METHOD AND MEANING:
Selections from the Gettysburg College Collection
What is art historical study and how it should be carried out are fundamental questions the exhibition *Method and Meaning: Selections from the Gettysburg College Collection* intends to answer. This student-curated exhibition is an exciting academic endeavor of seven students of art history majors and minors in the Art History Methods course. The seven student curators are Shannon Callahan, Ashlie Cantele, Maura D’Amico, Xiyang Duan, Devin Garnick, Allison Gross and Emily Zbehlik. As part of the class assignment, this exhibition allows the students to explore various art history methods on individual case studies. The selection of the works in the exhibition reflects a wide array of student research interests including an example of 18th century Chinese jade chime stone, jade and bronze replicas of ancient Chinese bronze vessels, a piece of early 20th century Chinese porcelain, oil paintings by Pennsylvania Impressionist painter Fern Coppedge, prints by Salvador Dali and by German artist Käthe Kollwitz, and an early 20th century wood block print by Japanese artist Kawase Hasui.

Collections are often considered as “orphans” taken out of their parent culture. Working with collections is an intriguing yet at the same time challenging experience. Our students met the challenges successfully through diligent and careful detective work. They took pains to document visual details of each work they have observed during their multiple visits to Gettysburg College’s Special Collections and investigated any possible data that could lead to a better understanding of the work. They have explored a wide range of art historical methods including visual analysis, material and technical study, connoisseurship, biography and iconography. They also contextualized the collections socially, politically and culturally to reveal the hidden meanings behind the artwork. The essays in this catalogue are fruits of the students’ thoughtful reflections on research subjects and art history methods.

This wonderful academic endeavor is made possible by immense support and generosity of many individuals. My students and I would like to express our sincere thanks to Shannon Egan, Director of Schmucker Art Gallery, who has fully embraced my initial proposal for the exhibition and provided guidance and advice on every step for the preparation of the exhibition. Shannon and my colleague Felicia Else, Associate Professor in the Art and Art History Department, also generously shared with our students catalogues of past student-curated exhibitions in their classes. We owe special thanks to Carolyn Sautter, Catherine Perry, Amy Lucadamo and Molly Reynolds at Special Collections and College Archives for their generous assistance and insightful suggestions. We thank Kerri Odess-Harnish for her informative class on navigating the library search engine and Robin Wagner, Director of Musselman Library, for her encouragement and tireless promotion of art on campus. Their patience, enthusiasm and support demonstrate the superb academic assistance our students have received from the Musselman Library. It is our hope this exhibition will showcase not only the hidden treasures in our college collection, but positive learning outcomes of our students.

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This cong-shaped ceramic vase is likely made at the kilns of Jingdezhen toward the end of late 19th c. or the beginning of the 20th c. It was a reproduction imitating the porcelain ware from the earlier reign of emperor Kangxi (1661-1722), which can be determined by the stamp seal on the exterior bottom of the piece. The interesting shape of the vase originally derives from a late Neolithic jade type named cong tube characterized with a large square body with a flaring mouth and a splayed ring foot.

The Imperial kilns at Jingdezhen were destroyed during the Ming dynasty and rebuilt by the Manchu rulers of the Qing in 1683. Kangxi and Qianlong, the second and fourth emperors of the dynasty, were particularly interested in replicating the methods of the Ming porcelain production. Additionally, they also made their own advancements in color and technique. This vase as a replica intends to integrate the lasting impression of the Ming porcelain tradition with the Qing creative technique. Human figures in narrative scenes on the intricate cutout background are dressed in traditional Han Chinese clothing rather than the Manchu attire. They are portrayals of the daily life in the Ming society. Traditional Chinese symbols of good fortune and longevity including bats and plum blossom are also featured at four corners of the vase body. One of the most notable advancements of Qing porcelain was that of multi-colored glazing known as famille verte in French. Famille verte consists of the main color palette for this vase including yellow, blue, red, purple, and green. With this advancement of colors, the workers were able to use ceramics like a canvas and paint intricate designs adding a unique flair to the Qing legacy.

