

Junior Docent Review Notes, Fall 2015

Group 1: Prehistoric, Mesopotamia, and Ancient Egypt

Charlie Botzenmayer, Paulette Day, Linda Goldenberg, Lucy Hicks, Randy Johnson, Sandra Pietron

Notes:

1) Venus Figure, 20,000 BCE, Paleolithic (72.10)

A. Portability is essential as the tribes were nomadic, there was no known writing, no available communication except cave drawings and items such as Venus. Venus was part of the Paleolithic period which lead into the Neolithic period of more permanent settlements and animal domestication.

2) Winged Genius, 883-859 BCE, Assyrian (41.9)

B. Writing is developed to tell stories. Styluses were used in wet clay to tell those stories which were put into clay envelopes. Polytheism was prominent. Registers were used to tell stories and the hieratic scale was created to show who was important within the stories.

3) Lady Tashat, 945-712 BCE, Egyptian (16.414)

C. Writing was established and became commonplace. Polytheism is still accepted. The use of registers was continued to tell a story and that the use of the canon of proportions was begun and this view was used in Egyptian painting and sculpture for thousands of years.

Group 2: Ancient Japanese (Jomon) and Ancient Chinese (Neolithic, Shang, and Zhou) Ceramics

Susan Arndt, Mark Catron, Susan Drummond, Elizabeth Germick, Nancy Goldstein

Notes:

Ancient Japanese Ceramics, Jomon Period 11,000 (10,500) – 300 BCE

Nancy Goldstein

Key Ideas: The Jomon period, which takes its name from its “cord marked” earthenware vessels, has the oldest ceramics tradition of any culture in the world. Objects, most of which have natural elements such as a “fire-flame” (ka’en shiki) represented, come from domestic sites rather than tombs.

Key Piece:

Middle Jomon, Bowl with four projections, 2500-1500 BCE, earthenware, 82.9.1

Ancient Chinese Ceramics, Neolithic Period 3500 – 1500 BCE

Mark Catron

Key Ideas: Objects with distinctive art styles come from river farming settlements. These decorated/painted/"carved" funerary objects show respect for ancestors and an afterlife, beliefs that continues today.

Key Pieces (Shown side-by side)

Storage bottle, Yangshao, Banpo type, 5000-4000 BCE, earthenware 98.125

Storage vessel, Majiayao type, c. 3000 BCE, earthenware 2003.200.6

Ancient Chinese Ceramics, Shang Dynasty 1523 - 1028 BCE

Elizabeth Germick

Key Ideas: Shang rulers are considered intermediaries between heaven and earth. Shang citizens live in permanent, stratified societies where they farm and practice ritual worship with formalized burial practices. The first taotie masks are made. A pictographic script that is related to modern written Chinese is used.

Key Piece:

Li tripod 32.54.11

Ancient Chinese Ceramics, Zhou Dynasty 1046 - 221 BCE

Susan Arndt

Key Ideas: The Zhou is the longest lasting Chinese dynasty where kings rule with the "Mandate of Heaven" and Confucius and Laozi emerge. The taotie image becomes more intricate and stylized. Burial practices have a new emphasis on the human world. Ceramics are glazed with brown ash.

Key Piece:

Storage jar (hu), Date Unknown, 32.54.7

Group 3: Ancient Chinese Jades and Bronzes (Neolithic, Shang, and Zhou)

Janelle Christensen, Brenda Haines, Suzanne LeRoy, Mary McMahon, Bill Wilson

Notes:

1) China: Neolithic Jade from 3500 – 1500 BCE

Ornament with Face of Human and Monster, 330-2000 BCE, calcified tan-grey jade, Mia 50.46.230

This is a stone-age culture. Stone carvings are known from this time period with jade work starting at this time. Jades are often symbols of religion, power, and prestige. Jade is thought to have a divine quality. They are thought to be ceremonial and used in tombs. A discrete artistic tradition is starting to emerge. Specific shapes appear to have specific meanings, e.g., bi (round) = heaven; cong (square) = earth; fu (axe) = wood chopping originally, later sign of weaponry. Taotie mask images are used – perhaps as protective spirit. Jade work is prevalent at this time but later fades in importance.

