

Kimbell Educational Resources



Kaikei (Japanese, active c. 1185–1225), *Standing Shaka Buddha* (detail), c. 1210, gilt and lacquered wood

Kimbell Art Museum

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PREPARING STUDENTS IN ADVANCE

We look forward to welcoming your school group to the Kimbell Art Museum! Here are a few suggestions for teachers to help to ensure a successful, productive learning experience at the Museum.

LOOK, DISCUSS, CREATE

Use this resource to lead classroom discussions and related activities prior to the visit. (Suggested activities may also be used after the visit.)

REVIEW MUSEUM GUIDELINES

For students:

- Touch the works of art only with your eyes, never with your hands.
- Walk in the museum—do not run.
- Please use an inside voice when sharing your ideas.

Additional information for teachers:

- Backpacks, umbrellas, or other bulky items are not allowed in the galleries. Free parcel check is available. Backpacks containing medical supplies are allowed with special clearance.
- Seeing-eye dogs and other service animals assisting people with disabilities are the only animals allowed in the Museum.
- Sketching is allowed in the galleries as long as it is in pencil and does not obstruct or interfere with other visitors.
- Unscheduled lecturing to groups is not permitted.
- No food, drinks, or water bottles are allowed in any galleries.
- Cell phones should be turned to silent mode while in the Museum.
- Tobacco use, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, electronic cigarettes, snuff, and chewing tobacco, is not permitted in the Museum or anywhere on the Museum's grounds.

Eating lunch at the Kimbell:

- Student groups are welcome to eat outside on the lawn or under the porticos, located between the Kahn Building and Piano Pavilion.
- Lunch boxes and coolers are not permitted in the galleries. You can pack lunches in a cooler and check it upon arrival or leave it on the bus until lunchtime.
- Please make sure to pick up all trash before leaving the Museum campus.
- Please remind students to refrain from running on gravel or touching outdoor sculptures.

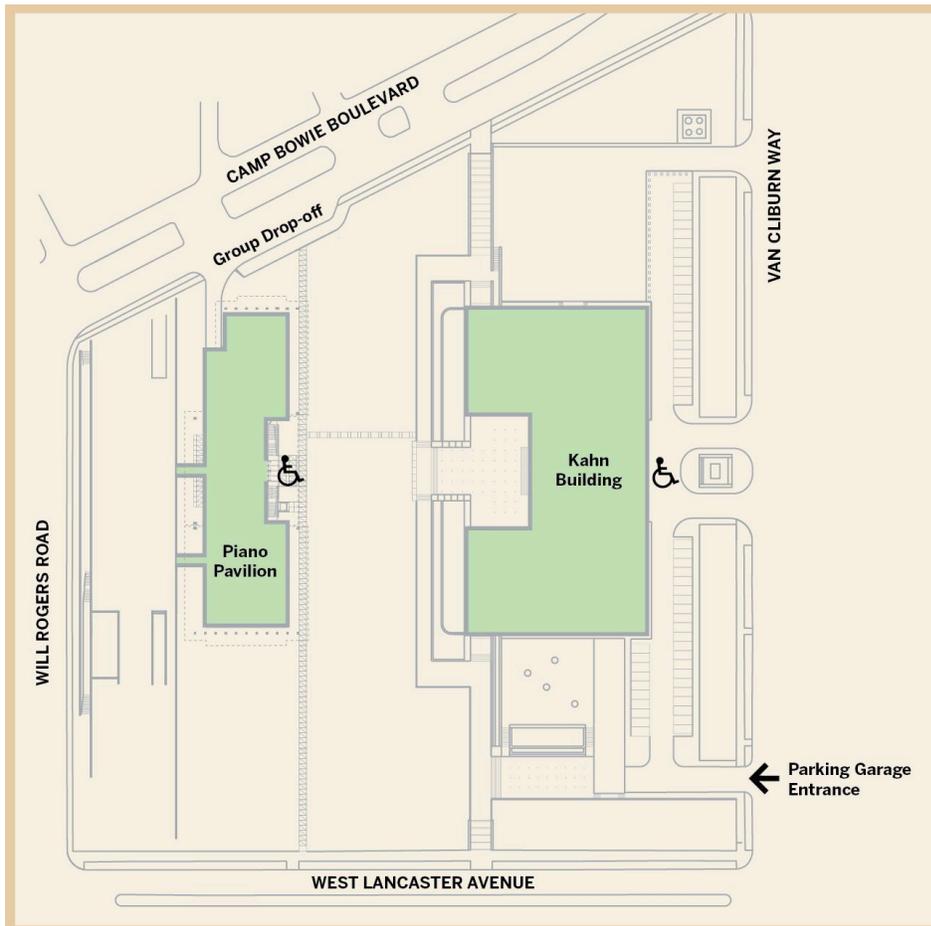
TWO BUILDINGS, ONE MUSEUM



South portico of the Kimbell's Kahn Building (completed 1972)



View of the Kimbell's Piano Pavilion from Lancaster Avenue (completed 2013)



Map of the Kimbell campus



Egyptian, *Portrait Statue of Pharaoh Amenhotep*
Red granite, c. 1400 BC (Recarved, c. 1250 BC)

Egyptian

Egypt, South Karnak, New Kingdom, Dynasty 18 (c. 1427–1400 BC)

Recarved for Ramesses II (the Great), Dynasty 19 (c. 1279–1213 BC)

Portrait Statue of Pharaoh Amenhotep

Red granite, c. 1400 BC (recarved, c. 1250 BC)

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

This regal figure of Amenhotep II shows him holding the traditional symbols of kingship against his chest—the scepter in the form of a crook in his left hand and the flail or whip in his right. He wears Upper (i.e., southern) Egypt’s distinctive crown, embellished by the uraeus cryptogram, or royal cobra, and a broad collar composed of five bands. His body is enveloped in the jubilee robe—worn by kings at festivals, particularly the Sed-festival—in which he was physically and spiritually rejuvenated. Usually the Sed-festival was observed after a reign of thirty years. Since most pharaohs never reached their thirtieth year, however, some celebrated it prematurely, including Amenhotep II.

