



The Cleveland
Museum of Art

Artists of
Our Region



Karen Levinsky

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Cover: Raphael Gleitsmann (1910–1995). *The White Dam*, 1939. Oil on masonite board. Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund 1996.325. Born in Dayton, Ohio, Gleitsmann grew up in Akron and studied at the Cleveland School of Art.

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We invite teachers and students alike to visit the Cleveland Museum of Art in person. We also encourage teachers and students to visit the museum's Website for information about the museum's permanent collection and educational programs.

As different as they may appear, the 12 pieces in this Art to Go suitcase have more than a few things in common. Some of the prints, ceramics, enamelware, and glass objects demonstrate different techniques even when they share the same media, but all are of the highest quality. Each work is owned by the Cleveland Museum of Art. Many of the artists who created them attended classes at the CMA, and some of them taught here. Most studied at the Cleveland School of Art (now known as the Cleveland Institute of Art, or CIA), and several joined its faculty. Some of them knew each other and worked together at these institutions or under the auspices of the Works Project Administration (WPA), a program run by the Federal Arts Project to employ workers during and after the Great Depression. All of them, both past and present, made their livelihoods as artists or in art-related fields, and the major role that Cleveland and the CMA played in each of their careers is unquestionable. Significantly, each artist exhibited works in the museum's May Show.

The May Show

From its inception, the Cleveland Museum of Art has encouraged the local art community. Many museum founders were art collectors, and the museum displayed their collections as well as works produced by local students. From early on, the Education Art (formerly Extensions) collection, the annual May Show (1919–1993, revived in 2005 as the NEO Show), and other activities demonstrated the museum's support of area artists.

For nearly 75 years the May Show served as a forum for highlighting the vitality, creativity, and variety of the arts in northeast Ohio. Before the museum opened in 1916, its first director, Frederic Allen Whiting, championed craftsmanship and the support of local artists. In his January 6, 1914, report to the museum's board of trustees, Whiting recommended the establishment of "an annual exhibition of Ohio born or trained artists." Influenced by Whiting's vision, the Cleveland Art Association exhibited the works of local artists in their Fifth Spring Exhibition, held at the CMA. The museum officially stepped in and organized the First Annual Exhibition of Works by Cleveland Artists and Craftsmen in 1919. The original intent was for the exhibition to be "a full expression of Cleveland art production." The forum of the yearly event, eventually known as the May Show, changed with the eco-

nomic climate, the demands of the artists, and the ideology of the museum's director. In 1919, 33 categories defined the type of art entered, with the number of categories peaking at 44 the following year.

CMA directors selected May Show jurors, usually not associated with the museum, including directors of other museums, curators, art professionals, professors, and artists. Some of the more famous artists who served as jurors include George Bellows in 1921, Edward Hopper in 1932, Georgia O'Keeffe in 1937, and Ansel Adams in 1963.

The May Show recognized artistic achievement through a variety of awards, ranked certificates, medals, and honorable mentions. Over the years, the museum purchased numerous works that appeared in the exhibition. In earlier times when fewer outlets existed for artists to show and sell their works, especially during the Depression, artists appreciated this venue. Through its purchases, the museum preserved the works of local artists for future generations. Many of these were accessioned by the museum into its Education Art collection, which is the source for the objects in this Art to Go lesson.

The Cleveland School

In 1928 *Cleveland Press* journalist Elrick Davis, in an article headlined "Cleveland's Art Pioneers Have Put City in Front Rank in Creative Field," coined the term "Cleveland School" to describe the local art community. Davis noted that a group of artists and craftsmen working in northeast Ohio and sharing ideas, techniques, and a vision of art and community had been active since the 1870s. This group, together with others interested in the arts, soon organized the Cleveland Academy of Art. Their forward-thinking and ambitious agenda included establishing an art school, building an art museum, holding regular exhibitions, encouraging private collectors and patrons of the arts, publishing an art magazine, and teaching drawing in the public schools.

In *Fine Arts in Cleveland*, Holly Rarick Witchey describes how "Cleveland had an art school long before it had an art museum. . . . [When the museum opened its doors in 1916] Cleveland artists were faced with . . . competition. . . . Would the work of long-dead artists [in the museum's permanent collection] be of more interest to the people of Cleveland than the products of its own living artists?"

Especially between 1917 and 1958, CMA's annual May Shows gave artists and patrons a forum and temporary salesroom. Everyone—the artists, the visiting public, and the museum—shared the benefits. The museum demonstrated a commitment to nurturing artists, many of whom probably remained in the city because of this support, despite receiving national and international recognition for their work. Many continued their training or taught at the CMA, also a mutually beneficial relationship. In addition, many were affiliated with the Cleveland School of Art as students or teachers.

By mid-century, Cleveland School artists included not only painters, but printmakers, sculptors, ceramists, enamelists, jewelers, and furniture designers. Not sharing similarities in style or subject matter, it was more a geographical relationship. Artists in our suitcase associated with the Cleveland School from 1910 to 1960 include Kenneth F. Bates, R. Guy Cowan, Edris Eckhardt, Kálmán Kubinyi, Charles Sallée, and Walter A. Sinz.

The Presentation

The Artists and Their Works

Kálmán Matyas Bela Kubinyi

(b. Cleveland, 1906; d. Stockbridge, Massachusetts, 1973)
An influential etcher and engraver, Kálmán Kubinyi was raised in Cleveland's Hungarian community. As a child, he attended museum art classes and later the Cleveland School of Art, graduating in 1926. Kubinyi completed his education the following year in Munich, Germany. His first etchings and engravings date from this period.

During the 1930s Kubinyi's prints were exhibited throughout the United States, and he was invited to exhibit his etchings and engravings at such important events as the Venice Biennale in Italy (1937) and the New York World's Fair (1939). Kubinyi also taught at the Cleveland School of Art (1936–40) and at the CMA. In this role, he influenced

many artists, including Leroy Flint, whom he introduced to the art of etching and engraving.

As an administrator, Kubinyi founded the Cleveland Print Makers in 1930 and served as its president until 1941. He also headed the graphic arts division of the WPA (Edris Eckhardt was in charge of the ceramics division) from 1935 to 1939, and directed the entire Cleveland WPA project in 1939.

In 1932, as president of the Cleveland Print Makers, Kubinyi established the *Print-a-Month* series, where subscribers received an etching, lithograph, or woodcut each month for a year. Artists received \$50 for each commission, and every print was published in a limited, signed edition of 250 impressions. Kubinyi contributed two original aquatints in 1934. This series, which continued until 1937, was the first of its kind, successfully raising revenue for the artists while making original art affordable during the Depression years.

From 1928 to 1957, Kubinyi exhibited numerous pieces in the May Show—etchings, lithographs, woodcuts, relief and linoleum prints, drawings, pastels, oil paintings, enamel, and jewelry—and won many prizes, including first prizes in 1930, 1931, 1938, 1946, and 1948.

In 1996, the CMA mounted *Transformations in Cleveland Art, 1796–1946*, second in a series of four exhibitions organized by the museum in celebration of the city’s bicentennial. Exploring Cleveland’s rich artistic tradition from the city’s origins to the mid 20th century, the exhibition paid particular attention to Cleveland’s legacy as a center for artists of diverse backgrounds. More than 200 paintings, prints, sculptures, photographs, and decorative arts by more than 60 artists were shown, including a print by Kubinyi.

Kubinyi’s work can be found in many public and private collections, including the University of Michigan Museum of Art, the Kelvin Smith Library at Case Western Reserve University, and the Western Reserve Historical Society. His prints illustrate several books, among them *The Goldsmith of Florence: A Book of Great Craftsmen*.

During the 1940s, Kubinyi and his wife, Doris Hall (a 1929 graduate of CIA), working mainly in enamels, opened a gallery and studio in Gloucester, Massachusetts. They later opened a studio/gallery in downtown Boston, and finally a studio in Stockbridge. Kubinyi also directed the art department for the Stockbridge School.

Kálmán Kubinyi (1906–1973). *Cuyahoga*, 1936. Lithograph. 4151.42



In the exhibition catalogue for *Transformations in Cleveland Art*, William H. Robinson wrote: “Cleveland painters, print-makers, and photographers found an endless fascination and inspiration in the Cuyahoga River, which snakes its way through the Flats and bisects the city before emptying into Lake Erie. . . . [They were] particularly fascinated by the numerous bridges that span the Cuyahoga.” In Kubinyi’s *Cuyahoga*, a ship’s anchor lies in the foreground, larger than life in relation to the landscape beyond. Meandering through the composition, the river bends under several different types of bridges while boats move back and forth under a shimmering sun.

