



# CRAVENS WORLD

*the human* AESTHETIC

This catalog was published on the occasion of the premiere installation of Annette Cravens Collection,  
*Cravens World: The Human Aesthetic* at UB Anderson Gallery, University at Buffalo, The State University of New York  
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The text of this catalogue was edited by Peter F. Biehl and Sandra H. Olsen

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Annette Cravens photographed  
by Kim Mckinzie, May 2009

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### CONTENTS

Preface	5
Bruce McCombe Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences	
Introduction	7
Peter F. Biehl Department of Anthropology	
Curatorial Essay	15
Sarah J. Scott Art Department, Wagner College	
The Anderson Gallery and the Cravens Collection	27
Sandra Olsen UB Art Galleries	
The Collector Annette Cravens	31
Samuel Paley (Department of Classics) with Sandra Olsen	
The Design of Cravens World	35
Mehrdad Hadighi Department of Architecture	
Cravin' the Cravens: The Outreach Program	39
Sarah A. Robert Graduate School of Education	
Highlights of the Collection	45
Laura Harrison Department of Anthropology	
Exhibition Checklist	63
Elizabeth Poyer Department of Classics	



*Ox and Cart from China. Tang Dynasty. 618-907. 8 inches (20.3 cm). Inv. no. 0085.*

# Preface

Bruce McCombe

Annette Cravens' generous donation of her large and diverse collection of cultural material to the University at Buffalo continues a family philanthropic tradition involving UB that began nearly 75 years ago. Donations from the Cravens' family have focused on the pedagogical mission of the university, consistently providing invaluable academic resources for research in both the arts and sciences. Equally important has been a concern for making the donations as broadly accessible as possible.

Mrs. Cravens' father, Dr. Edgar R. McGuire, succeeded his colleague and mentor, Dr. Roswell Park, as professor of surgery and medicine at the university, a position he maintained until his death in 1931. A few years later, Mrs. Cravens' mother, Mildred Francis Lacey, married Thomas B. Lockwood, who later gave his collection of rare books to the university. Subsequently, Mrs. Lockwood married Arthur Lacey, and the couple supported the acquisitions of the manuscripts of British poet Robert Graves as well as a portrait of Graves by John Ulbright, which still hangs in the Poetry and Rare Book Collection of the University Libraries.

Mrs. Cravens earned her undergraduate degree from Sarah Lawrence College in 1945 and her master's degree in social work from UB in 1968. She worked at Children's Hospital and the Cerebral Palsy Institute.

In 1984, Mrs. Cravens contributed the original renderings of the Lockwood Library to the university. She and her children worked with university administrators to establish a lecture series in the Poetry Collection in memory of Mrs. Lacey. She also founded the Dr. Edgar R. McGuire Historical Medical Instrument

Collection in memory of her father. Housed in the Health Sciences Library, the collection is an assemblage of more than 200 medical instruments dating from the early Roman period to the late 19th century. These donations confirmed Mrs. Cravens' belief that the university community and the larger region can learn and be enriched through access to objects, be it books, instruments, or most recently, her own personal passion, world arts.

Committed to her belief that firsthand contact with artworks from different cultures provides a tangible connection to the aesthetic sensibilities of other people, and creates a critical dynamic that can inspire appreciation and understanding, Mrs. Cravens provided support to the College of Arts and Sciences to assist with renovating a storage room at UB Anderson Gallery and constructing a uniquely designed open storage/display room that makes nearly all the collection visibly accessible. The College of Arts and Sciences also provides support for a graduate assistant on an annual basis, who will serve as collection manager and curator for the collection. The adjacent seminar room enables classes to study objects together during an entire semester. A proposed research room on the other side of the Cravens' World would provide space for object-based research with equipment available to examine the objects scientifically to further identify their place and date of origin.

In 2007, Mrs. Cravens received an Alumni Award for her loyal support of and commitment to the University at Buffalo. This recent donation continues her contributions to the university, and provides unique academic resources and support to strengthen and broaden academic research.



*Male Funerary Figure from Vietnam Moï (Doi) Circa 19th century 38 inches (96.5 cm) Inv. no. 0088*  
*Female Funerary Figure from Vietnam Moï (Doi) Circa 19th century 37 inches (94 cm) Inv. no. 0089*

# Introduction

Peter F. Biehl

When Bruce McCombe, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University at Buffalo asked me to work on the Cravens collection in December 2008, I had no idea what a phenomenal journey I was about to undertake. I am an archaeologist, trained to decipher objects in their contexts, fixated on physical, temporal, and cultural classification and obsessed with recreating as accurate a reconstruction of the past as possible. So when I was faced with the collection – an astonishing amalgam of objects spanning from prehistoric times to last week, whose origins hopscotched around the globe with the avidness of a seven-year-old careening around the block – I froze. What to do? How to make sense of it all for the public? How to show it in a way that would inspire, engage, transform students and lay people as well as academics and researchers? Most importantly, would we capture the life force, the *joie de vivre* that defines Annette Cravens, underpins her collection and ultimately unites all these beautifully disparate objects?

For me, objects are a gateway to stories about the past. They remind us of our shared humanity. Across the millennia, we humans have asked remarkably similar questions as we sought to mark, record and make sense of ourselves, our communities and life's most pivotal moments. Annette's objects encapsulate these questions. We just have to listen. Part of my hope for this exhibition is that it will inspire a new generation of viewers to let the objects speak.

As I said, it's been an amazing journey. This collection and my interactions with Annette Cravens have transformed my thinking about objects, aesthetics, art, museums, even to some degree, archaeology. I have been forced to think out of context – literally out of the box – and move beyond classic classification, in order to place objects back into boxes, albeit, floating, translucent ones. I feel privileged to have been part of this process, to know Annette and unspeakably honored that she trusted me with this amazing collection, which is her lifelong work.

7

## CRAVENS WORLD : *the human* AESTHETIC

We conceived this preliminary catalogue as a means to help the visitor enter the Cravens World and become familiar with the Cravens Collection Project. It is not a scientific catalogue. Rather, it focuses on the origins of this unique collection, the story of the woman who collected it and the history of the collection's relationship to the Anderson Gallery. In her essay, Sandra Olsen outlines this bond and notes that Annette's

donation of close to 1,100 objects has nearly doubled the size of the university's collection. She highlights pieces from the modern collection, which can be found in the hallway. Samuel Paley presents a more personal portrait of Annette as a collector, describing with humor and candor their mutual excitement over finding artifacts and negotiating with dealers over an almost 40-year span.

This preliminary catalogue also introduces the scope of the Cravens Collection Project and explains the University at Buffalo's plans until 2012 for teaching and research. It also describes the reasoning behind the design and display in the open storage room, and the extent of the outreach program. By 2012, we plan to produce a traditional scientific catalogue in which we archive the objects according to international conventions for cultural heritage and make the as-yet-unpublished objects accessible to the scientific community. I will begin this work in fall 2010 and will start with objects from Europe and the Near East.

This catalogue serves as an homage to this exceptional collection which follows the travels of Annette Cravens for the past 40 years. It was not an easy collection to curate. We came up with the idea of the globe to reflect her world travels and her unique way of viewing objects and of seamlessly moving from culture to culture without borders or bias. When she looks at art, she looks for line and color, gesture, articulation, something that comments or offers a glimpse at our own humanity. She often says she knows an object is worthwhile when it speaks to her. We wanted to help these objects, which have said so much to her over a lifetime, speak to those who enter her collection. Hence this innovative design by Mehrdad Hadighi and his team, which, we hope, will capture the viewer's senses and imagination.

Like Annette, who always looks at an object from all angles, the globe permits 360° views of the objects and showcases each as a unique creation. Like the transparent blocks that house her objects, she views world cultures as interlocking, each a reflection of the other and human beings' ongoing struggles to mark our existence, ease life's traumas and/or tell our stories to whomever will listen.

The globe houses 126 archaeological and ethnographic objects organized by guest curator Sarah Scott into six thematic groups identified by color. The wall cabinets and drawers house 451 objects (119 in cabinets, 332 in drawers) organized by geographic location. Scott explains her choices and the reasoning for each placement in her essay accompanying this catalogue.

Architect Mehrdad Hadighi, in his essay in this catalogue, deconstructs his rationale for the design and his evolving thoughts on museum aesthetics and the use of open storage facilities. I cannot stress enough the importance of his and his team's input and their creativity in imagining and building this reflective and reflexive foundation for the viewing of the collection.

The display is not only contemporary in its design, but also in its function. We have used the best of 21st-century technology to illuminate these ancient objects and bring their stories to

life. On the left-hand side of the globe, we have placed an interactive touch screen which will allow visitors to access information on the objects, view reconstructions of how they might have been used and gain information about the cultures, countries, peoples and artists who created them. We also plan to add (in 2010-2011) mobile handheld devices, which will enable visitors to move freely around, while learning about the objects. They will be able to hear: experts talk about the origins, the uses and significance of the objects, specialists assess the objects' cultural value and importance, curators talk about the placement of the object within the globe, and Annette Cravens describe when she first saw the object, why she wanted it in her collection and how she acquired it. A visit to the collection will be a multi-vocal, multi-medial and multi-dimensional globe trot.

We are working on outreach programs that will allow students from kindergarten to high school to interact with the objects both from their classrooms and within the gallery. This is an integral part of the project and a piece we are very proud of. Not only does this further the mission of UB in educating and reaching out to the Buffalo community, but it accurately reflects Annette Cravens' lifelong devotion to her hometown. Throughout her years of travel and exploration, Annette remained true to her

roots and never left her hometown. Instead, she worked tirelessly to support Buffalo's intellectual life via arts, theater and the University.

We are grateful for the help and vision of Sarah Robert from UB's Graduate School of Education, who expanded her research focus considerably to take on this project. She explains in her essay how crucial it is to expose students to art, other cultures, museums and teach them the art of seeing at a young age. Curiosity is a cornerstone of education and these objects inspire questions. In our increasingly digitized age, much learning is occurring on computers and in digital formats. Our exhibit takes advantage of these tools, but also makes sure students get a chance to see, touch and feel authentic, rather than virtual objects. It propels them to imagine who made them, why and under what circumstances. The objects will allow students – many of whom have never traveled outside of Buffalo – to visit foreign places. The objects, nestled in their hands, can serve as springboards for their imagination, transporting them to distant lands and our remote past. Such direct contact can, as Robert notes, enrich them in ways that transcend the boundaries of the classroom. Again, as always with Annette, we find the theme of crossing borders, expanding possibilities, rendering translucent and finding hidden connections.