The sculpture was originally part of a larger figure seated on a throne, which was excavated in 1896 at the Temple of Mut at South Karnak. Fragments of the throne that are now lost bore inscriptions of Ramesses II (“the Great”), who lived more than a century after Amenhotep II. Ramesses usurped this and many other sculptures of his predecessors and converted them into images of himself. In this case Amenhotep’s eyebrows were erased and his eyes, nose, and mouth slightly reshaped to make them resemble those of Ramesses.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What clues tell you that this is from ancient Egypt? Describe what he is wearing. What costume details catch your eye? Who do you think he might be? Why?

Try standing in the same pose. How does this make you look and feel? What is he holding? What other types of items do people include in portraits to show their status or interests?

What material is this? How do you think this looked when it was first made? How is granite different from wood or clay?

CREATE your own Egyptian-style collar necklace. What materials would you use to last for eternity? What decorations would impress others with your supreme authority? Include an animal that would act as your protector or personal symbol in the design.



Assyrian, Pair of Winged Deities
Gypsum, c. 874–860 BC

Assyrian
Assyria (Iraq), Reign of Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 BC)

Pair of Winged Deities

Gypsum, c. 874–860 BC
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

The Northwest Palace of Ashurnasirpal II (reigned 883–859 BC) at Nimrud (ancient Kalhu) is the earliest of the surviving royal residences of the Assyrian kings, lavishly decorated with monumental gateway figures and reliefs. The Northwest Palace consisted of a series of long, narrow rooms grouped around large courtyards. Seven-foot-high stone slabs that lined the walls of many of the rooms were carved with elaborate narrative, mythological, and ritual scenes in low-relief. The greatest and most original artistic achievement of the Assyrians, these images and accompanying inscriptions record the kings' military campaigns and testify to their prowess as warriors and hunters as well as their sanctity as the representatives of the Assyrian pantheon on earth.

One of the most recurrent and potent images on these reliefs is the depiction of a magic purification or protective ritual, in which winged griffin-demons (apkallu, "sages") or winged anthropomorphic deities, holding ritual "buckets" and pinecone-shaped objects, flank a "Sacred Tree" that they sprinkle with holy water or pollen. The Kimbell's pair of winged deities are fragments of two such full-length figures enacting this magic ritual, sprinkling or pollinating the central tree motif. As such, each figure would originally have held a bucket in his left hand and a cone in his right. The deities, marked as divine by their wings and horned helmets, are conceived in the image of the monarch, reflecting his facial features, stance, and physical strength. Their exaggerated musculature and luxuriant, tightly curled hair and beards suggest something of the king's vainglorious power and virility. These reliefs come from a room that may have been used by the king for ritual ablution.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What are some of the first things you notice about these figures? Which details catch your eye? Are they human? Why or why not?

How do we know that they are important or powerful? What other words would you use to describe them? How are they standing? What do you think they are doing?

Imagine a large room filled with full-size figures like these. How would it feel to be in that space?

DRAW the missing elements of the sculpture. What does the tree look like? How tall is it? How will you show the water being sprinkled on the tree?



Caravaggio (Michelangelo Merisi), *The Cardsharps*
Oil on canvas, c. 1595

Caravaggio (Michelangelo Merisi)
Italian, 1571–1610

The Cardsharps

Oil on canvas, c. 1595
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

The players are engaged in a game of *primero*, a forerunner of poker. Engrossed in his cards, the dupe is unaware that the older cardsharp signals his accomplice, who reaches to pull a hidden card from his breeches. The fingertips of the cheat's gloved hand are exposed to better feel marked cards. Cardinal Francesco Maria del Monte, a great patron of the arts, took the young Caravaggio into his household soon after purchasing this picture. It hung along with *The Gypsy Fortune Teller* in his palace. Together the two paintings would surely have reminded the cardinal and his guests of the story of the prodigal son, warning about the perils of greed and fraud. Caravaggio has treated the subject not as a caricature of vice but in a fresh way, in which the interaction of gesture and glance evokes the drama of deception and lost innocence in the most human terms. He structures the picture to allow us to witness everything, implicating us in the trickery.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What is happening in this picture? What do you notice first? Follow the eyes and gestures of each figure. How does your eye move around the painting?

Compare the characters and describe their actions and expressions. What is each man's role? What do you notice about their costumes?

What types of lines do you see? How are the figures grouped? What shape do they create?

Where do you see light and shadow? What other details do you see? What kind of game are they playing? Describe the space. Where are they?

What do you think will happen next? What would you do in this situation? How does Caravaggio create a sense of drama?

WRITE a story from the perspective of one of the characters and share it with the class.



