

THE  
**BURLINGTON**  
MAGAZINE



Recent acquisitions at the  
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco



# Recent acquisitions at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco



**G**ROUNDED IN AND defined by the Bay Area's history, geography and distinct ecosystem of innovation and activism, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, comprising the de Young Museum and the Legion of Honor, are sites of connection for people, art and ideas from around the globe. At the institution's core is a civic vision that echoes the ideals and ambitions of our museums' founders, Michael H. de Young, Alma de Bretteville Spreckels and her husband, Adolph Spreckels. Since de Young founded the Memorial Museum (today the de Young) in 1895, and the Spreckels dedicated the California Palace of the Legion of Honor (today the Legion of Honor) to the fallen soldiers of the First World War in 1924, both museums have continually contributed to the health and spirit of the city of San Francisco through robust programming and education.

The Fine Arts Museums' wide-ranging collections are at the heart of this endeavour, and today, as the institution engages with the Bay Area's diverse communities, we aim to share the multivalent narratives, complex histories and trans-historical dialogues imbued within our holdings. The Museums' repositories of ancient art, European paintings, European decorative arts and sculpture, and works on paper in the renowned Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts are primarily housed in the Legion of Honor's magnificent Beaux-Arts building in Lincoln Park, and the collections of American art, costume and textile arts, and Native American, African and Oceanic art are held in the striking copper-clad Herzog & de Meuron-designed de Young in Golden Gate Park.

In recent years, as we have continued to build our collections, the Fine Arts Museums' curators have enriched previous areas of strength through strategic acquisitions, while simultaneously acquiring works that address gender, racial and cultural inequities within our holdings. In the autumn of 2020 we recalibrated our strategic plan in light of the COVID-19 crisis and in response to our country's long-overdue reckoning with systemic racism. In so doing, we centred the embrace of Diversity, Inclusivity, Equity and Access (DIEA) principles in every aspect of our programme and culture. In practice, as we continue to develop our collections, we will prioritise the presentation of underrepresented traditions and histories. As we seek to unravel and lay bare the destruction and harmful legacies of colonial and imperial pasts, we view partnerships with source communities and conversations with local scholars, artists and educators as essential to our stewardship of our collections. These

dialogues play an indispensable role in our curators' interpretation of our holdings and enrich our visitors' encounters with the objects in our care.

The selection of recent acquisitions illustrated in the pages that follow speak to our commitment to expand the narratives that we tell. From the exquisitely crafted Talleyrand Bed (c.1805), which addresses the highly articulated role of visual propaganda in France during the rule of Napoleon, to the critique of imperialism implicit in the painting *Penumbra* (1970) by the Guyana-born British painter Frank Bowling, to the Afrofuturism embodied by the Kenyan-American artist Wangechi Mutu in her extraordinary sculpture *Outstretched* (2019), these recent acquisitions renew and expand our ability to spark curiosity, discovery and awe in the imaginations of our audiences.

**THOMAS P. CAMPBELL**  
**DIRECTOR AND CEO**

**FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO**

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1. *Penumbra*, by Frank Bowling (British, b.Guyana, 1934). 1970. Acrylic and spray paint on canvas, 227 by 697.9 cm.

Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions; inv. no.2019.72. Sir Frank Bowling's monumental 'map' painting *Penumbra* evokes the global scale and impact of the African Diaspora. Omitting (Africa and South America) and magnifying (the Atlantic Ocean) geographic elements, the painting charts the artist's own geographic peregrinations and critiques an imperialist and cartographic worldview that spotlights Europe and North America, while casting their colonised continents into the shadows.

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**2. Statuette of Seneb.** Egyptian, Middle Kingdom, mid-Dynasty 12, c.1897–1839 BC. Painted wood (probably sycamore), height 27,6 cm.

*Estate of Virginia B. Landensohn; Ms Lisa Sardegna and Mr David A. Carrillo; Martin I. and Margaret J. Zankel and Herbert and Jan West; The Chickering Endowment; Friends of Ian White; The Michael Taylor Trust; Volunteer Council Acquisition Fund; Diane B. Wilsey; Charlotte and Rolf Scherman; Ancient Art Council; Dr and Mrs Bernard von Bothmer; Teresa Keller Tilden and Douglas Tilden; Sheila Wishek, in memory of Cathleen A. Keller; Ancient Art Trust Fund; Richard Benefield and John Kunowski; Gretchen Turner; Colin B. Bailey and Alan P. Wintermute; Elizabeth D. Moyer, PhD, and Michael C. Powanda, PhD; Rajnikant and Helen Desai, Eunice Baek and Thomas Garrity; Tim and Peggy Brown; Phoebe Cowles; Mrs George Hopper Fitch; Maurice W. Gregg; Anthony and Susan Hardy; Skot Jonz; Peter and Lindsay Joost; Arielle Kozloff in honour of Renée Dreyfus; Millicent and Megan Rutherford, John Klopacz and Richard Wilson, and Donald and Louise Heyneman in memory of John Rutherford; Françoise and Andrew Skurman; and additional donors; inv. no.2014.45.*

Small wooden statues representing the deceased often were placed in tombs during the late Old Kingdom and into the Middle Kingdom (c.2400–1800 BC). The highly skilled artist who carved this statuette of a Twelfth Dynasty official named Seneb created a figure that embodies strength and projects a self-assured confidence. The richly striated wood grain matches every curve of the figure's arms, legs, chest and head, and the painted details, although minimal, enhance the figure's directness and power. It is an outstanding portrait carved under affluent Twelfth Dynasty kings (likely Senwosret II or Senwosret III).