## The Cravens Collection Project

The Cravens Collection Project is being funded by the UB College of Arts and Sciences with generous support from Annette Cravens. It includes: the assessment, research and management of the donated collection of ca. 1,100 archaeological and ethnographic objects, archives of written documents, oral histories, photos and artwork from around the world, the planning and building of four rooms (an open storage room which is called “Cravens World”, a research room and a seminar room which are both adjacent to the Cravens World and an exhibition room across the hall). It also includes the organization of this opening exhibition and catalogue publication, the conception and implementation of UB teaching modules and the previously discussed public outreach program with Buffalo public schools. I would like to stress again the array of teaching possibilities the collection gives us. At the moment, it touches on material culture studies, museum studies, anthropology, classics, art history, oral history, architecture, media studies, ethics and law – and this is only the beginning.

Another exciting aspect of the project involves the multi-media component, including the virtual museum interfaced with an online multimedia database for web use, the touch screen and handheld devices in the open storage room and the production of an educational video game focusing on the collection. The game is still in development, but will hopefully allow students to traverse the world in order to collect objects such as those in the Cravens collection.

We are thrilled about this chance to create such a unique and cutting-edge educational tool and are continually learning from our partners at Brock University, who are helping with the conception and development of the game. Educational gaming is a booming field and clearly represents a means of reaching today’s techno-crazed youth. It is also an innovative field for scholarship. Through this game, we will not only deepen the educational experience of the Cravens Collection, we will also produce scholarship in this new area of digital humanistic research.

## Future Plans for the Cravens World

In phase II of the Cravens Project, which will start in the fall semester 2010 and will end in 2012, teaching and research will come to the forefront. The seminar room on the East side of the globe will be used for Buffalo school children, as discussed, but also by UB students as a research lab. Students will examine and research objects from the collection over an entire semester. I will teach a course on museum management in the fall 2010 in which students will focus on objects from Europe and the Near East. The students will learn about identification, classification and preservation as well as about our own culturally-bound responses to artifacts. Similar courses using objects from other continents will follow over the next three years. During the course, students will write up narratives about the objects they have studied. Their narratives will be included in the final catalogue. At the end of the semester, the students will collectively curate a public exhibition of Cravens objects which will be housed in the niche across from the Cravens World.

The collection will also open opportunities for internships in museum studies, anthropology, classics, art history, oral history, education, and library science. Phase II will also see the renovation of the adjacent room (west side) into a research lab and a repository and study room for the collection's archives.

We see the Cravens Collection Project as a watershed moment for the University at Buffalo. The collection will allow the UB Anderson Gallery to become a vibrant player in the education and experiences of students in the College of Arts and Science and to serve as a resource for the entire Buffalo community. We hope it will boost the University's profile as a center for world cultural heritage research. The digital archives, virtual museum and video game will put UB on the cutting edge of curatorial science. Many universities across the nation have or will have such donated collections and it is our great hope that this collection will become a model that others might look to emulate. We've had a marvelous time doing this and can think of nothing more rewarding than helping others embark on a similar journey.

## Acknowledgments

This exhibition, Cravens World – The Human Aesthetic marks the end of the first phase of the Cravens Collection Project and was funded by the College of Arts and Sciences with generous support from Annette Cravens. More than 30 faculty and students worked on the project over the past 14 months, and I cannot thank them enough for their dedication, good will, long hours and inspirational thinking. Clearly, I cannot mention everyone by name, but still, there are several people who deserve particular praise. They are the core team, the people with whom I consulted often (at times daily) as we pushed to bring this project to fruition. They took this journey with me and I am humbled by how much they taught me, inspired by how much creativity they bring to the office every day and grateful for their dedication. This project is theirs as much as mine. They are: Sandra H. Olsen, director of the UB Art Galleries, Sarah Scott (Wagner College), the guest curator of the exhibition, the Cravens Project faculty committee members Stephen L. Dyson (Classics), Samuel Paley (Classics), Douglas Perrelli (Anthropology), Philip Stevens (Anthropology), Mehrdad Hadighi (Architecture), Sarah Robert (Education) and Elizabeth Peña (Art Conservation) and Nils Olsen, who offered legal advice. I would also like to thank several specialists who did preliminary research on the objects in the exhibition: Susan Beningson (Columbia University – objects from Asia), Catherine Fitzgerald Eckels (University of Pennsylvania – objects from

Oceania) and Gordon McEwan (Wagner College – objects from Mesoamerican and South America), Sandra Olsen (UB Art Galleries – modern pottery from Southwest United States), Samuel Paley (Classics – objects from the Near and Middle East), Douglas Perrelli (Anthropology – objects from North America), and Philip Stevens (Anthropology – objects from Africa).

I would also like to thank Mehrdad Hadighi (Architecture) and Chris Romano and Jose Chang (both Architecture) for their innovative design, crucial contributions to the intellectual development of the project and sustained friendship. I would also like to thank Sarah Robert for jumping onto this project and making it an immediate success. Already, her outreach program has been funded by the UB2020 Scholars Fund.

I would like to also acknowledge colleagues working on new branches of the Cravens project with me. Michael Frisch (American Studies), Sandra Olsen and Sarah Robert are contributing to the project, “Open Knowledge and Digital Archives: Digitization, Curation and Dissemination of the Cravens Collection.” Alexander Reid (English), Roy Roussel (Media Studies) and Sarah Robert, and Martin Danahay and Kevin Kee from Brock University have contributed time, creativity and expertise to the project “Serious Play and the Cravens Collection: Designing an Educational Video Game for the Outreach Program of the Cravens Collection.” Both projects have received funding from the Digital Humanities Initiative at Buffalo (DHIB), for which I am also grateful.

I would also like to thank the marvelous staff of the Anderson Gallery, particularly the amazing and impossibly talented Bob Scalise, without whom we would never be where we are today. Thanks also to Ginny Lohr, Jennifer Markee, Tim Roby, Jim Snider and especially Paul Wilcox for their continuing support.

I would also like to thank the Dean's Advisory Committee members, particularly Sue Gale, whose guidance and support were indispensable to the project. I would also like to acknowledge Rob Rychlik and Rekha Prativadi and their team from UB Facilities, Planning, and Design.

Thanks are also, as always, due to the magical Deb McKinzie, who was among the first to understand the importance of this project and who has served as its behind-the-scenes champion for years.

Thanks also to Paul Warner and Patrick Caveny of Hadley Exhibits for the producing functional, but eye-pleasing open storage wall cabinets and for the fabrication of the acrylic cubes of the globe. And a big thanks to Biff Henrich and Kim

McKinzie for photography, Vince Benbenek for the catalogue design and to Robert Freudenheim for the catalogue printing and production.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the time, energy and stunning work ethic of our graduate student assistants Elizabeth Poyer (database and collection) and at a later stage of the project Laura Harrison (photography) as well as the undergraduate student assistant Aleksander Ogadzhanov (website and virtual museum). Without their long hours and dedication, this project would still be a dream.

Most importantly, I would like to offer my unwavering gratitude to and admiration for Annette Cravens. Annette, you are an inspiration, not just to me, but to the entire university, the community and the thousands of school children your collection will touch. Your travels will change people's lives, even if they never leave Buffalo. Thank you for your spark, your imagination, your perfectionism, your infallible eye, and your attention to detail. Thanks for pushing us all to be better than we thought we could be.

*Annette, you are an inspiration... to the entire university, the community and the thousands of school children your collection will touch.*



Face-neck Jar from Peru  
Chancay  
1100-1470  
19 inches (48.5 cm)  
Inv. no. 0002

## CURATORIAL ESSAY

**Cravens Collection - Overview of the World Arts**

Sarah Scott

The Cravens collection is a unique group of world arts, spanning millennia and continents. The objects Annette Cravens collected are informed equally by her appreciation for aesthetics and context, and offer a rich view to the global traditions of art making. The study of world arts has recently emphasized a cross-cultural focus; a successful gallery installation, ‘Intersections,’ at the Fowler Museum at UCLA is but one example of how objects from many cultures and time periods have been brought together in a University setting.<sup>1</sup> The Cravens World is thus in the forefront of this new line of examination and study of world arts and culture.

The oldest objects from the Cravens collection are from Asia, Mesopotamia, and Europe. Pre- and Proto-historical cultures from the Mediterranean, southern Iraq, and the Nile Valley, dating to as early as 4500 BCE,<sup>2</sup> produced figurines, sculptures, and ceramics with generous forms and boldly defined linear designs. Each object possessed inherent meaning for its culture of origin. For example, stamp seals in the collection date from the third millennium BCE southern Mesopotamia. Stones carved from semi-precious stones are works of three-dimensional sculpture in their own right. Symbols carved on one flat side and then impressed into damp clay, imparted a coded message to temple administrators regarding commodities that were traded amongst early urban settlements. And so these objects possess the two inherent traits of the objects in the Cravens collection: aesthetic value, and functional relevance.

Works from Asia in the collection come from as far north as Mongolia and China, as far south as Indonesia, and India and Japan, dating to as early as the Neolithic period. Even before the first century AD Asiatic cultures took part in a vast trade network, the Silk Route, extending from the Yellow River to the Mediterranean Sea. It was along the Silk Route that objects and ideas were traded from eastern China, through modern day Afghanistan and into Rome and the rest of Europe. Some of the currency in the collection might have been used as tender along the Silk Route, such as the Tao and Pu currency known to have circulated in China during the early centuries of the first millennia CE.