With sharp angles and strong contrasts of light and dark forms, Kubinyi gives his river scene a feeling of movement and activity. This is a river in motion. We are drawn to wonder what lies around the bend.

Cuyahoga was not exhibited in the May Show, but Kubinyi did show several related works with views of bridges, lighthouses, and other waterfront sites. A modernist known for interpretations of the machine age, as well as “ash can” subjects, Kubinyi created many prints of industrial scenes with social realist impact.

Like much of the art created in the 1930s by artists who were nearly forgotten, Kubinyi's body of work is truly remarkable.

(William or Walter) Leroy Flint

(b. Ashtabula, 1909; d. Akron, 1991)

W. Leroy Flint attended the Cleveland School of Art from 1932 to 1936. After graduation he worked for the WPA on adult education projects. He also produced commissioned etchings, aquatints, and lithographs; in 1940 he created glazed mosaic murals at the Valley View and Woodhill Homes housing projects and Oxford School in Cleveland Heights.

By 1940 Flint had become executive secretary of the Cleveland Artists' Union and a member of the American Artists' Congress. During World War II he served as senior instructor in the map reproduction department of the Army Corps of Engineers at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. After the war, he worked for three years (1946–49) as director of the Cleveland City Planning Commission. Flint subsequently taught art at the Cleveland Museum of Art and then became an instructor, curator, and finally director of the Akron Art Institute. In 1965 he left this post to become professor of art at Kent State University.

Flint's early works focus mainly on realistic and sometimes regionalist subjects. A painter and printmaker, he sketched a series of lithographs on a yearlong shanty-boat trip down the Ohio River. Satire and social commentary figured prominently in such genre works as *Streetcar Rush*, *Skeptic*, *The Neighbors' Kids*, *Strike Breakers*, *Cliff Dwelling Street Car*, *Shovelers*, and *The Readers*.

After 1945 Flint began to experiment with abstract forms. By 1950 his paintings and drawings explored lyrical forms and rhythms far removed from his figurative, satirical art of the 1930s. He proved to be as much a master of abstraction as of representational art. In Flint's later modernist works he built his compositions with telling, spontaneous imagery.

Flint exhibited oil and watercolor paintings, etchings, relief cuts, woodcuts, linoleum cuts, and drawings in the May Show from 1935 to 1956, winning first prize for pieces submitted in 1936, 1937, and 1954. During his career, he regularly exhibited his art in Cleveland, Akron, Pittsburgh, Detroit, and Chicago. Today, examples of his work are included in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian,

W. Leroy Flint (1909–1991). *Speakers' Platform*, 1936. Aquatint and engraving. LN1942.4064



Cleveland Museum of Art (more than 20 pieces), Akron Art Institute, Butler Museum of Art in Youngstown, and University of Michigan Museum of Art. His sculpture *Flock O' Birds*, consisting of suspended, separate stainless steel abstract references to birds, is installed in the Akron–Summit County Public Library.

In Leroy Flint's *Speaker's Platform*, a color etching and aquatint, four ladies sit across the front of a stage. Potted palms frame the scene, and an American flag hangs as the backdrop on the wall behind them. Three of the women sit quietly with their hands in laps, turned and focused on hearing the words of the fourth. Sitting just right of center, with her arm outstretched on the back of her neighbor's chair, this woman speaks convincingly, gesturing to make her point.

Flint's scene is tongue in cheek. Presumably these ladies are guests on the dais where someone else will speak (or is speaking), most likely to deliver a political message. The actual speaker's podium is not visible. But Flint's "speaker" is the lady sitting here, who looks more like a gossip than someone with an important message to deliver.

The women's soft forms are delineated sparingly, the overall effect cartoon-like or resembling caricature. In con-

trast, touches of color on the wooden platform and chairs, on the flag, and on the ladies' skin and hair make the scene seem more real and enliven the composition. Flint made other prints on political and related themes, with satire and social commentary figuring prominently in his work.

In addition to printmaking, Flint painted in tempera and acrylic, moving from representational subject matter to abstraction and, later, modernist techniques.

Charles Louis Sallée

(b. Oberlin, 1913; d. East Cleveland, 2006)

Charles Sallée was born in Oberlin and grew up in Sandusky. An artist from his high school days, he apprenticed with his father who was an ornamental plasterer. In 1931 he moved to Cleveland. There he studied at Karamu House and at the Cleveland School of Art (1933–38), where he was the first African-American to graduate; he would earn a bachelor's degree in education from Western Reserve College in 1939. After teaching in Cleveland schools, he worked for the WPA as a printmaker and mural painter from 1936 to 1941, and then painted several murals commissioned for Cleveland-area schools and hospitals. He later served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a supervising draftsman for the Corps of Engineers, making tactical maps for the Air Force, and as a camouflage designer.

After the war, Sallée concentrated on portraits, life drawings, and still lifes made in a sensitive, realistic style. He also had a successful career as an interior designer for Cleveland-area restaurants, bars, and hotels, receiving design commissions at the Cleveland Stadium and the Grand Ballroom at Stouffer's Inn on the Square (now the Renaissance Cleveland Hotel), corporate offices, and private homes. Sallée's work is included in many major public and private collections. Into his 90s, he continued to sketch and paint portraits at his Cleveland home.

As a leader of the Karamu group, Sallée elevated the quality of prints produced during the WPA period. A center for cultural activities, Karamu House was founded in 1915 with the goal of defining "first the direction of the Negro's creative abilities into the mainstream of American life . . . and to enable the Negro to tell his own story to the community and the nation making directly known his sufferings, his dissatisfaction, his aspirations and his ambitions."

Charles Sallée (1913–2006). *Used Cars*, 1942. Etching. LN1942.4217



Sallée is included in a book published by the Cleveland Artists Foundation that showcases African-American artists in Cleveland, especially those who were involved at Karamu. His work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions and has been collected by the St. Louis Art Museum and others. The CMA owns four of his prints.

Sallée exhibited oils, etchings, watercolors, pastels, drawings, and illustrations in the May Show from 1935 to 1946, earning several honorable mentions. He died in February 2006 at age 94.

Created at the end of the Great Depression, *Used Cars* features a showroom window beyond which two men use rags to rub and polish the rounded fenders of the automobiles on display. The showroom is filled with cars; at least four are angled into Sallée's tight composition. A sign advertises that customers can "save \$100" on a used car. In the left foreground a man in coat and hat stands just outside the showroom entrance, hands in pockets, casting a sideways look at the cars. What is it about the store that interests him? Does he want to buy a car? Does his posture indicate his eagerness to buy, or do his hands in his pockets symbolize a lack of money?

In many of his prints, Sallée illustrates scenes from daily life in the years surrounding the Depression. Like *Used Cars*, *Postsetters* shows men at work, this time digging a hole while a dog looks on. Other pieces by Sallée show cabaret scenes: in *By Request* two fashionable ladies lean on an upright piano while a third plays; in *Swingtime* a central figure dances with both arms outstretched while others relax at their tables. In all of these prints the figures are engaged in activity, yet never do they make eye contact with one another or the viewer. As in *Used Cars*, most have their backs to the viewer. In Sallée's soft portraits, the women gaze downward or away.

Perhaps the world Sallée depicts is one where pleasure, although within reach, is still uncertain due to persistent hard times.

Hughie Lee-Smith

(b. Eustis, Florida, 1915; d. Albuquerque, 1999)

Hughie Lee-Smith was born in Florida and lived in Atlanta until 1925, when he moved to Cleveland with his mother. Lee-Smith began drawing at a very early age. He attended East Technical High School and art classes at the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Huntington Polytechnic Institute. In 1934, his senior year, he won a National Scholastics Art Competition scholarship for one year of study at the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts (now the Center for Creative Arts). In 1935 he won Karamu's second Gilpin Players Scholarship, enabling him to continue his studies at the Cleveland School of Art, where he graduated in 1938. While at art school, Lee-Smith taught children's classes at Karamu House. In 1944–45, he served for 19 months in the U.S. Navy and painted "morale" paintings at the Great Lakes Naval Base.

Lee-Smith attended Wayne State University in Detroit (B.A., 1953), and then began teaching art. While in Cleveland, he participated at Karamu House as an actor, dancer, set designer, and teacher; he also worked for the WPA as a printmaker. Over the years, he moved to South Carolina, Detroit, Chicago, New York, and Albuquerque, continuing to teach and paint, and winning awards such as the National Academy of Design's Emily Lowe Award in 1957 and the Purchase Prize in 1963. He was elected to the National Academy of Design in 1967. In 1994, he received an honorary doctorate from the Maryland Institute College of Fine Art. Lee-Smith was also elected an associate member of the National Acad-

emy of Design, the second African-American granted that distinction.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Lee-Smith taught at the Princeton Art Association in New Jersey and briefly in private schools. From 1969 to 1971 he was artist-in-residence at Howard University, and in 1973 taught at Trenton State College. During the civil rights unrest when black students revolted against the teaching of Western art, he had occasion to act as spokesman for the students.

