

The New York Times

From 12th Century B.C. to 2017, Art in Startling Variety

By **Anita Gates**

March 7, 2018



Deana Lawson, "Binky and Tony Forever," 2009. RISD Museum, Providence

New England

BOSTON "Fra Angelico: Heaven on Earth." This exhibition is something of a reunion: In the early 1400s, the Renaissance artist Fra Angelico did four reliquaries depicting events in the life of the Virgin Mary. In 1899, the newly widowed American collector Isabella Stewart Gardner bought one

of them, “Assumption and Dormition of the Virgin,” and brought it back to Boston. Now its three companions, from the Museo de San Marco in Florence, are coming to visit. Through May 20. Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 25 Evans Way; 617-566-1401, gardnermuseum.org

BOSTON “Klimt and Schiele: Drawn.” Exactly 100 years ago, two of Austria’s most revered and convention-challenging artists died: Gustav Klimt (1862-1918) and Egon Schiele (1890-1918). This show of 60 rarely seen drawings, on loan from the Albertina Museum in Vienna, focuses on how the two men’s works related, despite drastic differences in style, and on their daring depictions of the human body. Through May 28. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 465 Huntington Avenue; 617-267-9300, mfa.org

HARTFORD “Frederic Church: A Painter’s Pilgrimage.” We know the Hartford-born Church (1826-1900) as a master of the Hudson River School, but he constantly traveled internationally, seeking fresh inspiration for his landscapes. This show focuses on Church’s lesser-known works, of sites he painted in Egypt, Syria, Greece, Italy and Israel in the 1860s and ’70s. June 2-Aug. 26. Wadsworth Atheneum, 600 Main Street; 860-278-2670, thewadsworth.org

MANCHESTER, N.H. “The Sculpture of Augustus Saint-Gaudens.” War heroes were his specialty. Even his large-scale works, like “Lincoln: The Man” (best known as “Standing Lincoln”) and his 1893 “Diana” (which once balanced on one toe atop the original Madison Square Garden in New York), are part of this exhibition, the first major New England show of Saint Gaudens’s work in decades. Born in Dublin, raised in New York and active throughout Europe, Saint-Gaudens summered in New Hampshire, then spent his final years there, at his home and studio in Cornish. Through May 20. Currier Museum of Art, 150 Ash Street; 603-669-6144, currier.org

PORTLAND, ME. “The Robbers: German Art in a Time of Crisis.” In 1782, “The Robbers,” a new drama about two brothers (one a money-hungry villain, the other an idealistic revolutionary), made its playwright, Friedrich Schiller, famous. In 1922, the Berlin Dada artist George Grosz turned the same story into a lithographic suite, with its characters and action updated to Grosz’s present (and very unsettled) world, the Weimar Republic. Those nine prints, plus a table of contents, are the centerpiece of this show, which also includes works by Käthe Kollwitz, Max Beckmann and Otto Dix that reflect on Germany’s sociocultural milieu after the Great War. Through July 5. Portland Museum of Art, 7 Congress Square; 207-775-6148, portlandmuseum.org

PROVIDENCE, R.I. “The Phantom of Liberty: Contemporary Works in the RISD Museum Collection.” This is the design school museum’s broadest exhibition so far – more than 40 artists — of postwar art and design. Works in a variety of media make statements about the concept of freedom. Artists include Deana Lawson, Yinka Shonibare and Faig Ahmed. May 4-Dec. 30. Rhode Island School of Design Museum, 224 Benefit Street; 401-454-6500, risdmuseum.org

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WILLIAMSTOWN, MASS. “Drawn to Greatness: Master Drawings From the Thaw Collection.” The New York art dealer Eugene V. Thaw, who died in January, assembled a remarkable collection of drawings over the last half-century. This show includes 150 of them: pen-and-ink, chalk, graphite and watercolor works from the likes of Tiepolo, Ingres, Watteau, Turner, Degas, Cassatt, Gauguin, Cézanne, Matisse, Pollock and – oh, yeah – Picasso and Rembrandt. Through April 28. Clark Art Institute, 225 South Street; 413-458-2303, clarkart.edu

NORTH ADAMS, MASS. “Allison Janae Hamilton: Pitch.” Ms. Hamilton’s photographs have titles like “Nightgown and Spanish Moss” and “House Dress Hanging in Live Oak.” Her installations include taxidermy (alligators, a common sight during her Florida childhood, are favorites). This, Ms. Hamilton’s first solo museum exhibition, makes clear her love for the land (she sees the environment as subject, not background, she has said); her embrace of the mythical; and a palpable, intensely Southern sense of place. March 25-March 2, 2019. Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA), 1040 Mass Moca Way; 413-662-2111, massmoca.org



