IN THE BEGINNING

BIBLES BEFORE THE YEAR 1000

OCTOBER 21, 2006—JANUARY 7, 2007
THE FREER GALLERY OF ART AND ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY at the Smithsonian Institution together form the national museum of Asian art for the United States. The Freer Gallery also houses a collection of American art from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the world’s most important collection of works by James McNeill Whistler.

**FREER CURRENT EXHIBITIONS**

Closing Soon!
Pretty Women: Freer and the Ideal of Feminine Beauty
THROUGH SEPTEMBER 17, 2006

Beyond Brushwork:
Symbolism in Chinese Painting
THROUGH NOVEMBER 26, 2006

Freer and Tea, Part 2:
Raku, Hagi, Karatsu
THROUGH JANUARY 1, 2007

Ongoing Freer Exhibitions
Ancient Chinese Pottery and Bronze Art for Art’s Sake (American)
Arts of the Indian Subcontinent and the Himalayas
Arts of the Islamic World
Black and White Chinese Ceramics from the Tenth to Fourteenth Century
Buddhist Art
Charles Lang Freer and Egypt
Japanese Screens
Korean Ceramics
The Peacock Room
Small Masterpieces: Whistler Painting from the 1880s
Vietnamese Ceramics

**SACKLER CURRENT EXHIBITIONS**

Perspectives: Simryn Gill
THROUGH APRIL 29, 2007

In the Beginning:
Bibles Before the Year 1000
OCTOBER 21, 2006–JANUARY 1, 2007

Encompassing the Globe:
Portugal and the World in the 16th and 17th Centuries
JUNE 23–SEPTEMBER 16, 2007

Ongoing Sackler Exhibitions
The Arts of China
Fountains of Light: Islamic Metalwork from the Nuhad Es-Said Collection
Luxury Arts of the Silk Route Empires
Sculpture of South Asia and the Himalayas

**FROM SUNRISE TO MOONRISE: A FREER CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION**

OCTOBER 7, 2006, 8 AM TO 9 PM
FREER GALLERY OF ART, 12TH STREET & INDEPENDENCE AVE., SW

On October 7 the Freer Gallery of Art will mark its one hundredth anniversary. Come by for a full day of performances, demonstrations, and other activities. Look for the Teacher’s Corner, where Freer and Sackler educators will be on hand for discussion and to distribute educational resources and other goodies. See you there!

**TOURS**

We offer a variety of tours related to the museum’s ongoing and temporary exhibitions. For detailed information about offerings for school groups, please visit our website at www.asia.si.edu/education/ToursForStudents.htm.

To arrange a tour, please submit a tour request form online at www.asia.si.edu/education/TourRequestForm.htm. For more information, call 202-633-1012 or write to asiatours@asia.si.edu.
Free Semiannual Newsletter
Asian Art Connections: A Resource for Educators
To subscribe, please write to fsgasiaeducation@asia.si.edu

Online Resources: General
E-Gallery
Create your own exhibition using objects from the Freer and Sackler online collection. www.asia.si.edu

Online Educational Resources
www.asia.si.edu/education/onlineGuides.htm

Freer and Sackler Collections
www.asia.si.edu/collections/default.htm

Online Exhibitions
www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions/online.htm

Tour Information
www.asia.si.edu/education/toursForStudents.htm

Online Resources: Publications
Asian Art Connections: A Resource for Educators
www.asia.si.edu/education/onlineGuides.htm
Previous newsletters available in PDF format.

The Art and Archaeology of Ancient China: A Teacher’s Guide
www.asia.si.edu/education/onlineGuides.htm

The Art of Buddhism: A Teacher’s Guide
www.asia.si.edu/education/ArtofBuddhism.pdf

Arts of the Islamic World: A Teacher’s Guide
www.asia.si.edu/education/islam.pdf

The Arts of Japan: A Teacher’s Guide
www.asia.si.edu/education/onlineGuides.htm

The Arts of Japan: A Teacher’s Guide
Appropriate for grades 4–12, $20

The Art of Buddhism: A Teacher’s Guide
Appropriate for grades 4–12, $20

The Art and Archaeology of Ancient China: A Teacher’s Guide
Appropriate for grades 3–12, $20

Silk Road Resource Packet
Appropriate for grades 4–12, $12

Video
Puja: Expressions of Hindu Devotion
Appropriate for grades 6–12, $10
This award-winning video introduces Hindu worship through moving images and interviews. 1996. 20 min. (close captioned)

CD-ROM
Chi’s Adventure in Ancient China
Appropriate for grades 3–6, $10
Join Chi the chimera as he introduces viewers to ancient Chinese civilization through objects from the Freer and Sackler collections.