By 1988, Lee-Smith took a leave of absence from the Art Students League in order to fulfill his many commissions, among them murals for the New Jersey Commerce Building in Trenton and the Prudential Life Insurance Building in Washington, D.C.

The perspective Lee-Smith brought to his art was influenced by his experiences living through the Depression, World War II, and the civil rights movement. In prints and paintings of figures in desolate landscapes, he expresses a haunting sense of loneliness and alienation. His earliest works, mostly realistic, were fired by social concerns and longing for a better, more democratic ideal for America's future. In the postwar years he developed an abstract style using multiple planes and placing figures in surreal juxtapositions.

In the Cleveland Museum of Art's annual juried May Show, he won third prize for freehand drawing and honorable mention for linoprint in 1938, followed by second and third prizes for lithography in 1939 and 1940.

After a career spanning more than 60 years, Lee-Smith is today the most highly acclaimed African-American artist to have begun his career in Cleveland. In 1984, the City of Cleveland declared a Hughie Lee-Smith Day. He had more than 40 solo exhibitions from 1945 to the 1990s, including major retrospectives. His work is found in many public art collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Detroit Institute of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, and National Museum of American Art, as well as private collections. The New York Foundation for the Arts has produced *The World of Hughie Lee-Smith*, a video documentary of his life and work.

His parents were Luther and Alice Williams Smith. He changed his last name to Lee-Smith after he and his art school classmates decided Smith was too ordinary a name for a distinguished painter.

Hughie Lee-Smith
(1915–1999).
Desolation, 1942.
Lithograph. 4227.42



Desolation is indeed a wretched scene. Barren hills have pointed tops as if to fend off would-be inhabitants. The hills' wave-like shapes underscore their message of danger and unwelcome; they toss and twist in an uninhabitable landscape. A few miserable dwellings, little more than shacks of rough wood, are both tossed up and swallowed by these anamorphic mounds. Also in the scene are an abandoned curved piece of pipe or hose, tombstone-like cubes left piled or tumbling over one another at the left, and a few dead trees bereft of branches or leaves. Lee-Smith's strong background in drawing and composition are apparent, and skillfully depicted textures are seen in the earth, rocks, grass, and sky, as well as the nonorganic objects—wood planks, hose, and cut stone.

Only the few birds flying overhead show signs of life—and they will surely fly on to a greener place. What is the meaning of this bleak scene?

Lee-Smith's career began in the late 1930s, when social realism was in its heyday. From 1942, *Desolation* may be a comment on the state of the country after the Depression. It may also express the desperation felt by an African-American

man confronting racism. With its haunting symbolism and contemplative mood, the intriguing image provokes thought.

A perceptive social commentator, Lee-Smith created mostly realistic works, many concerned with the loneliness of decaying urban life and the alienation caused by racial inequality. In bleak settings of aging, dying neighborhoods and abandoned buildings, he painted solitary people of different ages and sexes across the racial spectrum.

Cowan Pottery

(1912–1931)

In the early 20th century, the greater Cleveland area was the country's center for ceramics. Cowan pottery was produced in Lakewood from 1912 to 1917 and in Rocky River from 1919 to 1932. The pottery's products represent the transition from the Arts and Crafts movement to the modern wares of the mid 20th century exemplified by Art Deco designs. Bowls, vases, candleholders, tea sets, and other items were mass produced in beautiful glazes created at the Cowan Pottery Studio. Other limited-edition sculptural pieces were also produced, and it is for these that the pottery became best known.

R. Guy Cowan was born in 1884 in East Liverpool, Ohio, and educated in ceramics at the New York State School of Ceramics at Alfred. He founded the Cowan Pottery Studio in Lakewood in 1912. The first studio had three small kilns, with Cowan doing most of the designing himself. In the early years, he produced a variety of art pottery and ceramic tiles. In 1917, Cowan was presented with the first of many career awards for pottery in the International Show at the Art Institute of Chicago.

During World War I, the studio closed while Cowan served as a captain in the Chemical Warfare Service. After the war, he reopened his Lakewood operation, but after the extinction of his gas well he moved the facility several miles west to Rocky River. The new studio had nine kilns, and a small house on the property became the pottery showroom. During the 1920s the studio prospered, and a nationwide dealer network, with some 1,200 outlets, was formed to distribute pottery to such stores as Marshall Field's in Chicago, Wanamaker's in Philadelphia, Kaufmann's in Pittsburgh, Ovington's in New York, and Halle's in Cleveland.

In the mid 1920s, the studio developed a full commercial line of pottery. By 1928 Cowan Pottery had grown to a staff of 35, producing 175,000 pieces a year ranging from unlimited stock designs to limited editions of sculptured pieces. Many well-known artists were affiliated with the studio, and through these artists and their works American ceramic art gained respect and recognition from the art world. The studio showed itself to be ahead of its time with the modern ceramic sculptures and wide array of Art Deco pieces it created for its avant-garde clientele.

Cowan developed strong ties with the Cleveland School of Art as a teacher, administrator, and provider of cooperative education employment in ceramics for advanced students, whom he encouraged and inspired to experiment with clay. This experimentation resulted in the development of many creative, unique, and cutting-edge designs and shapes that were executed by Cowan Pottery from 1927 to 1931. Of the more than 20 talented artists working for or associated with the firm, those represented in our suitcase include Edris Eckhardt, A. Drexler Jacobson, and Walter Sinz.

Financial difficulties began in 1929 as the delicate balance of art, pottery, and commercial production began to teeter. Limited editions and hand-painted pieces were being offered at a time when the public could appreciate but not afford them. In 1930, the Great Depression proved overwhelming and Cowan Pottery went into receivership. In 1931, operating under supervision of the court, Cowan Pottery artists were able to produce some of their most artistic work, but the factory was forced to sell off its remaining inventory at depressed prices and finally closed its doors that year.

Cowan, the Cowan Pottery Studio, and the artists involved with the studio produced technically extraordinary pieces that brought international recognition to American art pottery. The expertise of the artists and chemists allowed them to create art forms and glazes that have never been reproduced.

After the studio closed, Cowan spent the rest of his life as the chief designer for Syracuse China and as a judge and trustee for the National Ceramic Exhibitions. He died in Syracuse, New York, in 1957 and was buried in Rocky River.

Most Cowan Pottery is identified with one of the various Cowan marks that were used throughout the company's ex-

istence and help to date the pieces. Limited-edition pieces were normally marked and often signed by the artist. Cowan works appeared in the May Show from 1919 to 1932.

The Cowan Pottery Museum, located in the Rocky River Public Library, houses the largest Cowan collection in the world—more than 1,100 works.

Introspection was made at the Cowan Pottery Studio and designed by Albert Drexler Jacobson, one of many sculptors engaged by R. Guy Cowan to collaborate with craftsmen in the production of ceramic sculpture. Jacobson was associated with Cowan Pottery from 1928 to 1930. During that time, in addition to *Introspection*, he designed three other major pieces: *Antinea*, *Giulia*, and *La Reveuse*.

Introspection is the figure of an owl or bird presented in profile, characterized by a strong outline and slightly abstract, angular, symmetrical geometric shapes. The piece blends the elegance of Art Deco style with modern form. Its overlapping streamlined forms give the figure an aerodynamic look in contrast to its obvious solidity. There is little detail and nothing fussy about the figure, whose whole focus seems drawn inward, as the title suggests. Although made from earthenware clay, *Introspection's* bulk, heavy weight, and deep green patina-like glaze cause it to resemble bronze.

The piece was purchased for \$5.63 by the Educational Purchase Fund from the Cowan Pottery Studio on December 30, 1929.



Cowan Pottery Studio (1912–1931). Designed by A. Drexler Jacobson (1895–1973). *Introspection*, 1929. Glazed ceramic. 1929.972

Edris (Edith Aline) Eckhardt

(Cleveland, 1910–1998)

Edris Eckhardt began drawing and painting at the age of 8, attending children's classes at the CMA. After graduating from Cleveland's East High School, she enrolled in the Cleveland School of Art's painting program. As a student she worked part-time at Cowan Pottery, where she learned techniques for producing and firing various ceramic mediums. Eckhardt graduated from the Cleveland School of Art in 1931 and went on to achieve prominence as both a ceramist and a glass artist.