Georges de La Tour, *The Cheat with the Ace of Clubs*
Oil on canvas, c. 1630–34

Georges de La Tour
French, 1593–1652

The Cheat with the Ace of Clubs

Oil on canvas, c. 1630–34
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

One of the greatest masterpieces of seventeenth-century French art, Georges de La Tour's *Cheat with the Ace of Clubs* takes as its subject the danger of indulgence in wine, women, and gambling. While the theme harks back to Caravaggio's influential *Cardsharps*, also in the Kimbell, the roots of this engaging morality play can be traced to earlier representations of the biblical subject of the prodigal son. La Tour's dazzling colors and elaborate costumes create a brilliant tableau. His characters enact a psychological drama that unfolds through the cues of their sidelong gazes and the measured gestures that signal their next moves. The cheat tips his cards toward the viewer, who thereby becomes complicit in the scheme, knowing that in the next moment, the conniving trio of cheat, maidservant, and courtesan (identified by her low-cut bodice) will prevail.

Another autograph version of this subject, *Cheat with the Ace of Diamonds* (Musée du Louvre, Paris), displays abundant variations in details of color, clothing, and accessories. For most of his life, La Tour remained in his native duchy of Lorraine, remote from Paris. Although he created some of the most visually compelling images of his age, he fell into obscurity soon after his death. It was only in the early twentieth century that his oeuvre began to be rediscovered.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What is going on here? Who is cheating, and who is being cheated? How can you tell?

Who do you notice first? How does the artist focus our attention? How does your eye move through the picture? What other clues does the artist use to guide you? Where is everyone in the picture looking? Who seems unaware?

Where is the cheat looking? How is the viewer involved in this scene? What would you do or say if you encountered this scene?

Describe the costumes. What colors do you see? What can you tell about these individuals based on their costumes? Who is the most elaborately dressed?

WRITE a story describing what will happen next. What clues does the artist include to hint at the next scene? **SKETCH** your idea and share your story with a friend!



Jacob van Ruisdael, *Edge of a Forest with a Grainfield*
Oil on canvas, c. 1656

Jacob van Ruisdael
Dutch, 1628/29–1682

Edge of a Forest with a Grainfield

Oil on canvas, c. 1656
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

Jacob van Ruisdael, one of the greatest landscape painters of all time, flourished in the latter half of the seventeenth century, Holland’s “Golden Age.” Ruisdael began painting in his teenage years and moved to Amsterdam in 1655, shortly before he began *Edge of a Forest with a Grainfield*. Paintings from this period in his life are the ones for which he is most renowned. They typically emphasize the majestic power of natural forms—noble trees and cloud-filled skies—and an increased mastery of light effects to give those forms emotional resonance.

Edge of a Forest is ranked as one of Ruisdael’s highest achievements, from the years of his greatest genius. Everywhere he leads the viewer towards something he thinks should be noticed: a broken branch lies bent in the lower right, pointing the way into the canvas; a puddle of water in the sandy road reflects the bark of the tree above it; delicate flowers of a water lily poke their heads above the water; a bush is in flower in the shadowy glade beside one of the trees, while silvery-green leaves shine between patches of ivy green. These myriad details, however, do not distract from the impressive unity of the whole—the sense of nature, in its grandeur, captured by a painter who truly loves it.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What do you notice first? How does your eye move through this landscape? What details appear as you explore different areas? Where do you see animals or people? What are they doing? Why do you think Ruisdael included them?

Describe the textures that Ruisdael used to describe the trees, grasses, water, ground, etc. Are they rough, glassy, sandy, or soft? What types of brushstrokes did he use for each texture?

Where does sunlight enter the picture? Look for areas of light and dark. What effects do they create? How would you describe the mood of this scene?

COLLECT different leaves, scraps of bark, rocks, and other natural objects. Use paper and crayons to create a rubbing of these objects. What textures do they make? Do they reveal anything about the objects you could not see just by looking?



Jacob van Ruisdael, *A Rough Sea at a Jetty*
Oil on canvas, 1650s

Jacob van Ruisdael
Dutch, 1628/29–1682

A Rough Sea at a Jetty

Oil on canvas, 1650s
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

Jacob van Ruisdael elevated landscape painting to the level of high art. Recording the familiar wooded hills, flat farmlands, and coastal dunes of the Netherlands, his work went beyond the topographic accuracy of earlier generations to achieve a sense of the monumental grandeur of nature. His extraordinary powers of observation were wedded to a Baroque inventiveness that endowed his works with an unparalleled dramatic force.

Among his most highly valued works, Ruisdael's rare marine paintings reveal the scope of his genius, as they convey the transitory and changeable face of nature. *Rough Sea at a Jetty* represents the approach of a violent storm. The scene is taken from a jetty that extends a considerable distance into the sea. At the end is a rustic beacon to guide distressed ships into harbor. Two men with long poles stand, ready to come to the aid of a vessel striving to make port through the tempestuous winds and waves that threaten its approach. The beacon appears in Dutch emblem books as a symbol of salvation in times of peril.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What do you see happening in this scene? How would you describe this weather? How would it feel to be standing on that narrow jetty? Have you ever been in a storm like this? Where would you feel most safe in weather like this?

How does Ruisdael create a sense of drama? What takes up most of the picture? What are the main colors? What lines do you see? Where do they lead your eye?

What do you think will happen next? Where do you see light in this picture? Are there other possible light sources? Does the lighting have special meaning or significance?

Why were boats so important in the seventeenth century? Which nations were especially famous for their explorers and trade routes? What items do you think Dutch trade ships carried? (See Jacques de Gheyn's *Vase of Flowers with a Curtain*.)

