

EQUINE *Art*

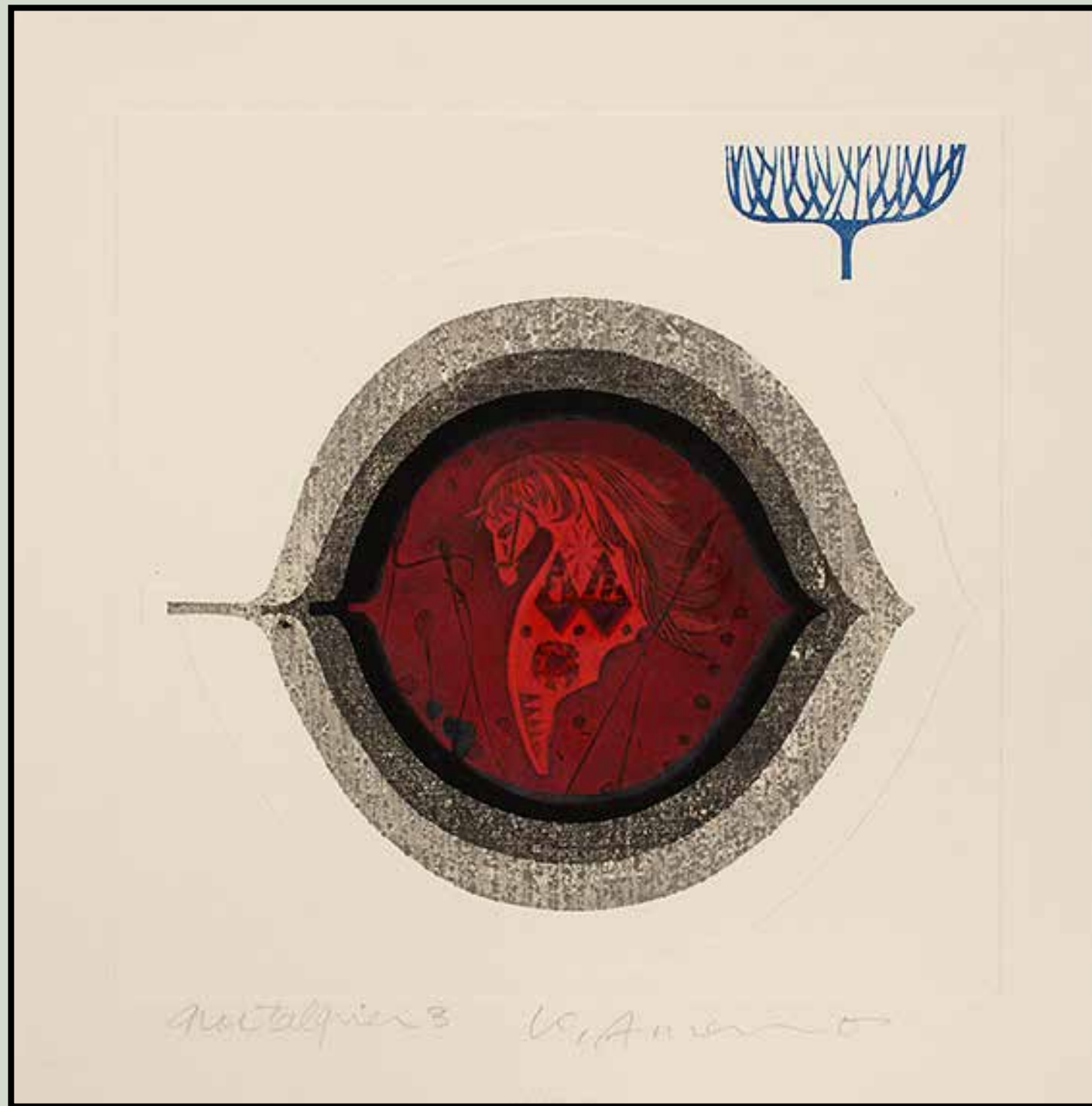
*E*quine Art reveals a passion for the horse that can be found around the world throughout time. While revealing a remarkable diversity of artistic approaches, this exhibition also illustrates the different roles horses have played as they helped shape human history.

The horse has held a special fascination for humans and artists throughout history. The origins of the horse date back to more than fifty million years. Horses evolved in North America and subsequently migrated to Asia, Europe, Africa, and South America. Ten million years ago about a dozen species of horses could be found roaming the plains and forests of North America. The earliest known representations of the horse go back some 30,000 years (according to radiocarbon dating), created by Stone Age artists in the Chauvet Cave located in the Ardeche region of France. While horses became extinct in the Americas about 10,000 years ago, they thrived on the grasslands of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (also known as the steppes). Most scholars now believe horses were first domesticated in the Eurasian grasslands roughly 6,000 years ago.