In 1935 she was appointed head of the WPA's ceramics division. She created monumental ceramic sculptures for the Great Lakes Expo, Ohio State Fair, New York World's Fair, and Cleveland's housing communities of Valley View and Woodhill Homes. She conducted a training program for art-

ists and taught ceramics at community occupational therapy and settlement houses. During World War II, Eckhardt created and marketed ceramic pins, taught volunteers, and participated in exhibitions traveling to army hospitals.

While with the WPA, Eckhardt created several series of ceramic sculptures for the Cleveland Public Library. Nationally known for her works inspired by characters from children's books, Eckhardt won a commission in 1939 from First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt for a life-size ceramic sculpture of Huckleberry Finn.

From 1942 to 1947 Eckhardt taught clay modeling as art therapy to students at Western Reserve University. In 1947 she presented televised demonstrations on ceramics. In her own work, she switched from ceramic sculpture to glass in 1953, devising methods for sculpting "gold glass" for which she became internationally known. Glass had largely been made in factories, but Eckhardt was one of several artists who experimented with glassmaking in their own private studios, forming freestanding sculptures in her basement studio in the 1950s and 1960s.

Considered one of the forerunners of the studio glass movement, Eckhardt enjoyed many artistic achievements and awards. During the 1950s she received two Guggenheim Fellowships and a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Fellowship. In 1971 she won a Cleveland Arts Prize Special Citation for Distinguished Service to the Arts for her pioneering work in glass sculpture. The prize celebrates individuals who, through exceptional mastery or commitment, vision or leadership, have significantly contributed to the vitality and stature of the arts in Cleveland.

Eckhardt believed her work to be art rather than craft. Her change from ceramic sculpture to glass as a medium is evident in the pieces she exhibited in the May Show. From 1932 to 1964, with the exception of one watercolor, she showed dozens of pieces in enamel, glass, ceramic sculpture, pottery, and jewelry, winning numerous prizes throughout the years.

Of the series of ceramic figures for children that Eckhardt created for the Cleveland Public Library during the WPA years, the most popular set represented figures from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. *The Walrus & Carpenter* illustrates the following scene excerpted from Carroll's poem:



Edris Eckhardt (1910–1998). *The Walrus & Carpenter*, 1941. Glazed ceramic. 1941.362

*The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low:
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.*

*'I weep for you,' the Walrus said:
'I deeply sympathize.'
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.*

*'O Oysters,' said the Carpenter,
'You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?'
But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.*

The *CMA Bulletin* described the *Alice in Wonderland* series as “full of humor and naiveté. [The figures] show an understanding of child psychology. [Eckhardt has] caught the sense of mad fantasy . . . their success rests in their compactness and solidness of composition.” Its direct emotion, calm pastel colors, and soft smooth glaze make it appealing to look at and to hold.

The piece won first prize in the 1936 May Show, prompting orders from schools and libraries throughout the country. In 1937 the series was exhibited at the Paris World's Fair, where England's Princess Elizabeth liked it so much that she arranged to obtain a set.

Walter A. Sinz

(Cleveland, 1881–1966)

Sculptor and medalist Walter Sinz was associated with Cowan Pottery. He learned printmaking at an early age from his father, a lithography instructor at the Cleveland School of Art. He entered the school himself in 1907, and from 1911 to 1952 taught lithography, sculpture, and industrial design there.

In 1952 Sinz retired from teaching to work on sculptural commissions. He worked in plaster, clay, wood, ceramic, and bronze, and also created models for sculptures and low reliefs.

Sinz created several outdoor sculptures and monuments, including *St. Luke Reading the Gospel* at St. Luke's Medical Center. His *Portage Path Marker*, created in 1926 and embedded into a boulder, is a bronze relief sculpture (3 feet x 4 feet x 2 inches) depicting a Native American carrying a canoe through the portage, an eight-mile passage between the Cuyahoga and Tuscarawas rivers in Akron.

Sinz revisited the theme of transportation in 1929 when he designed the *Thompson Trophy* for Thompson Products (later Thompson Ramo Wooldridge, or TRW), to be awarded to winners of the National Air Races' "unlimited" race—where no physical restrictions were placed on the airplane as to engine size, number, or horsepower. Wanting a trophy that symbolized speed supremacy in the air, Thompson Products invited four notable sculptors to prepare clay sketches.

A committee of five judges, including Orville Wright, unanimously chose the design submitted by Sinz. Fashioned from bronze and mounted on a black marble base, the trophy showed Icarus, the first man to fly according to Greek mythology, with wings spread and facing skyward, symbolizing man's ever-constant desire to fly. Sinz later prepared two ten-foot models of the trophy to be used at various sites to promote the race.

With the addition of a jet division in the mid-1940s, two trophies were needed. Sinz's original mold was found and two new trophies cast. These are now at the Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum in Cleveland and the Air Force Museum in Dayton, while the original trophy resides at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

Also well known as a medalist, Sinz was commissioned to design several medals, including the American Society for Metals Gold Medal established in 1943 and the Charles W. Briggs Memorial Technical and Operating Medal established by the Steel Founders' Society of America in 1944.

Sinz exhibited 112 pieces in the May Show from 1919 until his death in 1966, including bronze, ceramic clay, plaster, and wood sculptures, low reliefs, medals, a lithograph, and an oil painting, winning numerous awards.

Walter A. Sinz (1881–1966). *Black Nymph*, 20th century. Glazed ceramic. TR15299.13



Made of terracotta clay, *Black Nymph* is a female figure standing straight and tall, her left arm along her side and bending around her back at the elbow, her right arm up and over the top of her head. The frontal figure is cut at the knees. Small breasts, a narrow waist, and ample curved hips give the figure female attributes, yet its face, nearly featureless, is generic. The piece exudes a quiet dynamism: the overall effect is restful, a figure in repose, yet at second glance perhaps she is stretching before moving into action with new energy.

Formed by hand, the sculpture is hollow, making it lightweight and ensuring even firing in the kiln. The flat black matte glaze is understated and suited to the subtly modeled form. The piece is perhaps a model for a larger sculptural work.

Esther M. Sills (1908–1988). *Bowl*, 1944.
Wheel-thrown ceramic.
1944.301



Esther Marshall Sills

(b. Columbus, Ohio, 1908; d. near San Francisco, 1988)

Esther Marshall Sills graduated from Oberlin College in 1927 and from Ohio State University in 1928, receiving a master's degree from Columbia University in 1934. She taught fine arts at Columbia and Ohio State, and in Youngstown, Ohio. Sills and her husband, John, whom she met at Columbia, teamed to create pottery in their Cleveland Heights home studio. Esther designed and executed the pieces, while John built the equipment and fired them.

Sills exhibited watercolors and pottery in May Shows from 1937 to 1945, winning first prizes in 1939 and 1941. The Cleveland Museum of Art owns four of her pieces: two bowls, a vase, and a plate. She also created oil paintings, watercolors, block prints, and crayon sketches.

Sills and her husband dug their clay from the ground along Lake Erie at Mentor Headlands and carted it back to their studio. Sills would first knead the clay to make it pliable, and then place it on the potter's wheel, centering it

and forming the spinning lump of clay into its final shape. The bowl in the Art to Go suitcase is perfectly symmetrical with thin, even walls. Its weight and feel are appropriate for its size.

Sills used the sgraffito technique to etch her design. After applying a blue-green glaze, she scratched the design through the glaze to the original clay. The whimsical monkeys, with their long arms and tails, and the swaying coconut tree take advantage of the bowl's round convex form, seeming to chase around its surface. Firing in a kiln produced the glaze's glassy surface.

Paul Dominey

(b. Atlanta, 1943)

Paul Dominey was born in Atlanta, not far from a Civil War battleground. He still has his first painting: a red door with a big gold doorknob and blue windowpanes. Later in life his former kindergarten teacher told him that as a child he had announced to her that he was going to be an artist someday. Dominey struggled in school, and as an adult would discover that he has dyslexia. But he excelled in art, taking classes at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta and winning prizes for painting.

After graduating from high school, Dominey secretly put together a portfolio of artwork and sent it to the Cleveland Institute of Art. His family considered art an impractical way to make a living. He was accepted by the CIA and moved to Cleveland in the early 1960s. There he studied painting, drawing, enameling, and ceramics with such distinguished teachers as Kenneth Bates, John Paul Miller, Louis Bosa, Julian Stanczak, and Toshiko Takaezu, graduating in 1966 with a B.F.A. in painting and awarded a full-tuition scholarship for graduate work. He exhibited pottery and an acrylic painting in the 1965 and 1967 May Shows at the CMA.