**3. Relief with Ptolemy I Soter making an offering.** Egyptian, Ptolemaic period, reign of Ptolemy I Soter, 305–282 BC, Limestone, height 33 cm.

*Museum purchase, Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Endowment Income Fund; Chickering Endowment Income Fund; You Lan Tang through the Ancient Art Council in honour of Dr Renée Dreyfus; Friends of Ian White Unrestricted Endowment Income Fund; Vivien Grey Gift for Unrestricted Acquisitions; Docent Council Commemorative Fund, Docent Training Class of 2018 and memorial funds from various Docents in memory of Ellen Harden, Clara Morrissey and Pauline Schwartz; Anthony and Susan Hardy; Volunteer Council Art Acquisition Fund; Diane B. Wilsey; Francesca Deering Howe and Thomas Carr Howe Endowment Income Fund; Lindsay and Peter Joost; Koret Foundation; Dr and Mrs Bernard von Bothmer in honour of Dr Dietrich von Bothmer; Berkeley Greek Club in memory of Professors Frederic Amory, J.K. Anderson, Gary Holland and Louis A. MacKay; Ancient Art Acquisition Fund; Mrs William Hamilton; Teresa Keller Tilden and Douglas Tilden; Gretchen Turner; Sheila Wishek; Elizabeth D. Moyer, PhD, and Michael C. Powanda, PhD; John Klopacz and Richard Wilson; Ellen Werner in memory of Klaus Werner; Laura Abbott in memory of J.K. Anderson; Eunice Baek and Thomas Garrity; Kathryn A. Burg; Phoebe Cowles and Robert Girard; Charlotte Scherman in memory of Dr Rolf Scherman; Jerry Wehage and Murray Storton in memory of Allen Branco; and additional donors and tribute funds; inv. no.2019.70.*

After the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC, Egypt fell to his general Ptolemy, who declared himself king and the founder of the Ptolemaic Dynasty. Its Greek kings embraced the Egyptian religion and appeared on the walls of temples as pharaohs, making offerings to Egyptian gods. This limestone relief contains the partial head and upper body of a king making an offering to a god whose image is now lost. In front of him are two cartouches. Remains of the names and the style of the carving appear to identify the figure as Ptolemy I Soter (305–282 BC). What sets this relief apart is that it was later usurped by a Roman emperor, perhaps Vespasian, whose name has replaced that of Ptolemy I.

**4. Codex-style plate with K'awiil, serpent, and other figures.** Maya artist, Petén, Northern Guatemala, 680–750. Earthenware, diameter 30,5 cm.

*Gift of Gail and J. Alec Merriam; inv. no.2014.95.3.*

Ancient Maya ceramics are replete with visual metaphors and often reference complex mythologies. The scene on this plate pertains to an allegory connected to the moon and the origin of the Maize god about birth and sacrifice. The hieroglyphic text records the event as the birth of the Baby Jaguar deity, who is not depicted on the plate but is a key player in the epic. This is one of about a dozen known vessels that feature similar iconography and represent this narrative.





5. Architectural panel in the shape of a *mihrab*. Timurid, western Central Asia, second half of 14th century. Carved and glazed terracotta, height 55.5 cm.

*Museum purchase, Vivian Grey Fund for Unrestricted Acquisitions, and Friends of Ian White Restricted Endowment Income Fund; inv. no.2018.61.*

This intricately carved and glazed terracotta architectural panel in the form of a *mihrab* niche dates to the fourteenth century during the early Timurid dynasty. Its surface is densely filled with elegant scrolling floral and leafy arabesques in luminous glazes. Carved in high relief, the panel has the effect of a decorative carpet or a veil of lace, as the glazes lay over the deeply recessed ground. The Timurids used art and architecture to enhance their personal and courtly life as well as their prestige and legitimacy. They initiated one of the most brilliant periods in Islamic art.



6. Frame depicting the Five Senses and the Doria coat-of-arms, by Balthasar Martines (active Genoa, 16th century). c.1565–1575. Embossed silver, silver gilt and enamelled gold with modern mirror, 33.5 by 25.5 cm.

*Museum purchase, European Decorative Arts Trust Fund, Gift of Bank of America by exchange; inv. no.2020.25.*

This complex Mannerist mirror frame is a rare surviving example of Genoese secular silversmithing. The Flemish-born goldsmith Balthasar Martines executed the work, which is modelled with languid female figures that depict the Five Senses, each accompanied by symbolic attributes, with Sight – the most prominent symbol for a mirror – at the top, holding a mirror of its own and accompanied by an eagle. That it was made for one of the city's most prominent merchants, the princely Doria family, is apparent from the enamelled cartouche that shows the devices of the Doria overlaid with those of the equally significant Genoese Lomellini, signifying a marriage between these two leading families.