2) Shang Dynasty 1523-1028 BCE

Ritual Vessel, fang-ding, late 11th Century BCE, bronze, Mia 50.46.125

This is an example of piece-mold casting with connecting phalanges. The shape of the object existed in wood and clay before it appeared in bronze. The dark patina has come with age and exposure to

minerals found in the soil of the tombs. The traditions of this period include ritualized worship and formalized burial practices. Wine and food would have been presented in this piece. Permanent settlements are appearing at this time as well as agriculture and the domestication of animals. The art of the time often shows respect for ancestors and a belief in an afterlife, which continues to today. The Shang Dynasty is the beginning of more than 3,000 years of dynastic rule. In this time period, the Yellow River is a cradle of art along with 5 other worldwide centers/cradles of ancient art. The area is moving from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age.

3) Zhou Dynasty 1046-221 BCE (Western Zhou 1046-771 BCE, Eastern Zhou 771-256 BCE)

Ceremonial bell yongzhong, late 6th-5th Century BCE (Eastern Zhou), Mia 50.46.110

A feudal society is developing with city states; a king rules with a “Mandate of Heaven”, though unjust rulers are replaced. Continued development of ritual including music. Bells are without clappers and played with mallets. Bells emit a different sound depending upon striking location. This age is the zenith of bronze casting in China. Taotie images become more styled but are used less frequently. Written script is developing as an art form. It is a time of great philosophers—Confucius, Laozi, and others. Burials with ritual art shows larger scale but with an increased emphasis on human experience.

4) Zhou Dynasty 1046-221 BCE

Wine Vessel, late 4th Century BCE (Eastern Zhou), Mia. 50.46.112

This vessel shows increasing technical virtuosity with inlaid gold, silver, and copper, cast bronze handles that are rings that freely move, and surface designs. Abstract designs, such as hook and comma, start to replace sacred masks and symbolic animals. In general, the artistic expression is greatly advanced, and there is a leaning away from sacred toward profane designs.

Group 4: Ancient Americas (North America: Eastern and Southwestern; South America: Andean Region)

Pat Gale, Jena Lange, Josie Owens, Kathryn Schwyzer, Cathie Wemlinger

Notes:

As we reviewed our notes and guidelines on the three cultures of the Ancient Americas (North America: Eastern and Southwestern; South America: Andean Region), we found four themes that applied to all. The four themes are animal imagery, wave imagery, luxury items, and the belief in the afterlife. We then chose four objects that we thought represented these themes well and also covered the three cultures. Please remember that the themes relate to all three cultures.

Item # 1 - Vessel in the Form of a Fish, Nazca, c. 100 BCE-600 CE, clay and pigments (Mia 44.3.59)

The use of animals in pottery is seen throughout these cultures. The Nazca were from Peru and were keen observers of nature. Bold and colorful art. Very stylized with sweeping lines and brush strokes. They wanted to capture the spirit and liveliness of the subject rather than the natural appearance (others did as well). The piece is fun and playful. This might have been used to carry water from underground sources either to reservoirs (storage) or to fields.

Item # 2 - Bowl, Hohokam, c. 900-1200, clay and pigments (Mia 2004.71)

There was much fighting over presenting this object because Hohokam is so much fun to say! Jena won. The wave imagery was used a lot in the pottery of the different cultures - sometimes decorative to emphasize the shape of the bowl or pot and sometimes more symbolically. The wave can represent water. Most of these cultures had a tie to a water source. Water was an important symbol and represents harvest and/or life. The Hohokam used an irrigation system. The wave can also represent wind. The wind was part of their religion and the Hohokam had great respect for weather, winds, and earth. The pattern often reminds one of the wind patterns on the sands in this area of the SW United States.

Item # 3 Ear Spools, Chimu, c. 1150-1450, gold (Mia 43.4.1,2)

This item took us off task as we discussed modern ear gauges. Kathryn wanted to bring in the salesclerk at Anthropologie to model how one would wear the ear spools. See how art is timeless? Luxury objects were produced to support the prestige and power of the leaders in different cultures. Many ancient Andean societies, including the Chimu, believed their ruler to be the living representation of the gods. Only the most elite would have worn these gold ear spools. Gold's symbolic connection to the sun gave it powerful spiritual currency. These spools would have been worn in a leader's distended earlobes. They depict a ruler wearing a large feather headdress, carrying a ceremonial cup and a feather fan and being carried in a litter by two well-dressed monkey attendants.

