

NOTES

From James Glisson's gallery talk 12/4/24

Ridley-Tree Reinstallation Part 2

Modern Life: A Global Art World

SATIRICAL PRINTS/CARICATURES (Prints will be rotated approximately every 3 months.)

Why is this section here? The theme of the gallery reinstallation is "Modern Life". Caricatures pre-date this time period by many centuries. But, it was during the 19th century that they gained in popularity. They were mass distributed in the newspapers.

FRANCE

"King Louis Phillipe", Honore Daumier, 1830-1833, three lithographs

The most famous of all caricaturists was the Frenchman, Honore Daumier. Three of his satirical prints depicting the self-proclaimed monarch, Louis Phillipe, are on view. Daumier depicts Louis Phillipe as a pear-shaped, grumpy, dyspeptic figure. Not surprisingly, Daumier got in trouble for these works. Daumier was the voice of the ups and downs of French politics.

MEXICO

Across the 19th century, mass media came into play in Mexico. Caricatures making fun of the bourgeoisie, mimicking European fashion, became very popular. The works of Manilla and, in particular, Posada, who was friends with Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, were the driving force in the emergence of the popularity of Calaveras (skulls) in Mexican culture. They also helped to promote the Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebrations.

"La Calavera de la Viuda Alegre", Manuel Manilla, n.d., lithograph - and other prints

"La Calavera Catrina", Jose Guadalupe Posada, ca. 1900, zinc etching - and other prints

JAPAN

"Long Live Japan: One Hundred Victories, One Hundred Laughs", Kobayashi Kiyochika, 1894-1905

Two woodblock prints depicting the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. This was the first time that Japan challenged a European power. The fight was over Manchuria. In one print Japan is depicted as an octopus scooping up Russian ships. In the other, Russian soldiers are depicted with the rising sun, the symbol of Japan. It showed the demoralization of the Russian troops.

RODIN AND OTHERS – SCULPTURE

Auguste Rodin, several works, 1884-1905, marble and bronze

These sculptures illustrate the success and business model that Rodin incorporated into his practice, along with the advances in bronze casting that were happening in the 19th c. Artists were now able to take large sculptures and reduce them. This combined with the ability to produce these sculptures on a mass scale changed how sculptors worked.

Why bronze? It was more durable than marble. These were new sculptures for a new age. Many of the sculptures were produced using the lost wax casting method. But, Rodin also began to use sand casting as a technique. Many of the Rodin figures shown are from Rodin's "The Gates of Hell" project, depicting scenes from Dante's Inferno. Rodin took individual figures from that piece and reproduced them. The famous "The Thinker" is one example. Sometimes these figures were translated from marble to bronze. Consumers from all over the world began to purchase these pieces.

"Study for Action in Chains", Aristide Maillol, 1905, bronze

Maillol was a contemporary of Rodin. His background was in tapestry design. He sculpted figures based on his wife's musculature, but also emphasized these qualities as an indication of power.

TIMELINE OF SBMA

The timeline shows over 80 years of history of SBMA divided into four sections: *Foundation, Modernization, Expansion and Illumination.*

FOUNDATION

The museum, the former SB Post Office, was used as a temporary art exhibition space in 1933. Artist, Colin Campbell Cooper wrote a letter to the SB News Press proposing that the then vacant building be used as a community art museum. One of Cooper's paintings is shown:

"California State Building, San Diego Exposition", Colin Campbell Cooper, 1916, oil on canvas

A committee was formed and the museum opened its doors in 1941. There is a photograph of Wright Ludington with his foot on an ancient capital. Ludington, along with Ina Campbell, were the first major donors of works to the museum. It was Campbell's collection that was the basis for the Asian Collection. From the very beginning, SBMA has had major works in its collections and exhibitions. After WWII, Marcel DuChamp's "Nude Descending the Staircase" was on view. Artist, Rico LeBrun was given an artist in residency position.

"Self Portrait", Rico LeBrun, 1940, oil on canvas

MODERNIZATION

During this period of time, the museum actively sought out international modern art, keeping pace with the times.

"Jeune Fille en March", Marc Chagall, 1927-1928, oil and gouache on composition board, gift of Ganna Waleska

Latin American art was added to the collection and an exhibition of Chicano Art was held in 1970.

"Fuga (Escape)", Carlos Merida, 1940, oil on canvas

Another major donor was Catherine McCormick, who not only donated major artworks (Monet), but also McCormick house (Ridley-Tree Education Center) and the McCormick gallery.

EXPANSION

Photography and New Media were areas of expansion over the next few years. The blockbuster exhibition “Eternal China: Splendors From the First Dynasties” featuring the Terra Cotta Warriors in 1998 was a highlight of this time period.

ILLUMINATION

The museum continues to build and strengthen its collection. The installation of the Siquieros mural was a major addition in 2001. The Asian and New Media collections have also been added to during this time.