Consisting of Museum objects rarely or never before exhibited, combined with a selection of loaned works, this focus exhibition gives varied glimpses into the long tradition of equestrian art. Among some of the pieces that can be seen include horses at a blacksmith shop in James McNeill Whistler's print *The Smith Yard*, an old man tending his horse in a magnificent Japanese painting on silk, and a brass sculpture of Hayagriva, the horse headed avatar (incarnation) of Vishnu.

Larry Young's sculpture of Pegasus captures the poetry of motion of the mythical flying horse, while the Regionalist artists John Curry, Grant Wood, and Thomas Hart Benton capture varying moments in the life of a terrestrial horse. Long noted for horsemanship, a proud Persian warrior rides a fierce steed in Alexander Orłowski's lithograph. The tradition of the English hunt comes alive in a watercolor by Robert Hugh Buxton. In addition, a selection of ancient coins depicting horses in a variety of compositions, as well as other antiquities taken out of storage, some of which have never been on display, hint at the differing roles of the horse in antiquity.

Capturing the imagination of the earliest artists, the horse has inspired an astounding diversity of representations. Some show the horse as a symbol of power and majesty by detailing the beauty of this creature. Others reduce the majestic creature into a series of geometric shapes in individualized stylizations. While often serving man, the horse retains an independent nature, frequently displaying a free spiritedness. The remarkable level of individualization shown by the artists in their portrayals of the horse testify to humankind's special relationship with this remarkable animal.



Kunihiro Amano (Japanese, b. 1929)