Item # Gorgets, Spiro (Mississippian) c. 1200-1350, shell (Mia 91.37.1,2)

These gorgets indicate trade as the material came from the Gulf Coast. They were worn as chest ornament and indicated influence. The Spiro dead were buried and not cremated. The burial mounds could be quite elaborate. (The serpent mound though is not a burial site. Snakes were strongly associated with the earth and fertility of crops.) Mounds were built from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. The idea of afterlife was relevant to all the cultures. The gorgets are thought to have been gifts to the dead and ensure safe arrival and prosperity in the land of the spirits. The hand and eye motif signifies the constellation and marks the path of the soul along the Milky Way. The sun is the chief divinity.

Group 5: Ancient Americas (Pacific Coast, Mesoamerica, and Central America/Isthmus)

Joan Gilmore, Debbie Koller, Jan Lysen, Bruce Robbins, Linda Thain, Elizabeth Winga

Notes:

Key Ideas:

- Cultural technologies including a calendar, advanced mathematics, and a written language with multi-meaning glyphs, all helped distinguish the elite, ensuring their power over the majority of the population and resulting in a long-lived, stable culture.
- The Mesoamerican ball game represented a link to an unseen underworld. Remains of more than 2000 ball courts have been found located in large scale urban areas in the region. Pottery, sculpture and architecture tell us much about the rich traditions of the ball game. O'Riley (p.

294) suggests that the ball court “was probably regarded as an entry to the underworld and the underworld itself.”

- There was an easy cross-over between life and death, with respect shown for ancestors by keeping the dead nearby through shaft burial sites below houses.

Objects:

#1 Chocolate pot, Guatemala, Maya 750 A.D. 97.92.6

#2 Rattle in form of ball player, Veracruz 47.2.9

#3 House group, Nayarit, Pacific Coast c. 100-400 A.D. 42.2.37

Intro

Presenter – Debbie Koller

Pacific Coast and Mesoamericans in the ancient world created highly organized and stratified societies with elaborate written language, rituals and religious belief structures. The 3 objects we chose reflect these key attributes of these highly developed people.

Object #1

Presenter – Bruce Robbins

Key Idea: The Maya culture was long-lasting because of a stable social hierarchy and a sophisticated communication through art and writing.

- The Chocolate Pot, created at the height of the Classic Period, suggests the power and elite status of the owner. Cacao (chocolate or cocoa) already had a 2000 year history and was a common currency. The written inscriptions on the pot specify its owner, location, shape and purpose. Only selected, royal Mayans could be the "artists" who wrote any-thing. These literati, called "ab ts'ib," brought together the divine character of art and writing. So the pot itself is one of many indicators of the creative, divine powers that exist above and below the Mayan people and its culture.

Object #2

Presenter – Jan Lysen

Key Idea: The Mesoamerican ball game represented a link to an unseen underworld. Re-mains of more than 2000 ball courts have been found located in large scale urban areas in the region. Pottery, sculpture and architecture tell us much about the rich traditions of the ball game. O’Riley (p. 294) suggests that the ball court “was probably regarded as an entry to the underworld and the underworld itself.”

Talking points:

- This rattle represents a ball player from Veracruz near the Gulf Coast and has features consistent with other ball game objects throughout Mesoamerica. He is dated during the time of the Classic period in Mesoamerican culture (250 – 900).
- This player wears a yoke around his hips, a kneepad and a helmet. His helmet has a harpy eagle crest, a predatory bird which fits the nature of the sport.
- This rattle provided accompaniment during the ball game.

- Young athletic men dressed with heavy padding moved a heavy rubber ball up and down an alley overseen by priests. They were likely reenacting the afterlife journey of their rulers to Xibalba, a city of the dead at the base of nine levels of the underworld. If the rulers survived, they returned to the heavens and existed among other ancestors, gods and other living rulers.
- After the game, players could be sacrificed to actually complete the journey. The game may have been instructive about the cycle of life and death. Or, the game may have been used in lieu of war to settle disputes between competing rulers.
- So, the Mesoamerican ball game was both an actual game but also had spiritual significance.

Object #3

Presenter – Elizabeth Winga

Key Idea: The Nayarit culture felt an ephemeral separation between the living and the dead. Respect for ancestors meant keeping them close after death, both physically and spiritually.