CHART an imaginary five-day weather forecast for this picture, using a map of the Netherlands and recent meteorological reports.



Jacques-Louis David, *The Anger of Achilles*
Oil on canvas, 1819

Jacques-Louis David
French, 1748–1825

The Anger of Achilles

Oil on canvas, 1819
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

Jacques-Louis David, the leading Neoclassical painter in Europe during the French Revolution and under Napoleon, took exile in Brussels after the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. There he painted and exhibited *The Anger of Achilles*, which he prized highly as the culmination of his career-long efforts to recapture the perfection of ancient Greek art. The complex episode, which challenged David to render a spectrum of interacting emotions from stoic courage and calm, heroic resolve to grief and anger, is drawn from Euripides' tragedy *Iphigenia in Aulis* and Racine's seventeenth-century dramatic version of the same story.

Agamemnon, king of the Greeks, has just revealed to the youthful Achilles that the king's daughter Iphigenia is not to be married to him but sacrificed in order to appease the goddess Diana and so allow the Greek fleet to set sail for Troy. As Iphigenia's mother, Clytemnestra, looks on tearfully, Achilles angrily reaches for his sword. Agamemnon's magnetic gaze and authoritative gesture appear to freeze Achilles's outburst. Apparently dressed as a bride, Iphigenia clutches her heart, oblivious to the display of male confrontation. Her mother's reaction, composed of disappointment at Achilles' inability to act as well as grief for her daughter, is apparently intended to mirror the mixed reactions that any spectator must feel as filial, spousal, and civic duties compete with one another.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What is going on in this picture? What story would you make up about these characters? How do they relate to one another?

How long ago do you think this happened? How are these characters dressed? Describe the colors and patterns. What is happening in the background?

Focus on the individual characters. Which figure is Agamemnon? What makes him appear kingly? What do his expression and pose tell you? What do you think he is saying at this moment? Compare him with Achilles. Describe the expressions of the women at center.

DISCUSS the ideas that you associate with heroes from history and those living today, and then **DESIGN** a helmet for a (real or made-up) hero who represents ideas that are important to you.



Frederic Leighton, *Portrait of May Sartoris*
Oil on canvas, c. 1860

Frederic Leighton
British (English), 1830–1896

Portrait of May Sartoris

Oil on canvas, c. 1860
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

One of the leading artists of the tendency in British art known as the Aesthetic Movement, Frederic Leighton trained in the continental academic tradition in Germany, Italy, and France and insisted upon beauty and form as the artist's primary concerns. He was elected president of the Royal Academy in 1878 and elevated to the peerage in 1896. In 1853, the young Leighton met Adelaide Sartoris, a former opera singer and celebrated hostess whose friendship provided him with an entrée into artistic and fashionable society. He seems to have painted this celebrated portrait of Adelaide's daughter, Mary Theodosia (May) around 1860, the year after he settled in London. She is aged about fifteen and depicted in the setting of the family's country residence in Hampshire. The fallen tree suggests the passage of time and mortality, accentuating her fragile beauty. A descendant of the Kemble family—one of the most distinguished English theatrical dynasties—May was a talented amateur actress and singer. She married Henry Evans Gordon in 1871, and Leighton painted two further portraits of her in the succeeding years.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What do you first notice about this young girl? How is she dressed? What does this costume suggest about her? How would you describe her expression?

What colors or shapes do you notice first? How do they lead your eye through the composition?

Where do you think this is? What do you notice in the background? What season do you think this is? Why? Why do you think the artist includes a felled tree?

Describe the various textures in this picture—especially her costume. How does it compare to other textures in the outdoor scene?

CREATE a self-portrait in a special place wearing a costume that relates to a hobby or interest.



Pierre Bonnard, *Landscape at Le Cannet*
Oil on canvas, 1928

Pierre Bonnard
French (1867–1947)

Landscape at Le Cannet

Oil on canvas, 1928

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

Pierre Bonnard's beginnings were influenced by the sinuous lines and hues of Paul Gauguin, and his late works inspired Mark Rothko, the ultimate colorist of the abstract age. He is known for his scenes of daily life, centering on his own extended family; for his complex depictions of interiors, often inhabited by his wife, Marthe; for his depictions of Marthe at her toilette or in her bath; and, finally, for his landscapes, which depict with equal joy his garden at Vernon in Normandy and his house and its environs at Le Cannet. In 1926, he purchased a property near the village, just north of Cannes on the Mediterranean, seeking in the warm climate of the French Riviera an environment that would be good for Marthe's health.

Landscape at Le Cannet is the most ambitious depiction of the world that was the central setting in Bonnard's art for the final decades of his life. Taking a position on the hill above his home, which he had christened "Le Bosquet" for the grove of trees that surrounded it, Bonnard looked to the west, toward the Esterel mountains. The roof of Le Bosquet, near the tree at center of the composition, gives a sense of Bonnard's personal scale in the context of the panorama; the two hillocks in the foreground fall towards the pathway that borders the rear of Bonnard's property, where a girl and her dog can be seen passing by. Bonnard places himself in the right foreground, beside a pair of goats; a cow stands among spiky plants at the other side of the canvas. Suffused with warm light and with a rainbow-like array of colors, the painting was intended to decorate the home of a distinguished collector on the outskirts of Paris.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

How does your eye move through the landscape? What details appear as you explore different areas? Where do you see animals or people? What are they doing? Why do you think Bonnard included them?