Dominey's work has been shown in the Southeastern Juried Exhibition in Atlanta, the Cleveland Institute of Art's first annual juried alumni show, the Gertrude Herbert Museum of Art Competition in Augusta, Georgia (where he won a prize), and in solo gallery shows in Atlanta, New Orleans, and Los Angeles. His work is held in a number of private and



Paul Dominey (b. 1943). *Moon Pot*, 1965. Hand-built ceramic. TR15721.27

corporate collections around the world. Dominey has sold art and designed framing for interior designers and architects. Presently, he works as an art consultant for the Deljou Art Group, a fine art publishing company based in Atlanta.

Moon Pot is a hand-built clay piece made from two slabs of clay, possibly rolled out with a rolling pin and then layered and fused by finger-pressing the edges together. A material such as newspaper would have been used to stuff the form, keeping the top and bottom spread apart while the clay dried; the paper would have burned up during firing. Fingermarks remain around the edges of this piece. The surface texture was created by pressing cloth, perhaps burlap, into the wet clay. Glazes in shades of gray and brown were applied to the piece after the first firing.

The piece's natural appearance and organic form were typical of ceramic works created in the 1960s. "Weed pots" of all shapes and sizes with similar narrow openings (for displaying a single natural stem, such as that of a wildflower) were a popular form. Bearing the complete title *Moon Pot, Series 1, Number 3*, Dominey's piece is aptly named for its flat oval "flying saucer" disk shape, moon-like soft surface, and pale color. Four small spouts placed off-center on the pot's crest (one has a broken top) look like geological features on the moon's surface.

Kenneth Francis Bates

(North Scituate, Massachusetts, 1904–1973)

The son of an interior designer and the grandson and great-grandson of craftsmen, from an early age Kenneth Bates knew that he wanted to pursue art in some form or another. By the time he was in high school he had decided on teaching art as a profession.

Bates attended the Massachusetts School of Art, where he earned his bachelor's degree. He moved to Cleveland in 1926 and joined the Cleveland School of Art faculty the following year, spending some time as head of the design department and, in 1971, becoming professor emeritus. During his 43 years at the school, he taught every class offered, as well as advanced courses in enameling.

Specializing in enamelwork and internationally recognized for his achievements in the field, Bates is credited for elevating enameling from hobby to art. One of the first artists and teachers in the United States to pursue enameling with the same attention, devotion, and passion that painting and sculpture commanded, Bates influenced multiple generations of American enamelists. In 1987 he was recognized for his enamel crafting and honored by his colleagues at the National Society of Enamelists with the title "Dean of American Enamelists." The three books he wrote remain standard texts in the field.

Bates produced a rich and varied body of artwork, examples of which now reside in museum collections, public buildings (*Midsummer in Ohio*, painted in 1956, hangs in the main library in Lakewood), and private collections. His work appeared in every May Show from 1933 to 1993, winning numerous prizes. In 1946 he was awarded first prize in a national enameling competition. Works by Bates have been displayed in many museums and were featured in one-man shows in Brooklyn and Chicago. The CMA owns more than 20 of his works.

Throughout his career, Bates produced enamel bowls, boxes, plates, tiles, wall panels, and sculpture. Some of his pieces portray abstract designs, but most are based on patterns derived from the natural world. An avid horticulturist, Bates cultivated prize-winning roses that sometimes served as models for his art. He was an excellent colorist, designer, and craftsman, exploring the endless possibilities of enameling.

Kenneth F. Bates
(1904–1973). *Wall
Plaque*, 1957. Enamel.
1986.1111



Bates lived with his family on the Lake Erie shoreline for 60 years in a house that was the first International Style structure in Ohio, designed by the noted architect Alfred Klaus, with input from Bates: flat-roofed and outfitted with original Art Deco furnishings, appliances, and even flatware.

Created to hang vertically on the wall, Bates's irregularly shaped plaque depicts a landscape in shades of green, gray, and brown. A painting in enamel, the composition gains solidity from the repetition of shapes and colors. Interpreting a specific locality or an invented scene, *Wall Plaque* shows off the medium of enamel with depth of color and metallic brightness. One of many such plaques Bates produced, this piece shows his absolute mastery of the medium, as the enamel takes on an almost painterly quality.

Bates's buildings, bridges, roads, fields, and trees are recognizable though abstracted. Two orange brick buildings have small black windows, several gray stone buildings have bright blue and turquoise windows, and a dull green factory building has a red roof, white windows, and dark green stacks. Bright green and yellow-green patches suggest grass and highlight darker green tree-like forms. Roads and bridges wind

through the scene as overlapping shapes create tiers in the cityscape. Although the perspective is compressed into one plane, these thoroughfares provide a path that lends a sense of depth to the view.

Norman E. Magden

(b. Cleveland, 1934)

Norman Magden graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art in 1957. He received an M.A. in 1958 and a Ph.D. in 1974 in art history from Case Western Reserve University. A former professor of art history and director of the School of Art at the University of Illinois in DeKalb (1993–2001), Magden is now professor and head of the art department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

As a filmmaker and video artist, Magden has received many honors, including awards from the London Film Festival, International Canadian Film Festival, Athens International Film Festival, Ann Arbor Film Festival, and National Endowment for the Arts Short Film Showcase. Other awards include grants from organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts, Illinois Arts Council, Illinois Humanities Council, and Randolph Street Gallery in Chicago.

Magden's recent works involve the creation of multi-image performances in which performers move in an integrated environment of projected images and interact with these images by carrying portable screens as an extension of their performance personae or by wearing specially designed costumes. Performers acting as screens become a metaphor for the polemical human struggle between the beauty and terror of technology and its ever-increasing presence in contemporary society. Pushing the dissolution of boundaries between realities even further, the images being projected on the performers often contain a reiteration of the performance actually taking place, creating an intriguing visual confusion in which it becomes almost impossible to separate the images of the performance from the live performance. These multi-image works have been performed nationally and internationally, most notably at the Theatre des Amandiers, Paris; International Carnival of Experimental Sounds, London; Polytechnic Institute, Mexico City; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Automation House, New York; and Avant-Garde Festival, New York.

Norman E. Magden
(b. 1934). *Seated
Cup*, 1965. Enamel
on copper. 1965.82



In April 2003, Magden spoke at the 30th Annual Conference of the Midwest Art History Society on “Phenomenological Art and Film as Analogues of Primal Experience.” He has collaborated with many other artists and performers. Reviews of Magden’s work cite “a fascinating world,” “stunning beautiful effects, almost surreal glimpses into another world,” and the observation that “no single word quite describes Magden’s dance/film/music collaborations.”

Resembling a chalice, *Seated Cup* is two deep concave shapes fused together, the larger open one supported by the inverted smaller base. To begin, two flat circular copper pieces were softened by heating, allowing them to be hammered by hand with a soft mallet into the desired shapes.

Decorating the surfaces of both halves is a delicate linear pattern of orange dashes outlining interlocking shapes. These marks likely would have been painted onto the surface, while the deeper background colors might have been applied by sifting or dusting enamel onto the copper. The abstract symmetrical surface design complements the cup’s organic shapes and colors. The simple primitive-looking design is enhanced by the enamel, which flows and fuses in its molten state in the kiln

and, when cooled and hardened, reveals depth and illusion. The piece would have been created in many stages and fired after application of each layer of enamel.

Magden exhibited 47 pieces in the May Show from 1956 to 1968, winning several prizes for his ceramics, jewelry, and enameling. In 1965 he exhibited three cups in the 47th Annual May Show, including *Seated Cup*, which the museum purchased.

Drew Smith

(b. Akron, 1948)

Drew Smith began taking glassblowing classes in northeast Ohio during the studio glass movement of the 1970s. A graduate of Ashland University (B.A. in art and marketing, 1970), Smith operated a studio in his hometown of Akron from 1973 to 1981. He then taught glassblowing at Columbus College of Art and Design, while also running the Drew Smith Glasshouse in Logan, Ohio, where he produced glasses, paperweights, lamps, vases, chandeliers, and sculptures (including a giant toothbrush, glass oozing from a paint can, and huge geometric steel tubes). His glass pieces often gained iridescence from copper enamels and silver chloride salt used on the exterior and encased in clear glass.

In 1996 Smith moved to Tampa, where he opened a studio gallery with his then wife, Kirsi, Finland's first woman glassblower. That same year, Ashland University mounted a 25-year retrospective of his work. The Newark Museum chose one of Smith's pieces for an exhibition on the 20th-century studio art glass movement. The Corning Museum and the Renwick Gallery each have a work by him in their permanent collections.