Talking points:

- This 1500-year-old polychromed clay sculpture called House Group is typical of anecdotal ceramic objects found in shaft chamber tombs of the Nayarit culture along the Pacific Coast of Mexico. The majority of Nayarit funerary artifacts found have been looted from graves, so contextual information about them is lacking. However, the inclusion of vessels with food in tomb offerings suggests a desire to provide for their ancestors. The exact purpose of the House Group is not known beyond ensuring that the living and the deceased remain connected.
- The stories told in this sculpture through these animated figures set within an architectural structure reveal insights about afterlife beliefs, as well as everyday activities and social interactions of the Nayarit. Emphasis in this sculpture is on a family feasting together. The two levels of the house with figures on both levels suggest that the living family is feasting above with a mirrored scene below of the ancestors. It is believed that this two-level design is a conceptual design, meaning that it represents ideas and beliefs, rather than being a realistic depiction of their housing structures.
- The documentary insights of daily village life that this sculpture provides is unique in the ancient Americas and invaluable in better understanding their culture. Even though there was social stratification in this culture, this scene suggests that kinship ties were a main principle of social organization, even among the ancestors.

Conclusion

Presenter – Debbie Koller

The early art of Mesoamerica, the Pacific Coast Region, and Central America informs us about the language, rituals, and beliefs of these people. The written language unified and stabilized the culture. The ritual of the ball game, in addition to being an early team sport, created a gateway to the underworld. The placement of dead ancestors literally put them in the ground under the home of the living, reinforcing the blurry line between the living and the dead that was a central idea of these cultural groups. Through these objects we are able to learn about how people lived thousands of years ago.

Group 6: Aegean World and Archaic Greece

Julie Holland, Kristen McDougall, Ann Romanczuk, Meg Ubel, Brenda Wyley

Notes:

Intro: We are presenting some key ideas from two cultures today: the Ancient Aegean and Ancient Greek cultures, covering the period from about 3000 BCE to around 500 BCE, along with some related objects from our collection. The Aegean world during this time consisted of the Cycladic Islands off the coast of Greece, the Minoans on the island of Crete, and the Mycenaeans on the Greek mainland.

Ancient Aegean Key Idea:

These were seafaring people who had a well-developed shipping and trade network with other continents including Africa, Asia and Europe. Thus they had regular access to materials, goods, ideas and artistic styles from other cultures.

Ancient Greek civilization rose to prominence several centuries after the decline of the Aegean cultures. Mia's collection primarily holds objects from the Archaic period of this civilization (between about 600 and 480 BCE), so we will be focusing our presentation on that period.

Ancient Greece Key Ideas:

1. Greeks believed in a pantheon of gods and goddesses and visualized their deities in human form, engaging in human activities, with human weaknesses and emotions.
2. The civilization consisted of strong, independent city-states with autonomous governments. As part of this, the Greeks created their own architectural orders while building increasingly elaborate temple complexes. They also began to produce ceramics extensively and established trade and commerce with neighboring civilizations.
3. Greek artists were restless, and continually sought to improve on artistic conventions and trends. Styles changed markedly during the period, generally gravitating toward more naturalistic depiction of humans.

Aegean World**Cycladic figure 62.52 - Ann**

The only Cycladic/Aegean object in Mia's collection.

Aspects of the figure:

- Highly stylized
- Hundreds of figures have been found, mostly in graves, mostly female
- They follow some conventions: arms crossed under breasts, featureless face except for elongated nose
- Bodies proportioned according to three overlaid circles: top of head to waist, shoulder to knees and waist to feet
- Made from fine & durable white marble, found in abundance in some of the Cycladic Islands

Two things to remember that are not easily guessed:

1. Cycladic figures were originally painted in blue, red and sometimes green so originally would have looked very different from what we are used to seeing in a marble sculpture.
2. Often there were wide open eyes painted on various parts of the figure, including the cheeks and thighs, as well as the normal eye position. Purpose might be to connect healing powers to a certain part of the body, but no written record to confirm this.

Ancient Greek Civilization

Hydria - Kristen

Antimenes Painter, 530-500 BCE, terra cotta 61.59

Hydria / Pottery in Archaic Period in Ancient Greece

1. Although the function of this Hydria, a 3 handled utilitarian vase was to carry and pour water, its decoration and proportions illustrate the harmony, balance and beauty so important to Ancient Greeks.
2. At the beginning of the Archaic Period the abstract geometric patterning that had been dominant for several hundred years was overtaken by a more naturalistic style reflecting influences from the Near East and Egypt.
3. Pottery-making was the first major industry in Athens and it dominated the export market throughout the Mediterranean region. Black-figure painting, seen here was developed. Figures were painted on the body of the vessel using a slip that stayed black after firing and a sharp tool was used to incise details. White and purplish red were sometimes used as highlights. Antimenes Painter. This was the first art style to give rise to identifiable artists.
4. On this Hydria you see the typical features of Vase painting of this period.
 - –Use of registers organize a narrative.
 - –Flat figures still, but starting to see overlapping to create depth and movement—again becoming more naturalistic.
 - Decorative and geometric patterns used for emphasis and framing.
 - A battle theme is typical. Here on the main body Athena is represented as the warrior goddess, painted white to indicate her gender, as she is harnessing her chariot.
 - –Gods are depicted in idealized human form.