Describe the different colors that you see. How does Bonnard's use of color set a mood, awaken the imagination, and/or energize the scene? How does it make you feel?

How might you experience this landscape with your other senses. What would you hear? What would you touch? What's the weather like? What does the air taste or smell like?

WRITE a short story from the perspective of one of the figures or animals found in this landscape. What are they thinking? Where have they been and where are they going?



Chinese, *Earth Spirit*
Gray earthenware with painted polychrome decoration, first half of the 8th century

Chinese

China, probably Shaanxi province, Tang dynasty (618–907)

Earth Spirit

Gray earthenware with painted polychrome decoration, first half of the 8th century

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

The inclusion of fantastic animal guardians as part of the retinue of tomb figures began in the Northern Wei dynasty (AD 386–534) and continued into the Tang dynasty. Also called earth spirits, or *zhenmushou* (grave-quelling beasts), these guardians took the form of fantastic hybrid creatures composed of various animal and sometimes human elements and were placed in the tomb in pairs to ward off any malevolent beings who threatened to intrude. The Kimbell's fierce figure of an earth spirit stands in a rampant posture of conquest as it subdues a snarling beast upon a rockwork base, its left arm entwined with a serpent.

The spirit's triple horns, bulging eyes, and bare-teethed grimace add to its ferocious appearance. Black stripes on the forearms and forelegs terminate in sharply clawed hands and feet, and undulating flames emerge from its head, shoulders, and right leg. A gilded tondo, finely painted with a group of figures (possibly musicians, who may also be foreigners), set against a luxuriant floral panel, embellishes the figure's chest. The composite elements of the earth spirit, such as the large horns, claws, fangs, and tiger stripes, presumably conferred upon it the fearsome qualities of such animals. The evil that the earth spirit is quelling is in the form of the horned, hoofed beast that he tramples underfoot. The eye on the side of the beast's belly may represent the "third eye," an indication of the influence of Esoteric Buddhism prevalent during the early Tang period.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What is your first response to this sculpture? Choose three words to describe it.

What actions do you see happening? Notice how your eye travels around the figures. How do their gestures and expressions help you figure out what's going on?

Count the number of animal-like features you see in this sculpture. What animals do they remind you of? How do they contribute to the sculpture's overall feeling?

If you designed your own guardian against evil forces, what would it look like? Would it take on animal or mythological features? What other attributes might it have?

SKETCH your own personal Earth Spirit. As a challenge, try to follow the color scheme of the Kimbell's sculpture or invent your own.



Chinese, *Court Lady*
Gray earthenware with painted polychrome decoration, first half of the 8th century

Chinese

China, probably Shaanxi province, Tang dynasty (618–907)

Court Lady

Gray earthenware with painted polychrome decoration, first half of the 8th century

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

One of the most engaging and distinctive groups of Tang funerary sculpture is the one representing ladies of the court. This animated and charming example stands in a gracefully swayed pose, her petite hands held in a conversational gesture in front of her swelling form. She wears a white long-sleeved jacket tucked into a full-length red robe that falls in looping folds to her feet, leaving her upturned, *ruyi*-shaped, triple-cloud shoes visible. Her hairstyle, known as a *gaoji* (upswept topknot), is stiffly lacquered and folded, with a clump of hair separated and bound into a fan shape in the front, all held in place by two crescent-shaped combs. Her plump, heavily made-up cheeks are offset by exquisitely delicate eyes, nose, and slightly parted lips, reflecting the contemporary ideal of voluptuous beauty.

The Tang sculptors' careful attention to details of fashion and physiognomy allows us to trace in their works the changing fashions of ladies at court during this period. In the early eighth century a new aesthetic favored a fuller and more rotund physique and loose, billowing robes. This fashion for ladies of ample form was probably set by Yang Guifei, the imperial consort of the emperor Xuanzong (reigned AD 712–56). Dressed in elegant clothes with their hair arranged in elaborate coiffures and their faces beautified with cosmetics, these figures of aristocratic Tang women possess a singular grace and charm.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What is she wearing? How is her hair styled? What little details did the artist want us to notice in particular?

Imitate her hand gestures. What are you usually doing when gesturing like that? What do you think she would say to you?

Why do you think someone would put her in their tomb? What might she do for them in the afterlife? What would you want to take with you on a long journey? Or who?

What is this sculpture made of? What sort of tools did the artist use to create the details you see?

CONDUCT an imaginary interview with the Court Lady. What questions would you ask? What answers would she give?



Kaikei, *Standing Shaka Buddha*
Gilt and lacquered wood, c. 1210

Kaikei

Japanese, active c. 1185–1225

Standing Shaka Buddha

Gilt and lacquered wood, c. 1210

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

Kaikei, the great master sculptor of the Kamakura period (1185–1333), established the primary school of sculpture that produced statuary for the major temples in Nara and Kyoto. Especially important among Kaikei sculptures is a distinctive style of Buddha image that is refined and graceful and clothed in deeply folded and decoratively draped robes.

The Kimbell's sculpture is a rare image of the historical Buddha, Shaka (Shakyamuni), who is identified by the *abhayamudra* (gesture of reassurance) of the right hand. His left foot advancing, the Buddha appears to move forward to greet the devotee with an expression of gentle and profound compassion. The beautifully proportioned figure is wrapped in an elegant robe that covers the body in rhythmical folds, rippling across the stomach and cascading over the arms. Entirely covered with gold lacquer, the robe is further embellished with a floral and geometric pattern of fine-cut gold leaf.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What are some of the first things you notice about this beautiful sculpture? Does anyone recognize the figure? What clues help us to know this is the Buddha?