Smith closed his Tampa gallery in 2002. He now lives in San Diego, where he teaches glassblowing. His current work includes hand-blown glass sculpture and furniture. "Glass has tremendous surface strength," says Smith, who casts molten glass into steel frames, creating an enlarged version of cloisonné. In 1999 he was featured in an issue of *Glass Art* magazine as one of four leading glass furniture makers. At a recent International Furniture Fair in New York he presented a line he calls "Ferro Vitro."

Smith exhibited twice in the May Show: *Column*, a cast bronze sculpture in 1973, and a glass decanter set in 1975.

Drew Smith (b. 1948).
Vase, 1972–73. Hand-
blown glass.
1973.1021



While Smith's glass piece in the Art to Go suitcase is recognizable as a vase, the way in which it varies from a traditional form demonstrates the unique qualities of blown glass. Like other vessels, it sits flat on its foot, with a body that swells outward in the middle, then narrows upward at the neck and forms a lip. But it's far from symmetrical, as layers of glass applied to the molten glass body create bulges and raised areas, making the glass itself seem to ooze and pulse with life. Made from amber-colored glass, the piece's variations in color and texture result from silver salts added when the glass was hot. This vase was purchased for the museum in 1973.

Conclusion

The artists represented in our suitcase spent their lifetimes creating art for generations to enjoy. Some of them were leaders and innovators in their fields; some were instructors, teaching and guiding others in their art careers. Clearly, the CMA was integral to their endeavors, as we have seen that several of them studied or taught at the museum; certainly all of them spent time viewing works in the museum's world-class collection.

All of the artists participated in the CMA's May Show, which provided an annual review of local artists' work in all media, affirming their virtuosity, lending their work credibility with awards and honors, and presenting an opportunity for patrons to buy works. There is no doubt that the artists appreciated this symbolic and financial support.

Kenneth F. Bates, an internationally renowned artist, teacher, and author who showed his work in the May Show for a record 60 years, personified the mutual appreciation shared by the museum and local artists. In a keynote speech at the 1987 Enamel Convention, Bates asked: "Why do enamellists and all other creative people . . . [feed] on one another's approval, growing satisfied, basking in each other's accomplishments? We like to exhibit techniques and results which no layman understands or in which he shows the slightest interest." Bates expressed the value of entering and being accepted in juried shows like the May Show when he advised: "Steer your thinking in the direction of the pieces they accepted. . . . [Explore] a new technique, or a new dimension. [You may discover] a whole new train of thought which otherwise might have been passed."

With encouragement and generosity, the CMA and the May Show significantly contributed to sustaining the region's artists and spurred artistic growth and development in Cleveland.

Timeline

Highlights in Art and World History



1929
Introspection,
Cowan Pottery



1936
Cuyahoga,
Kálmán Kubinyi

1800

1900

July 22, 1796
Moses
Cleaveland
reaches the
banks of the
Cuyahoga and
establishes the
Cleveland
settlement

1861–65
Civil War

1879
Thomas Edison invents
light bulb
Charles F. Brush invents
electric arc lamp
Rodin creates *Thinker*

1905
Cleveland
School of Art
opens new
building in
University Circle

1903
Pablo
Picasso,
Georges
Braque, and
Juan Gris
begin
working in
Cubist style

1915
Karamu
House
opens

1916
Cleveland
Museum of Art
opens
Cleveland Play
House forms

1922
Garrett
Morgan
invents tri-
colored
traffic light

1930
Cyrus
Eaton
founds
Republic
Steel

1938
Charles Sallée
and Hughie
Lee-Smith
first African-
American
graduates
from
Cleveland
School of Art



Natives and
Settlers: Early
Artifacts from
the Ohio
Region



Native
American
Art



Diego Rivera:
A Mexican
Hero and His
Culture

Artists of Our Region

Art to Go Suitcase



1941
Walrus & Carpenter,
Edris Eckhardt



1942
Used Cars, Charles
Sallée



1965
Seated Cup,
Norman
Magden

1950

2000

1941
Japan attacks U.S. at
Pearl Harbor

1935–43
WPA employs 75
Cleveland artists to
create art for
factories, schools, and
public places. Ends
when artists are called
to WWII

1954
U.S. Supreme
Court rules
racial
segregation in
public schools
illegal

1963
Dr. Martin
Luther King Jr.
leads Civil Rights
march on
Washington, DC

John F. Kennedy
assassinated

1979
Compact
disc
introduced

1994–96
Jacobs Field,
Rock & Roll
Hall of Fame
and
Museum,
and Great
Lakes
Science
Center open

1996
Cleveland
celebrates its
bicentennial

2006
You are here



Materials and
Techniques of
the Artist

Lesson Plan

● Focus

Middle school and high school students will be introduced to 20th-century artists who studied and worked at local cultural institutions, schools, and production workshops. The Cleveland Institute of Art, Karamu House, Huntington Polytechnic, and Cowan Pottery Studio among others will be the basis of the student's understanding of local arts movements and their importance to the community then and now.

● Purpose

To allow students the opportunity to handle genuine art objects that highlight stylistic and manufacturing techniques of local 20th-century artists. Concepts in art appreciation and production techniques will make solid formative interdisciplinary connections.

● Motivation

Students will be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to participate in discovery-based discussion while handling art objects. Pre- and post-discussions by the classroom teacher further motivate and solidify student comprehension of concepts.

● Objectives

Students will learn and appreciate the importance of local art movements and their effects on local, national, and world affairs. Students will form opinions on the importance of the arts on local economies as well as the emotive advantages of communities that have strong arts opportunities.

Students will become familiar and will use in discussion certain terms that characterize style and/or techniques inherent in the objects created by local artists. They will also gain an understanding of local history by viewing works by artists active in the local scene in the early 20th century.

Students will be introduced to a variety of production techniques, including lithography, ceramics, enameling, and glassblowing. Students will gain a greater appreciation for the function of museums as storehouses of knowledge understood through the arts.

● Participation

Discussion will be encouraged through inductive reasoning techniques during the Art to Go presentation. Questions both simple and complex will be posed. Identification of new and review terms will be woven into the discussion.

● Comprehension Check

Throughout the presentation the CMA instructor will consistently weave new terms and concepts into the discussion as a means of reviewing and reaffirming knowledge.

● Continued Exploration

Teachers and students will continue to expand their visual arts vocabulary by identifying new terms and knowledge as they study other subjects and the environment in which they live. This process will reinforce all learned knowledge.

Vocabulary Terms

aquatint

Usually combined with other etching techniques to create tonal areas that are rich, deep, velvety, and dark, or delicate transparent tints resembling watercolor washes. The ground used—usually sprinkled asphaltum or resin dust—is warmed to melt the particles of dust, adhering them to desired areas of the plate but not fully protecting the metal from the acid etch.

cast

To create a cast form, the artist shapes the original version of the work in wax. The wax is covered with plaster, creating a mold. Then the wax is removed, usually by melting it out, leaving an impression in the mold exactly matching the original work. Soft fluid “slip” (finely ground clay mixed with water) is poured into the hollow form. Once the clay has hardened, it is removed from the mold.

ceramics

Objects made from clay that are baked (fired) in an oven-like enclosure called a kiln, then glazed to add color and decoration and to create a glasslike, nonporous surface. After glazing, the pieces are fired again at high temperatures, adhering the glaze permanently to the surface and making the ceramic works hard, durable, and long lasting.

clay

A fine-grained, firm earthy material that is pliable when wet, brittle when dry, and very hard when heated. Clay can be formed into desired shapes through various methods—including hand building, casting, and “throwing” on a potter’s wheel.

enamel

A decorative and protective layer made from silica (a kind of glass) applied as a powder or paste or mixed with liquid and painted onto ceramic ware, glass, or metals. The piece is then heated for a short time in a kiln or furnace, where the powdered glass fuses onto the surface and solidifies, resulting in a smooth, glossy, glass-like surface.

etching

A polished metal plate (usually copper or zinc) is covered with a thin acid-resistant layer (wax or resin) blackened with a fumigating candle. With an etching needle the artist draws into the wax ground without penetrating the metal. The plate is then submerged in a series of acid baths, where the acid bites into the metal surface only where the protective ground has been taken away to expose the drawing.

glass

A hard material made of silicates, considered to be a supercooled liquid rather than a true solid. Molten glass can be poured into a mold and pressed, or blown. The glass artist adds minerals or other items, if desired, for color and other effects.

glassblowing

A method of making art objects from glass. The artist dips a long blowpipe (pontil or punty) into molten glass and shapes the piece by forcing compressed air or blowing breath through the pipe, causing the gathered glass to expand, while rotating the pipe to spin and shape the piece. Once a piece is finished, striking its neck separates it from the blowpipe. It is allowed to continue cooling slowly.

