Freer’s Gift
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE FREER GALLERY OF ART
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 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

Virtue and Entertainment:
Music in Chinese Art
THROUGH MARCH 26, 2006

Artists of Edo 1800–1850
THROUGH MAY 29, 2006

Freer and Tea: One Hundred Years of The Book of Tea
THROUGH MAY 29, 2006

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

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

SACKLER CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

Closing Soon!
Gold: The Asian Touch
THROUGH FEBRUARY 26, 2006

Perspectives: Mei-ling Hom
THROUGH MARCH 12, 2006

Featured Exhibition
Hokusai
MARCH 4–MAY 14, 2006
Experience the genius of Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) in this exhibition of paintings that span his seventy-year career. Works such as Boy Viewing Mount Fuji will be displayed for the first time alongside important works from museums and private collections in Japan, Europe, and the United States. The exhibition is co-organized by the Nihon Keizai Shimbun, Inc. in cooperation with the Tokyo National Museum.

Hiroshi Sugimoto:
History of History
APRIL 1–JULY 30, 2006

Facing East: Portraiture across Asia
JULY 1–SEPTEMBER 4, 2006

Bible and Book
OCTOBER 21, 2006–JANUARY 1, 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

TOURS

To request a tour, please contact us at 202.633.1012 or asiatours@asia.si.edu or submit your request online at www.asia.si.edu/education at least four weeks in advance. For detailed information about school tours, including descriptions, please visit our website: www.asia.si.edu/education/toursForStudents.htm

Current Exhibition Tours
Some current exhibitions are available as tours for school groups. Group size and grade levels vary for each exhibition.

Special Tours
Hands-on Tuesdays
45 participants total (including chaperones), grades 3–8, Tuesday mornings from 10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Join us for an interactive tour in the galleries, followed by a hands-on art activity in the Sackler classroom.

Arts of the Islamic World
30 students, grades 7–12, 1 hour
The Religions of Asia: Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism
45 students, grades 6–12, 1 hour
How to Look at Asian Art: Process, Function, and Meaning
60 students, grades 3–12, 1 hour

Introduction to Japanese Art
45 students, grades 3–12, 1 hour
The Art and Archaeology of Ancient China
45 students, grades 3–6, 1 hour
Survey of Chinese Art
45 students, grades 7–2, 1 hour
The Art of Buddhism
30 students, grades 7–12, 1 hour
The Art of Hinduism
30 students, grades 6–12, 1 hour
Animals in Asian Art
45 students, grades K–3, 45 minutes
The Princess and the Peacocks
20 students (with at least 3 chaperones), grades K–3, 45 minutes
Charles Lang Freer, Collector
60 students, grades 9–12, 1 hour
Charles Lang Freer (1854–1919), the founder of the Freer Gallery of Art, made his fortune in the railroad industry of late nineteenth-century America. When health concerns prompted him to retire at the age of forty-five, he pursued a career of connoisseurship, collecting the finest works of art across both time and culture. The Freer Gallery is internationally recognized for its Chinese, Japanese, and turn-of-the-century American art, including an unmatched collection of works by James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903). However, one of the lesser-known treasures of the collection are the Egyptian objects, most of which Freer purchased during three trips to Egypt between 1906 and 1911. After his first trip to Egypt in 1906–1907, Freer was so enthusiastic about Egyptian art that he declared, in a letter to his friend and business partner Colonel Frank J. Hecker, “I now feel that these things are the greatest art in the world, greater than Greek, Chinese or Japanese.” While that passion eventually subsided, Freer continued to believe that Egyptian art comprised an important part of his cherished collection.

This year, 2006, we mark the centennial of the Smithsonian Institution’s acceptance of Freer’s collection, paving the way for the Smithsonian’s first art museum. To mark this anniversary, we have highlighted an object from this small Egyptian collection to hint at the breadth of Freer’s aesthetic vision and to introduce the public to a little-known aspect of this extraordinary gift to the American people.
PART I

It’s the night before Ted’s grandmother’s birthday, and he plans to make a card with a picture of her favorite animal—a falcon—on the front, copied from a nature magazine. But just as he starts working, he sees a flash of lightning. A thunderstorm is rolling through and the electricity goes out. He turns on his battery-powered radio, and the local station reports that power is out across the city. Now, there is no way he can use a copy machine, computer, scanner, or any other electronic device to duplicate the falcon picture. He’s determined to put a picture of the falcon on the card, because it’s the first animal his grandmother saw as a child after a long illness in the hospital. Falcons symbolize health and freedom to her. What does he do? Well, he’s going to have to draw the falcon himself, so he turns on a flashlight and begins. He decides to try two different ways of drawing the bird to see which comes out best—drawing it free-hand and using a grid. Now, try Ted’s two approaches yourself.