7. *Vanitas*, by Andrés Deleito (Spanish, active 1656–63). c.1660. Oil on canvas, 107 by 155.5 cm.

Museum purchase, Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Endowment Income Fund; inv. no.2018.3. This work, previously unpublished, joins four other known *vanitas* compositions by the still-life painter Andrés Deleito. Signed at bottom right, the picture is also recognisable as a product of Deleito's hand by the use of heavy, glittering impasto. On the right sits a pile of luxury objects: gold and silver, jewels and coins, plates, ewers, and metalwork of fanciful design. These stand in sharp contrast to the objects on the left: a human skull, a mirror, an open book and a painting portraying the Last Judgment. These are reminders of the brevity of human life, the vanity of worldly pleasures and the need for divine salvation.

8. *St Matthew with two angels* (design for a lunette), by Bernardino di Betto di Biagio, called Pintoricchio (Italian, c.1456–1513). c.1485–90. Pen and brown ink and brown wash over traces of black chalk, ruling and compass work on laid paper, 24.9 by 28.9 cm.

Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions; inv. no.2021.1. Constituting a new cornerstone of Pintoricchio's extremely rare graphic catalogue, this rediscovered drawing features the evangelist St Matthew attended by two angels. Drawn in pen and ink with a bold crosshatching technique, the three figures emerge from the sheet with the appearance of a sculpture. They sit atop a horizontal frieze enlivened by *grotesche* ornaments copied from Emperor Nero's palace Domus Aurea, which had been discovered around the making of this design. Prominently featured at the centre of the frieze is a coat of arms that can be identified with that of Cardinal Domenico della Rovere (1441–1501), the nephew of Pope Sixtus IV. This armorial element links this drawing to a prestigious Roman commission and helps to date it to around 1485–1490.







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9. *Lansdowne vase*, by Giovanni Battista Piranesi (Italian, 1720–78). Rome, c.1770. Marble with ancient fragments, 49.5 by 39.4 by 28.1 cm.

*Gift of Joseph and Deborah Goldyne; inv. no.2020.39.1a–b.*

The artist Piranesi, principally known for his evocative etchings of Rome and prison scenes, also had a thriving business restoring and selling antiquities. For this vase, he augmented the ancient marble fragment of the lid and shoulder by recreating the body of the vase with ‘strigilated’ spiral fluting inspired by ancient sarcophagi, adding handles with male figures, an acanthus calyx and a slender foot. Acquired in Rome from the artist by the Irish painter Hugh Dean, this vase was added to the famous collection of ancient sculpture belonging to Lord Shelburne (later Marquess of Lansdowne), kept at Lansdowne House, London, where it was recorded in the Blue Room, one of the main drawing rooms.

10. *Charger*. Iranian, Safavid period, possibly Mashhad, 17th century. Stone paste with underglaze blue decoration, diameter 39.4 cm.

*Gift of Phoebe Cowles; inv. no.2014.61.*

The blue-and-white design on this large dish, painted in a rich cobalt underglaze, includes elegant open and scalloped Islamic niches in a form also found in architecture and other decorative arts of this period. Within each niche is a floral spray and surrounding it an overall abstract flower design painted in imitation of the bold Chinese blue-and-white flower motifs drawn from Chinese export wares. However, the painter has created his own design, which incorporates his adaptation of the original Chinese patterns with local Iranian imagery.

11. *Talleyrand State Bed*. France, probably Paris, c.1805. Carved and gilded wood with modern silk damask and passementerie, and an iron support, 356 by 208 by 163 cm.

*Museum purchase, Art Trust Fund in memory of Xavier Bonnet; inv. no.2019.61.*

This impressive state bed, or *lit de parade*, was supplied for the château de Valençay in central France, the country house acquired by the notorious diplomat and politician Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, prince de Bénévent (1754–1838), to entertain as Napoleon’s foreign minister. The grandeur of the bed, with its elaborate hangings and draped domed canopy set at twelve feet high, was intended to reflect Talleyrand’s elevated status as a prince of the empire. The bed effectively stood in as a throne during Talleyrand’s formal daily ritual of dressing in public while he received his guests in his bedchamber. Made before the invention of bedsprings, the bed has three mattresses, recreated by the late historic upholsterer Xavier Bonnet. The mattresses, two of wool and one of feather and down, were made to cocoon Talleyrand, who was terrified of falling out of bed.





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12. *Moritz-Wilhelm, Duke of Saxe-Zeitz*, by Willem van Mieris (Dutch, 1662–1747). 1705. Oil on copper panel, 10.8 by 8.3 cm.

*Bequest of Margaret Kaplan; inv. no.2020.32.2.*

Willem van Mieris was born in Leiden to a family of painters. He established a successful practice in his hometown during the final decades of the seventeenth century, turning out finely painted portraits, genre scenes and a few landscapes. In addition to attracting patrons from Leiden's elite, he developed a modest international clientele, particularly in Germany. This miniature portrait, painted on copper, portrays the second and final Duke of Saxe-Zeitz (1664–1718), a member of the House of Wettin. The sitter's armour, somewhat more loosely painted than his exquisitely detailed face and hair, may be a later addition. Technical research is ongoing, but underlying strokes of ultramarine visible under magnification suggest that the Duke may originally have worn a jacket of blue velvet.