Objects from Oceania from the islands of Micronesia, Melanesia, Polynesia, and Australia date to colonial periods, ranging from the early eighteenth century to the 20th century. Although the arrival of European missionaries to the region resulted in the destruction of much of the religious art, indigenous cultures adapted technologies introduced by the Europeans. Indigenous arts created with the use of these new technologies circulated to new markets. Many of the Maori pieces in the Cravens collection are a result of this new-found tradition in the Oceanic region. The Asmat people of southwestern New Guinea and the Abelam peoples of the Sepik River region used shell, feathers, animal bone, and natural fibers to craft ritual objects. Australia's aboriginal culture is represented in the collection by a few early 20th century examples of personal adornment worn for ceremonial purposes.

Many works in the collection originate from South and Central America. Those from Central America date to as early as the Olmec cultural period, approximately 1500-400 BCE. The Olmecs established long-lived traditions in the region such as building central plazas for staging elaborate rituals where the religious and political elite validated their power through their connection with deities. These traditions continued in the cultures of the Maya and Aztec. Objects of personal adornment, relief carvings, figurines and ceramics in the Cravens collection depict

images of elite interacting with or on the behalf of earthly and celestial deities. South American objects in the collection date to as early as 3300 BCE, such as the few examples of Valdivian sculpture. There are examples of beautiful figural ceramics in the collection produced in the southern and central states of Peru during the period of domination by the powerful Chimú state (1150-1450 CE). Many other objects originate from early cultures in Costa Rica, Columbia, and the Dominican Republic. A number of Taino objects contain figural details suggestive of deities worshipped in the Dominican Republic during the middle of the second millennium. Since scholars are just beginning to understand the cultural significance of some of these objects, the collection provides invaluable research opportunities.

A large portion of the collection is comprised of objects from North American contexts. During the early centuries of the second millennium AD multiple cultures existed in North America, all of which contributed to a rich ceramic tradition. Mississippian 'Mound Builders' produced works ceremonial in nature, emphasizing swirling and curvilinear decoration. In the southwest Hohokam and then Puebloan cultures created beautiful ceramics with figural and geometric designs. The American Northeast was also populated during the first and second millennia by the Iroquois and Algonquin, who maintained a rich tradition of personal adornment, sculptural forms, and ceramic production.

Objects from all these cultural groups are represented in the Cravens collection, as well as contemporary ceramics by artists who draw upon these ancient traditions. The opportunity to display together and research both ancient and contemporary ceramics from the southwest is one of the assets of the Cravens collection. By housing the works together scholars, students, and visitors can compare and contrast the continuation of traditions. Indigenous American Northwest Coast and Arctic material culture is also represented in the collection. Carved ivory effigy sculptures, figurines, and fishing and hunting tools originate from Old Bering Sea culture (as early as 500 BCE,). Similar works from the Punuk and Thule cultures (first and second millennia CE) can be found in the collection.

The Cravens collection is most rich in objects from sub-Saharan Africa. Works come from diverse cultural groups such as the Azande, Bapende (Pende), Baule, and Mende. These cultural groups transcend modern national borders, but can be found in countries such as Burkino Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, and Zaire. Although some objects reflect indigenous traditions, others reflect Islamic and Christian traditions imported by travelers from the Near East and Europe. The Yoruba tradition, originating from the Ife urban civilization (350 BCE) in southwestern Nigeria, claims Ife as the city of the origin of humankind. The belief that deities created humans out of terracotta perhaps

contributes to the rich sculptural tradition in this region, represented by many examples of portrait-like sculptures in the collection. The Benin Kingdom also claimed descent from the Ife tradition. Their establishment and maintenance of ancestral communication was essential to the continuation of the dynasty. Works in the collection used for such communication include objects of metal, carved ivory, and bone. Baule sculptures in the Cravens collection from Côte d'Ivoire, dating from the 19th-20th centuries, masterfully capture human and spiritual elements that served as links between the earthly and celestial realms, aiding diviners in their craft.

This general overview has provided an introduction to the diverse nature of the world arts in the Cravens Collection. Across every continent, ancient and contemporary artists created works with different media. Each object had a unique function and form. Yet these characteristics beg comparison across continents. The wealth of artistic tradition inherent in the collection, and the ways these traditions inform contemporary practices will provide unique educational opportunities for the Buffalo community. By bringing these objects and now displaying them at the UB Anderson Gallery, Annette Cravens has given a gift of unsurpassed value for future generations.

## Cravens Collection Introductory Installation - The Human Aesthetic

Cravens World provides an innovative, alternative design solution for “open storage”—a space or room in a museum providing visible accessibility to an entire collection. Accessibility to collections has been one of the most consistent challenges facing museums since they were founded. How is it possible for museums at the same time to display, secure and care for collections? A popular response has been designing spaces and rooms that basically turn storage rooms inside out, accessing the entire collection and inviting the public to walk past rows of cases with all the objects lined up and identified with various interpretive strategies. While interesting for visiting scholars, the presentation is most often unimaginative and visually stagnant. Rather than encouraging analytical examination of distinctive aesthetic characteristics, the individual objects become lost in the overwhelming visual presentation. Cravens World presents a successful resolution to the tension between accessibility and aesthetic display.

The Cravens collection includes world arts of great diversity—in geography, medium, time, and function, but they all possess one similarly striking quality—an aesthetic vitality essential to their effectiveness as an object. In the Cravens

World, works of art in the central ‘Globe’ structure are installed according to six cross-cultural themes. Within each theme, designated by a color, individual cubes hold objects that connect in at least one way to those in adjacent cubes. Minimal labeling inside the cubes allows for looking and learning without distraction. Visitors are encouraged to analyze the varieties of colors, forms, and context inherent in each object and between objects. Objects in the wall cabinets are organized by geographic region. They are conceived as a storage space with one eye-level cabinet visually accessible for display purposes. According to conservation principles, objects in the drawers are organized by medium. The west wall displays a range of world arts conceived on a monumental scale: weaponry, personal adornment, and ritual objects. To learn more about the objects, visitors should use the touch-screen on the south wall to access the interactive database or the binder with hard copies of pages from the database. This collection is meant to be studied; the open storage room installation is an introduction to studying the collection and examining the objects cross-culturally and thinking about what they can tell us about human material culture.



*vessels and storage*

*Lidded Bowl from Nigeria Yoruba 1850-195018  
inches (46 cm) 0003*

Storage vessels comprise the first thematic group in the globe.<sup>3</sup> Decorated vessels are a highlight of the Cravens Collection, illustrating the ingenuity and creativity of ceramic artists across time and space. A lidded, anthropomorphic vessel from Nigeria (0003) makes a stunning comparison to the face-neck jar from the Chancay culture in Peru (0002). The Peruvian vessel functioned as a grave offering after it was used in as a beer-serving vessel in the funerary feast. Many Neolithic cultures, such as the Xiajiadian of China, used firing techniques and minimal surface embellishment to highlight elegant shapes and fine surface texture (0009).

Stone carving was a luxury art in antiquity. An alabaster kohl tube from Syria (0006) functioned as a cosmetic storage container; in antiquity kohl was applied around the eyes to deflect the sunlight. Not only the shape but the incised concentric circles illustrate fine workmanship. The rich tradition of ceramic production in ancient Native America is beautifully represented in the Cravens collection. Both ancient and contemporary works are displayed to highlight the continuation of decoration and forms. Contemporary artists such as Rosemary Chino Garcia (0026), Jesse Garcia (0025), Carmelita Dunlop (0027), and Jackie Stevens (0021) follow in the footsteps of their ancestors, while also developing groundbreaking techniques and new styles of their own.

*masking the world*

*Baba or Yam Mask from Papua New Guinea. Abelam. 20th century . 10 inches. (25.4 cm). Inv. no. 0117.*



The masking tradition is common to many global cultures, reaching back to prehistoric times and continuing through today. Face coverings were used for a multitude of functions. The Baba mask of the Abelam culture in New Guinea (0117) was worn by young men during initiation rituals to introduce them to the spirit world. The large eyes and openwork weaving style are distinctive visual components of these masks. A large selection of masks from across sub-Saharan Africa has been selected for the installation to illustrate the vast difference in form and function across the continent (0122, 0124).



*the human figure*

*Male Funerary Figure from Vietnam Moi (Doi) Circa 19th century 38 inches (96.5 cm) Inv. no. 0088*

*Female Funerary Figure from Vietnam Moi (Doi) Circa 19th century 37 inches (94 cm) Inv. no. 0089*

A group of human figures illustrates the diversity across cultures in representing human forms. A Nayarit Chinesco female figurine from Mexico (0112) is represented as a full figure with voluminous thighs. African female figurines from Camaroon convey abundant physical presence, perhaps reflective of their apotropaic

function (0106, 0107). The Yoruba in Nigeria captured the essence of human power in elegant, elongated figures through Ogboni society's edan (0110), meant to be worn as a sign of high office. A slender and graceful male-female pair (0088, 0089) from Vietnam, provide yet another comparison.

*ritual and the afterlife*

*Ox and Cart from China. Tang Dynasty. 618-907. 8 inches (20.3 cm). Inv. no. 0085.*

Ritual objects in the Cravens collection display the diversity of ceremonial traditions across the world. A series of totemic wooden staffs (0066, 0067, 0068, 0069, 0070, 0071, 0072, 0073) from the Dogon culture in Africa provide an interesting contrast to the globular vessel from the Majiayao culture in China. Decorated with black on buff brushwork, the elegant linear design is typical of fine wares produced by the

settled Neolithic communities of Gansu Province on the Yellow River. A number of objects from Ancient China highlight the importance of funerary ritual. Funerary practices honored the deceased; female figurines (0062, 0064) and tomb models (0065, 0085) aided the spirit in the afterlife. The ox and cart tomb model provided the necessary supplies for the deceased, ensuring he would be as prosperous in his afterlife as in his terrestrial life.





*prestige and status*

*Status Knife from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Nakonda.  
1900-1925. 20.125 inches (51.1 cm). Inv. no. 0059.*

The next theme exhibited is status and prestige . In many global cultures status and prestige were frequently communicated with a show of objects. For example, West African knives, objects that might be perceived as weapons, were actually prestige items carried to symbolize importance within tribal communities (0055, 0056, 0059). The warrior effigy comes from the Sepik River region of Papua, New Guinea (0050). This prestige object, called karahut, was held in

a warrior's mouth during battle. Today they are worn as pectorals during ceremonies or special occasions. Ancient Egyptian civilization relied on the Pharaoh to maintain order and a relationship with the gods. The Pharaoh's prestige was marked in figural arts drawing parallels with gods. The Osiris head (0039) exhibited here represents the god of the dead in the White Crown of Upper Egypt, indicative of the connection between god and king.