Vocabulary Terms

kiln

An oven or oven-like enclosure used to heat ceramic pieces to harden the clay in preparation for glazing or to adhere the glaze permanently to the surface, making it hard, durable, and long lasting. Also used to heat and fuse enamel to various surfaces.

lithography

A method of creating multiple images that relies on the natural mutual incompatibility of oil and water. The artist draws with an oil-based medium, such as a grease crayon, to create an image on the flat surface of a stone or metal plate. During printing, the surface of the stone or plate is kept wet with water, which is absorbed by and remains on the non-oily parts of the surface while being repelled by the oily parts. Oil-based ink, applied with a roller, adheres only to the surface's oily portions, where the image lies. The wet, unmarked, non-oily portions resist the rolled-on ink.

potter's wheel

A revolving horizontal disk used to shape clay forms. Varieties range from the simplest kick wheel, operated by kicking or using a disk to keep the turntable spinning, to power-driven electric wheels. The potter's wheel may have been invented by either the Sumerians or the Chinese in about 5000 BC, perhaps even before the use of wheels for transportation. Objects made on a potter's wheel are perfectly symmetrical.

print

Damp paper is placed over an image inked on a stone or plate. Pressure is applied by hand or by means of a printing press, enabling an exact transfer of the image onto the paper. The print will be a mirror image of the image created by the artist. Separate plates are used for color prints, with separate drawings prepared for each color. Registering, or lining up, these plates is a challenge for the printmaker.

sculpture

Three-dimensional works of art that can be made from almost any material. For example, ceramic artists can carve, model, construct, or cast three-dimensional forms from clay.

series

An edition of prints exactly the same from a single image created on a stone or plate, with the inking and printing process repeated multiple times. Artists sign and number each print in the series.

slab

A flat piece of clay formed using a rolling pin. In slab construction, the artist builds up a form by joining shapes cut from thick sheets of damp clay. Parts are connected by scoring or scratching the areas to be joined and then coating them with slip, a little extra clay that will blend the joints and harden.

Historical Terms

Great Depression

The cultural period often called simply “the Depression”; the political response to the economic slump in North America, Europe, and other industrialized areas of the world that began in 1929 and lasted until about 1939. Called the “Great Depression” because it was the largest sustained decline in industrial production and productivity in the century and a half for which economic records have been regularly kept, it began with a collapse of stock prices on the New York Stock Exchange in October 1929.

Karamu House

The nation’s oldest African-American cultural arts institution, founded as a settlement house (the Playhouse Settlement) in 1915 by two social workers as a place where people of different races, creeds, and religions could find common ground. When the founders discovered early on that the arts provided that link, the settlement began to promote interracial theater and arts, quickly becoming a magnet for African-American dancers, actors, writers, and printmakers. Renamed Karamu House (after the Swahili word meaning “a place of joyful gathering”) in 1941, the not-for-profit community-based organization continues as a cultural center offering art experiences for people of all ages through a variety of programs.

May Show

For almost 75 years (1919–93), the Cleveland Museum of Art presented the May Show as a forum for highlighting the vitality, creativity, and variety of the arts of Cleveland and the region. During the Depression, the May Show was a means for local artists and craftsmen to support themselves through the sale of their work. Through the years the museum recognized superior artistic achievement through a variety of awards and purchased numerous works of art. In 2005 the exhibition was reestablished as the NEO Show.

Works Project Administration

Created to help provide economic relief during the Great Depression, this “make-work” program provided jobs and income to unemployed citizens. WPA projects primarily employed blue-collar workers in construction projects across the nation, but also hired white-collar workers and artists for smaller-scale projects and even ran a circus. The WPA built 650,000 miles of roads, 78,000 bridges (including the Golden Gate Bridge), 125,000 buildings, and 700 miles of airport runways. The visual arts arm of the WPA, the Federal Arts Project, produced hundreds of thousands of artworks, including an estimated 2,566 murals, 17,744 sculptures, 108,099 easel paintings, and 240,000 prints.

The FAP had two goals: to employ out-of-work artists and to provide art for non-federal government buildings (county courthouses, post offices, libraries, etc.). The WPA’s commissions resulted in a legacy of “American Scene” public art, encouraging awareness of and appreciation for American art and artists. Today, more than 60 years after it ceased to exist, there is no part of America that does not bear some mark of the WPA. “WPA art” has come to be a generic term for art created during that period.

Media

Ceramics

Ceramics are objects made from fired clay. Clay is so long-lasting that objects made from it, such as pottery and bricks, are often one of the keys to knowing civilizations thousands of years later. Clay is a fine-grained, firm earthy material that is pliable when wet, brittle when dry, and very hard when heated. The oldest form of clay pottery is earthenware (known as “terracotta” when fired). Later forms include stoneware and porcelain.

Clay is formed into desired shapes through various methods. It can be poked, pushed, pulled, rolled, pinched, torn, jabbed, cut, carved, and molded and thrown on a potter’s wheel.

To create sculpture, a three-dimensional work of art, an artist can carve, model, construct, or cast a form in clay. To cast a form, the artist shapes the original version of the work in wax. The wax is covered with plaster, creating a mold. Then the wax is removed, usually by melting it out, leaving an impression in the mold exactly matching the original work. Soft fluid “slip” (finely ground clay mixed with water) is poured into the hollow form. Once the clay has hardened, it is removed from the mold.

Clay can be manually shaped on a potter’s wheel, a revolving horizontal disk. Wheels range from the simplest kick wheel, operated by kicking or using a disk to keep the turntable spinning, to power-driven electric wheels. The potter’s wheel may have been invented by either the Sumerians or the Chinese in about 5000 BC, perhaps even before the use of wheels for transportation. Objects made on a potter’s wheel are perfectly symmetrical.

Ceramic objects can also be made from slabs, flat pieces of clay that have been formed using a rolling pin. In slab construction, the artist builds up a form by joining shapes cut from thick sheets of damp clay. Parts are connected by scoring or scratching the areas to be joined and then coating them with slip, a little extra clay which will blend the joints and harden.

Once formed, clay pieces are fired in an oven or oven-like enclosure called a kiln. The resulting bisque ware, or hard pottery, can be glazed to add color and decoration and to create a glasslike, nonporous surface. After

glazing, clay objects are fired again at high temperatures, adhering the glaze permanently to the surface and making the pieces hard, durable, and long lasting.

Enameling

Enamel is a decorative and protective layer of glass. Ceramic ware, glass, or metals—most often copper, a pliable reddish-brown metal used either pure or in alloys such as brass and bronze—serve as a foundation for enamelwork. Copper is easily molded or shaped, and can be hammered thin by hand or with tools.

The enamel surface is created when a vitreous coating made from silica (a kind of glass) is applied as a powder or paste or mixed with liquid and painted on. The piece is then heated for a short time in a kiln or furnace, where the powdered glass fuses onto the metal and solidifies, resulting in a smooth, glossy, glass-like surface. Transparent or opaque, enamel usually serves to add decorative color. Many techniques can be used to manipulate enamel to create different design effects. Objects made with, coated with, or decorated by this method are also referred to as enamels.

Enameling has long been a method for making decorative objects, and was used to decorate jewelry in ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Enamelwork specimens found in Belgium and England date from as early as the 3rd or 2nd century BC. Perfected in the Byzantine world, enamel, often in the cloisonné technique, was used to adorn screens and tabernacles. In the 12th century, the Spanish excelled in the *champlevé* technique. During the Middle Ages, enamel was sometimes used for major works such as altarpieces. In 16th-century France, Limoges became a center of enamelwork production. From Limoges emerged the most famous artist to work in enamel: Léonard Limousin. Beginning in the 17th century in England, enamel was used to create miniature portraits and floral decoration on vanity cases and snuffboxes. In the 19th century, craftsmanship declined and interest in the enamel medium generally waned. In the mid 1960s, however, an extensive craft revival nurtured a renewed interest in enamel techniques.

Media

Glassmaking

Glass, a hard material made of silicates, is considered a supercooled liquid rather than a true solid. Glass can be manipulated in several ways to create works of art. Molten glass can be poured into a mold and pressed, or blown.

To blow glass, the glass artist puts the type and amount of glass necessary to make the piece in an oven to melt, adding minerals or other items, if desired, for color and other effects. Once the glass has melted to a liquid stage, the glassblower dips a long blowpipe (pontil or punty) into it and gathers some glass on the end, quickly scanning it for imperfections. If the glass is satisfactory, the glassblower begins to shape the piece by forcing compressed air or blowing breath through the pipe to expand the gathered glass.