13. *Madame de Narbonne*, by François-Hubert Drouais (French, 1727–75). 1769. Oil on canvas, 71.1 by 55.9 cm.

*Gift of Lady Alexander of Weedon in honour of Martin Chapman; inv. no.2020.2.*

A leading portraitist at the court of Louis XV, François-Hubert Drouais painted some of the most fashionable figures of the *ancien régime*. In this portrait, he depicted Françoise de Chalus (1734–1821) as a young woman dressed in *chiné* silk, a lace fichu



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and the emphatic rouge popular at the court of Versailles. Married to the duc de Narbonne-Lara in 1749, this sitter served as lady-in-waiting to two French princesses: Louise-Élisabeth de France, duchesse de Parme, and Marie-Adélaïde de France. In 1755 Madame de Narbonne bore a son, Louis, comte de Narbonne-Lara, whose natural father was rumoured to be Louis XV.



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14. *An evening landscape*, by Samuel Palmer (British, 1805–81). c.1880. Transparent and opaque watercolour over graphite on paper, 21 by 44.1 cm.

*Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions; inv. no.2020.3.*

Executed in the final year of the artist's life, this carefully constructed panoramic landscape distills many of the central themes found in Samuel Palmer's work throughout his career: iridescent lighting, dramatic vistas and a lovingly rendered view of nature – which was likely drawn from his reminiscences of Shoreham, in Sussex, near where he had lived earlier. This luminous watercolour was built up through the application of dense layers of pigments to convey the ending of a day, when a gleaner meets a goatherd as he returns home.

15. *Isabella and the pot of basil*, by William Holman Hunt (English, 1827–1910). 1867–68. Oil on canvas, 60.6 by 38.7 cm.

*Museum purchase, Yvonne Cappeller 1992 Trust Fund, Grover A. Magnin Endowment Bequest Income Fund, Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Endowment Income Fund and generous donations from Lucy Young Hamilton, Margaret and William R. Hearst III, Jessica and Jason Moment, Lisa Sardegna and David Carrillo, and Diane B. Wilsey; inv. no.2021.31.*

This picture portrays a story from Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1353), adapted by the poet John Keats in 1818. Having exhumed her dead lover's body, Isabella conceals his head inside a potted basil plant, watered with tears. William Holman Hunt's treatment was an exercise in mourning. He and his wife, Fanny Waugh, had travelled to Florence in 1866; she died there in December, and her memory served as his model for Isabella. Both the literary subject and various details of the composition (notably the majolica pot) demonstrate a Pre-Raphaelite fascination with early Italian art. A newly decorative sensibility, however, also signals the influence on Hunt's work of the nascent Aesthetic Movement. He was so attached to this composition that he painted it twice. The prime version is in the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne.

16. *The birthday*, by William Holman Hunt (English, 1827–1910). 1868. Oil on canvas, 102.9 by 72.7 cm.

*Museum purchase, Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Endowment Income Fund and Grover A. Magnin Endowment Bequest Income Fund; inv. no.2019.33.*

*The birthday* is the first painting by William Holman Hunt, a founding member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, to enter a public collection on the West Coast of the United States. It portrays Edith Waugh – Hunt's second wife and the sister of his deceased first wife, Fanny – on her twenty-first birthday. With its vibrant colouring and tactile brushwork, *The birthday* embodies the aesthetic forged by the Pre-Raphaelites against the grain of the more narrative approach then championed by official art institutions. As one observer noted in a review of the 1869 Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, where *The birthday* was first exhibited, 'Mr. Holman Hunt [. . .] is "in" the Academy as an exhibitor, but, for reasons best known to himself, not "of" it'.

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17. Baluster vase and cover with AR monogram, attributed to Johann Caspar Ripp (1681–1726). Meissen Factory (est.1710), Meissen, c.1725–30. Hard-paste porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, 41.3 by 21.5 cm.

*Gift of Malcolm D. Gutter; inv. no.2015.66a–b.*

The Meissen Factory, founded in 1710 by King Augustus III ('the Strong') of Saxony, was the first in Europe to succeed in manufacturing true porcelain in the Chinese and Japanese manner. The decoration of this vase is attributed to Johann Caspar Ripp, who developed Meissen's underglaze blue pigment to resemble Chinese wares. In the work's design, chrysanthemums and prunus grow out of a Rococo console, a distinctly European motif that ties the vase to interior fashion of the mid-eighteenth century – after successfully imitating Chinese porcelain, Meissen began to develop a uniquely European style. Porcelain was no longer a borrowed element of Asian cultures, but a nativised European art form adapted to European purposes.