*decorating the body*

Personal adornment is a cross-cultural tradition from pre-history through today. Jewelry made with various materials, from precious metals to feathers, is imbued with symbolic and religious meaning. A mask pectoral from Indonesia (0047) was worn on a celebrant's chest during fertility rituals on Leti Island. A masterful creation in metal, the visage is conceived as a closed form, providing a contrast to the fine openwork style of a pommel from Tibet (0048). A silver



*Pectoral from Indonesia. Mid-19th century.  
7.25 inches (18.4 cm). Inv. no. 0047.*

necklace from Asia illustrates yet another beautiful example of the metallurgist's craft (0038). African artists created works with tiny beads to adorn the body, such as the finely beaded buttock shield from the Jaba culture in Nigeria (0037). A subgrouping has been installed that highlights the abundance and variety of gold jewelry from South America. The pendants and ear flares in the form of animals, hybrid animal/human beings, some with geometric designs, were all created to mark the wearer as someone of high status.

Objects in cabinets on the north and east walls are organized by geographic origin. Along the north wall, five cabinets house objects from indigenous North American cultures, contemporary Native American ceramic artists, ancient Central and South American cultures, currency from across the globe, and objects from the ancient cultures of Europe and the Near East. Cabinets along the east wall contain objects from Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Glass-fronted display spaces in the middle of each cabinet demonstrate the dynamic display potential of these study collection cabinets. Graduate students in seminars will be invited to curate small groups of study objects for these spaces. The closed cabinet doors hold more objects from the designated geographic regions. Since they require more research, they are accessible only by appointment. Visitors are encouraged, however, to look at the wealth of objects in the lower drawers and peruse these objects that for conservation purposes are organized by material.

The first cabinet on the north wall contains two shelves with North American objects. Carved ivory objects from Inuit traditions on the top shelf served as inspiration for the sculptures on the lower shelf by contemporary artists Sam Nahaulaitug and M. Margnig. The second cabinet to the right, also with North American objects, displays contemporary objects that continue ancient Native American traditions; figural works on the top, ceramic vessels on the bottom. We recommend that you turn 180 degrees and look at the the 'Globe,' for more visual comparisons between ancient and contemporary Native American, and other global cultures ceramics. The next display cabinet provides a selection of beautiful ceramics from Central and South America. An incredible variety of materials and forms used by global cultures as currency fills the fourth cabinet; the objects on the top shelf are Oceanic and those on the bottom are South American that were chosen because of the elegant shape, delicate carving, and richness of material. The display shelves in the fifth and far cabinet of the north wall highlights the abundant variety of animal forms inherent in Near Eastern material culture.

The east wall cabinets contain objects from Africa, Asia, and Oceania. The variety of shapes used by African artists to capture the human form is apparent by the group of objects on the top shelf, in contrast to architectural object on

the bottom shelf. The second cabinet further highlights figural art from Africa, emphasizing animal-inspired forms. The third cabinet houses mostly objects from Asia. However, the bottom shelf currently displays a variety of world arts created in stone - many from China. The final cabinet to the right of the east wall houses objects of personal adornment; the bottom shelf displays examples from Oceania with a few from Asia. The top shelf is a cross-cultural group of personal adornment objects, including a group of richly decorated luxury figurines from Asia.

Displays of monumental world arts are installed in Cravens World on the south and west walls and in a niche on the east wall. The niche provides space for large ceramics; one abundant storage jar from sub-Saharan Africa and two contemporary Native American works by Jackie Stevens. The west and south walls provide expansive space to carry monumental spears, maces, masks, and ritual adornment from multiple cultures; maces and a pectoral from Oceania on the south wall and on the west wall a leather shield from Southeast Asia, and from Africa spears, ceremonial staffs and a mask.

The Cravens collection offers a wonderful opportunity for studying aesthetics and function of global art. It is with great pleasure and expectation that we offer this preliminary installation as a taste of multiple avenues of research that will be pursued by future generations.

1 Terminology and curatorial philosophy used here were drawn from this model.  
See: <http://collections.fowler.ucla.edu:81/intersections/>

2 'Before Common Era'

3 Visitors can see each object has an inventory number on an adjacent label. The inventory numbers are accompanied by colored dots indicating their thematic group (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet).



Mask from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.  
*Lula*. Early 20th century CE. 16 inches (41 cm). Inv. no. 0122.

## UB ANDERSON GALLERY *and* THE CRAVENS COLLECTION

Sandra H. Olsen

### “The Museum as a Way of Seeing”<sup>1</sup>

The Annette Cravens collection and its premiere installation, *Cravens World: The Human Aesthetic*, complements and reinforces the mission of UB Anderson Gallery to serve as a unique academic center for interdisciplinary research focusing on learning from objects. It has also positively and dramatically altered the character of the University’s collection. Formerly focused on European and American modern and contemporary art, the Cravens collection extends the reach of the visual arts at UB Anderson Gallery from modern to ancient times. With objects representing traditions of many societies, times and places, the Cravens collection is useful to a range of disciplines at the University, in the public schools, as well as to the diverse interests of individual visitors to the Gallery. Key to pedagogical success is the distinctive installation design for the Craven collection that provides visible access to the entire collection.

When you cross the threshold of the Cravens Room—designed and constructed for visual encounters—you enter a transformative space. Hundreds of objects surround you, human achievements from other places and times. The room has been designed to require you to look closely at the objects; their form, color, and other aesthetic details. There are no distractions from the visual experience. The transparent structure at the center of the room provides endless opportunities to examine objects from every side and perspective. They are purposefully organ-

ized in groups and subgroups to encourage visual comparisons. The inventory numbers provided on small cubes adjacent to the objects are the gateway to further information available on the interactive database near the door to the Seminar Room.

Collections with the quality and quantity of objects to permit cross-generational and cross-cultural juxtaposition of the human aesthetic are rare. Within the central “globe” installation, there is a wonderful opportunity to witness the continuation of traditions among the southwest Native American cultures with ceramics dating from early centuries of the first millennium to no more than thirty years ago. The universality of the human aesthetic in creative production is apparent to the visitor standing in the Cravens Room. Even more observable is the stunning diversity of expression by individuals across many generations and traditions.

While most serious collectors seek to curate their collections—conceptualizing installations within their living spaces for display—Annette Cravens is the consummate curator among her peers. The installation of works of art in the small niche gallery at the top of the stairs replicates an installation in her home. A riser in front of the wall supports a group of beautiful objects. On the left side of the riser, a tall wooden sculpture stands on the floor. The framed print above the riser is by abstract expressionist Catalan

artist Antoni Tàpies, who is often credited with introducing contemporary abstract art to Spain. The vertical forms of the sculpture, the black vertical marks in the Tàpies print and the standing figures on the riser formally complement each other, even though they represent artworks from different times and cultures. In fact, the seemingly totemic floor sculpture is *Untitled*, 1986, by Kate Rison, Professor of Art in the Department of Art and Art History of Trinity University, San Antonio, TX.

Without labels to provide dates, names and places of origin, Annette Cravens' wonderful installations challenge visitors to identify even the century when objects were made, not to mention their places of origin and creators. Any hope of identifying the objects requires careful examination of the objects, analysis of their form, and a search for other aesthetic clues, before making a cross-cultural, cross-generational mental survey of one's personal intellectual repository. This method of visual prompting inevitably leads to series of questions and vibrant discussion. Similarly, the design of the Cravens World is intended to inspire visitors to seek specific information about the objects and their makers through interaction with the database available on the touch screen at the back of the room. Like all good collectors, Annette Cravens has maintained

her insatiable curiosity, avidly pursued lifelong learning, and developed a superb visual acuity. But it is Annette's curatorial prowess that has guided her brilliant selection of objects that together reflect the human aesthetic.

Overwhelmed by the visual feast of objects in the Cravens Room, one might miss the installation of modern works of art from the Cravens collection in the second floor gallery. Many of the prints and some of the paintings and sculptures in the Cravens collection are the works of artists who were represented by David Anderson and, before him, by his mother, Martha Jackson, at her gallery in New York City. Even before David Anderson moved his gallery from the City, Buffalo collectors, including Annette Cravens, were among his clients. The business relationship between the collector and art dealer is apparent when the modern works in the Cravens collection are compared with the selections from the David Anderson collection on view in the atrium. Visitors are invited to consider aesthetics shared by the modern works and cultural objects in the Cravens room; the geometric shapes in the Sean Scully prints, the markings in the Tàpies and Motherwell prints, Chillida's architectonic design, Beverly Pepper's totemic sculpture and the anthropomorphic form of the Louise Nevelson sculpture, *The Cat*.

David Anderson and Annette Cravens both understood the potential of their collections as unique academic resources. Strong advocates for the importance of learning from objects, they provided opportunities for students to examine works of art and original objects as the initial step in their research. Reflecting this potential, the Seminar Room adjacent to the Cravens Room on the east side was renovated only one year after David Anderson gifted his gallery to UB to house artworks and objects for intense examination and research by academic classes or other groups during a semester.

Recent requests to use the Seminar Room from faculty outside of the Arts Management Program and Museum Studies reflect the broadly-interdisciplinary pedagogical effect of the Cravens collection. In preparation for acceptance of the Cravens collection by UB, Samuel M. Paley, Professor of Classics and former Director of Judaic Studies at the University, supervised the intense examination, documentation and research of more than 60 Middle and Near Eastern antiquities from the Cravens collection by graduate students in his fall 2007 seminar in Middle and Near

Eastern Studies. Peter F. Biehl, Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Director of the Cravens Project, will use the Seminar Room and selected objects from the Cravens collection for his fall 2010 seminar on European and Near Eastern objects.

