

AUDIO 1

Saint Jerome

El Greco also known as Doménikos Theotokópoulos

circa sixteen hundred

Oil on canvas

Height: 93.1 centimeters or thirty-six and eleven sixteenths inches by width: 78.5 centimeters or thirty and seven eighths inches by a depth of 6.5 cm or two and one sixteenths inches

Framed and in centimeters: one hundred by 84.77 by 6.35.

Audio description of the work:

This painting is in a gold frame which has a band of black through, it is approximately the size of a standard movie poster.

This waist up portrait features a half-clad Saint Jerome as an elderly white man. He sits with his torso on a 45 degree angle facing right and gazes at the eye level figure on a crucifix which he holds up by its long centre post. The painting depicts St Jerome bare torso with light greys whites and a yellowish hue in high contrast with deep shadow in a muted brownish black background that has faint hues of reds and greens peeping through.

Saint Jerome face is gaunt and aged but his body is muscular. He has short fine white hair which runs longer down his neck in a style resembling a mullet and a long pointy white beard. His face appears ashen, thin and elongated. His ears have slightly more colour in them. Were it not for the expression on his face it would be a sombre scene. Saint Jerome wears a slight smile and his lined eyes are opened wide as he looks at the crucifix.

Various objects surround him. Counterclockwise from left to right: In the top left corner, painted ivy leaves peek over his left shoulder and form a partial vignette. Below this, a cardinal red hat with a tassel hangs on the wall. Under this, robes of the same red drape across St Jerome's lap.

In the palm of his right hand is a gray object. In front of him is a thick bounded book held closed by two clasps. It stands on its end.

Towards the bottom of the painting is a book which has fallen open. Writing is indicated by many fine black lines on the white page. To the right of this and close to St. Jerome, facing him is a human skull. Further right on the table is an ink pot with a quill or pen sticking out of it. Beside this is an hourglass. At the base of the hourglass is a small folded piece of paper or folded cloth.

End of Audio Description.

Exhibition label text:

Domenikos Theotokopoulos was born in Crete in 1541, which was then part of the Venetian Empire. He trained in Crete, Venice, and Rome before he moved to Spain to settle. In the 1570s, he came to the Spanish court of King Philip II, hoping to be hired as a court painter. Philip was unconvinced and the painter instead settled in the Spanish city of Toledo where he found great success, and his nickname, The Greek. The Pieta at right comes from his stay in Rome, and his painting of Saint Jerome comes from his later life in Toledo.

End of Exhibition label text.

AUDIO 2

St Michael the Archangel

This work is attributed to an anonymous Ecuadorian sculptor, dated 1700-50. It is made of polychromed and gilded wood. New York, The Hispanic Society of America, LD 1999.

Height 129.5 centimeters or 51 inches by a width of 69.5 centimeters or twenty seven and three eighths inches by a depth of 47 cm or eighteen and a half inches

Audio Description of the work

This carved and intricately painted wooden sculpture is displayed in a central area in a freestanding case. The sculpture is painted in opaque colours and glossed in a high shine finish like the other works in this gallery. St Michael the Archangel is depicted as a winged young pale skinned male presenting angel with his sword drawn. He is wearing armour and gazing downwards as he lightly steps over a devil figure. It is pinned underfoot and head raised, contorts its face and clutches its heart.

St Micheal holds his left hand on his hip and his right holds his two edged flame bladed sword up in his right hand near his left shoulder.

St Michael has full wavy brown hair and is dressed in a cream colored, gold trimmed floral patterned tunic worn under a bronze coloured breastplate or curiass. His knee length skirts float outwards from his legs. The pattern is of delicate orange blooms with green accent details. On his head is a light brown helmet with a red large feather to the front that droops forward. Two small wings are attached to his back and have four tiers of feathers which are trimmed in alternating green and orange that match the floral print. He wears calf high brown boots.

The devil is a small, brown coloured humanoid creature with large eyes and wings, two horns protrude from its forehead and a tail to his rear end with large eyes. In relation to saint Michael, it is the size of a medium sized dog.

End of Audio description

Exhibition label text:

Saint Michael was a popular saint all across the Spanish Empire.

End of Exhibition label text.

AUDIO 3

Batea

Batea

Peribán, Michoachán, Mexico, 1650

Mexican lacquer on wood, 8 centimeters by 56.5 cm

New York, The Hispanic Society of America

Audio description of the work.

Batea which translated from Spanish means “pan”, is a circular work of art which is primarily dark green, black, and light brown accented with vibrant yellow, red, blue and orange. It is about the width of a washing machine and is displayed in a wall mounted case. It contains a pattern of individual coloured illustrations of dozens of animals, nature motifs, soldiers and horse-drawn carts accompanied by brick houses, fountains and mythical animals. The symbols encircle the central image of a woman with a halo seated in front of two pillars. She is seated draped in a red cloth and her right breast is exposed. She might be either the Goddess Diana or Sybella and resting after a hunt. There is a brick house on her left, behind her are two lions, a bow and arrow and quiver and a brick wall.