A) First, draw the falcon by copying it freestyle from the image in the upper right corner.

B) Next, reproduce the falcon by copying the original image square by square into the grid on the right, drawing each part.

Compare the experience of drawing the falcon with and without the grid. Which was easier? Which image are you happier with? What differences do you notice between the two drawings?

PART II

Look carefully at the object on the poster. Read and answer the questions below to help focus your observations.

A) Looking
What is the overall shape of the object?
What are some shapes you see in the figure on the object?
What colors do you see?
What kind of material do you think the object was made from? Why?
Have you seen anything like this before?
What does it not look like?
What are the details you see?
What other things do you notice about it?

B) Interpreting
How is the figure dressed?
How is the figure positioned?
What do you think the figure might be holding in his hands?
What might the figure be doing?
What might be the purpose of this object?
Who might have made this object?

C) Exploring
What else would you like to find out about this object?
How did artists achieve a consistent style for images in ancient Egypt?

Ancient Egyptians believed that specific figural proportions could endow images with great power, because they reflected the eternal world of the gods. Artists used a grid system to create images in the proportions that were considered correct. For instance, in the case of the sculptor’s model of the king above, the grid was first painted onto the limestone surface. Then, using the grid as a guide, the artist produced a carefully measured outline of the figure that was to be carved.

What might be some advantages of using the grid system? Have you ever started the process of learning something by copying or imitating? (For example, playing scales on a piano or writing the letter “A.”) Do you think there might be room for creativity when learning this way? How? What about after the basic skill is mastered?

How was the reason for the particular style of images in ancient Egypt?

Most art in ancient Egypt was religious in nature and produced for temples and royal tombs. Ultimately, ancient Egyptian artists were working for the gods and the king, who was actually considered a demigod. Thus, their work had value beyond whether it looked beautiful. Artists had to follow strict rules of proportion, because they were presenting ideas considered to be eternal and powerful. For example, images of objects on the wall of a king’s tomb had to be properly proportioned; otherwise, they would not later become the actual items needed by the king in what he believed would be his afterlife. This system of strict proportions ensured that all images were basically of the same quality and consistency even if, for example, the artists had been trained in different workshops.

Are you familiar with any works of art that have importance beyond their pleasing appearance? What do they depict? What deeper ideas are the artists trying to communicate?

How did someone become an artist in ancient Egypt?

Ancient Egyptian artists occupied a fairly low position in society—on par with laborers. Typically, the profession was hereditary, passed down from father to son. Training commenced with an apprenticeship, during which the student learned to copy carefully such standard images as the one pictured above. Workshops were attached to temples and tombs, and thus artists were on hand whenever the need for them arose. Opportunities for creativity came when powerful individuals hired artists to design the decorations for their tombs.

How does the description of the ancient Egyptian artist match or contrast with your own idea of an artist today? Can you support your answer with specific information and examples?
PART IV

In ancient Egypt, an artist was valued according to his ability to produce a correctly proportioned image that accurately portrayed and honored the eternal world of the gods and the king. What do we value in artists today?

Charles Lang Freer, founder of the Freer Gallery of Art, purchased the ancient Egyptian sculptor’s model featured on the poster, because, although his primary interest was Asian and American art, he had a vision of bringing together the best art from different cultures and time periods. Freer had a definite view about what makes good art and assembled his collection based on that view. Today, who decides what good art is? And who decides what makes an artist valuable or not?

VOCABULARY

aesthetic relating to the beautiful.

apprentice a person who learns a skill or trade by working with an expert in that skill or trade.

motif a single or repeating design.

relief a figure or design that stands out from a flat background.

symbolize to represent something: for example, in the case of this sculpture, the uraeus crown—an object—stood for an idea—kingship. The position of the king and the wine jars symbolizes the act of worship by giving offerings to the gods.

Sculptors’ models

Egypt, Dynasty 26 (664–525 B.C.E.), or later
Limestone
8.3 x 12.5 x 1.6 cm.; 179 x 18.8 x 3.6 cm.; 14.7 x 16.3 x 2.0 cm.
Freer Gallery of Art
Gift of Charles Lang Freer F1908.58; F1909.374; F1908.61

Ancient Egyptian artists also needed to know how to depict with accuracy the images used in hieroglyphs, the pictorial writing system of ancient Egypt. The Egyptian phrase for hieroglyphs literally translates as “the god’s words.” Egyptians believed that the gods had bestowed hieroglyphs on humanity. Consequently, hieroglyphs were considered to be very powerful. They were used for royal and religious purposes, not for everyday record keeping, for which another script was developed. The images below of the crocodile, falcon, and goose (often identified as a pintail duck) may have been used as models for hieroglyphs.