The Cravens collection effects a significant expansion of the University's collection, nearly doubling its size and exponentially broadening its contents. The unique installation of the objects in the collection advances immeasurably the UB Anderson Gallery's mission of accessing its unique academic resources as broadly as possible. The architectural design of the Cravens Room so dramatically exceeds expectations of the visible storage principle shared by many museums today that it fairly places this unique space and, by inclusion, UB Anderson Gallery on the proverbial map of innovative museum design. But the true success of the Cravens project will be determined when faculty, students, school children, families, and the general public all enjoy and repeat their close visual encounters with these remarkable cultural objects that evoke the nuances of human expression and creativity.

1 Alpers, Svetlana "The Museum as a Way of Seeing," in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Edited by Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 1991.



Annette Cravens and Sam Paley  
August 2007 (photographed by Constance Cravens)

# The Collector Annette Cravens

Samuel Paley with Sandra Olsen

In 1977, a year after my appointment to the faculty of the Department of Classics at the University at Buffalo, a richly collaborative intellectual journey began for me with a simple introduction. The object of this introduction was neither faculty member, nor student nor expert in the field. Annette Cravens was an active and supportive member of the Buffalo Museum of Science for many years, and she frequently sought advice from curatorial staff. When she brought a recently acquired Near Eastern object to the museum, she was directed to consult with UB's new Associate Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology. We spent the years since examining, studying, and discussing cultural material - a lifelong friendship centered on antiquities, particularly those from the Ancient Near and Middle East. Annette Cravens eagerly took full advantage of our Department's academic resources that were available to her. She could frequently be found at the University at Buffalo attending lectures by visiting scholars or talking with faculty and graduate students about their research. She also regularly attended lectures organized by the Western New York Chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America.

Beyond the University environment, she would join me in attending national conferences or international lecture series organized by important museums with prestigious collections of antiquities, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Brooklyn Museum or

institutions such as the Archaeological Institute of America. On these occasions I enthusiastically introduced her to curators, collectors and dealers from around the world. The shared experiences led to our regular practice of meeting as often as once a week, frequently over dinner. We relished the opportunity to exchange ideas and opinions, share new discoveries from our most recent travels, and perhaps share the latest gossip about antiquities and antiquarians. Since we both are accurately self-described direct, outspoken, and opinionated individuals these meals devoted to ancient arts were lively and memorable.

Annette Cravens began collecting artwork in the 1940's with the purchase of four works of modern art, one a Chagall print. It was the beginning of more than sixty-five years of collecting, reflecting her worldwide travels, incessant curiosity, and the many friendships she cultivated with artists, scholars, dealers and collectors. Although the collection today comprises more than 2,000 works of art, the Chagall print remains installed in its preeminent location at the center of her home, a symbol of Annette Cravens' insatiable interest in formal beauty and the human aesthetic, not to mention her remarkably consistent eye for quality and good taste throughout this long process. Virtually every accessible surface in her house - walls, shelves, counters, even the attic - is filled with world artworks that span civilizations, as well as books and catalogues which foster their study.

In spite of the size and diversity of the collection, every object was acquired and displayed in a cogent manner. Annette Cravens has traveled across the world, but rarely as a tourist. Her voyages are journeys of learning, frequently sponsored and organized by museums, including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, or institutions such as the Archaeological Institute of America, and guided by curators or scholars. Documenting her observations and experiences with photographs and journals, she over the years filled dozens of scrapbooks and photo albums that serve as visual and cultural databases for the collection. They chronicle a dedication to lifelong learning, that in combination with an innate talent for discerning formal beauty informed a collector's eye and left her uniquely qualified to assemble an extensive and significant cross-cultural and cross-generational world arts collection.

Annette Cravens and I often discussed the significant pedagogical value of her growing collection. The breadth and quality of objects within the collection afford endless educational opportunities for comparing objects from different cultures, different times, and different places, as well as the intellectual challenge of interpreting and displaying cultural material. Effective study and understanding of cultural material is significantly enhanced when students have an opportunity to examine and document the physical properties of objects – medium,

measurement, weight – and, with the aid of appropriate scientific equipment, to determine the date and place of its origin.

From the beginning of our discussions, the University at Buffalo was considered to be the most appropriate potential beneficiary of the collection, because of its unquestioned commitment to research in both undergraduate and graduate education, the breadth and quality of its departments, and its support for interdisciplinary collaboration in research and teaching. UB's Departments of Anthropology and Classics as well as the newly founded Institute for European and Mediterranean Archaeology (IEMA) emphasize a broad range of graduate studies in theory and methodology while exposing students to the current research of preeminent scholars through their hosting of lectures, colloquia, and conferences where faculty, guests and students present projects for debate and discussion. Field research is also essential to both departments. In addition to the University's keen appreciation of the collection's teaching value, the resources of its UB Anderson Gallery would also ensure its professional care, exhibition, and management.

Annette Cravens was particularly concerned with public access to the collection. Located between the University's historic Main Street campus and the larger Buffalo community, UB Anderson Gallery is admission-free and offers easy access to public transportation and ample

free parking. Most challenging, however, was the need for an installation design that would, at the same time, showcase the beautiful objects while making the collection accessible to the broadest possible audience. Together and individually we visited museums to view successful open storage displays, and consulted with curators and museum design companies. While these exemplary spaces brought collections out of storage and into public spaces, clearly presenting and organizing the objects within an intelligible construct, we found most of the installations to be unimaginative. They lacked the potential to grasp the viewer's attention to either distinctive aesthetic details or the diversity of creative production of world cultures.

Crucial for Annette Cravens was that a successful installation of her collection incite the thrill of personal discovery she enjoyed through the decades spent building it while also arousing curiosity and the desire for further examination and investigation. To capture these elements, the Cravens Collection Project was conceived including the design of The Cravens World which beautifully displays the collection and renders most objects visually accessible without supervision; it also offers opportunities to both examine single objects carefully and to analyze groups of objects that are organized by themes, region of origin or material.

The University at Buffalo, students and faculty, as well as school children and their teachers throughout Western New York and, most broadly, the general public of the region has received an exceptional gift from Annette Cravens. By generously sharing her collection with us, she has accomplished great good – significantly enhancing the tools for innovative and effective higher education at UB while at the same time providing the entire community years of aesthetic enjoyment and intercultural appreciation, realizing her strong advocacy for and commitment to lifelong learning.



MEHRDAD HADIGHI

## ARCHITECTURE – ARCHAEOLOGY – ARCHIVE

Mehrdad Hadighi

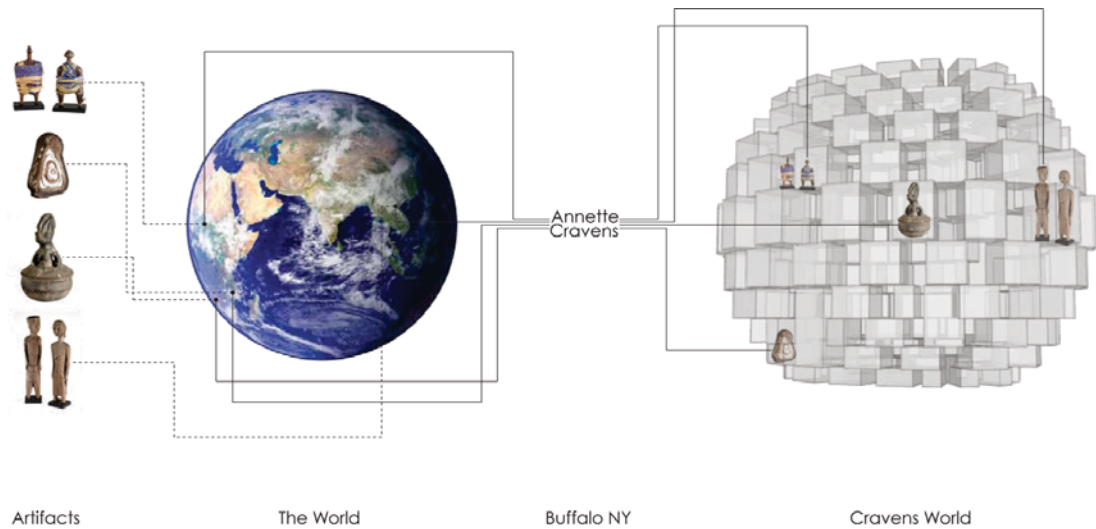
## The Design of Cravens World

The Cravens collection is a collection of aesthetic artifacts, some archaeological, some contemporary, which has been gathered from all corners of the globe through the travels of an individual. A linear trajectory that links the artifacts is the individual's travels. A much more complex and networked trajectory is that of her mind, where pre-Columbian figurines may be linked to contemporary two-dimensional flat-work from Buffalo. Our task was to create an exhibition environment that would permit the legibility of the former (linear trajectory), and promote the complex possibilities latent in the latter (networked trajectory).

Theodor Adorno has relegated to the same realm the museum and the mausoleum.<sup>1</sup> The work, once in the museum, he argues, is removed from the flow of culture, where it could establish new connections with a vast array of psyches, cultures, and artifacts to a realm of archival facts, and metrics of organization. We recognized that the question paramount in the design of Cravens' World was: how to store/display the artifacts of the Cravens Collection, to archive them, to systematically organize them, yet to elevate their potential for reconnecting into new flows of culture and meaning. This fundamental tension between the museum as a place of archiving and maintaining and the world as a place of open and fluxive connections has defined the conceptual as well as material tensions within the project.