18. Man's *haori* (jacket). Japan, c.1931. Stencil-printed silk (*katayuzen*), 109.2 by 127 cm.

*Gift of Erik Jacobsen; inv. no.2015.84.15.*

Popular between 1900 and 1945, Japanese propaganda kimono, known as *omoshirogara* (meaning interesting or amusing), included kimono and other traditional Japanese clothing with imagery that celebrated Japan's modernity and, later, military power. These garments were worn by men, women and children at home or to intimate gatherings. This *haori* (kimono-style jacket) features flyers for Columbia Records, Victor Records and *Toyo Chikuonki Kabushiki-kaisha* (Orient Records), who were among the first purveyors of records and gramophones.

19. Ritual vessel (*aduno koro*). Dogon artist, Mali, early 20th century. Wood, 41.9 by 132.7 by 23.5 cm.

*Gift of the Robert T. Wall Family; inv. no.2019.98.*

Dogon origin myths tell the story of a supernatural being Nommos, who was transformed into a horse to carry the ark containing the eight founding ancestors to earth. This outstanding ritual Dogon vessel is carved with a wealth of related imagery, including the head and tail of the horse and the eight founding ancestors. Dogon vessels were kept in the house of a lineage head and used to hold offerings dedicated to their ancestors.

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20. Figure. Luba artist, Democratic Republic of Congo, 19th century. Wood, metal and fibre, 26 by 5.1 by 4.8 cm.

*Gift of Richard Schelle; inv. no.2019.1.*

Women served important roles as spirit mediums and advisors to Luba kings and chiefs, and Luba female figures embody concepts of beauty, memory and power. This sculpture is distinguished by its finely detailed and elongated form. The common gesture of the hands placed on the breasts reflects the belief that only the body of a woman is powerful enough to hold the king's spirit and conserve royal precepts.

21. *Rêve au coin du feu (Dreaming by the fireside)*, model by Camille Claudel (French, 1864–1943), executed by François Pompon (French, 1855–1933). 1899. Marble, 22.2 by 31.8 by 24.8 cm.

*Gift of Marie-Joséphe de Touzalin Dunaway; inv. no.2018.88.*

This work, one of Camille Claudel's early essays in narrative sculpture, may represent the artist's feelings after her rupture with the sculptor Auguste Rodin, with whom she had worked closely as a pupil, assistant, model, collaborator and lover. Commissioned by Claudel's principal patrons, Comte and Comtesse Arthur de Maigret in 1899, this sculpture was the first iteration of this model and one of the few compositions that proved commercially successful for the sculptor. Rather than being carved by Claudel following the studio practice of the day, this marble was made by the sculptor François Pompon. Very delicately executed, and with a soft surface finish typical of Pompon's skills, the back of the fireplace is carved so thinly that light can be transmitted through it to give the impression of a lit fire.





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**22. *in pursuit of Venus [infected]*, by Lisa Reihana (New Zealander, b.1964). 2015–17. Ultra HD video, colour, 7.1 sound, duration 64 minutes, 250 by 400 cm.**  
*Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, acquired jointly with funds provided by the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions, the Fine Arts Museums Foundation and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Collectors Committee; inv. no. 2019.21.*  
 Set against a Tahitian background echoing the scenic French wallpaper *Les sauvages de la mer Pacifique* (c.1804–05) that inspired the work, *in pursuit of Venus [infected]* draws on theatre and animation traditions to reclaim the history of ‘discovery’ between Pacific Islanders and European explorers. Epic in scope, scale and duration, it recasts these moments of contact, connection and conflict – or, according to Reihana, ‘originary infection’ – from a Polynesian perspective. The film is a continuous loop, with Captain Cook’s eventual death only one of eighty live-action vignettes that unfold before the viewer. This format of presenting the film with no perceptible beginning or end invokes *Tā-Vā*, a concept of time and space in the Pacific that builds a more complex and layered cultural narrative.

**23. *Jar*, by Maria Martinez (American, San Ildefonso, 1887–1980) and Julian Martinez (American, San Ildefonso, 1879–1943). c.1930–39. Earthenware, 17.8 by 22.9 by 22.9 cm.**  
*Gift of Ardelle Southworth; inv. no. 2017.11.*  
 Maria Martinez and her husband, Julian Martinez, were a formidable team. Maria was an expert potter and could burnish clay to a brilliant shine. Julian was an astute designer who painted the pots with a matte slip using designs adapted from rock art and ancient pottery fragments. Together they perfected a firing technique that resulted in these distinctive black-on-black ceramics. This jar was purchased at the 1939–40 Golden Gate International Exposition held on San Francisco’s Treasure Island. The Martinezes travelled to the fair to hold pottery-making demonstrations and to sell their art at the Indian Market. The stylised tree motif that appears on this jar is said to have been inspired by California’s soaring pines and redwoods.

**24. *Basket*, by Elizabeth Hickox (American and Karuk / Wiyot, 1872–1947). c.1915. Wild grape root, myrtle shoots, maidenhair fern and porcupine quills, 15.9 by 18.7 cm.**  
*Purchased with funds from the friends of AOA, the AOA Docent Fund and in memory of Leroy C. Cleal; inv. no. 2019.65a–b.*  
 Elizabeth Hickox is renowned for the technical and aesthetic refinement of her baskets. She used an unusual technique to shape her work. Like other weavers, she would increase the diameter of a basket by adding more warp rods. However, to narrow the basket, Hickox would not reduce the number of warps, as others did, but would instead trim each warp to make it thinner, resulting in an exceptionally even surface. Hickox made the bold contrasting design of this basket using dark fern and porcupine quills dyed bright yellow with wolf lichen. The stitches, balanced in colour and size, demonstrate Hickox’s impeccable weaving skills as well as her meticulous harvesting, preparation and sorting of materials. She created the unique shape of this basket based on a tobacco basket.