5. Red figure painting was better suited to naturalistic representation of details and gradually replaced black-figure by the end of the archaic period.

As gods were being humanized, so were vessels—with their lips, mouth, neck, shoulders, bodies and feet!

Votary Figure 28.23 - Brenda

This piece was one of many unearthed at the temple of Golgoi and was made at the end of the Archaic Period. A votary by definition can be a person who is bound by solemn vows or a devoted follower or advocate of someone or something. In this instance we have a statue representing a man who wants to ensure that his constant presence as a worshiper is represented in the temple.

As mentioned in the key ideas of ancient Greece, the Greeks believed in a pantheon of gods and goddesses and visualized their deities in human form. The deities are thought of as living in the temple while prayers are being said and it is for this reason that worshippers wanted to be 'seen' to be in the temple to keep the deity of that temple present. A bit like prayer by proxy! Without constant prayer, the deity would leave the temple.

Dedication of large numbers of votive statues in the temples of Cyprus began in the 7th century BCE. Lots of statues like this would be placed outside the temple sometimes resembling a 'forest' of figures. Over time some of the older ones would be gotten rid of to make room for newer votary figures.

Common characteristics of archaic Greek sculpture as shown in this figure, include the faint smile commonly referred to as an 'archaic smile' with the closed-lip expression, large wide open almond-shaped eyes, and a stiff static pose facing forward. A robe is draped over one shoulder with diagonal folds covering most of his torso.

Today various churches throughout the world use a form of votary when they light votive candles in front of statues or holy sites in the memory of ones they have loved or for special petitions to be granted.

Corinthian Helmet 2001.80.1 - Julie

Greek city-states were in continual competition over trade routes, land and resources. They were also under near-constant external pressure and conflict. This continuous state of war spurred invention, and the Greeks were unmatched in their ancient world for developing weapons, armor and strategy.

The helmet:

- meticulously designed and custom fit by armor smiths for Hoplite soldiers.
- many inscribed with names, may also show battle damage and repairs.
- had inner lining of leather or linen
- hole in the top for attaching a horsehair crest.

- made from a single sheet of bronze with no earholes.
- could be pushed up on the head when not in battle.
- the style is among the most aggressive-looking in history.

Hoplite soldiers in battle: They were a volunteer citizen militia made up of middle class farmers. Soldiers purchased their own armor and helmets were costly. Hopliters are famous for their closed order combat formation known as the phalanx. Each soldier wore shin guards, a breast plate, a helmet, and carried a spear in the right hand and large shield in the left. They lined up in a mass, shield to shield to form an impervious wall. The line could be a quarter mile wide and eight soldiers deep, preferable spanning a narrow valley. The phalanx would start its charge at a trot, breaking into a run before colliding with the enemy in a bloody scum. Battling in the phalanx formation made it possible to settle a war in a single bloody struggle, allowing the Hopliters to get back to their farms quickly. The Hoplite phalanx was the preeminent fighting force in the Mediterranean for almost 400 years.

Group 7: Classical and Hellenistic Greece

Richard Lemansczykafka, Kay Quinn, Maggie Rosine, Sara Wagner, Kit Wilson

Notes:

Just as the elements of architecture evolved during the Archaic period and relied on mathematical proportions and ratios (consider the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns), so, too, did the human form evolve.

Early Classical Greek Period

480-450 BCE

(from Stokstad, vol.1)

During this span of 160 years, the Greeks established an ideal of beauty that has endured in the Western world to this day. Scholars have associated Greek Classical art with three general concepts: humanism, rationalism, and idealism. The ancient Greeks believed in the words of their philosophers and applied this wisdom to their art: "Man is the measure of all things," seeking an ideal based on the human form, with even the Greek gods being imagined as perfect human beings! Since they valued reason over emotion, they perceived all areas of life; especially the arts, as having meaning and pattern.