CD
Silk Road Stories
An audio CD of stories told by Freer and Sackler volunteers who have cultural ties to countries along the ancient Silk Road. Features stories from China, Japan, Turkey, and Bangladesh. $10.

Slides and Digital Images
Slides and digital images are available from our rights and reproductions department. To preview the sets or to order online, go to www.asia.si.edu/visitor/rnr.htm and click on Slide Sets Now Available! Order sets by fax at 202.633.9770. $100 for a set of 40 images; individual slides or digital images available for $5 each.
This extraordinary exhibition marks the first time many of the earliest examples of biblical manuscripts will be shown to the public. Many of the texts on view were produced in a format known as the codex, or leaf book. These Bibles were similar to modern books—made of papyrus or parchment leaves, bound along one edge, and often covered with leather or wood.

The works on display in *In the Beginning* range from fragments of the earliest papyrus codices to lavish purple manuscripts written in silver ink. The exhibition also traces the emergence of the biblical canon, or approved texts, as well as the Bible’s translation into diverse languages, its dissemination from the Middle East to western Europe, and its transformation into a complex and iconic symbol of faith.

The Bible is the best-selling book of all time. However, the word “Bible” comes from the Greek τὰ βιβλία meaning “the little books.” This reflects the fact that the Bible did not originate as a single document but is comprised of independent texts that were valued and used by early Christians. It was not until many centuries after the rise of Christianity that the Bible acquired its current form as “one” book.

The emergence of the Bible is a story not only of religion but also of technology. The modern dominance of the codex is a lasting legacy of early Christianity. Just as we face a technological revolution today with the increasing use of computers, so too did the shift from scroll to codex in the ancient world represent a dramatic change in the way information was stored and accessed. The adoption of the codex by early Christian communities had a profound impact on how the Western world would interact with the written word.
FEATHERED OBJECT

Front cover of the Washington Manuscript III—
The Four Gospels (Codex Washingtonensis)—
painted with the figures of St. Matthew and St. John
Greek, 7th century
Encaustic painting on wooden panel
21.3 x 14.3 cm
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer  F1906.297

Back cover of the Washington Manuscript III—
The Four Gospels (Codex Washingtonensis)—
painted with the figures of St. Mark and St. Luke
Greek, 7th century
Encaustic painting on wooden panel
21.3 x 14.3 cm
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer  F1906.298

Washington Manuscript III—
The Four Gospels (Codex Washingtonensis)
f. 108v-109r (Gospel of Mark)
Greek, late 4th–early 5th century
Ink on parchment
20.8 x 14.3 cm
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer  F1906.274

Charles Lang Freer purchased this codex containing the four gospels in 1906 on a trip to Egypt. Written in Greek—the language used by many early Christian communities—this particular codex is the third oldest parchment manuscript of the Gospels. The codex itself dates from the late fourth to early fifth century and the covers were made later, in the seventh century.

VOCABULARY

Codex (plural: codices) leaf book, similar to the modern book
Gospels written stories of Jesus’ sayings and actions
Parchment the skin of sheep, goats, or calves prepared so that it can be written on
Manuscript a text written by hand
Scroll a format for recording written information in which papyrus, leather, or parchment forms one continuous sheet that can be rolled up for storage
FROM SCROLL TO BOOK

How did people store information before the leaf book (codex) form emerged?
Humans developed written symbols for representing their spoken language long before the book form emerged. The early formats devised by humans for storing written information ran the gamut from clay tablets in ancient Mesopotamia to bamboo strips in ancient China.

Why, then, did the book become the primary mode of recording information?
The answer lies in the history of Christianity, which developed in the Middle East during the first centuries of the Common Era (C.E.). Many of the earliest Christian communities spoke Greek and lived within what is often called the Greco-Roman world, an expanse of territories centered around the Mediterranean Sea and dominated at different times by Greece and Rome. In the Greco-Roman world, written information was typically stored in a scroll format.

How did someone read from a scroll?
Reading a scroll differs from reading a book. In the Greek tradition, the scroll format was usually read from left to right—by unrolling the text with the right hand and rolling up the text with the left. The text was written in narrow columns and the reader, when opening his scroll, generally unrolled enough to see two columns. Not all scrolls were read this way, however. Because Hebrew is read from right to left, Hebrew scrolls were (and still are) unrolled with the left hand and rolled up with the right.

FUN fact
Can you read the sentence below?
thisisnotjustaverylongwordbutanexampleofthewayinwhichinformationwaswrittendownonscrollsinthegreco-romanworld
In the first centuries of the Common Era scrolls were written without punctuation, paragraph divisions, or even spaces between words! Although it may seem daunting to us, experienced readers at the time had no problem understanding the text.