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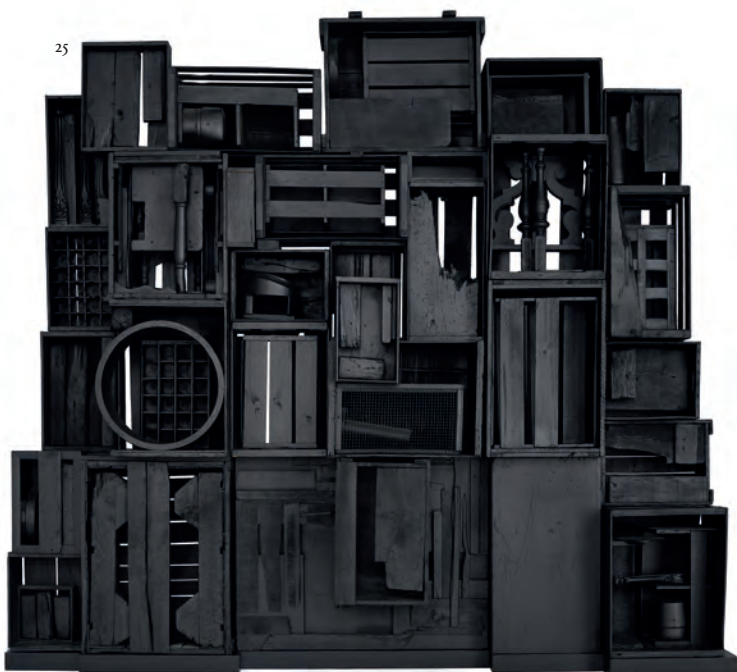
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25. *Sky cathedral's presence I*, by Louise Nevelson (American, 1899–1988). 1959–62. Painted wood and found objects, 271.8 by 305.1 by 54.6 cm. Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions; inv. no.2017.50. Louise Nevelson's sculpture *Sky cathedral's presence I* addresses the viability of religious belief in an existential age traumatised and transformed by the Second World War. Balancing the forces of fragmentation and unification, Nevelson's architectonic black altars, shrines and cathedrals fulfil an instinctual human desire for forces larger than ourselves – an emanation that is mythical and mysterious, yet spiritually sustaining.

26. *Black and white one-stroke waterfall*, by Pat Steir (American, b.1940). 1992. Oil on canvas, 440.7 by 230.5 cm. Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions; inv. no.2018.30. Pat Steir's painting *Black and white one-stroke waterfall* from her *Waterfall* series draws inspiration from Chinese and Japanese painting, Taoist and Buddhist philosophies, minimalist and conceptual art, and postmodernism. Lyrically reconciling abstraction and representation, this monumental canvas viscerally conveys the sensation of standing below a towering waterfall through its vertical cascades of poured, splashed and dripped paint.

27. *Katsura*, by Kay Sekimachi (American, b.1926). 1971. Dyed nylon monofilament; 4-layer and tubular weaves on an 8-harness loom, 109.2 by 38.1 by 33 cm. Foundation purchase, George and Dorothy Saxe Endowment Fund; inv. no.2016.7. San Francisco native Kay Sekimachi is a pioneer in the post-Second World War fiber art movement, which emerged in the 1960s and 1970s as artists gave textile traditions new expression, expanding into the realms of sculpture, installation and performance art. Throughout her six-decade-plus career, Kay Sekimachi has explored the infinite possibilities of double weave – a technique that uses one warp to produce a cloth of two or more layers – stretching its potential by transforming it from two to three dimensions. In 1963 Sekimachi began experimenting with monofilament, a then-new material from DuPont Chemical. The artist was drawn to the dualities of its properties – pliable yet firm, and transparent yet receptive to dyes. *Katsura* is a seminal work from this series, which remains a defining moment in Sekimachi's career.





Recent acquisitions at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

28. *Untitled (Compass series)*, by Jay DeFeo (American, 1929–89). 1979. Charcoal and oil pastel on paper, 35.6 by 27.9 cm.

*Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions; inv. no.2016.6.1.* Jay DeFeo was part of a vibrant community of avant-garde artists, poets and musicians in 1950s San Francisco. She was primarily a painter with an extensive drawing practice. *Untitled (Compass series)*, composed in DeFeo's signature palette of black, white and gray, employs a variety of media. There is also evidence of considerable smudging and erasing (which DeFeo utilised extensively in her practice, almost as a technique), creating complex layers of forms and shapes. The drawing compass, a favorite tool, was the inspiration for the main shape, and other everyday objects appear as well, including a cup handle, a shoe tree and a kneadable eraser. The end result is an abstraction in which the mechanical objects have been reshaped into elegant organic forms.