- **Image: Lekythos, 26.7 450-430 BCE**

On this earthenware vessel, notice the human body form. It was once painted. Note that the body is not yet in its idealized form. Thus, during this period, we see the beginnings of contrapposto, in the marble sculpture known as KRITIOS BOY (c. 480 BCE). This marks a departure from the rigid, frontal sculptures of the Archaic period. By the end of this period, the idealized body is more evident with both the perfected anatomy and the swelling of veins. (Stokstad, vol. 1, page 123, The Warrior).

Also of relevance to sculpture during the early classic period was the development of a technique of hollow-casting bronze utilizing the lost-wax process. This provided the Greek sculptors with the potential to create more complex action poses; incorporating outstretched arms and legs. It is worth noting that these poses would be difficult to create in marble, since unbalanced figures fall over and

extended appendages could break off. The painted underside of an Athenian kylix (broad, flat-drinking cup) portrays work in a late Archaic foundry for casting life-size figures. This ceramic cup provides clear evidence that the Greeks were creating large bronze statues in active poses as early as the first decades of the 5th century BCE. (Stokstad, vol. 1, pages 120-21). Unfortunately, very few of these amazing bronze sculptures still exist, since being made of metal, they were melted down and repurposed for other metal objects.

High Classical Greek Period

450-400 BCE

This period is called Greece's Golden Age, a name determined by Art Historians. The Parthenon was built 447-432 BCE, on an Acropolis, a city on a hill, that became a sanctuary and temple devoted to Athena. It exemplified the rules of proportion in architecture. The Parthenon's pediment and frieze made a perfect stage for the idealized forms of the High Classical period. During this time, we see sculptures of nude men. Women are still sculpted with clothing.

The best-known theorist of the High Classical Period was the sculptor Polykleitos. About 450 BCE, he developed a set of rules for constructing what he considered to be the ideal human figure. Known as the Canon of Proportion, this "rule," included a system of ratios between a basic unit and the length of various body parts. The canon also included guidelines for *symmetria*, meaning the relationship of body parts to one another.

During this phase, the human form took on the height of idealism. In sculpture, faces were placid and serene. Bodies took on a perfect balance between tension and relaxation in the use of *contrapposto*. The musculature of an athlete was revered.

- **Image: Doryphoros, 86.6, 120-50 BCE**

During this time, we continue to see sculptures of nude men, while women are still sculpted with clothing.

Late Classical Greek Period

400-323 BCE

We now begin to see Greek sculptors start to challenge and change the standards set forth by Polykleitos and other sculptors of his time. Thus, during this period, we now see our first nude female sculpture – Aphrodite of Knidos by Praxiteles. We also see animals and children in sculpture. The visual arts of this time period began to show more human interaction, even more sexuality.

- **Image: The Crouching Lion, 25.25, 4th Century BCE**

And so, with the human body becoming an idealized figure, this crouching lion depicts similar idealized features (muscles, stance which suggests movement). Some might describe this lion as naturalistic, but also idealistic.

Hellenistic Greek Period

323-31/30 BCE

As Greek art continued to evolve, we begin to see tension and conflict in the art forms during the Hellenistic Period. It is this evolution that took Greek sculpture to what is considered its height. Similarly, the theatre that Greek architect Epidauros' designed is often considered the epitome of basic

theatre design! It provided uninterrupted sight lines with good acoustics while allowing for the efficient entrance and exit of its 12,000 spectators. No better design has ever been created. (See 148 Stokstad, vol. 1 for more info.)

- **Image: Tiber Muse, 56.12 2nd-1st Century BCE**

Consider the sensual nature of this sculpture. It reflects the final stages of the evolution of Greek sculpture; art that was both realistic and sensuous. Thus we see more expressive subjects and poses.

In conclusion, we see an amazing evolution of the arts in Greece during its Classical and Hellenistic Periods. The impetus for such an evolution being the inherent and developed striving for perfection in almost all aspects of Greek life; especially the Arts. This is evident in the examples we have already presented as well as the evolution of Greek Architecture, (The architect Iktinos, like the sculptor Polykleitos and his Canon, wrote a treatise on Architecture), and both the Pythian games and the Olympic Games. (The Pythian Games held at Delphi and the Olympic Games held at Olympia actually held competitions in music, dance, poetry and playwriting; as well as popular athletic contests. Statues were present at each site, dedicated to and honoring all the victorious competitors!)

Group 8: Etruscan, Ptolemaic Egypt, and Ancient Roman

Terry Keir, Shelly McGinnis, Angie Seutter, Kathleen Steiger, Jung Sook Wendeborn, Jennifer Youngberg
Notes:

1. Figure of a Youth (47.39)
2. Striding figure (58.14) & Ptolemaic Ruler in Guise of Hercules (68.81)
3. Roman Matron (32.16)
4. Cinerary Box (62.20)

Etruscan: Figure of a Youth: 47.39

Relaxed and naturalistic sculptures that are clothed.