Surrounding the central image which lies at the base of the pan is a series of intricate borders in complementary colours with fine detail. The sides of the bowl closest to the central image depict waters which have ducks, pigs, birds, goats, sheep and mythical characters. Past this towards the lip of the bowl are brick houses with towers and eight sided fountains also made of brick and land alongside the water. A bit further back are people in men’s clothes on horseback wearing capes and holding umbrellas. There are exotic animals such as birds with long tails, lions, working on animals such as horses drawing carts over water. There are small sprigs of flowers growing in in-between spaces against a black backdrop. Close to the rim are birds sitting in trees, a man with a bow drawn. There are flower fronds, winged dragon-like creatures, and other creatures with horns. The rim of the pan contains an intricate ringed design of light yellow, dark orange, and blue stripe with white dashes spaced out with red star patterns and finally, thin rings of orange, yellow and orange.

End of Audio description.

Exhibition label text:

Bateas are large, nearly flat decorative trays. The form evolved from dishes that were used for panning for gold in riverbeds. The lacquer artists of Mexico and Colombia produced enormous bateas, using the oversized tray as a canvas for their craft. The indigenous artists who produced

them are largely anonymous, but one workshop included greyhounds running around the perimeter of their bateas as a form of signature. Many were produced for colonial patrons and include European imagery: one shows a Greek goddess at centre and the other portraits of Spaniards.

End of Exhibition label text

AUDIO 4

A- Head of St Paul

Artist: Luisa Roldán
1692-1706
Polychromed terracotta, 46 cm diameter

Audio description of the work.

The first of two terracotta disks by the same artist which are displayed propped upright on metal holders and side by side under glass. The heads of their subjects are sculpted to stand out significantly from their base, also called a high relief and are the size of a real human head. They are positioned as if to look at one another, this piece is on the left.

This sculpted and painted terracotta disk presents the bloodied decapitated head of St Paul. St Paul is depicted as a bearded middle aged white man with high cheekbones and a strong straight nose with a slight ridge or bump on top, soft brown hair and beard the length of half his head. He is in profile facing right and his eyes are closed. His mouth is frozen hanging open and streaks of blood swirl in his hair, around his ears and base of his cleanly sliced neck where his raw flesh windpipe and bones are also visible. On the disk behind his head is a rumpled circle of blue cloth framing his head like a halo. This is set on the disk which is painted a brilliant gold and sculpted to have a rim and row of indented dashes along the edges as you might still find today on any type of serving platter or charger plate.

End of Audio Description.

B- Head of Saint John the Baptist

Artist: Luisa Roldán
1692-1706
Polychromed terracotta, 48.5 cm diameter

Audio Description of the work

This work is in the same style to the head of Saint Paul and serves up another head on a platter this time with St John the Baptist in profile turned to the left on the same type of gold platter with on top of a rumpled blue cloth forming a halo.

St John's mouth is frozen open as if he was in mid gasp or he were snuffed out in the middle of the deepest sleep. His eyes are closed and his chin points upwards. He is a white man with slightly wavy fine brown hair. He wears a short beard and mustache and he has blood along his

hairline and pooled in his ears. The bloodied base of his neck has exposed flesh with the skinline shrunken back from the decapitation just under his Adam's apple. He appears to be younger than Saint Paul by a few years and his face is more filled out.

End of Audio Description

Exhibition label text:

While Spain was home to very few professional women artists, key figures emerge in the 1600s. Both Luisa Roldán and Andrea de Mena learned to make sculpture in the workshops of their respective fathers, who were themselves established professionals. Luisa Roldán was the first woman to hold the position of court sculptor and the first woman to be admitted to the prestigious Accademia di San Lucca.

End of Exhibition label text

AUDIO 5

View from the road leading out of Majayjay to Magdalena, Province of Laguna

1840-45

Daguerreotype, 17.4 x 21.1 x 0.8 cm

Audio Description of the work:

While this image resembles a black and white photograph it was recorded as a Daguerreotype, a precursor to the photograph and appears as black ink on a shiny metal plate. It is the sixth of 15 and is first of 5 images shown in the centre display case of this section of the exhibition. It rests on a black background at a 45 degree angle in order to showcase the images on the plate at the best angle for viewing. The four corners of this image are faded away. The image is captured from above, presumably from an upper floor.

The plate shows in precise detail several buildings of a small town located along a flat dirt road which is wide enough for 4 people walking shoulder to shoulder. The middle of the road is worn, presumably from people and animals on foot.

The buildings line the road for a stretch of about 100 meters before it veers off to the right, turning behind a building and out of sight. There are tall palm trees in the background beneath a clear sky. Describing the image composition from bottom to top: the Daguerreotype shows the dirt road traveling diagonally from bottom right towards the centre angling towards the top left. Moving upwards the road turns to the right and is lost between two buildings also called "bahaikubo" or Nipa huts which are on stilts. Below these are two more to the right of the road. They appear to be constructed of bamboo walls have open uncovered windows. The roofs have high slopes, and have thatched roofs.

The image has captured are two animals which are either horses or mules. The animal at the bottom right stands with something on its back. There is a thatched awning sloping down from the roof of the two storey building almost touching a fence. There is a similar awning on the next building where the second animal stands and eats head down at the side of the road, with its feet on the road.

The house on the far side of the bend is also two stories high and has some trees inside of its fence almost at the height of the house. To the left, there are tall trees with leafy crowns and another row of two large buildings. These have a stone bricks on first floor. There is a path that leads between them.

End of Audio Description.

Exhibition label text:

While so many of the daguerreotypes in this suite depict Manila and its surrounding areas, the towns of Majayjay, Magdalena and Pagsanjan are all over 100 kilometers south. The

photographer may have produced daguerreotypes 1 and 2 in this case on a short trip outside of Manila.

End of Exhibition label text