What words would you use to describe his expression? Look at how he holds his hands. Do you think that pose has special meaning?

Look for other special details on his face and head. What do you notice about his ears?

What kind of costume is he wearing? How would you describe the lines that show the folds?

What do you notice about the other parts of the sculpture? What natural forms do you recognize? What is he standing on? What shape is the base of the pedestal?

For what purpose do you think this was created?

READ the story of the Buddha and learn about other important symbols in Buddhist art.



Kano Shigenobu, *Wheat, Poppies, and Bamboo*
Ink, colors, and gofun on gold leaf paper, early 17th century

Kano Shigenobu
Japanese, active c. 1620–1630

Wheat, Poppies, and Bamboo

Ink, colors, and gofun on gold leaf paper, early 17th century
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

This brilliant screen depicts young wheat, blossoming poppies, and bamboo, all of the summer season. Boldly patterned with bright mineral colors on a gold ground, it exemplifies the exuberant decorative style of the Kano school. A heightened sense of realism is achieved with the use of the *moriage* technique, whereby parts of the composition are built up by the application of gesso to create raised designs on the painting surface.

The emerging elite of Japanese society in the seventeenth century were the *daimyo* (feudal lords), who controlled extensive domains and served as advisors to the *shogun* (military overlords). The magnificent castles of the *daimyo* were embellished with colorful paintings on screens and sliding doors, often decorated with gold-leaf backgrounds, which served to brighten the huge, dark interiors.

Among the retainers in the service of the *daimyo* lords were the painters of the Kano school, a family of secular artists who formed the most important school of decorative painting from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. The Kano painters employed colorful and decorative elements in their work, developing a bold style well suited to these grand commissions. In particular, the Kano school painters of Kyoto popularized the *kimpeki* style of gold-ground screens painted in opaque mineral pigments.

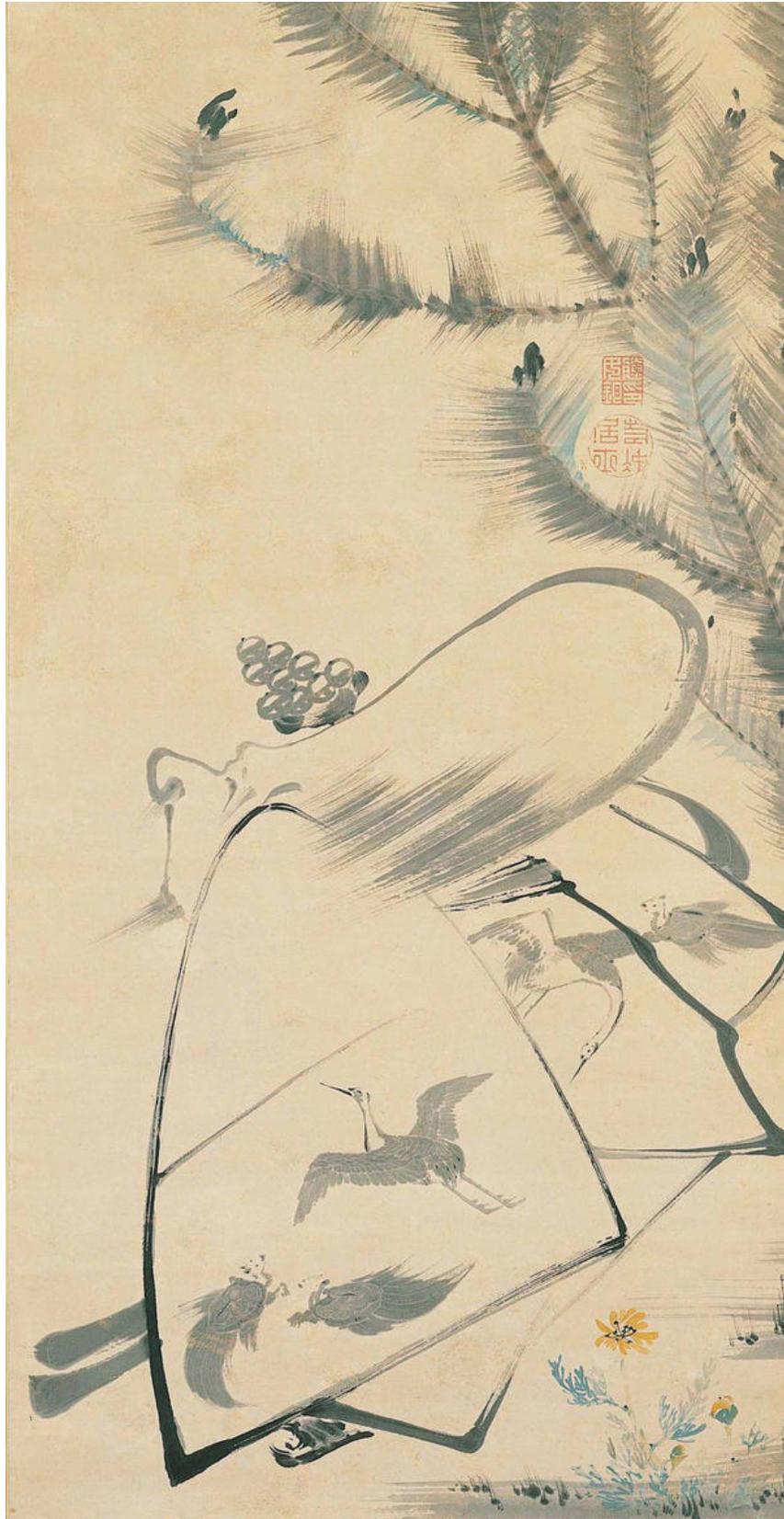
FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

Do you consider this a landscape painting? Why or why not? Where are we? What is the position of the viewer? Describe the different textures and forms that you see.