Nostalgia 3, mid-20th century

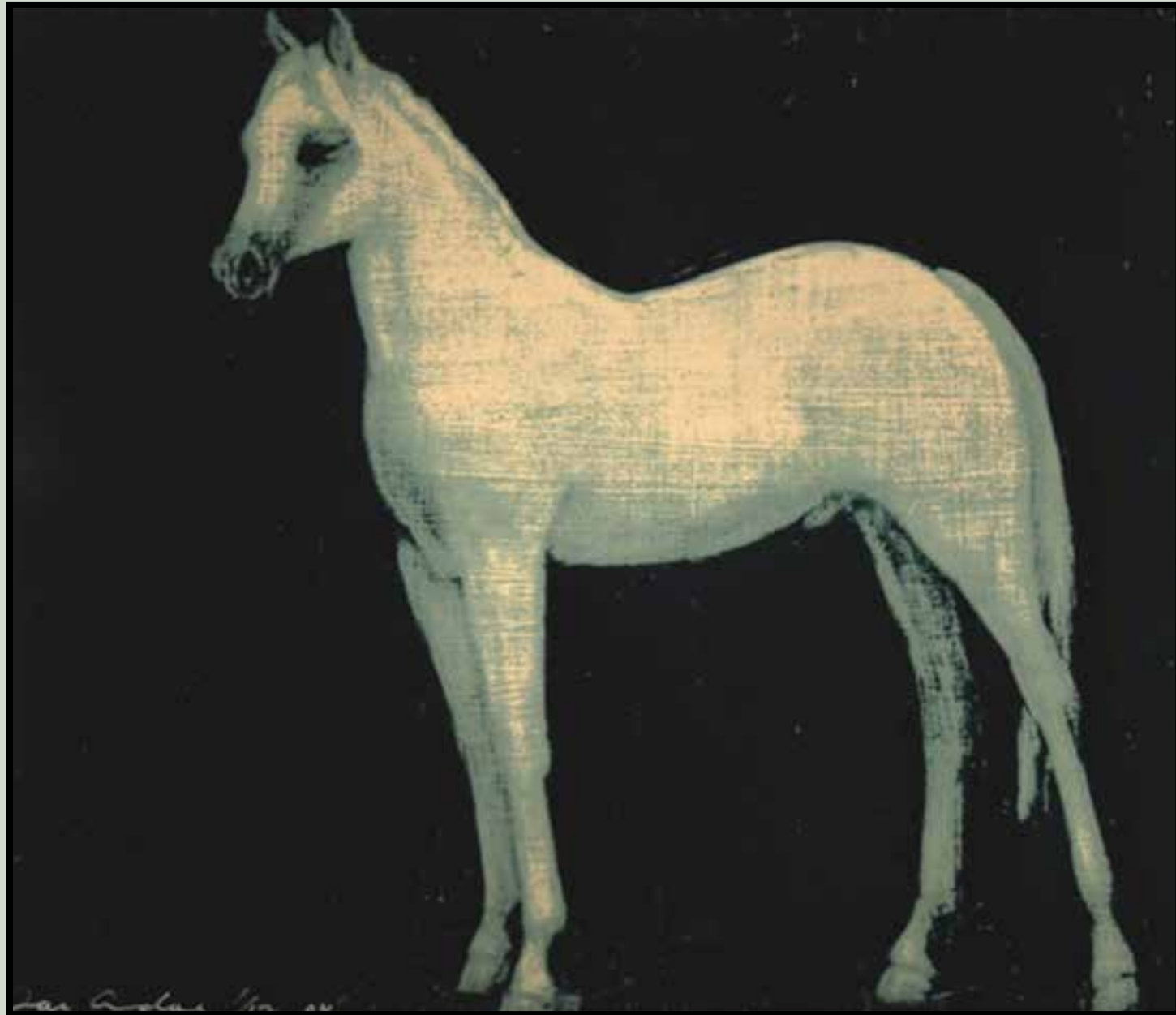
Colored woodcut

Museum purchase (76.12)

Nostalgia 3 depicts a stylized horse in profile within a series of rings. The clarity of form and printing are typical of the “*Sosaku Hanga*,” or creative print movement. Abandoning the traditional collaborative system for producing prints, in which a number of individuals would have been involved, artists who participated in this movement undertook all processes of the print production and saw themselves as creating art for art’s sake. Through the eye of a horse, the artist examines color and form in relationship to nature.

Artist Biography

Amano is a self-taught woodblock printmaker. His first exhibition was in 1955 with the Nihon Hanga Kyokai. His abstract and semi-abstract prints are geometric, and rich in color, and often include erotic references.



Joe Andoe (American, b. 1955)

Rolling Hills, 2004

Serigraph

Lent by the artist

Born and raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Joe Andoe draws upon his experiences on the Southwestern plains to create his expressive works. Andoe's prints are based upon his oil paintings and reveal the rough texture of the original canvas. While interested in representing the essence of his subject, the artist also imbues his works with a soulful sensitivity.

Rolling Hills follows Andoe's typical style of depicting a solitary figure on a dense velvety background. The resulting silhouette evokes an eerie calmness that the artist describes as: "the stillness at twilight when animals come out into the open."

Artist Biography

Born and raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Joe Andoe draws upon his experiences on the Southwestern plains to create his expressive works. Andoe strives for an essence of simplicity in his work. The artist says, "I tend to economize; I want to reduce images to their blueprint."



Thomas Hart Benton (American, 1889–1975)

The Race, 1942

Lithograph

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. D.A. Ross (80.189)

A horse gallops across the plain, racing with a speeding locomotive. The viewer feels the sensation of speed from the gait of the horse, the smoke rolling over trailing and behind the engine, and the telephone pole cleverly positioned at a slight angle. While an essay on the timeless beauty of the horse in motion, the piece also comments on the “progress” of civilization. Despite the signs of urban life, the horse runs free with an unbridled spirit.

The Race is a preparatory composition for the painting entitled *Homeward Bound* that Benton painted in 1944. Benton made the following comment about his print:

Common enough scene in the days of the steam engine. Why did horses so often run with the steam trains while they now pay no attention to the diesels?

Artist Biography

Born in Neosho, Missouri, and the son of a Missouri congressman, Benton studied art at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Academie Julien in Paris. Benton briefly experimented with modern art before developing his unique personal style. His Regionalist paintings, murals, and lithographs illustrate everyday life in rural middle-America.



Robert F. Bussabarger (American, 1922–2013)

Equestrian Romance, ca. 1965

Stoneware

Gift of the artist (85.131)

Equestrian Romance revisits the age of medieval chivalry in the guise of a post-modern fairytale. Integrating modernism with a selective eclecticism, Bussabarger shows the eternal story of a damsel in distress saved by a brave knight upon a gallant steed. Throughout time, images of knights, rulers, and heroes often included the horse. This inclusion reflects the significance of the horse, as well as the artistic role of the horse in establishing the importance and mood of the piece. While the young woman seems uncertain of her fate, the horse in this instance appears to already celebrate a “happily ever after” ending.