What were the advantages of the book format over the scroll format?
The book offered several advantages. The first was convenience. A single book could hold more text than one scroll—a long text had to be recorded on multiple scrolls. Additionally, books were simply more “user friendly”—as we now say. A reader could easily move back and forth, quickly comparing information in different sections. In a scroll, that kind of cross-referencing was much more difficult, requiring the reader to unroll and re-roll the document to view material in different sections. For early Christians studying numerous gospel texts, such cross-referencing was a vital tool. As Christianity spread across Europe, the book became the primary mode of storing information in the Western world.

Questions:
What are the advantages of presenting information on a computer screen rather than in a book? Disadvantages? Which do you prefer? Do you think that computers will eventually replace books? Would that be positive? Why or why not?
Teacher Workshop: Indian Dance and Art
October 28, 2006, 10:15 am to 2 pm
Explore the relationship between dance traditions and art from the Indian Subcontinent in the Freer and Sackler galleries. Teachers will work with master dancers and examine works of art with educators. This workshop will be active, so please wear comfortable clothing! Cost: $10.
To register, send: 1) Your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, school affiliation (home schooling parents are also welcome), subject(s) and grade level(s) that you teach and 2) A $10 check or money order payable to the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery to: School and Teacher Programs—India Workshop Education Department Freer & Sackler Galleries Smithsonian Institution PO Box 37012, MRC 707 Washington, DC 20013-7012 Space is limited. Registration closes October 20, 2006.

Are you currently teaching in a DC Public School?
Join us for a special teacher workshop, Art Brings Writing to Life! on November 30, 2006, part of the DCPS Professional Development Institute offered through the DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative. Writing comes to life in this innovative workshop where participants learn simple but effective writing activities using art as inspiration. As teachers explore artworks from such countries as Japan and China and paintings by American artists, they will learn about fun and meaningful poetry and prose activities for the classroom. This workshop is FREE and provides DCPS professional development credits. Art Brings Writing to Life! is also offered as a tour through the Arts for Every Student program for sixth- to eighth-grade DCPS students. For more information or to register, contact the DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative at 202.416.8882 T or 202.416.8853 F or visit the website at www.dccollaborative.org.

New Student Program!
Arabic Groove: Percussion and Art at the Freer
October 26, 2006, 10:15 AM, 11 AM, 11:45 AM, 12:30 PM, OR 1:15 PM
For students in grades 6 through 8
Cosponsored by Discovery Theater and the Freer Gallery of Art
Experience the mesmerizing rhythms in both Arabic music and art through the drum and dance of young percussionist and educator Karim Nagi Mohammed. Listen to driving dumbek, his famous turbo tabla, and more! Following the performance, students explore the galleries to find the exciting visual rhythms in art from the Arab world.

Tickets are $3.75 per student and $5.00 per adult. To purchase tickets, contact Discovery Theater at 202.357.1500 T, 202.786.2536 F, or e-mail disc-th@tsa.si.edu. For more information, go to www.discoverytheater.org. DC Public schools may register for Arabic Groove through the DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative and get free tickets and transportation. Call 202.416.8882 T or 202.416.8853 F or visit the website at www.dccollaborative.org.

New Web Resources
Check out the newly organized website for teachers at www.asia.si.edu. We have included more content resources organized by geographical area and easier paths to the information educators need! We welcome any feedback. Please send comments to sgasiaeducation@asia.si.edu.
In our popular family program, children ages six to fourteen accompanied by an adult use an activity book to explore an exhibition and then create a related art project to take home. Family programs take place on the dates and times listed at www.asia.si.edu and do not require a reservation. This fall, ImaginAsia will offer special programs related to the arts traditions of India and the Himalayan region.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Freer Gallery of Art
Jefferson Drive at 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20560-0707

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
1050 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20560-0707

Hours
10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily; closed December 25
Admission is FREE to the museum, exhibitions, and programs.

Information
www.asia.si.edu
202.633.1000
202.357.1729 TTY
Information desks open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Food Service
For information on food services at the Smithsonian, please visit www.si.edu/dining/default.htm

Transportation
Ride the Metro’s orange or blue line to Smithsonian Station. Parking on the Mall is extremely limited.

Library
The museum’s non-circulating research library specializes in Asian art as well as American painting at the turn of the twentieth century. It is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, except for federal holidays.

Accessibility
Accessible entrances to the Freer and Sackler Galleries are located at Independence Avenue. Wheelchairs are available at the guard’s desk at each museum entrance. Information is available in large type or Braille and on audio-cassette or disk.