Imagine encountering this screen in a darkened *daimyo* castle. How might its golden, reflective quality affect your experience?

Why do you think the artist chose to depict these particular plants in this unique arrangement? What do wheat, poppies, and bamboo have in common? How are they different?

SKETCH your own summertime panorama. What plants would you include? How would you arrange these elements on your own painted screen?



Ito Jakuchu, *Fukurojin, the God of Longevity and Wisdom*
Ink and light colors on paper, c. 1790

Ito Jakuchu
Japanese, 1713–1800

Fukurojin, the God of Longevity and Wisdom

Ink and light colors on paper, c. 1790
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

This humorous image depicts Fukurojin, one of a group of Chinese divinities called the “Seven Household Gods,” who were also popular folk deities in Japan. Fukurojin, an old man, is always distinguished in this group by an exaggerated, tall forehead, which is taken to be indicative of his superhuman intelligence and wisdom. He stands under a pine tree with branches that are softly brushed to create the sense of long, thick pine needles, and he is dressed in a voluminous robe decorated with cranes and long-tailed turtles. In Asian mythology these three motifs—pine, crane, and turtle—are symbols of longevity.

Jakuchu, one of the Three Eccentrics of the Edo period (1615–1868), was a remarkable individualist whose paintings defy easy classification. Born in Kyoto, he was the eldest son of a wealthy greengrocer. Although he inherited the family business, he left the running of the shop to his brother and devoted his entire life to painting. Jakuchu’s oeuvre is extensive and broad in scope. His style ranges from colorful, decorative works on silk to daring compositions in ink; his subjects include elegant depictions of flowers and barnyard fowl, as well as major Buddhist icons and narrative themes.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

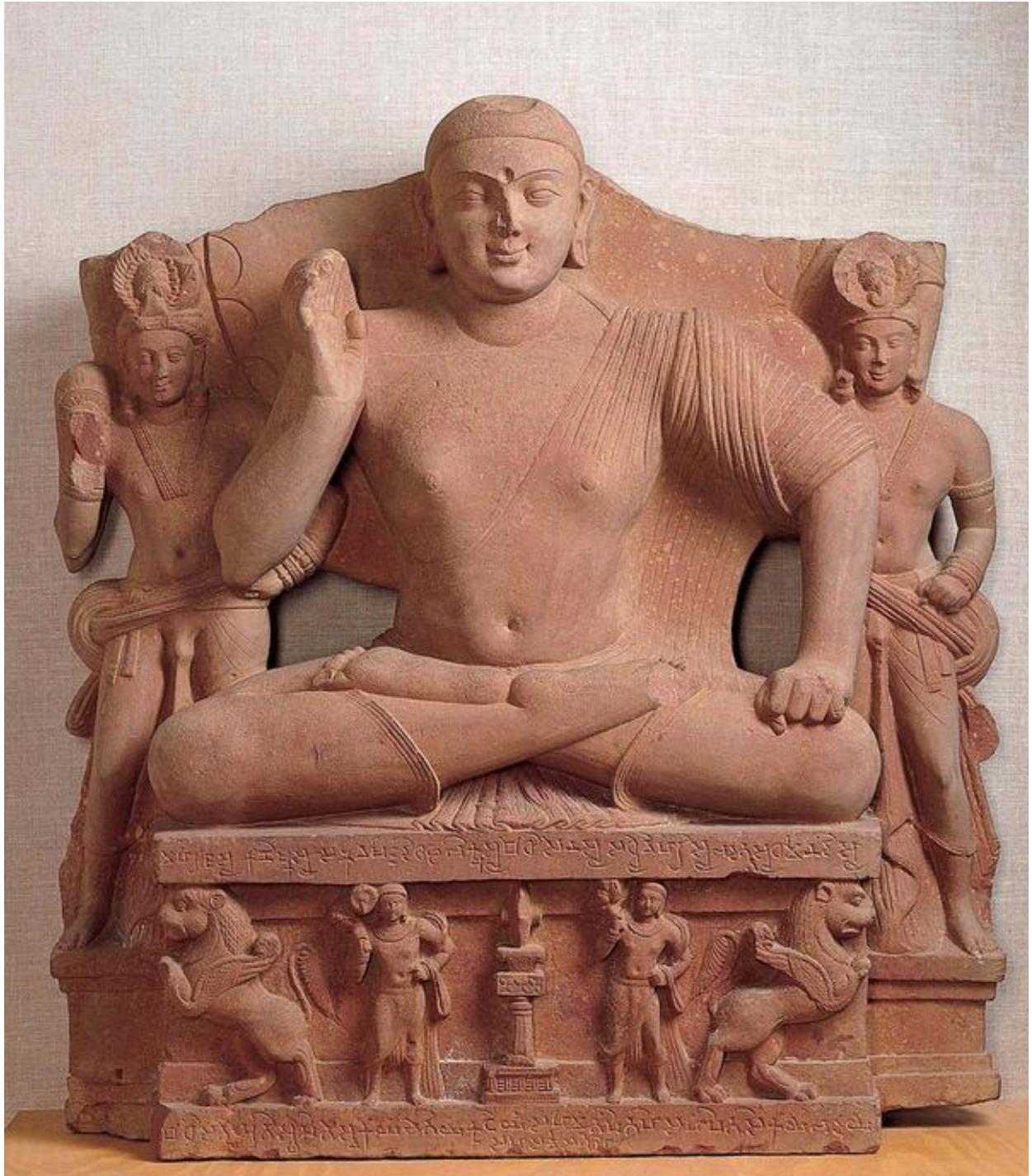
Take a few moments to look closely. Who or what do you notice in this scene? What clues tell us that Fukurojin is a god? What about him suggests that he is old and wise?