The glassblower rotates the pipe, spinning the glass and shaping the piece quickly so the object does not become lopsided. The part of the piece attached to the blowpipe will be its bottom. Glassblowers can use metal tongs or wet wooden boards to shape pieces; pinching the tongs around the soft glass creates indentations. Once a piece is finished, striking its neck separates it from the blowpipe. Finally, the neck is shaped. The piece is allowed to continue cooling slowly.

In the Stone Age, objects were carved from natural glass such as obsidian and rock crystal. The earliest known manufactured glass is from Egypt, dating to about 2000 BC, and much was produced by the artisans of the Roman Empire. Following the fall of Rome, very little glass was manufactured until 10th-century Europe, when stained glass was popular. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the principal center of European glassmaking was on the island of Murano at Venice.

During the 20th century, glass was made principally in factories with the complex machinery of mass production, using molds to form objects. Pioneers of glass art in the 1930s to 1960s saw glass as an art medium and envisioned glass art objects as commercially viable. These artists experimented with sculptural and functional work, using warm glass techniques that did not involve extremely high temperatures and thus could be executed in small studios.

Printmaking

Before the printing press, printmaking was not considered an art form, but rather a way to make multiple copies of materials for communication. In the 18th century, art prints began to be considered originals, but not until the 19th century did artists begin to produce limited editions and sign their prints. Two types of printmaking methods are illustrated in the 20th-century works included in the suitcase: lithography and etching.

Lithography, invented in Bavaria in the late 18th century by Aloysius Senefelder (1771–1834), relies on the natural mutual incompatibility of oil and water. The artist draws with an oil-based medium, such as a grease crayon, to create an image on the flat surface of a stone (usually highly polished and chemically treated limestone) or metal plate. During printing, the surface of the stone or plate is kept wet with water, which is absorbed by and remains on the non-oily parts of the surface while being repelled by the oily parts. Oil-based ink, applied with a roller, adheres only to the surface's oily portions, where the image lies. The wet, unmarked, non-oily portions resist the rolled-on ink. Damp paper is placed over the inked stone or plate and pressure is applied by hand or by means of a printing press, enabling the exact transfer of the ink onto the paper. When lifted, the paper bears the image created by the artist.

Etching (from the Latin *radere*, to scratch or scrape) evolved gradually from the earlier process of burin engraving. Both seem to have originated in Germany, where Albrecht Dürer's etchings on iron, made between 1510 and 1520, were probably the earliest important examples of an art that in the following centuries was practiced by many of the greatest draftsmen and painters.

In etching, ink-receptive indentations are produced chemically. A polished metal plate (usually copper or zinc) is covered with a thin acid-resistant layer (wax or resin) and then blackened with a fumigating candle to make the artist's emerging design more visible. The artist uses an etching needle to draw into the wax ground without penetrating the metal. The plate is then submerged in a series of acid baths; the acid bites into the metal surface only where the protective wax has been removed to expose the drawing. Length of immersion time in the acid bath influences

Media

etching depth. Lines that are bitten to sufficient depth are coated with stopping-out varnish. Areas that receive the longest exposure to the acid will be the heaviest and darkest in the print. Following the final etch, the plate is cleaned of any varnish and remaining wax ground.

To make a print, the plate is warmed to ease the flow of ink, which is rubbed into the etched depressions. The unetched surface of the plate is wiped clean, so that the ink remains only inside the indentations. Then the artist covers the plate with a damp sheet of paper and applies pressure by hand or using a printing press, transferring the etched design to create an impression on the paper.

Aquatint is a method of etching tonal areas instead of lines. Rubbing ink into these areas produces rich, deep, velvety dark tones as well as delicate transparent tints. The tones resemble watercolor washes, which accounts for the name: aqua or water tint. Aquatint differs from line etching in that the ground does not protect the plate entirely from the acid. The usual method is to sprinkle asphaltum or resin dust in specially constructed dust boxes, allowing it to settle on the surface of the plate. After the plate is dusted, it is warmed to melt the dust particles until they adhere to the plate. Areas are progressively coated with resin and then etched for varying periods of time, with the lightest tones etched for the shortest time. With each immersion, the next lightest tone is protected, or “stopped out,” before the plate is put into the acid bath again. Dipping in the acid and stopping out is alternated until all tones on the plate are accommodated. Aquatint, rarely used alone, is usually combined with other techniques.

Series. Especially with lithography, a large number of prints can be pulled or made from any single image on a stone or plate, without the image deteriorating in quality. The inking and printing processes are repeated multiple times, creating an edition of prints exactly the same. With etching, fewer first-rate proofs can be made from a plate. Often printmakers destroy their stones or plates after making a given number of prints. Artists sign and number each print in a series. For color prints, separate plates are used, with separate drawings for each color. Registering, or aligning, the several plates is a challenge for the printmaker. A significant fact about prints is that the finished print is a mirror image of that created by the artist on the stone or plate.

Further Reading

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Many websites but especially <http://www.markbassett.com>.

List of Objects

● Kenneth F. Bates (1904–1973). *Wall Plaque*, 1957. Enamel. 1986.1111

● Cowan Pottery Studio (1912–1931). Designed by A. Drexler Jacobson (1895–1973). *Introspection*, 1929. Glazed ceramic. 1929.972

● Paul Dominey (b. 1943). *Moon Pot*, 1965. Hand-built ceramic. TR15721.27

● Edris Eckhardt (1910–1998). *The Walrus & Carpenter*, 1941. Glazed ceramic. 1941.362

● W. Leroy Flint (1909–1991). *Speakers' Platform*, 1936. Aquatint and engraving. LN1942.4064

● Kálmán Kubinyi (1906–1973). *Cuyahoga*, 1936. Lithograph. 3963.42

● Hughie Lee-Smith (1915–1999). *Desolation*, 1942. Lithograph. 4227.42

● Norman E. Magden (b. 1934). *Seated Cup*, 1965. Enamel on copper. 1965.82

● Charles Sallée (1913–2006). *Used Cars*, 1942. Etching. LN1942.4217

● Esther M. Sills (1908–1988). *Bowl*, 1944. Wheel-thrown ceramic. 1944.301

● Walter A. Sinz (1881–1966). *Black Nymph*, 20th century. Glazed ceramic. TR15299.13

● Drew Smith (b. 1948). *Vase*, 1972–73. Hand-blown glass. 1973.1021

Multi-disciplinary Connections

Visual Arts

Using printmaking or drawing techniques, create renderings like those of Charles Sallée that document a section of your neighborhood. Research a photo history and find a picture of that same or a similar place 10, 20, or 30 years ago and make a picture of that as a comparison.

Physical Science

Observe the works in enamel, glazed ceramic, and glass in this suitcase. What are the inherent scientific similarities and differences between the chemical compounds used in these techniques? What elements must one have in order to create colors in enamels, glazes, and glass? Are the same compounds used in all three?

Social Studies

Do artists have a role in the military? Research the artists in this presentation and find out what roles they played, if any, in military actions early in the 20th century. What other national or international artists come to mind when we think of war? Do these roles still exist in today's military? What do artists have to say about current military actions?

Mathematics

Many WPA and Ohio Arts Project artists created murals in federal buildings around the northeast Ohio region. Grids and scaling are necessary in order to make large-scale renderings from small drawings. First create a small drawing on an 8 x 10-inch piece of paper. Then using tracing paper, create a grid of 1 x 1-inch squares to lay over the drawing. Using a larger piece of paper (or a wall, if you are daring!), create a grid that is proportionately larger, for example, 1 inch = 4 inches, or 1 inch = 1 foot. Then use observation drawing techniques and redraw the small version of the drawing square by square into the large version. Research the scaling techniques used by Renaissance, Dutch, and/or contemporary artists.

Language Arts

Read the works of African-American playwright Langston Hughes, who worked (among other places) at Karamu House in the early 20th century alongside several artists presented in this suitcase. Understand the struggles of the local civil rights movement through words and images created by artists who persevered through some of America's most repressive years.

Art to Go Suitcase Presentations

Oodles and Oodles of Lines and Shapes
Repeat, Repeat, Pattern, Pattern
Museum Zoo: Animals in Art
Masks: Let's Face It
Let's Discover Egypt
Cool Knights: Armor from the European Middle Ages and Renaissance

Native American Art
Early America: Artistry of a Young Nation
Problem Solving: What in the World?
Classical Art: Ancient Greece and Rome
China: Art and Technology

Ancient Americas: Art from Mesoamerica
Natives and Settlers: Early Artifacts from the Ohio Region
Journey to Asia
Journey to Japan
Journey to Africa: Art from Central and West Africa

The Art of Writing: The Origin of the Alphabet
Diego Rivera: A Mexican Hero and His Culture
Materials and Techniques of the Artist
Artists of Our Region

Artists of Our Region

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