Frank Stella, "Juam, State I," 1997. 2018 Frank Stella/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Mid-Atlantic

BALTIMORE "Crowning Glory: Art of the Americas." One insightful way to assess a civilization: what the people put on their heads, how they portrayed the human head and what that meant in terms of identity, prestige and spirituality. This 20-object show examines pre-Columbian cultures as old as the 12th century B.C., in Central and South America: The Olmec of Mexico left behind a series of distinctive giant heads, up to 12 feet tall, made of volcanic basalt. Carvings from the Jama-Coaque of Ecuador show their affection for a wide range of elaborate headwear. The Nazca of Peru were into trophy skulls. Through Oct. 7. Walters Art Museum, 600 North Charles Street; 410-547-9000, thewalters.org

NEW YORK (BROOKLYN) "David Bowie Is." As you might expect, a show about Bowie (1947-2016), a pop star who specialized in innovation and reinvention, is thoroughly multimedia, with video projections and continuous audio. It's big too: The 400 or so objects include 60 of his performance costumes, 85 handwritten lyric sheets and an abundance of music videos, television clips and concert footage. Organized by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the show has been touring worldwide for five years; this is the big finish. Through July 15. Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway; 718-638-5000, brooklynmuseum.org

NEW YORK (MANHATTAN) "Bodys Isek Kingelez." Rachel Donadio, writing in The New York Times, once summarized his work as "architectural models gone wild." Mr. Kingelez, a self-taught Congolese sculptor who died in 2015, started doing models of single buildings and soon expanded into complete futuristic cityscapes. This show, which includes pieces from the 1989 Centre Pompidou show "Magiciens de la Terre," is the first major retrospective of his work. May 26-Oct. 21. Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street; 212-708-9400, moma.org

NEW YORK (QUEENS) "Mel Chin: All Over the Place." One day in July, it will appear in Times Square: Is it a shipwreck statue? A whale skeleton? Something in between. It will be joined by a 20-foot-tall animatronic statue of Jenny Lind, who was a megastar singer in the 19th century. This "augmented reality" is part of a major survey (more than 70 works) of the career of Mr. Chin, a conceptual artist whose work comments on environmental issues and social justice. Based at the Queens Museum, the show – as its title suggests – is also all around the town. April 8-Aug. 12. Queens Museum, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; 718-592-9700, queensmuseum.org

PHILADELPHIA "Modern Times: American Art 1910-1950." The world was seriously changing in the early 20th century (automobiles, tall buildings, bizarre new music), and many American artists responded by using colors and shapes in new ways. Georgia O'Keeffe's "Red and Orange Streak," Marsden Hartley's "Painting No. 4 (A Black Horse)," Florine Stettheimer's "Spring Sale

at Bendel's" and Beauford Delaney's "Portrait of James Baldwin" are among the works here. April 18-Sept. 3. Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway; 215-763-8100, philamuseum.org

PRINCETON "Frank Stella Unbound: Literature and Printmaking." Mr. Stella, 81, has been a minimalist, a maximalist, a maker of shaped canvases and a practitioner of relief so high that it had to be called sculpture. And over 15 years (1984-99), he created major print series based on four quite different literary sources. Now, at his alma mater (where he majored in history), 41 prints from those series — based on a collection of Italian folk tales, the Dictionary of Imaginary Places, "Had Gadya" (a Passover song) and "Moby-Dick" — will be brought together. May 19-Sept. 23. Princeton University Art Museum, Elm Drive; 609-258-3788, artmuseum.princeton.edu

WASHINGTON "Black Out: Silhouettes Then and Now." These cut-paper profiles are a centuries-old art form but relatively unstudied. Highlights of this 50th-anniversary gallery exhibition include a life-size silhouette of an enslaved 19-year-old woman (alongside her 1796 bill of sale) and work by Auguste Edouart (1789-1861). Contemporary artists in the show include Kara Walker, Kristi Malakoff, Camille Utterback and Kumi Yamashita. May 11-March 10 (2019). Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, Eighth and F Streets N.W.; 202-633-8300, npg.si.edu