“Imagine that an employer arrives in a little-known region where his interest is aroused by an expanse of ruins, with remains of walls, fragments of columns, and tablets with half-effaced and unreadable inscriptions. He may content himself with inspecting what lies exposed to view, with questioning the inhabitants—perhaps semi-barbaric people—who live in the vicinity, about what tradition tells them of the history and the meaning of these archaeological remains, and with noting down what they tell him— and he may then proceed on his journey. But he may act differently. He may have brought picks, shovels and spades with him, and he may set the inhabitants to work with these implements. Together with them he may start upon the ruins, clear away the rubbish, and, beginning from the visible remains, uncover what is buried. If his work is crowned with success, the discoveries are self-explanatory: the ruined walls are part of the ramparts of a palace or a treasure-house; the fragments of columns can be filled out into a temple; the numerous inscriptions, which, by good luck, may be bilingual, reveal an alphabet and a language, and, when they have been deciphered and translated, yield undreamed-of information about the events of the remote past, to commemorate which the monuments were built. *Saxa loquuntur!* {Stones talk!}”<sup>2</sup>

If we translate the archaeological site to an exhibit, in the first instance, the employer would have read the captions of the exhibits set atop gray stands, each organized by a temporal or



physical limit, made notes in his notebook about the dates, places, and the names of the cultures, and then proceeded on his journey. But he may have acted differently. He could have begun by studying one of the artifacts closely, and traced new trajectories to other artifacts, masks and faces, seemingly unrelated, but visible through transparencies, reflections and refractions of distant and near neighbors. He would have to “work” on the collection and be a productive and engaged viewer, thus elevating the creation of work over maintaining and recording of work, and highlighting a decisive difference between representational display methods and productive methods, one based on satisfying curiosity, the other on creating it.

The interior architecture of galleries and museums has fluctuated between serving as the backdrop to the work or having its own presence. Most contemporary museums and galleries tend towards the neutral “white cube” and serve as the back-drop for the artwork. However there are also examples of galleries and museums where architecture is very present, with which the artwork must compete for attention. The dilemma is exaggerated with archaeological artifacts, which are assumed to be less contemplative and more informative. It is the artifacts’ informative quality that has made archaeological displays concentrate more on the representation of facts

than the presentation of flows of cultures. Archaeological galleries, museums, and their displays generally tend to be composed of “gray” stands, atop which sit the artifacts and their textual counterparts, identifying and classifying them. In Cravens World, we sought to provide the “stand” but simultaneously to push the stand away, to provide the link to information, classification and history, and simultaneously permit an opening for new trajectories and flows. In our proposal, we accentuated the tension between the two modes. On the one hand, the “World” is far from the neutral cube, and is very much so present as an object. Yet simultaneously, through material selection, detailing, fabrication, and lighting we have made the world disappear. We have made an environment for display, where archaeological artifacts float in space, among other artifacts, and cultures.

A museum archival system would have suggested the display of the collection based on fixed physical, temporal, or cultural classifications, providing an absolute record of the past. We wanted to start there, yet be able to open a door through this record, to a new future, one that is unimaginable within the fixity of the organization of the archive and the museum. Through a constant re-shuffling of the artifacts, we hope to generate new flows, new cultures, new networks and new connections. To that end, Cravens World is



designed to promote new visions of our world, our culture, and history through new assemblies of the collected fragments of cultures in the Cravens Collection. With each new assembly of artifacts, each time a visitor walks through the exhibition, and each time an exhibition is curated, a new vision is born by re-mapping the flows of history and culture.

Cravens World is physically shaped like a “world”, where artifacts may be placed in relation to their origin on the globe. Cravens World is constructed to appear transparent, entirely open, where artifacts seemingly float or hover in space, without the context of the museum apparatus. In its stead, the artifacts are seen in the context of other neighboring artifacts, distant artifacts, city of Buffalo (through the window), the sky (through the light from above), and visitors. The simultaneity of the metric organization of the archive with the construction of live memory is at the core of Cravens World.

The transparent material is not simply transparent. It is also reflective and refractive. At any moment, an archaeological artifact is simultaneously a part of its archival family and also a new family of cultures, of faces viewed through the



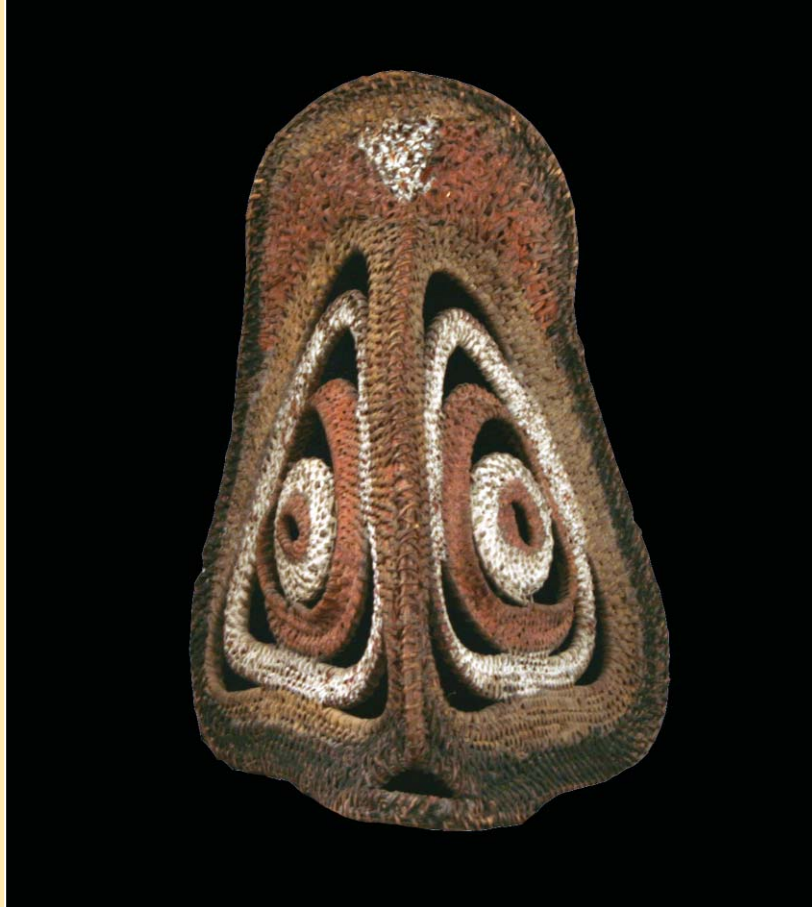
transparency, other faces reflected by the material, and yet others that have been refracted into new spatial configurations.

There is a scene in the German film director, Wim Wenders’ ‘Paris, Texas’, where the reflection of Harry Dean Stanton’s face on a one-way glass is superimposed on Nastassia Kinski’s face, visible through the same glass, as they communicate through a closed loop telephone.<sup>3</sup> The fabrication of this deferred mode of communication along with the superimposition of the visual information creates a cinematic moment where our assumptions about the lives of the two people is thrown up in the air, and held there, in suspension. For a moment, we are provoked to imagine domestic and cultural conditions otherwise un-imaginable. Later, we find out that Travis (Harry Dean Stanton) has been lost for four years and Jane (Nastassia Kinski) turns out to be his wife, with whom they share a child, Hunter. A totally normative family life, through a cinematic fabrication is opened to the imagination and to new flows of culture and domestic life. In Cravens World, we have utilized transparency, reflection and refraction to throw our assumptions about archiving and classification up in the air, for a moment, long enough to contemplate new flows of cultures.

1 Theodor W. Adorno, “Valery Proust Museum,” in *Prisms*. Translated by Samuel and Shiery Weber (London: Neville Spearman, 1967), 173-186.

2 Sigmund Freud, “The Aetiology of Hysteria” (1896) in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Translated by James Strachey. (London: Hogarth, 1953-74), 192.

3 ‘Paris, Texas’, director: Wim Wenders, screenplay: Sam Shepard. (Road Movies Filmproduktion, 1984).



## CRAVIN' THE CRAVENS : THE OUTREACH PROGRAM

Sarah A. Robert

# Fostering K-12 school-university learning experiences

### The Cravens Collection is educational

The Cravens Collection is an educational collection. Representing an extensive depth and breadth of artifacts from around the world and spanning millennia, the paths of inquiry to be pursued are seemingly endless. Inquiry surrounding the collection began with the first examination of the objects and later their organization by University at Buffalo (UB) researchers. These initial queries piqued interest enough that they were incorporated immediately into the research and teaching at UB in programs as varied as archaeology and architectural design. The explorations continue today and will continue well into the future, fostering learning among academics and undergraduate and graduate students. The collections potential has been tapped across the university.

Inquiry can be limited by curiosity, creativity, perspective, and initiative. Yet from the initial stages of the project, limitations to who can learn, what can be learned, and how one can learn have been at the forefront of development of educational outreach initiatives. How the project might also foster learning in K-12 schools quickly followed as a line of inquiry and possibility.

### Expanding beyond the University

Cravin' the Cravens: A plan to foster K-12 school-university learning experiences is a pilot project to explore the possibility for collaboration across educational institutions. Specifically, the aim of the pilot project is to develop a community of educators from the University and Western New York schools. The group collectively explores the collections' potential for student inquiry that strengthens and extends New York State Social Studies Curriculum. This requires both parties to share their knowledge and expertise in a spirit of civic engagement and public intellectualism for the benefit of area youth. Teachers bring to the table knowledge of what students need to know (curricular knowledge) and how to facilitate learning (pedagogy). Academics bring to the table knowledge of the artifacts (Archaeology), of museum and art education (UB Galleries), and of social education (Learning & Instruction). Cravin' the Cravens is a plan to cultivate learning experiences.

A second aim of Cravin' the Cravens is to introduce underrepresented populations to the University. While many Western New York students are familiar with the University at Buffalo, the familiarity ends at the name. Bringing adolescents

to campus to learn introduces higher education to students in an accessible way. University personnel are called on to work with educators to craft an experience that bridges the Cravens Collection and the South Campus.

The first support for educational outreach was a generous grant from the University at Buffalo's 2020 Scholars Fund, recognizing the project as a sustainable component embodying two of UB's Strategic Strengths: "Cultures and Texts" and "Civic Engagement and Public Policy." A two-part fieldtrip to the collection will engage students in hands-on examination of artifacts and introduce students to UB researchers who strive to understand diverse cultures and historical moments. The fieldtrip experience also introduces students to the research university that supports such examinations. Most important, experiential learning is accessible to all in the region.

