Joslyn Art Museum Opens Reinstalled Balcony Gallery of American Indian, Asian Art

Omaha, NE – Joslyn Art Museum has reopened the south side of its Storz Fountain Court balcony galleries, marking the completion of a reinstallation project dedicated to American Indian and Asian art from the permanent collection. The installation American Indian Art: Tradition and Innovation occupies the north side of the balcony and was completed in August. The south portion of the balcony, The Arts of Asia, showcases works from the geographic area that includes China, Japan, India, and Southeast Asia. These permanent collection installations, highlighting two of Joslyn’s most popular collections, are included in free general Museum admission.

American Indian Art: Tradition and Innovation

American Indian art is often viewed as fixed in time — as the record of peoples who have been displaced, or the repetition of decorative styles far removed from their original sources. This gallery aims to create a dialogue between past and present, highlighting historic objects alongside works by contemporary American Indian artists. As part of a living tradition, their work celebrates their heritage while also addressing the challenges that face Native communities today and their relationship with Euro-American society. From practical objects made for everyday use to painting and sculpture that expands the contemporary vocabulary, the works seen in the new installation represent the diversity of American Indian cultures with expressions of reverence, anger, humor, and vitality. The installation includes 31 works ranging from a nineteenth-century Haida mask...
Joslyn’s American Indian and Asian Galleries

from the Pacific Northwest to Zig Jackson’s self-portrait, photographed in a war bonnet, sunglasses and tennis shoes while riding a city bus. Featured artists include Arthur Amiotte, Mary Lee Begay, Edith Claymore, Bob Haozous, Oscar Howe, Maria Montoya Martinez, Jaune Quick-To-See Smith, Roxanne Swentzell, and Dorothy Torivio.

The Arts of Asia

The 29 objects in this gallery are drawn from a broad geographic area that includes China, Japan, India, and Southeast Asia. Spanning a period of over 3,500 years, the objects in this installation reflect the religious beliefs and artistic heritage of many interwoven cultures from the Neolithic period (about 10,000 BC to about 2,000 BC) to the nineteenth century. Highlighting all aspects of life, from the household to religious devotion to the passage of the deceased into the next world, the works explore how various peoples conceived of life and death and the confluence of the two. The ferocious visage of a ceramic zhenmushou or tomb guardian from the Tang Dynasty (618–983), placed to warn away malevolent invaders that would disturb the deceased in the afterlife, sits in marked contrast to the serene smile of a gilded Tibetan Bodhisattva from the nineteenth century, intended as a vessel to assist others on the journey towards enlightenment. The history of interaction with Western culture is also reflected, from the classicizing influence of Hellenistic Greece seen in a small tomb relief, to the advent of foreign trade in the sixteenth century that created a market for elaborately-decorated porcelain in Western Europe, highlighted by two vases emblazoned with dragons snaking their way through roiling clouds. Reverence for the natural world is evidenced by Nishiyama Hôen’s elegant screen depicting a male peacock displaying his magnificent tail to his mate surrounded by peonies and cherry and magnolia blossoms.
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Our Mission — Joslyn Art Museum collects, preserves, and interprets the visual arts of the highest quality, fostering appreciation and enjoyment of art for the benefit of a diverse audience. Our Vision — To be cherished and respected as a premier art museum.

The Museum was a gift to the people of Omaha from Sarah Joslyn in memory of her husband, George, who made his fortune as president of the Western Newspaper Union. The Museum's original 1931 building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, with 38 types of marble from seven countries. The Walter and Suzanne Scott Pavilion, a 58,000-square-foot addition built in 1994, was designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster, Baron Foster of Thames Bank, as his first U.S. commission. The Museum features galleries, a 1,000-seat concert hall, fountain court, education technology gallery, lecture hall, classrooms, sculpture garden, café, and shop.

Joslyn Art Museum Hours: Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., 10 am to 4 pm; Thurs., 10 am to 8 pm; Sun., noon to 4 pm. Closed Monday and major holidays.

General Museum admission is free.