Describe his costume. What animals do you see? What might they represent? What images or symbols do you associate with long life?

Compare the different brushstrokes. Are some darker than others? What colors does the artist use? Where do you see colors other than black or gray? Which forms are very detailed in their description? Which are shown with only a few brushstrokes? What does the artist leave to the imagination?

What are the two red symbols next to the pine tree branches? Who might have put them there?

IMAGINE a conversation with Fukurojin. What questions would you ask of his infinite wisdom? **WRITE** a short dialogue and share with the class.



Indian, *Seated Buddha with Two Attendants*
Red sandstone, AD 82

Indian

India, Uttar Pradesh, Mathura, Kushan period (c. 50 BC–AD 320)

Seated Buddha with Two Attendants

Red sandstone, AD 82

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

This seated Buddha conforms to a standard early Mathura type. In his personification as Shakyamuni, the teacher, the Buddha is portrayed as a traditional yogi, seated on a throne, and dressed as a monk. The thin, diaphanous robe is worn over the left shoulder, leaving the right shoulder bare. The sensitive modeling of the soft flesh gives little hint of the musculature underneath but still endows the body with a sense of solidity and mass. The hair is smooth like a cap, and the cranial bump (*ushnisha*), now missing, would have appeared as a twisted bun or coil of hair (*kapardin*). The right hand is raised in the gesture of reassurance (*abhayamudra*). As prescribed by the scriptures, the palms of the hands and soles of the Buddha's feet are marked with the lotus and the wheel, symbols of his divinity and teaching.

Carved in high relief with generously modeled and sensuous torsos, the royal attendants flanking the Buddha have similar stylized facial features and archaic smiles as their lord. The sculpture is carved in the form of a stela and includes other symbols and figures referring to the Buddha's life and exalted status as a universal monarch. The large halo behind his head represents the sun and proclaims his divinity. The pillar, topped by a wheel centered in the relief panel of the throne, is symbolic of preaching and refers to the Buddha's first sermon at Sarnath. The two figures holding flywhisks, flanking the pillar, and the rampant lions signify the Buddha's royal heritage.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

Describe the seated figure of the Buddha, his facial expression, and also his pose and gestures. How does the sculpture make you feel? Why?

How is the Buddha dressed? How does the sculptor distinguish between the parts that are flesh and those that are covered with cloth?

What other figures surround the Buddha? What are they holding and wearing? Are they as important as the central figure?

What material is this? Describe its color and texture. Is this a durable stone? Has it suffered any damage? What's missing?

RESEARCH the life of the historical Buddha and the meaning behind his most common iconography and mudras. Do you see any of these elements pictured in this sculpture?



Indian, *Four-Armed Ganesha*
Terracotta relief, 5th–6th century AD

Indian
India, Uttar Pradesh, Gupta period (320–600)

Four-Armed Ganesha

Terracotta relief, 5th–6th century AD
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth

Ganesha is the elephant-headed son of Shiva, one of the three most important deities of the Hindu pantheon, and his consort, the goddess Parvati. He is widely worshiped as the remover of obstacles and the bestower of good fortune, prosperity, and health. The origin of his hybrid body—consisting of an elephant’s head with one tusk and an infant’s torso with distended belly—is related in Hindu legends. Parvati is said to have created Ganesha in human form to act as her door guardian. When he refused to admit Shiva to Parvati’s chamber, the god cut off the child’s head. In order to placate the distressed Parvati, Shiva replaced the head with that of the first living thing he could find—an elephant.

Hindu deities are often depicted with multiple heads and arms, a physical expression of the multiplicity of their superhuman powers. Due to the damaged condition of this superb terracotta relief, it is no longer possible to identify the deity’s usual attributes—an axe, a rosary, and a bowl of sweetmeats—which would have been held in his hands. The serpent hanging across his torso signifies his relationship to Shiva, who also bears this attribute. Many Hindu brick temples were decorated with terracotta plaques such as this one. The plaques are distinguished by their naturalistic modeling, well-illustrated in the sensuous and powerful sculpting of this image, which is unusually expressive, and notable also for its large size and early date.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What do you notice about this sculpture right away? What details do you notice that might mark Ganesha as a special person? Why do you think he has an elephant’s head?

How do we know that Ganesha is the most important figure in this piece? Where are the other figures in the composition? Are they the same size as Ganesha? What are they doing?

Can we walk all the way around this sculpture? Where do you think a sculpture like this was originally placed?

Why would Ganesha, the “Lord of Obstacles,” be shown with the head of an elephant? What sort of objects or problems might people ask him to remove?

RESEARCH myths about Ganesha to discover more about his personality and adventures. Choose a story and re-tell it in your own words to a classmate.