### First experiences

A major accomplishment as of the March, 2010, opening is the development of a working group comprised of Cheektowaga Central School District's middle and high school social studies faculty and administrators and UB academics, administrators, and graduate students. The

Cravens Collection working group expands from the already established school-university partnership of Cheektowaga Central School District (CCSD) and the Department of Learning and Instruction, adding a social studies emphasis and broader participation from the UB community. Since June 2009, we have met at Cheektowaga Central High School to learn together about the Cravens Collection. We have reviewed the extensive inventory of artifacts seeking connections with the New York State Social Studies Curriculum for grades six through twelve. For example, in grades six, seven, and nine, students begin the year learning about antiquities, ancient cultures, and how researchers study them. To fold in the Cravens Collection Project, students are introduced to artifacts from which to begin to develop their own inquiries into the object and the people and culture from which it emerged. This starts students' independent investigations into themes or concepts developed with their teacher. Take for example the rich collection of currency found in the Cravens Collection. Students explore the concept of economic systems. They compare and contrast the form of various monetary objects across historical, cultural, and spatial contexts. Our work yielded a growing list of themes and concepts for student inquiry that begins in the classroom and continues in the Anderson Gallery and upon return to CCSD.

The Cravin' the Cravens project has expanded the spaces of learning of the CCSD-UB collaboration. CCSD students take part in a day-long fieldtrip to UB Anderson Gallery and the South Campus. This endeavor began late in 2009. CCSD teachers and administrators visited the gallery for a strategic brainstorming session to finalize an itinerary and the logistics for a future student trip. It was the first chance CCSD educators had to see first-hand the collection and move around the exhibition space. The results also led to further development of in-class, or pre-visit preparation for student fieldtrips, demonstrating that the boundaries for incorporating the Collection into K-12 learning had not been reached. Additionally, students' investigations at the gallery were deepened with more time allotted for conducting research and laying out time to think, to process, and to document; students experience of research is central to the trip.

### Inquiry into the future

The exhibit opening marked the beginning of the Cravin' the Cravens research fieldtrips. CCSD student visits in 2010 are well-constructed pilots of a model for sustainable educational outreach. Adjustments will be made to reflect the evolving knowledge of the collection, growing group of scholars conducting research on the objects, and learning from school visits.

Fieldtrips provide depth and breadth to the social studies curriculum. The Cravens Collection can be woven into students' learning experiences over the course of the school year through UB faculty visits to the classroom, teachers and students visits to UB Anderson Gallery, and future development of digital components such that the collection is within Internet reach of learners. We hope that the orientation of the experience around hands-on inquiry will culminate in student projects that can be exhibited at the gallery and virtually as the project moves into digital format.

The groundwork has already been laid for the development of a digital archive of the collection. The Digital Humanities Initiative at Buffalo (DHIB) broadens the possibility for learning from a fieldtrip to pre- and post-visit examinations of content. Educational outreach also will be digitized as curricular materials developed as part of the Cravin' the Cravens project are added to the archive alongside learning tools such as a video game. I wish to gratefully acknowledge the participation of the Cheektowaga Central School District administrators and social studies educators who, thanks to their own curiosity for enhancing their students' learning experiences, have made Cravin' the Cravens possible. As a first-ring suburb to the third poorest urban area in the United States, their knowledge of the challenges area school districts confront to provide equitable educational opportunities to all students will lay a strong foundation on which the Cravens Collection can continue to evolve as an accessible educational resource.

The diverse collection of artwork, archival material, and archaeological objects represents a unique local educational resource for hands-on learning. Such an experience serves goals of the social studies and public education to provide students with academic knowledge and with analytical skills and experiences to critically analyze and interpret objects and texts. Cravin' the Cravens educational outreach, in reality, is crucial education within reach. The foci of academic research are accessible through the accessibility of the collection. Students can learn first hand about cultural artifacts and experience the joy of discovery alongside peers, their teachers, and UB faculty. Discovery that is tightly

woven to explorations of human nature - past and present - is a corner stone of strong humanistic and democratic schooling. The social education-intensive component also creates a pathway to UB for students and their teachers, an experience that offers the chance to critically analyze the world in which they live. It is our hope that Cravin' the Cravens Educational Outreach will cultivate ways to expand learning experiences while improving educational equity, working with educators to develop powerful and authentic learning experiences for all Western New York students and building strong bridges between UB and K-12 schools for years to come.



*prestige and status*

*Status Knife from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Nakonda.  
1900-1925. 20.125 inches (51.1 cm). Inv. no. 0059.*

Eight Totemic Figures from Mali.

*Dogon. Circa 1590-1690.*

*15.375 inches (39.1 cm). Inv. no. 0066.*

*Dogon. Circa 1590-1690.*

*19 inches (48.3 cm). Inv. no. 0067.*

*Dogon. Circa 1590-1690.*

*13.25 inches (33.7 cm). Inv. no. 0068.*

*Dogon. Circa 1590-1690.*

*20.5 inches (52.1 cm). Inv. no. 0069.*

*Dogon. Circa 1590-1690.*

*12.5 inches (31.8 cm). Inv. no. 0070.*

*Dogon. Circa 1590-1690.*

*19.375 inches (49.2 cm). Inv. no. 0071.*

*Dogon. Circa 1590-1690.*

*16.5 inches (41.9 cm). Inv. no. 0072.*

*Dogon. Circa 1590-1690.*

*24.375 inches (61.9 cm). Inv. no. 0073.*

THE CRAVENS WORLD

# Highlights of the Collection

Laura Harrison

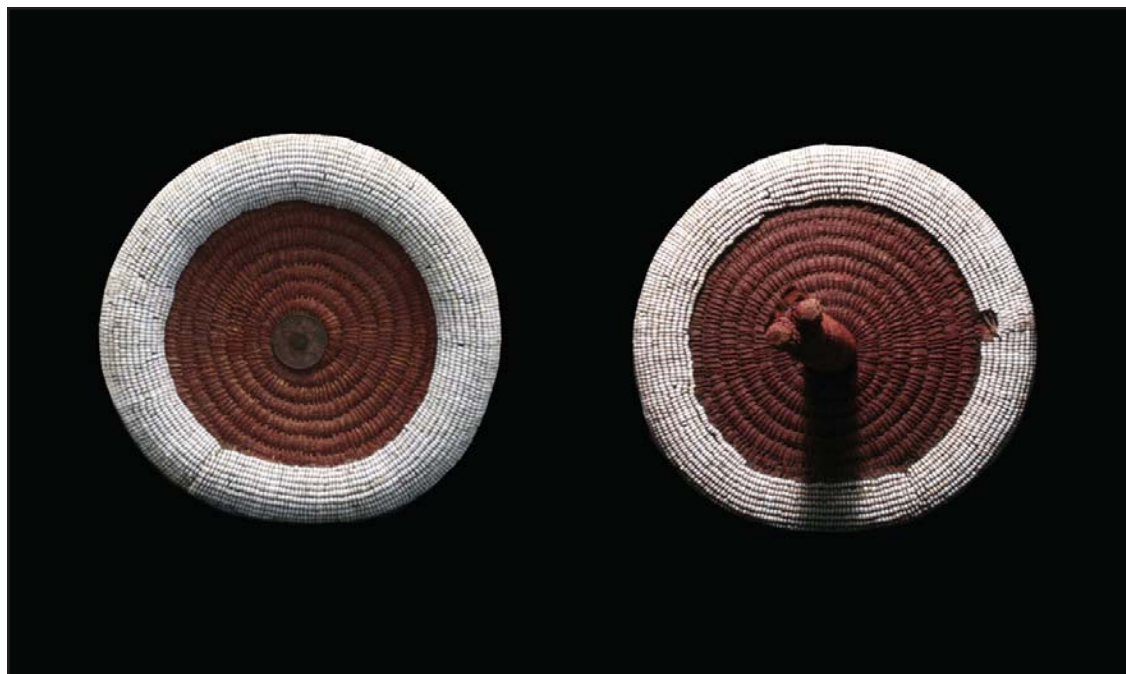




Alabaster Kohl Tube from the Near East.  
5.125 inches (13 cm). Inv. no. 0006.



Animal Pen from China.  
Western Han Dynasty. 206 BCE–9 CE. 4.75 inches (12 cm). Inv. no. 0065



Buttock Shield from Nigeria.  
*Jaba. Early 20th century. 4.875 inches (12.4 cm). Inv. no. 0037.*



Carmelita Dunlap (1925-2000). Bowl.  
*San Ildefonso Pueblo. 1988. 10 inches (25.4 cm). Inv. no. 0027.*



Carrie Chino Charlie (b. 1925). Bowl.  
*Acoma Pueblo. 1986. 7 inches (17.8 cm). Inv. no. 0026.*



Ceramic Figure of a Servant from China.  
*Western Han Dynasty. 206 BCE-220 CE. 6 inches (15.2 cm). Inv. no. 0064.*