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1 Lu Sun, National University of Taiwan. 24 September 2014. Email Interview.
3 Daisy Goldschmidt Lion and Jean Claude Moreau-Gobard, Chinese Art: Bronzes, Jade, Sculpture, Ceramics (New York: Rizzoli, 1980) 186.
5 Sun, Email Interview.
6 Lion, 187.
Cong-shaped Ceramic Vase
1890-1910, Qing Dynasty
Ceramic
42.4 cm (h) x 15.3 cm (w)
Gift of John H. Hampshire, Special Collections/
Musselman Library, Gettysburg College
Kawase Hasui
*Yakumo Bridge, Nagata Shrine*
1934
polychrome woodblock print on paper
51 cm x 33.5 cm
Gift of Frank H. Kramer, Special Collections/
Musselman Library, Gettysburg College
Yakumo Bridge at the Yugata Shrine is part of a series of landscape prints called the Collection of Scenic Views of Japan II created by Kawase Hasui in 1933. The initial objective of the collection was to capture the significant scenic views of Japan that are traditionally represented in Japanese woodblock printmaking and then recreate each scene incorporating the newly imposed Western style. The modern elements are represented mostly through the vivacity of color in the work and the way the landscape is portrayed. The initial increase in Western influence began after Japan ended a 200 yearlong period of national isolation and became open to imports from the West. These imports included the printing techniques that affected the type of art being popularized in Japan. Hasui was a prominent Japanese painter of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He is most known for his work with Japanese woodblock prints and his interest in the popularized Western style. His prints represent both the traditional ukiyo-e printmaking style of Japan and a transition into the modern Shin-Hanga style, commonly referred to as the “New Prints Movement.” Yakumo Bridge at the Yugata Shrine follows the ukiyo-e collaborative style of the 17th and 18th century Edo period (1603-1868) while including the Western elements associated with the 19th century Shin-Hanga style.

The Shin-Hanga style occurred between the Taishō and Shōwa periods, reaching a peak in popularity in the 1930s. It is responsible for revitalizing the traditional ukiyo-e art rooted in the Edo and Meiji periods. By the time that Western imports into Japan revolutionized European artists, the early years of the Meiji revitalized traditional Japanese printmaking (1868-1912). Hasui remains true to the Edo tradition, but also employs the revitalized elements. The clash of the movements was a result of the economic climate of 19th century in Japan as well as an increased interest in trade with the Western world. This exchange stimulated a trend in collecting Japanese art both in Japan and worldwide. Japanese printmakers wanted to create prints that merged both traditional and Western characteristics and were also affordable for Japan’s middle class. The ukiyo-e style practiced by Kawase Hasui, the most popular form of printmaking, became avidly collected. A high demand could be reached because the combination of the two styles in Hasui’s work were greatly dependent on a “factory system” rooted in the traditional ukiyo-e style of printmaking. A final print is achieved by a system of “specialists.” Each specialist is responsible for a different task. The process involves a designer, a carver, a printer and a publisher.

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These two paintings by the American Impressionist painter, Fern Coppedge (1883-1951), complement each other as they pertain to the same movement, but also differ in terms of style and aesthetic. They both depict dramatic winter scenes within the Bucks County region of Pennsylvania and are painted in a way that coincides with French Impressionist ideals as well as those of Coppedge. From a young age she had a love for nature and took a particular interest in how natural light reflects on surfaces, such as mounds of snow and icy river water. She often mentioned that as a child, other children would find her strange, as she “would see deep purples, reds and violets in a field of snow”.

The smaller work Lamp Lighter’s Cottage is an intimate representation of nature and clearly depicts a single cottage along with the landscape directly surrounding it. The cottage itself is very realistic while the rolling hills of snow and bare leafless trees are predominantly Impressionistic in style. The cottage’s bright yellow exterior is both consistent with a Pennsylvania country style home and a compliment to the muted blue tones of the landscape lit by moonlight. Within the mounds of snow, the various colors and shading are applied by thick and expressive brushstrokes. From this technique, it is clear that Coppedge practiced the technique of en plein air painting, painting scenes directly in the outdoors, as was typical of the American Impressionist painters.

