

Learning Resources

Approaching this Course

October 7, 2015

Gallery Reinterpretation

- All 2nd and 3rd floor panels and labels are being rewritten.
- Gallery panels articulate one organizing “big idea” for a group of objects and provide the context for why these works are together.
- The label draws visitors into the object, encouraging them to look, think and discover.
- All labels reinforce the overall theme or “big idea” of the gallery.

“Big Idea”: Gallery 306

In 18th-century Europe and Colonial America artists created virtuosic paintings and sculptures that glorified the gallantry, fashion sense, and pleasurable pursuits of aristocratic life.



The Pursuit of Pleasure: Europe and America 1700–1800

If it was good to be the king, it was almost as good to be an aristocrat. Noblemen and women filled their grand European homes with paintings and sculptures that glorified courtly behavior, fashion, and artistic taste. At the same time, the emerging merchant class of New England commissioned art that reflected their own self-image as an entrepreneurial elite. American artists turned to European portraiture for inspiration, painting the well-to-do colonists as a kind of New World aristocracy. The established upper class as well as the newly rich both indulged in hedonistic fantasies. Catering to their voyeuristic tastes, artists depicted famous locales, the sexual escapades of gods and goddesses, and romantic scandals—allegories for the timeless pursuit of pleasure.





Louis Gauffier
French, 1762-1801

Portrait of Dr. Thomas Penrose, 1798

Oil on canvas

The John R. Van Derlip Fund 66.20

Tombstone
information

Anatomy
of a
museum
label

Paintings were the selfies of an earlier era, a way for wealthy people to document their travels. Here, Dr. Thomas Penrose poses at an overlook outside the city of Florence—note the famous Duomo (domed cathedral) in the background. Born in 1769, he was not an aristocrat but traveled in well-heeled circles as the young secretary to an English diplomat. He's depicted as a gentleman and an amateur artist, his top hat and gloves tossed aside as he sketches the view.

Extended
label

Louis Gauffier
French, 1762-1801

Portrait of Dr. Thomas Penrose, 1798
Oil on canvas
The John R. Van Derlip Fund 66.20

Artist name,
nationality,
b/d dates

Title,
date of
artwork,
medium

Donors/fund,
accession
number

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Extended
label

Accession Number: year, group, item

96.97.36

96 = **year** of accession: 1996

97 = where this object is within sequence of all donations that year: in the 97th donated **group** of objects

36 = where this object is in sequence within a group of donated objects: 36th **item**

Research Strategies

- **Start with the basics**
- **Search broadly and creatively**
- **Use exhibition catalogs**
- Note alternate titles and spellings
- Follow footnotes and bibliographies
- Know trusted online sources
- Pursue related topics

Types of Resources

- Children's books, encyclopedias
- Art history surveys (Stokstad, Gardner, Janson)
- _____ *for Dummies*
- General books on an artist, period, or culture
- Exhibition catalogs
- Audio tours (free for docents and guides!)
- Online resources
- Human resources: your colleagues and Mia staff

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Alternate titles

Japan (Jomon), *Bowl with four projections*, 2500-1500 BCE
or
Bowl with flame-fire rim

Alternate spellings

Chinese: Wade-Giles (19th-20th c.) vs.
Pinyin (mid-20th c.- present)

Chou / Zhou dynasty

Ch'in / Qin dynasty



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Organizational Strategy

Create **object files** organized by:

--continent/country/culture: Europe/France

--century/period: 19th c./Impressionism

--artist: Monet, Claude

--title/description: *Grainstack, Sun in the Mist*



Organizational Strategy



Create **object files** organized by:

--continent/country/culture: Africa/Nigeria/Yoruba

--century/period: 20th c., about 1920

--artist: unknown

--title/description: *Crown* (for a Yoruba king)

Organizational Strategy

- Create **tour files**: A Taste of Asia, Highlights of the Museum, Arts of China and Japan
- Use **index cards** for summaries of objects: mix and match
- Create **collateral files**: Chinese ceramics, Egyptian funeral practices, bronze piece-mold casting, lost wax casting

Learning Framework

- **Creativity** – an aspect of thinking, knowing, and doing across disciplines that often generates something new or innovative. Engaging with art, materials, and others inspires creativity.
- **Critical Thinking** – a deliberate, often facilitated, interactive process of reasoning and evaluating information that enhances engagement with art. Critical thinking helps us make connections between art and life.
- **Global Awareness** – exploring, engaging and connecting with other people and world cultures through the lens of art. Artwork from around the world and throughout history invites learners to consider multiple worldviews.