WASHINGTON "Georg Baselitz." In partnership with the Fondation Beyeler in Riehen, Switzerland, this major retrospective is the first one on these shores in two decades for Mr. Baselitz, the figurative master who turned 80 in January. More than a hundred works on display (some never seen before in this country) include "The Naked Man" (1962), which was once confiscated by East German authorities, perhaps because of its depiction of a larger-than-life-size erect penis; work from his "Helden," or "Heroes," series (mid-1960s); and the upside-down paintings that made him famous in the '70s. And some say that statue of his at the 1980 Venice Biennale was really a Hitler salute. June 21-Sept. 16. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Independence Avenue and Seventh Street; 202-633-4674, hirshhorn.si.edu

WILMINGTON, DEL. "Eye on Nature: Andrew Wyeth and John Ruskin." Wyeth (1917-2009), the illustrator's son from Chadds Ford, Penn., was best known for "Christina's World," a wistful combination of landscape and portrait. The London-born Ruskin (1819-1900) was the most distinguished art critic of his day, barely known as an artist at all. But these very different men were similarly fascinated with the details of the natural world. Now Ruskin's pencil-ink-and-inkwash "Trees in a Lane" (1847) and Wyeth's ink-and-watercolor "Sycamore Tree" (1941) hang side by side as part of this show, which includes almost 60 works by the two. Through May 27. Delaware Art Museum, 2301 Kentmere Parkway; 302-571-9590, delart.org





Bradley Phillips (1929–1991), "Leontyne Price," 1963, on view at the Mississippi Museum of Art.
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

South

ATLANTA “Divine Felines: Cats of Ancient Egypt.” Cats were poised and graceful, and they killed vermin and snakes, but that doesn’t really explain why they were worshiped in Egypt for thousands of years. More than 90 objects from this college museum and the Brooklyn Museum collection suggest the reverential treatment the animals received in life and death (sometimes being mummified, just like the pharaohs). Items from Egypt include an Old Kingdom limestone tomb relief; a Ptolemaic-period stele with the leonine gods Bes and Tutu; a wood, gesso and paint cat coffin; and a 2,000-or-so-year-old bronze cat statuette that has Old Hollywood history too. Charlie Chaplin is said to have presented it as a gift to Paulette Goddard. Through Nov. 11. Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University, 571 South Kilgo Circle; 404-727-4282, carlos.emory.edu

FORT WORTH “From the Lands of Asia: The Sam and Myrna Myers Collection.” Here’s a very personal vision of Asian art. Mr. Myers – an American, who with his wife (who died in 2012) moved to Paris in the 1960s and began buying Asian art, has lent the Kimbell Art Museum more than 400 objects the couple collected over the years, some dating back to the Neolithic era. You can’t say the show lacks variety; items include a 17th-century Tibetan tapestry coat, a jade pendant from the Han dynasty, a Japanese wood sculpture of a Noh actor, porcelain, ivory, kimonos and Buddhist art. Through Aug. 19. Kimbell Art Museum, 3333 Camp Bowie Boulevard; 817-332-8451, kimbellart.org

HOUSTON “Modernism on the Ganges: Raghubir Singh Photographs.” Living in Paris, London, New York and Hong Kong, Mr. Singh (1942-99) saw it all, but his eye was always drawn back to his native India. The nearly 90 photos in this show were done with a handheld camera, color slide film and an eye for a subcontinent’s dense complexity. Mr. Singh’s influences ranged from the Parisian photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson to the filmmaker Satyajit Ray. Through June 3. Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1001 Bissonet Street; 713-639-7771, mfah.org

JACKSON, MISS. “Picturing Mississippi, 1817-2017: Land of Plenty, Pain, and Promise.” Some 175 works created by a hundred or so artists who lived in Mississippi (which celebrated two centuries of statehood last year) or came from afar to be inspired by it. Among them: Eudora Welty, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Henri Cartier-Bresson, John James Audubon, Carrie Mae Weems, Kara Walker, Melvin Edwards, George Caleb Bingham and Andy Warhol (represented by “Triple Elvis,” whose subject was born in Tupelo in 1935). Through July 8. Mississippi Museum of Art, 380 South Lamar Street; 601-960-1515, msmuseumart.org

NASHVILLE “Rome: City and Empire.” From 100 B.C. to A.D. 400, it was the largest city in the world. At its height, the Roman Empire ruled over one-fifth of the planet’s population. This British Museum exhibition tells its story through more than 200 historical objects of all kinds. Among the treasures: a gold seal ring that bears the face of Mark Antony, a gilded wall painting of plaster and gold, a relief of two female gladiators, heads of Hadrian and Augustus, copper and enamel jewelry, and a fresco from doomed Pompeii. This is the show’s only North American stop. Through May 28. Frist Center for the Visual Arts, 919 Broadway; 615-244-3340, fristcenter.org.