Developed and refined bronze casting and engraving.

- Etruscan wealth came from its fertile soil and abundant metal ores. They exploited their resources in trade with the Greeks and countries in the eastern Mediterranean. Their artists drew inspiration from these same peoples. They became known for their sophisticated bronze casting and engraving much of which has not survived (melted down for other uses). Bronze was used for offerings dedicated to the gods, for household goods (mirrors) and personal possessions. During the Archaic period (prior to 500 BCE) figures were somewhat rigid. This figure of a youth from the early Classical era (created - 480 - 460 BCE) does include strong vertical lines common in the Archaic period as well as a naturalistic pose and expressive details common in the Classical era. It could also be wearing an Etruscan Cloak (short cloak worn over a toga).

Ptolemaic: Striding Figure (58.14) & Ptolemaic Ruler in Guise of Hercules (68.81)

Drew from the Greeks and Egyptians for influence.

Rigid Egyptian pose; stiff and stylized

Greek ideals - more idealized human body

- Art from the Ptolemaic period, (which was a Hellenistic kingdom based in Egypt from around 300-30 BCE) melded together Greek and Egyptian artistic traditions. Ptolemaic rulers of the time adopted the conventions of the Egyptians pharaohs as well as Greek ideals in their portraits. We've got some great examples of Ptolemaic art here at MIA. First, is our Striding Figure. He's standing in the classic, rigid Egyptian pose, but his body is a bit more fleshy and it brings in some of the Greek ideals as well. For example, you can make out his navel and his chest muscles. The Ptolemaic Ruler in the Guise of Hercules represents the Greek art from the time with his idealized human body. He's in a very dramatic pose, more of an s-bend than the classic Greek contrapposto. He also has attributes that link him to the Greek god Hercules including his club and lion skin.

Ancient Rome

Verism - Faithful reproduction of what is seen - The real, not the ideal: Roman Matron 32.160

- The Romans excelled in the arts – painting, sculpture and architecture – and we know they were heavily influenced by the Etruscans and the Greeks. A significant departure occurred in the realm of portraiture, however. Whereas the Greeks generalized the human face, smoothing it of imperfections and idealizing youth, Roman portrait sculptors, as far back as the Republican period, sought to create lifelike images of their subjects. Why the change? We know that the Romans did not focus on the afterlife; they wanted to be remembered by their ancestors. Hence, the practice of creating likenesses of ancestors for display at funerals. Growing out of this practice, Roman Republican portraiture is often associated with verism – the faithful reproduction of the appearance of subjects. Now we see the distinguishing aspects of individual likenesses including wrinkles and other effects of aging. The Romans celebrated advanced age and equated it with power and wisdom, virtue and venerability.
- Here we have our Roman Matron. She dates from 60 – 70 CE. This is the time of the Early Empire. During this time, Roman artists created a new style. While it was still grounded in verism, it was heavily influenced by a revival of Greek Classical ideals. We see a realistic, aged face on an idealized, youthful body. This combination of recognizable likeness and idealization was characteristic of Roman sculpture at this time.

Assimilation of many other cultures and religious cults they conquered: Cinerary Box 62.20

- The ancient Roman Empire was so large that it enveloped many peoples with very diverse belief systems. This cinerary box from the 1st Century is a great example of a cultural shift toward cremation that might have been absorbed with a neighboring population and their customs. Roman dead were required to be taken outside city limits to be cremated or, in later centuries, buried. This rule was probably first enacted to keep disease from spreading in urban areas, but eventually meant that the roads into cities were lined with a myriad of cinerary boxes to honor the deceased. These were many shapes and sizes, some were votive offerings sites with the same shape but instead of storing ashes, were set up to receive offerings to heroes or gods.
- The rituals surrounding the dead were as varied as their monuments. Initially a deceased family member was anointed and carried out of the city to a pyre for incineration. The funeral processions were elaborate and full of pageantry and the more prominent citizens would command a larger crowd. Wailers and mourners could be hired to add to the overall effect and the feasting and tributes could become unruly. Eventually the drama was over and the ashes of the deceased were placed in a cinerary box, although wealthier citizens might place their box within a tomb (then used later when burials became more popular with the rise of Christianity). This box is decorated on three sides and the flat and plain back side leads us to

believe it might have been placed in a shrine or tomb. Romans overall believed in an afterlife; this incorporated Greek gods and stories (Hades and the Elysium Fields) as well as local pagan customs, and morphed into a dynamic and interesting religious mix that was generally tolerated.