29. *Him and her hold the root*, by Lonnie Holley (American, b.1950). 1994. Rocking chairs, pillow and root, 115.6 by 185.4 by 77.5 cm.

*Museum purchase, and gift of the Souls Grown Deep Foundation from the William S. Arnett Collection; inv. no.2017.1.27.* Lonnie Holley's striking assemblage *Him and her hold the root*, with one decrepit and anthropomorphic rocking chair leaning its arm upon the other, supports a large tree root, which evokes a 'family tree', genealogies, or 'roots', and also the accumulated oral histories and knowledge that are passed down from elders to their descendants.



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30. *Blood and meat: survival for the world*, by Thornton Dial (American, 1928–2016). 1992. Braided carpet rope, metal, electrical wire, screen, textile, enamel paint and Splash Zone compound on plywood, 165.1 by 241.3 by 27.9 cm.

Museum purchase, American Art Trust Fund, and gift of the Souls Grown Deep Foundation from the William S. Arnett Collection; inv. no.2017.1.7.

Thornton Dial's assemblage *Blood and meat: survival for the world* commemorates the martyrdom of civil-rights activists with a tangle of anguished knots and a tire iron crucifix. Portrait heads of the assassinated Dr Martin Luther King Jr and President John F. Kennedy surround a central portrait veil alluding to the brutal murder of Emmett Till. With its suggestions of bondage, racial violence and fury, Dial conveys a sense of urgency that still resonates today.

31. *Carolina interior*, by Romare Bearden (American, 1911–88). 1970. Collage of various papers, fabric, paint, ink and graphite on paperboard, 33 by 40 cm.

Museum purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions; inv. no. 2019.4.

In the 1960s Romare Bearden incorporated photomontage and collage into his practice, establishing his reputation as a contemporary artist. For his innovative collages, he cut up photographs, magazines, newspapers and prints, pasting the pieces and shapes into powerful portraits of Black life. *Carolina interior* is a remembrance of the bathing ritual he witnessed on visits to the humble homes of his relatives. Bearden fractured and layered his images, improvising with materials and ideas in a way that was more than a matter of technique. It came out of his life and culture – the improvisational nature of the jazz music he loved, the Christian iconography he saw in Black churches, patchwork quilts and rooms wallpapered with old newspapers and magazine pages he recalled from childhood summers in North Carolina.



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32. Quilt, by Rosie Lee Tompkins (American, 1936–2006) and Irene Bankhead (American, b.1925). 1996. Velvet, velveteen, velour, faux fur, panne velvet, backed with cotton gauze; pieced, quilted, 188 by 148.6 cm.

*Museum Purchase, Textile Arts Council Endowment Fund; inv. no.2019.53.1.*

Rosie Lee Tompkins was the pseudonym for the quilt maker Effie Mae Howard, who relocated to Richmond, California, from the South during the second wave of the Great Migration. Tompkins’s love for lush, brilliant fabrics – velvet in particular – and her mastery of classic quilt patterns led to her creation of uniquely complex works with spatial arrangements of small piecework squares within larger colour swaths. As a result, her work pulsates with energy and rhythm. As the art critic Roberta Smith has written, ‘Ms. Tompkins’s quilts are formidably joyful visual events that ignore the usual boundaries between cultures, histories, and mediums’.

33. *Lincoln, Lonnie, and me – a story in 5 parts*, by Carrie Mae Weems (American, b.1953). 2012. Video installation and mixed media, 335.3 by 457.2 by 1066.8 cm.

*Museum purchase, in honour of the Friends of New Art; inv. no.2017.49.*

Carrie Mae Weems draws on narrative formats such as self-portraiture, social documentary and oral history to scrutinize notions of subjectivity in terms of gender, race and class. Her video installation *Lincoln, Lonnie, and me* is a meditation on the exclusionary mechanisms of the American dream. In one sequence, Weems intones a portion of Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address while spectres of Lincoln, a crying woman and a reenactment of the John F. Kennedy assassination flit across the screen. In another, segments of speeches by her fellow artist and activist Lonnie Graham alternate with images of race riots and bus boycotts. Between these scenes, Weems intersperses ghostlike appearances of athletes, performers and tricksters, thus commenting on how white culture has traditionally reduced Black identity to certain societally sanctioned roles and provoking viewers to confront their own complicity in the perpetuation of systemic racism.

34. *Birth hood*, by Judy Chicago (American, b.1939). 1965–2011. Sprayed automotive lacquer on car hood, 109 by 109 by 10.9 cm.

*Foundation purchase, Wattis Endowment Income Fund; inv. no.2020.26.2.*

*Birth hood* is one of a set of four spray-painted Chevrolet Corvair car hoods that Judy Chicago created in 1964. Preceding her minimalist work, they contain the seeds of all the formal, conceptual and iconographic strategies that have informed Chicago’s feminist methodology to this day: the embrace of what she calls ‘fringe’ techniques and subjects unacceptable to the reigning art historical canon (here combining spray painting with biomorphic imagery laced with sexual innuendo), the material fusion of figure and ground and her distinctive rainbow palette. In order to make them, Chicago apprenticed at an autobody workshop as the only woman among 250 men, one of many ‘firsts’ that would come to define her career as the pioneering artist who paved the way for feminist art and arts education.