Winter on the Delaware provides a more general, holistic view of Pennsylvania Impressionist themes. The buildings and landscapes are illustrated with less detail, as the emphasis is placed on the use of bright color and depiction of nature. Despite her extensive schooling and knowledge of artistic conventions, Coppedge is better known for her courage and individual sense of style. Here, that concept is most certainly evident as she focuses her attention on the visual representation of the crisp winter landscape as opposed to exact details of a realistic scene.

Coppedge was born on a farm in Decatur, Illinois in 1883 and died in New Hope, Pennsylvania in 1951. She started her artistic career at the Art Institute of Chicago and soon continued her studies at the Art Students’ League in New York until finally she ended at the Philadelphia School of Design for Women. There she connected with the Philadelphia Ten, a group of successful women artists established in 1919 devoted to showing exhibitions according to a specific style with a unified level of quality. Additionally, her work is associated with the New Hope School, an art colony specific to fostering the Pennsylvania Impressionist works.

The Pennsylvania Impressionists gained recognition during the early 1900s, approximately thirty years after the French Impressionistic movement, as they carried forth Impressionistic values but did so in a way that was essentially free from French influence and rooted in American soil. Although they shared similar principles regarding a revolt against the industrial revolution and a reconnection with nature as well as closely related painting technique, the American Impressionists saw a greater value in individual development and deviations in style.

2 Alan Goldstein, A Forgotten Woman (Doylestown: James A. Michener Arts Center, 1990), 12.
3 Brian Peterson, Pennsylvania Impressionists, 12.
Fern I. Coppedge
*Lamp Lighter’s Cottage*
1930-1935
oil on canvas
67 x 73 cm
Special Collections/Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

Fern I. Coppedge
*Water on the Delaware*
1940-1951
oil on canvas
81 x 81 cm
Special Collections/Musselman Library, Gettysburg College
Ritual Food Vessel, Fang Ding
1644-1964 CE, Qing Dynasty
bronze
21.6 cm (h) x 20.3 cm (l) x 16.2 cm (w)
Gift of John H. Hampshire, Special Collections/Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

White Jade Altar Vase
1368-1644 CE, Ming Dynasty or later
white jade
24.13cm (h) x 9.2cm (w)
Gift of Frank H. Kramer, Special Collections/Musselman Library, Gettysburg College
Chinese antiquarianism, the connoisseurship of ancient artifacts and inscriptions, emerged in the Northern Song (960-1127) and grew stronger in the following dynasties until the early 20th century. Several emperors in the Ming and Qing dynasties were among the enthusiastic promoters for antiquarianism. The Ming Emperor Xuanzong of early 15th century for instance ordered his Ministry of Works (gongbu) to reproduce bronze vessels according to the Kaogutu and Bogutu, two antiquarian writings compiled in late 11th and early 12th century of the Northern Song. The two catalogues recorded not only the physical characteristics of the antiquities, but also careful scholarly studies of them.

The Manchu Emperor Qianlong of the Qing dynasty was an avid collector of antiquities. During his reign of almost the entire 18th century, he not only accumulated a massive collection of ancient artworks later becoming the collections in the Palace Museums in Beijing and Taipei and commissioned exquisite replicas of antiquities with alterations to suit his taste and aesthetics. Even though he and his imperial members were Manchus, they had deep appreciation of the Han Chinese culture.

The white jade square vase is a reproduction of a square bronze zun wine ritual vessel first cast during the Shang dynasty around 1200 BC. The cicada and kui dragons on the body of the vase resemble to the design on ancient bronzes during that time. The date of this reproduction is hard to pin down. However, a similar piece in the collection of the Palace Museum at Beijing was carved during the reign of Emperor Qianlong of 18th century suggesting the likelihood for the dating of the Gettysburg piece. A jade vessel in such scale was difficult to carve and demanded skillful craftsmanship. It is likely that this piece was produced in the imperial workshop at which the best craft men from the country served.