Artist Biography

Originally from Ohio, Bussabarger received his bachelors in fine arts from Wittenberg College in Springfield, OH. During WWII, the artist served in the Navy and was stationed in the Pacific region. Once he completed his military service, Bussabarger continued his education at Michigan State University where he received his masters of fine arts in 1947. He then taught briefly in Michigan and Texas before moving to Missouri, where he taught ceramics and painting at the University of Missouri–Columbia from 1953 to 1990.



Robert Hugh Buxton (British, 1871–ca. 1965)

Taking a Ditch, early 20th century

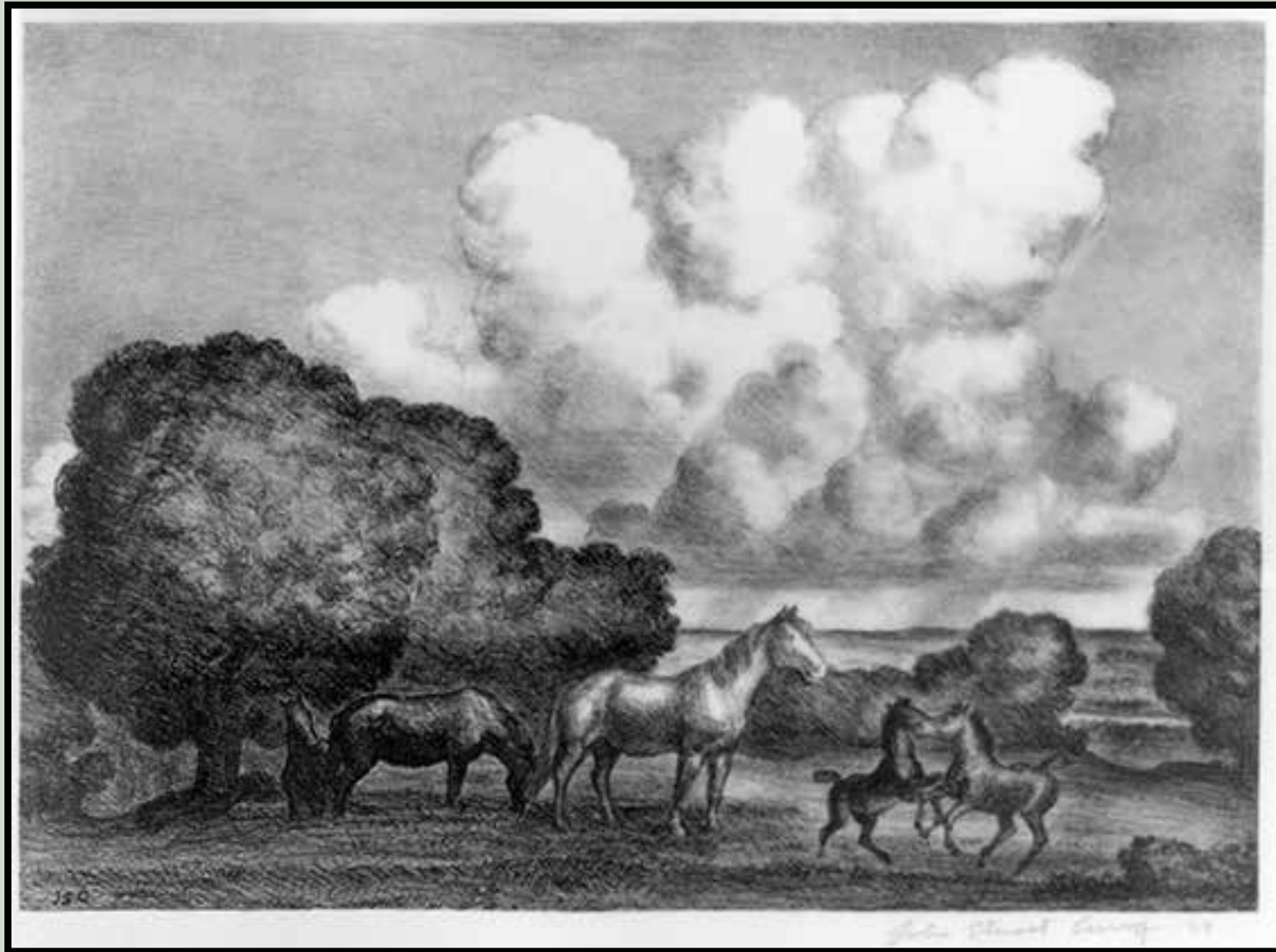
Watercolor

Lent anonymously

Fox-hunting in Britain became popular at the end of the seventeenth century. The sport marked the transition from hunting for food to hunting for vermin. Horses used in the hunt had to be both brave to jump obstacles and fast to keep up with the faster hounds introduced in the eighteenth century. The Thoroughbred horse of today was first developed in Britain in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the crossbreeding of native mares and imported Arabian stallions. This watercolor shows his great skill of capturing the strength and dynamism of the horse in action.