SARASOTA, FLA. “Hank Willis Thomas: Branded/Unbranded.” Take an ad, delete the words with the advertising pitch, and what you’re left with is another message: the evolution of identity and stereotypes in marketing images. Or substitute new copy, and a MasterCard ad can become a heartbreaking comment on a young black man’s funeral (“Finding the right casket for your son: Priceless”). Mr. Thomas, a black photographer and conceptual artist born in New Jersey in 1976, uses these methods to comment on race, gender and commodification. About half of this 26-work exhibition comes from those series, particularly “Unbranded: A Century of White Women, 1915-2015,” alongside real ads from the artist’s personal archives. Through June 10. John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, 5401 Bay Shore Road; 941-359-5700, ringling.org



Léon Bakst, “The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian,” 1911.
via Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Midwest

CHICAGO “The Medieval World at Our Fingertips: Manuscript Illuminations From the Collection of Sandra Hindman.” Ms. Hindman, founder of Les Enluminures (galleries in Chicago, New York and Paris) and a noted medieval manuscript scholar, offers nearly 30 European illuminations here, spanning four centuries. The show includes fragments from choir books and books-of-hours (lavishly illustrated devotional texts made for everyday churchgoers). Through May 28. Art Institute of Chicago, 111 South Michigan Avenue; 312-443-3600, artic.edu

CINCINNATI “Terracotta Army: Legacy of the First Emperor of China.” Most art lovers know something about the thousands of life-size terra cotta soldiers found by farmers in Shaanxi province in 1974. This international loan exhibition brings many of them – and related Qin dynasty

objects, from the same third-century B.C. funerary pit – to the United States for the first time. April 20-Aug. 12. Cincinnati Art Museum, 953 Eden Park Drive; 513-639-2995, cincinnatiartmuseum.org

DETROIT “Making Home: Contemporary Works From the DIA.” Home is supposed to mean “comfort, belonging and permanency,” this show’s organizers point out. But some of the 47 works here (mostly prints, drawings and photographs) may reflect a different reality. The show, which comments on both domestic space and community as home, includes Carrie Mae Weems’s seminal “Kitchen Table Series” photographs; Lorna Simpson’s “Bathroom,” a study of mirrors framed by glaring light bulbs; Roger Shimomura’s wartime-theme lithograph “American Guardian”; and works by Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and Romare Bearden. Through June 6. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Avenue; 313-833-7900, dia.org

KANSAS CITY, MO. “All the World’s a Stage: Theater and Costume.” And every man an actor, Shakespeare added, who after his hour upon the stage is heard no more. But sometimes, as this small, highly specialized show of 10 prints and drawings reminds us, artists immortalized the performers. And sometimes they helped create the theatrical illusions. The exhibition includes Edouard Manet’s depiction of commedia dell’arte characters, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec’s cabaret performers, and Marc Chagall’s sets and costumes for the Moscow State Yiddish Theater. Through Aug. 5. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 4525 Oak Street; 816-751-1278, nelson-atkins.org

MILWAUKEE “Designing Paris: The Posters of Jules Chéret.” A Milwaukee couple, James and Susee Wiechmann, began collecting Chéret (1836-1932) posters in the 1980s and have now donated nearly 600 to their hometown museum. This introductory show includes 16, produced between 1878 and 1906, with an emphasis on colorful come-ons for Paris’s most famous music hall, the Folies-Bergère. Chéret shows a taste for soft reds and yellows, and for depictions of women’s legs. Through April 29. Milwaukee Art Museum, 700 North Art Museum Drive; 414-224-3220, mam.org

MINNEAPOLIS “Power and Beauty in China’s Last Dynasty: Concept and Design by Robert Wilson.” Yes, Mr. Wilson’s credit is part of the title. That’s how revered a theater artist he is. More than four decades after “Einstein on the Beach,” his masterpiece with Philip Glass, he creates a museum installation as theater. Art (objects from the museum’s collection), light and sound evoke the Qing dynasty as museumgoers walk through various spaces, each one representing an aspect of the opulent life inside the imperial palace. Through May 27. Minneapolis Institute of Art, 2400 Third Avenue South; 612-870-3131, artsmia.org



Robert Colescott's "Colored TV," 1977, on view at the Seattle Art Museum.