- The Roman Empire was so vast that it geographically assimilated many different peoples and diverse customs and as a result developed a very tolerant stance. The Edict of Milan was an agreement in 313 to tolerate Christians but this actually followed another tolerance decree made two years earlier. This set the stage for a variety of funerary practices and a reason that we find a blend of different cultural symbols of death and resurrection on this funerary box. The head in the center was thought to ward off evil and might be reminiscent of the Greek Medusa. The garlands are probably of pagan origins relating to the harvest, and the winged harpies were to carry off the souls of the dead. Cremations were popular in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD but this changed as Christianity became dominant and people began to bury their dead, so these cinerary boxes to store ashes were even mixed into tombs along with sarcophagi in later centuries. The constantly changing MIX seems to characterize the dynamic culture Roman Empire, and I would like to propose that diversity and tolerance gave the empire its lasting strength.

Group 9: Early Jewish, Christian, and Islamic

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Notes:

Key Points: All are Religions of the Book

- Monotheistic religions that developed within polytheistic societies
- All have written records of God's words; Torah, Bible, & Quran
- Art becomes an expression of religious identity and the art objects are used as teaching tools that provide insight into the unique beliefs and practices of these religions.
- There are differences in subject matter for these three religions
- The style between Jewish and Christian art is similar and is different from Islamic art.

1. Judaism

- Since Jews were conquered, scattered, and persecuted, very little art survived.
- There are 8-7th c BCE ceramics, seals, ivories, monuments and writings. In the Greek era, there are some coins and in the Roman era, sarcophagi, coins, amulets, mosaics, and frescos.
- There is no imagery of humans
- Art reveals beliefs and practices; menorah imagery and symbols of the holiday practices

No Mia works

2. Origins of Christianity

- Just like Jewish art, chronologically Christian art develops during the late Roman culture, when preaching to non-Jews occurred.
- Christianity "legalized" and becomes the Roman state religion by 4th c
- Early imagery presents Christ as "good shepherd" and commemorates the faithful. There are no markers of divinity.
- Later images are teachable moments from the New Testament gospels

No Mia works

3. Byzantine Empire

- Roman empire collapses
- Extensive use of highly ornate mosaics (influenced by Greeks and Romans) –that represent the status of rulers who preside over church and state. This begins art used as propaganda. Materials used were glass, stone, and gold.
- Figural art forms are static and formal and rulers take on a holy status

No Mia works

4. Coptic Christianity

- Coptic world includes Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans
- Community founded around 42-62CE
- Modeled on aspects and rituals of ancient Egyptian religion: ankh, symbol of eternal life, adopted as their cross; retained resurrection rituals associated with Osiris.
- Christian monasticism begins among Copts
- Most art works recovered from grave sites
- **OBJECT: Egypt, Sanctuary curtain with a Latin cross, tapestry weave, 5-6th CE 83.126**

5. Syrian Christianity

- Founded 1c CE. Disciples were the first called “Christians”
- Mosaics, a Roman tradition, are prevalent and are largely used on floors of buildings
- Monastic tradition begins; mixed religious shrines
- Christianity spreads geographically
- **OBJECT: Syria, Elephant Attacking a Feline, mosaic, 4-5c CE 69.49.2**

6. Islamic

- Spreads and absorbs and integrates aspects of other cultures (Central Asia, and deserts of Africa) during the period of 600-1000CE
- “Believer” are Muslim and follow the Koran
- Islamic lands were centers of trade between East and West: silk, textiles, spices and exquisite art objects.
- Art:
- Made for religious practices/settings and secular purposes
- Made for Islamic peoples of many cultures; incorporates diverse traditions
- God cannot be depicted in a figural form
- Highly decorative objects with repeating geometric, floral, and arabesque designs that is often mathematically balanced and fills the complete space of an object.
- Interlaced motifs, scrollwork, and precisely arranged Kufic calligraphy. Because the Arabic language was forced on all the lands occupied, the use of Arabic script was common.
- **OBJECT: Hispano-Moorish, Lion statuette 11-12 CE, gold 72.12**
- **Object: Iran (Persian), Plate 9CE, earthenware with under glaze brown slip, 68.80**