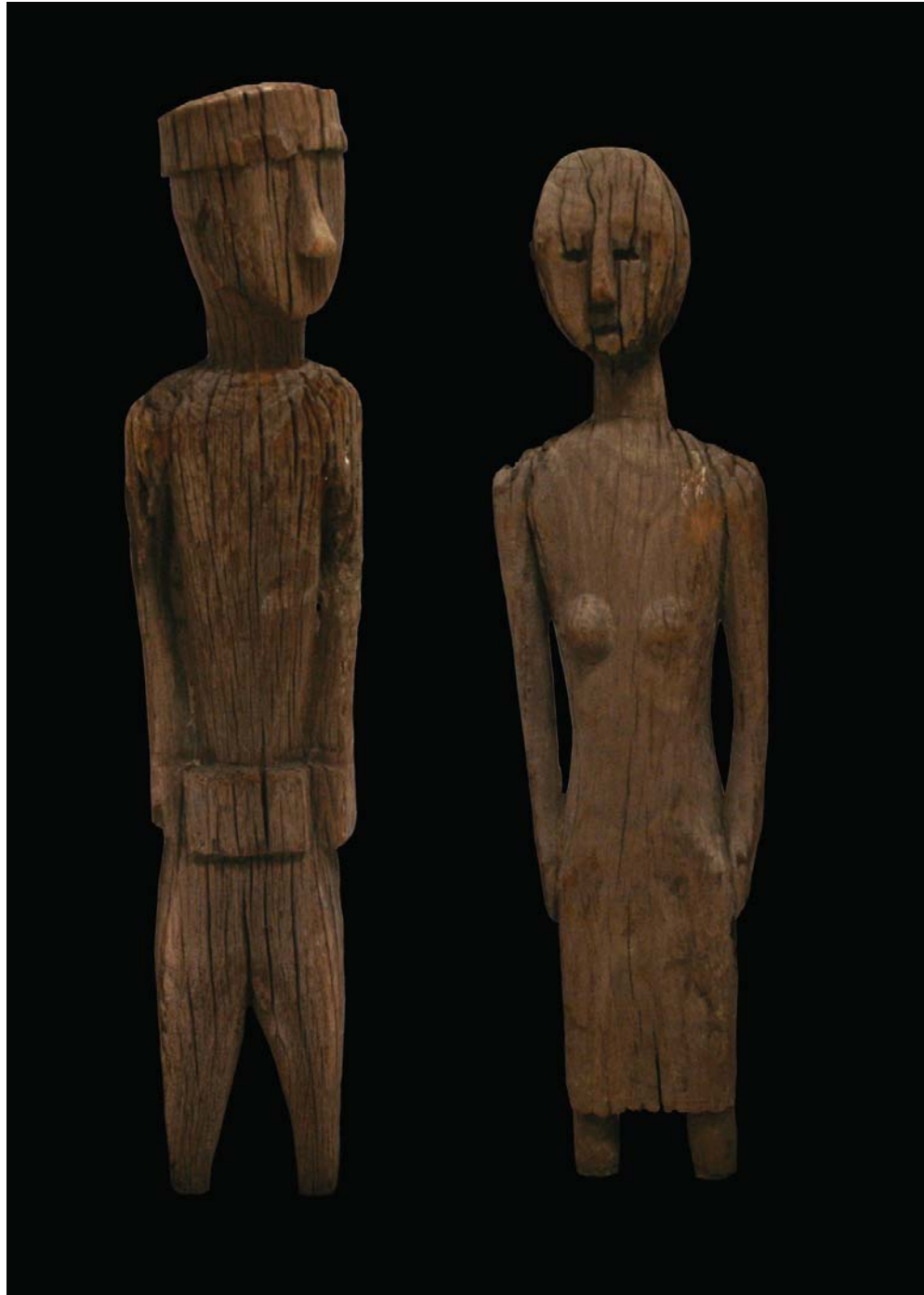
Ceramic Figurine from Mexico.  
*Nayarit Chinesco. Circa 200 BCE-250 CE. 7.75 inches (19.5 cm). Inv. no. 0112.*



Dan Mask from Liberia. Dan.  
*Mid-20th century. 11.125 inches (28.5 cm). Inv. no. 0124.*



Edan Ogboni from Nigeria. Yoruba.  
*Circa 1850-1950. 6.5 inches (16.5 cm). Inv. no. 0110.*



Male Funerary Figure from Vietnam.  
*Moi (Doi). Circa 19th century. 38 inches (96.5 cm). Inv. no. 0088.*

Female Funerary Figure from Vietnam.  
*Moi (Doi). Circa 19th century. 37 inches (94 cm). Inv. no. 0089.*



Female Figure Threshing Wheat from China.  
*Northern Wei Dynasty, 386-534. 4.625 inches (11.7 cm). Inv. no. 0062.*



Jacque Stevens (b. 1949). Ceramic pot or bowl.  
*Winnebago, 20th century, 4 inches (10.1 cm). Inv. no. 0021.*



Jessie Garcia (1910-1990). Acoma Corrugated Pot.  
*Keresan, Acoma Pueblo. 20th century. 7.25 inches (17.7 cm). Inv. no. 0025.*



“Li” Tripod Vessel from China.  
*Lower Xiajiadian. Circa 2100-1500 BCE. 11 inches (27.9 cm). Inv. no. 0009.*



Lidded Bowl from Nigeria, Yoruba.  
*1850-1950. 18 inches (46 cm). Inv. no. 0003.*



Mask from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.  
*Lula. Early 20th century CE. 16 inches (41 cm). Inv. no. 0122.*



Osiris Head from Egypt.  
*Saite Dynasty. Circa 630-600 BCE. 3.25 inches (8.2 cm). Inv. no. 0039.*



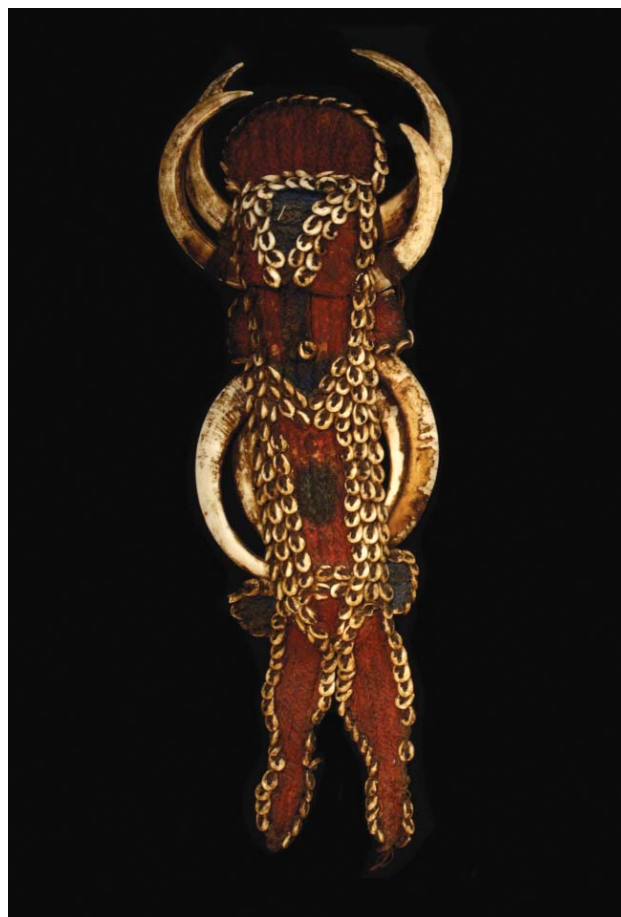
Necklace from China, Laos, Vietnam or Thailand.  
*Miao. Late 19th century. 9.4375 inches (24 cm). Inv. no. 0038.*



Parade Knife from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.  
*Ngbandi*. Circa 1900-1935.  
29.75 inches (75.5 cm). Inv. no. 0056



Pommel from Tibet.  
17th century. 8.75 inches  
(22.2 cm). Inv. no. 0048.



Warrior Cult Effigy from  
Papua New Guinea.  
Abelam. Circa 1900-1935.  
14 inches (35.5 cm). Inv. no. 0050.

Throwing Knife from  
the Democratic Republic  
of the Congo.  
*Kuba. 19th century. 22.5 inches  
(57.1 cm). Inv. no. 0055.*





*Pectoral from Indonesia. Mid-19th century.  
7.25 inches (18.4 cm). Inv. no. 0047.*

## EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

By Elizabeth S. Poyer

All measurements refer to height.  
Unless otherwise indicated, all dates are CE.

Alabaster Kohl Tube from the Near East  
5.125 inches (13 cm)  
Inv. no. 0006

Animal Pen from China  
Western Han Dynasty  
206 BCE–9 CE  
4.75 inches (12 cm)  
Inv. no. 0065

Baba or Yam Mask from Papua New Guinea  
Abelam  
20th century  
10 inches (25.4 cm)  
Inv. no. 0117

Buttock Shield from Nigeria  
Jaba  
Early 20th century  
4.875 inches (12.4 cm)  
Inv. no. 0037

Carmelita Dunlap (1925-2000) San Ildefonso  
Pueblo  
Bowl  
1988  
10 inches (25.4 cm)  
Inv. no. 0027

Carrie Chino Charlie (b. 1925) Acoma Pueblo  
Bowl  
1986  
7 inches (17.8 cm)  
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Ceramic Figure of a Servant from China  
Western Han Dynasty  
206 BCE-220 CE  
6 inches (15.2 cm)  
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Ceramic Figurine from Mexico  
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Circa 1590-1690  
15.375 inches (39.1 cm)  
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 19.375 inches (49.2 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0071

Dogon  
 Circa 1590-1690  
 16.5 inches (41.9 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0072

Dogon  
 Circa 1590-1690  
 24.375 inches (61.9 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0073

Face-neck Jar from Peru  
 Chancay  
 1100-1470  
 19 inches (48.5 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0002

Female Figure Threshing Wheat from China  
 Northern Wei Dynasty  
 386-534 CE  
 4.625 inches (11.7 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0062

Female Figure from Cameroon  
 Dowayo/Namji  
 Mid-20th century  
 10 inches (25.4 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0106

Female Funerary Figure from Vietnam  
 Moi (Doi)  
 Circa 19th century  
 37 inches (94 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0089

Jacque Stevens (b. 1949) Winnebago  
 Ceramic pot or bowl  
 20th century  
 4 inches (10.1 cm)  
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Jessie Garcia (1910-1990) Keresan, Acoma  
 Pueblo  
 Acoma Corrugated Pot  
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 7.25 inches (17.7 cm)  
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“Li” Tripod Vessel from China  
 Lower Xiajiadian  
 Circa 2100-1500 BCE  
 11 inches (27.9 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0009

Lidded Bowl from Nigeria  
 Yoruba  
 1850-1950  
 18 inches (46 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0003

Male Figure from Cameroon  
 Dowayo/Namji  
 Mid-20th century  
 10.625 inches (27 cm)  
 Inv. no. 0107

Male Funerary Figure from Vietnam  
Moi (Doi)  
Circa 19th century  
38 inches (96.5 cm)  
Inv. no. 0088

Mask from the Democratic  
Republic of the Congo  
Lula  
Early 20th century CE  
16 inches (41 cm)  
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Necklace from China, Laos,  
Vietnam or Thailand  
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Osiris Head from Egypt  
Saite Dynasty  
Circa 630-600 BCE  
3.25 inches (8.2 cm)  
Inv. no. 0039

Ox and Cart from China  
Tang Dynasty  
618-907  
8 inches (20.3 cm)  
Inv. no. 0085

Parade Knife from the Democratic  
Republic of the Congo  
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