The bronze square ding likely made toward the end of the Qing dynasty is another example of the reproduction of ancient Chinese bronze type from the Shang and Western Zhou dynasties (ca. 1500-mid-11th c. BC). The flattened feet in the shape of dragon, round ears and square body are all traditional stylistic features of the period. The decorations of taotie animal face motifs on the body, however, reveal the vessel as a reproduction. The face motif was cast in bas-relief instead of embossment. The butterfly-shaped head with sharp corners on the horn is another typical characteristic on the reproductions of later dynasties.

Alterations and innovations in the reproductions not only suggest the evolution of bronze vessels, but reveal the culture value of antiquities in later times. The antiquarianism demonstrates the intellectual curiosity toward the past and deep appreciation for the tradition. Replicas were given more aesthetic values as the antiquarian interest evolved in Chinese history.

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Käthe Kollwitz was a German printmaker who created many images of war and death before and during the two World Wars. She was especially successful during the Weimar Republic (1919-1933) when she was the first woman honored with the title of professor at a prestigious Berlin art academy. Max Klinger (1857-1920), another German printmaker who created monochromatic etchings concerning social issues served as a major inspiration to Kollwitz. She and her family lived in a working-class area of Berlin where she was exposed to and inspired by the daily struggles of the urban poor.

Kollwitz created seven etchings in a cycle called the Peasant War that depicted the peasants’ revolt in 1524-1525 against the Holy Roman Empire for religious and tax freedom and the crushing of the movement by the aristocracy that followed. The Prisoners (1908) is the last of the seven works in the cycle and shows the aftermath of the revolt with many men, hands bound, awaiting punishment.

The muscles and clothing of the figures are highly detailed, and their faces are emotional and expressive, demonstrating Kollwitz’s perception of the human experience and struggle. Studies that preceded this etching show that the boy slumped in the front of the crowd was modeled after her son Peter, evidence of the importance of her family in her life.

Kollwitz’s son Peter died in combat early in the First World War, causing her art to shift from hardships of others to her own suffering as she also embraced an expressionist style. She turned to woodcuts, allowing the physical process of slashing and gouging the wood to portray her emotional turmoil. Die Eltern (The Parents) from 1923 depicts two parents embracing and mourning, likely over the loss of a child, and the white lines slashed into the silhouettes are raw and eerie. Kollwitz continued to create many prints involving mothers and their children that exposed the devastating effects of war on the home front until her death in 1945.

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3 Ibid., 94.
6 Carey and Griffiths, 71.
Käthe Kollwitz
*The Prisoners* (from the *Peasant War Cycle*)
1908
etching with soft-ground
53 x 65 cm
Gift of Gabor S. Boritt, Special Collections/Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

Käthe Kollwitz
*Die Eltern* (*The Parents*)
1923
woodblock print
62 x 77.5 cm
Special Collections/Musselman Library, Gettysburg College
Chime Stone Tê-ch’êng
19th-20th c., Qing Dynasty
jade
48.24cm (l) x 18.4cm (w) x 2.9cm (d)
Gift of Frank H. Kramer, Special Collections/
Musselman Library, Gettysburg College
This jade chime stone originally belonged to a set of twelve teqing commissioned in “the twenty-ninth year of Qian Long’s reign” (1764) as specified in the inscription in formal script on the top long edge of the chime. The inscription on the short edge denotes this chime as the “Huangzhong” tone, the lowest pitch out of the set of twelve chimes. Individually strung and hung from a wooden or metal frame, teqing chime stones are essential components of court musical performances in ancient China. In the Qing dynasty, teqing was first used for imperial sacrifices in the Temple of Heaven in 1761 during the reign of Emperor Qianlong. The imperial commission of teqing was meant to commemorate two auspicious events coinciding in the year of 1759, a triumphant win of the five-year military campaign against two tribal states in the northwest and a discovery of a set of ancient bronze bells in south China. These two events were thought to be signs of heavenly approval of Qianlong’s regime.¹

The triangular body of this chime stone is decorated with gold designs of flying dragons amongst cloud motifs. The perforation at the apex of the chime is decorated with a flaming jewel motif. Each of the dragon images has five toes, an emblematic symbol of the emperor during that time.² A set of chime stones in the collection of the Palace Museum at Beijing provide a further clue for the possible source of the jade used for this chime stone. The Palace Museum set was made with dark greenish colored jade from Hetian, a region rich for jade mines at the newly acquired land in the northwest by Emperor Qianlong. The inscribed imperial edict on the Palace Museum set states that jade from Hetian was mined for courtly production of chime stones.³ The Gettysburg example commissioned five years after the conquering of the northwest was among a set created with the superior Hetian jade.