2018 Estate of Robert Colescott/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, photo: Don Ross

West

DENVER “Degas: A Passion for Perfection.” Every freshman art student knows that Edgar Degas adored dancers; roughly half his life’s work depicted ballerinas. But Degas was also fascinated by opera, by horses and by human nudes. This show focuses on his recurring themes in more than 100 works (from paintings to bronze sculptures) made between 1855 (when the artist was 21) and 1906. We even see how he adjusted when street scenes in his beloved Paris began to include electric lights. This is the only American stop for the show, organized by the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England. Through May 20. Denver Art Museum, 13th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock Street; 720-865-5500, denverartmuseum.org

LOS ANGELES “Reality Projector” by Olafur Eliasson. The Copenhagen-born, Berlin-based Mr. Eliasson’s first major exhibition here is a site-specific installation. Projected light creates dynamic shadow play that turns the Marciano’s huge first-floor gallery into an abstract 3-D film. Through Aug. 31. Marciano Art Foundation, 4357 Wilshire Boulevard; 424-204-7555, marcianoartfoundation.org

LOS ANGELES “Michelangelo to Degas: Major New Acquisitions.” Where has Michelangelo’s circa-1500 “Study of a Mourning Woman” been all these years? In England, in the library at Castle Howard (where “Brideshead Revisited” was filmed), pasted inside an album. It’s just one of 16 major drawings in this show drawn from the Getty’s impressive 2017 acquisitions. Degas is represented by two late-19th-century works: a nude and a study of dancers. Other artists here include Goya, Andrea del Sarto and Tiepolo. The Getty, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary, has also thrown in one painting: “La Surprise” (1718-19), by Jean Antoine Watteau, which until a decade or so ago was believed to have been lost. Through April 22. J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Center Drive at Sepulveda Boulevard; 310-440-7300, getty.edu

PORTLAND, ORE. “Richard Diebenkorn: Beginnings, 1942-1955.” A native Oregonian, Mr. Diebenkorn (born in Portland in 1922) was a star of figuration. But what did he do before that? Roughly 100 paintings and drawings on loan from the artist’s foundation, most never publicly exhibited before, begin to answer that question. The show includes early works in oil, watercolor, gouache and ink; Abstract Expressionist paintings done in California; and “Untitled (Horse and Rider)” (1954), considered one of his first mature figurative paintings. June 16-Sept. 23. Portland Art Museum, 1219 S.W. Park Avenue; 503-226-2811, portlandartmuseum.org

SAN FRANCISCO “The Train: RFK’s Last Journey.” Fifty years ago (June 8, 1968), a Penn Central train carried the body of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, assassinated three days before, from New York to Washington for burial at Arlington. Inside, a Magnum photographer, Paul Fusco, took

color shots of the sea of mourners lining the tracks. Outside, the spectators took their own photos and home movies as the train passed. Now their work (collected by Rein Jelle Terpstra), Mr. Fusco's pictures and Philippe Parreno's 70-millimeter film re-creating the journey, are together in this multidisciplinary memorial. March 17-June 10. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 151 Third Street; 415-357-4000, sfmoma.org

SANTA FE "No Idle Hands: The Myths & Meanings of Tramp Art." During the Depression, there were a lot of old cigar boxes and fruit crates lying around. People (mostly, but not all, men) had pocket knives, they knew how to notch and layer, and tramp art was born. The term is a misnomer (its practitioners were not necessarily bums or hobos), but the name stuck. This show includes more than 150 examples – sewing boxes, jewelry boxes, communion boxes, picture frames, small furniture pieces — from the United States and seven other countries. Five of the artists are still working in the genre today. Through Sept. 16. Museum of International Folk Art, 706 Camino Lejo, Santa Fe, N.M.; 505-476-1200, moifa.org

SEATTLE "Figuring History: Robert Colescott, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas." What if it had been "George Washington Carver Crossing the Delaware"? In Mr. Colescott's work, it was – and the guy in the back of the boat was playing a banjo. Ms. Thomas painted a "Dejeuner sur l'Herbe" in which the trois femmes were black. Mr. Marshall's "School of Beauty, School of Culture," set in a black-owned hair salon, was his take on the history-painting genre. This show of three African-American artists creates a solid counternarrative on general history, art history, black identity and gender identity. Through May 13. Seattle Art Museum, 1300 First Avenue; 206-654-3100, seattleartmuseum.org

Correction: March 7, 2018

An earlier version of this article misstated the month in which a sculpture by Mel Chin will appear in Times Square. It is July, not April; the overall exhibition "Mel Chin: All Over the Place" begins in April.

Correction: March 8, 2018

An earlier version of this article gave an incorrect location for the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA). It is North Adams, Mass., not West Adams.

A version of this article appears in print on March 14, 2018, on Page F42 of the New York edition with the headline: Art From Three Millenniums