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**35. Jacket, by Junya Watanabe (Japanese, b.1961) for Comme des Garçons (Japanese, est.1973). Fall 2015, Ready-to-wear. Polyester knit (jersey).**

*Gift of Norah and Norman Stone; inv. no.2020.18.8.*

For Junya Watanabe of Comme des Garçons, the design principle of *monozukuri*, or the art, science and craft of making things, guides his work. His designs are about experimentation, as he endlessly reworks his garments into fresh constructions that offer a reinterpretation of modern dress standards with a playful irreverence. His clothes have been described as intriguing, experimental and complex, as well as complicated to make and sometimes also difficult to wear. In recent years, his collections have moved away from specific garments into abstracted forms. In this piece, Watanabe uses an intricate pleating technique to create a cocoon-like sculpture that engulfs the wearer's body.

**36. Woman's evening jacket, by Vivienne Westwood (British, b.1941). Spring / Summer 2007. Cotton, metallic thread, sequins, rhinestones, onyx, coral; complex weave, embroidery (chain, buttonhole, and couched stitches) and stones.**

*Gift of Christine Suppes in honour of Jill D'Alessandro; inv. no.2017.75.17.*

**Woman's evening gown and belt, by Vivienne Westwood (British, b.1941). Spring / Summer 2013. Silk, cotton; satin, printed plain-weave lining.**

*Gift of Christine Suppes in honour of Jill D'Alessandro; inv. no.2017.75.16a-b.*

Over the course of her nearly forty-year career, Vivienne Westwood has explored the history of cutting and tailoring garments within the longstanding English tradition. Self-taught, she often incorporates elements from eighteenth-century gowns, such as corsets and skirt pulls, to create evening wear of unrestrained grandeur. As evinced by this ensemble, her opulent blend of colors and fabrics, and her use of complex cuts, are unparalleled in contemporary fashion.



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**Recent acquisitions at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco**

**37. *Exomind (Deep water)*, by Pierre Huyghe (French, b.1962). 2017/2020. Concrete cast with wax hive and bee colony, 72 by 60 by 79 cm.**

*Foundation purchase, Wattis Acquisition Endowment Fund*

With its female form crowned by a beehive head, home to a colony of Italian honeybees (*Apis mellifera ligustica*), Pierre Huyghe's *Exomind (Deep water)* is a work of art in constant formation. Enacting a literal cross-pollination of organisms, *Exomind* gestures toward the multiplicity of subjectivities that constitute the world. The beehive embodies a form of self-organising intelligence common in nature. Also called 'swarm intelligence', it has informed concepts of emergent and collective intelligence in the social sciences and inspired such terms as 'hive mind'. Natural forms of swarm intelligence have also served as heuristic models for the design of artificial intelligence systems. Part artifice and part organism, the work functions like a living algorithm; its evolution is driven by its colony of worker bees, who scan the environment and mine it for nectar like a line of code harvests data. But it also embodies a symbiotic vision of intelligence that bridges the categorical divide between human, nature and machine.

**38. *Outstretched*, by Wangechi Mutu (Kenyan, b.1972). 2019. Paper pulp, wood glue, charcoal, pigment and feathers, 91 by 162 by 75 cm.**

*Museum purchase, Jay D. and Clare C. McEvoy Endowment Income Fund; inv. no.2021.32.*

An artist who calls both Nairobi and New York City home, Wangechi Mutu moves voraciously between cultural traditions to challenge colonialist, racist and sexist worldviews with her speculative projection of an alternate universe informed by

feminism, Afrofuturism and the Symbiocene. *Outstretched* cites the classic trope of the reclining nude, whose passivity has dominated the representation of women in art for centuries. However, *Outstretched* resists such characterisation. Her face and hands are covered with bundles of black and red feathers, a colour scheme that evokes violent acts and conjures images of abuse and mutilation. Wearing her amphibian skin and vaginal-shaped shield like a protective cover, *Outstretched* refutes the association of nakedness with nudity, thus valiantly defying the indignity and injury of female objectification.

**39. *White guise*, by Alison Saar (American, b.1956). 2018–19. Colour woodcut, relief printing and paint on shellac-stained mulberry paper, 139.7 by 69.9 cm.**

*Museum purchase, Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts Endowment Fund; inv. no.2019.60.*

Alison Saar's print depicts a Black woman, whose hair is bound into an elaborate cotton-ball crown, standing barefoot in front of a wallpaper background. (The crown references the practice of enslaved pickers who wore cotton plant stems in their hair as a disguise in the fields.) She is a so-called 'house slave', forced into domestic servitude and nearly invisible to the white household she serves – instead of disappearing into the cotton fields, she blends into the wallpaper. She holds a flat iron in her hand that, while symbolic of her domestic servitude, also represents her defiance: the iron is dripping with blood. Saar's female figure is thus delineated as a powerful being, lifted up by her crown and representative of her liberation and self-determination.