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Perhaps there is a natural juxtaposition between the works of 16th century classical literary giant William Shakespeare and the 20th century avant-garde surrealism of Salvador Dalí. Dalí was a true renaissance man, with masterful technical skill in the visual arts along with an affinity for literature. Dalí penned a few books himself, along with multiple short poems and essays.¹

Dalí’s representations of Shakespeare’s classic plays *Troilus and Cressida* and *Timon of Athens* are two parts of a larger series of dry-point engravings from *Much Ado About Shakespeare II* (1971).² The set includes 16 prints that depict scenes and motifs from Shakespeare’s plays. The dry-point technique involves scratching a needle against a metal plate, usually copper. Both scenes are composed in a one-point perspective, reminiscent of Dalí’s empty dream landscapes, with flat figures and a horizon line, thus becoming an illusion of extending scope, or in this case, extended scenes.³ *Troilus and Cressida* is a story of love convoluted by the Trojan War. The scene shows a warrior clad in a shield and decorated headwear. The shield mimics the Ancient Minoan octopus vase excavated in Knossos, therefore most likely the image represents a Greek soldier.

In Act 5, scene 9 of the play Hector, Troy’s chosen soldier, utters his penultimate lines referring to the armor of a slain, unnamed Greek soldier, but also questioning the noble facade of war.

Most putrefied core, so fair without,
Thy goodly armour thus hath cost thy life.
Now is my day’s work done, I’ll take my breath.
Rest sword, thou hast thy fill of blood and death.

Dali’s interpretation of *Troilus and Cressida* is perhaps a more literal sketch compared to his metaphorical depiction of *Timon of Athens*. Once wealthy and generous, Timon was an upstanding, respected citizen of Athens, until his debts accumulated and his friends suddenly dropped their allegiances. In Act 4 of the play, Timon retreats to the wilderness and in a frustrated rage, digs his hands in the earth and miraculously finds gold. Shortly after, he runs into a comrade from Athens, who was also irate with the greed of the city. Their dialogue is as follows:

*Apemantus*: What wouldst thou have to Athens?

*Timon*: Thee thither in a whirlwind. If thou wilt, tell them I have gold; look, so I have.

Timon offers a response rooted in bitterness at the betrayal of his friends. A minor detail became the focal point of Dalí’s interpretation, yet the whirlwind could also be a reference to the play’s overarching motif of enveloping greed. With close reading, Dalí’s playful portrayals become more conceivable, but true to the surrealist manner, always open to interpretation.

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Salvador Dalí
*Timon of Athens*, from the *Shakespeare II* suite
1971
drypoint engraving
48.5 cm x 38 cm
Gift of Lawrence A. and Pamela J. Rosenberg, Special Collections/Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

Salvador Dalí
*Troilus and Cressida*, from the *Shakespeare II* suite
1971
drypoint engraving
48.5 cm x 38 cm
Gift of Lawrence A. and Pamela J. Rosenberg, Special Collections/Musselman Library, Gettysburg College
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Curated by Shannon Callahan, Ashlie Cantele, Maura D’Amico, Xiyang Duan, Devin Garnick, Allison Gross and Emily Zbehlik under the direction of Yan Sun, Associate Professor of Art History, Gettysburg College

November 7 – December 12, 2014

GALLERY TALK: November 7, 5 pm
RECEPTION: November 7, 5 - 7pm

FRONT: Kawase Hasui (1883-1957), Yakumo Bridge, Nagata Shrine, 1914, polychrome woodblock print on paper, 51 cm x 33.5 cm. Gift of Frank H. Kramer, Special Collections/Musselman Library, Gettysburg College