Poster captions:
Top:
Sculptors’ Model. Egypt, Dynasty 26 (664–525 B.C.E.) or later.
Limestone. 18.9 x 16.5 x 3.9 cm. Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1909.142.

Bottom from left to right:
Detail, Vessel. Egypt, New Kingdom Dynasty 18 (ca. 1539–1295 B.C.E.).
Glass. 8.4 x 6.7 x 3.8 cm. Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1909.416.

Detail, Falcon. Egypt, Ptolemaic Dynasty (305–30 B.C.E.).
Stone. 57.1 x 26.6 x 54.1 cm. Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1909.141.

Detail, Pomegranate flask. Egypt, New Kingdom Dynasty 18 (ca. 1539–1295 B.C.E. or later).
Glass. 10.2 x 8 cm. Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1909.423

Detail, Face from a coffin. Egypt, New Kingdom Dynasty 18 or 19 (ca. 1539–1190 B.C.E. or later).
Wood and glass. 20.3 x 16.1 x 8.4 cm. Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1909.143
**TEACHER RESOURCES 2005–2006**

| Free Semiannual Newsletter Asian Art Connections: Resources for Educators | To subscribe, please write to fsgasiaeducation@asia.si.edu |
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**Online Resources: General**

**New!**

**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**

**Style and Status: Imperial Costumes from Ottoman Turkey**
Asian Art Connections: A Resource for Educators
www.asia.si.edu/education/onlineGuides.htm

**Himalayas: An Aesthetic Adventure**
Asian Art Connections: Resources for Educators
www.asia.si.edu/education/ConnxsFall03.pdf

**The East Asian Painting Conservation Studio**
Asian Art Connections: Resources for Educators
www.asia.si.edu/education/ConnectionsFall2004.pdf

| **The Art and Archaeology of Ancient China: A Teacher's Guide**
www.asia.si.edu/education/onlineGuides.htm | **The Art and Archaeology of Ancient China: A Teacher's Guide**
Appropriate for grades 3–12, $20 |
| **The Art of Buddhism: A Teacher's Guide**
www.asia.si.edu/education/ArtofBuddhism.pdf | **The Art of Buddhism: A Teacher's Guide**
Appropriate for grades 4–12, $20 |
| **Arts of the Islamic World: A Teacher's Guide**
Appropriate for grades 4–12, $20 |
| **The Arts of Japan: A Teacher's Guide**
www.asia.si.edu/education/onlineGuides.htm | **Silk Road Resource Packet**
Appropriate for grades 4–12, $12 |
| **Devi: The Great Goddess (Hinduism)**
www.asia.si.edu/education/devi/index.htm | **Video**
**Puja: Expressions of Hindu Devotion**
This award-winning video introduces Hindu worship through moving images and interviews. 1996. 20 min. (close captioned) $10 |
| **Japan: Images of a People**
smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/japan_images_people/index.html | **CD-ROM**
**Chi’s Adventure in Ancient China**
Appropriate for grades 3–6
Join Chi the chimera as he introduces viewers to ancient Chinese civilization through objects from the Freer and Sackler collections. $10 |
| **Puja: Expressions of Hindu Devotion**
www.asia.si.edu/education/pujaonline/puja/start.htm | **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. The recording features stories from China, Japan, Turkey, and Bangladesh. $10 |
| **Silk Road Resource Packet**
Appropriate for grades 4–12, $12 |

**CD-ROM**

**Teacher Resources for Sale**

| **Sackler Gallery Shops**
All teacher resources listed below are available for sale through the Sackler shops. Order these materials online at www.freersacklershop.com, by phone at 202.633.0535, or by fax at 202.633.9838. In addition to Freer-Sackler publications, the shops also stock children’s books on Asia that our Education Department has recommended. |
| **New!**
**The Arts of Japan: A Teacher's Guide**
Appropriate for grades 4–12, $20 | **Slide Sets**
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. |

**CD**

**Chi’s Adventure in Ancient China**
Appropriate for grades 3–6
Join Chi the chimera as he introduces viewers to ancient Chinese civilization through objects from the Freer and Sackler collections. $10
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. Special programs will be offered in conjunction with Hokusai in the spring.