Artist Biography

Born just outside London, Buxton studied art at the Herkomer School of Art and the Slade School of Fine Art. He was an oil and watercolor painter as well as an illustrator, and is known mainly for his landscapes, dogs and hunting scenes. Buxton exhibited his works both in London and Paris.



John Steuart Curry (American, 1897–1946)

Summer Afternoon, 1939

Lithograph

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. D.A. Ross (81.39)

Summer Afternoon is one of Curry's pastoral representations of rural America. Adult horses stand in a pasture as colts and/or fillies frolic nearby. A large, billowing cloud looms overhead, dominating the scene. The artist has pictured a fertile, idealized Midwestern landscape.

Curry along with Thomas Hart Benton and Grant Wood were members of the Regionalist art movement, which concentrated on showing aspects of everyday life from the American West and Deep South.

Artist Biography

Born in Dunavant, Kansas, the artist John Steuart Curry remained tied to his Midwestern roots throughout his life. He is Regionalist painter celebrated for his ability to represent the dramatic aspects of rural life, particularly in images of natural disasters, animal fights, and religious revivals.



Sherd from a Vase with Head and Neck of a Horse

Egypt, New Kingdom, ca. 1550–1069 BCE

Pottery

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Donald N. Wilber (63.6.2)

Horses were introduced to Egypt around 1700 BCE. The earliest horse skeleton discovered in Egypt bears the physical characteristics of the Arabian horse, one of the oldest breeds of horse in the world. In ancient Egypt, horses were a luxury item unavailable to the average citizen and were used for battle, hunting, and ceremonial occasions.



Statuette of a Horse

Greek, ca. 725–700 BCE

Bronze

Anonymous gift (90.120)

Figurine of a Horse and Rider

Greek, ca. 600–575 BCE

Terracotta

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Marcus (60.7)

Considered a noble creature by the ancient Greeks, the horse played a central role in Greek life from the earliest period. The horse also held a special place in Greek mythology. Poseidon, the god of water, was closely associated with horses, and Vergil in the *Georgics* credited Neptune (the Roman water god) with creating the first horse. Figurines like these were often given as a grave offering or as a dedication to the gods.





Two Plaques of a Soldier Riding over a Fallen Opponent

Greek, from South Italy, late 4th century BCE

Terracotta

Weinberg Fund (81.267.1 & 81.267.2)

Each plaque shows a warrior on a rearing horse above a fallen soldier. The horse was a symbol of wealth throughout Greek history. Mounted troops generally came from the upper classes because only the wealthy could afford the upkeep of the horse. Greek horses tended to be relatively small, and horse breeders relied on eastern imports to increase the size. These two plaques were made from the same mold and might have been used decoratively in a burial context.



Two Horse Heads

China

Han Dynasty, 206 BCE–220 CE

Terracotta

Gift of Mrs. D. David McLorn (75.74 & 76.90)

These horse heads are *ming qi* ("spirit utensils"), or grave goods buried with the deceased to protect and serve the spirit of the departed (in this case a male soldier). The custom dates back to the Shang Dynasty (17th–12th century BCE), but it gained momentum in the Han Dynasty. The heads of these *ming qi* have holes for ear attachments and a bit and were previously connected to separately fashioned bodies. Nearly identical, the two heads were probably made from the same mold.



The first poem is by Hayashi Seiu (1792-1849)

*The Cuckoo's cry resounds in every village.
At the first rain, the eastern frontiers
beyond the city are plowed and tilled.
These days the old farmer returns home
late in the evening.
The worn-out horse in his humble stall
is tired and neighs impatiently to be fed.*

The second poem is by Sato Issai (1772-1859)

*How many years did I work for the farmer?
Then I was trained to pull the cart.
Covered with beautiful brocade and
wearing a bit of jade,
The heavenly horse, although he is well-fed,
is still a horse.*

The third poem is by Matsudaira Kanzan (1766-1833)

*I have been beaten along the narrow
mountain path.
Now I am old, but I still work every day
for the farmer.
I hang my head down and give a long
neigh when I return from the fields.
Who cares if I am hungry or tired?
Only the old mountain men can guess.*

The final poem is by Matsuzaki Kodo (1770-1844)

*The yellow weasel is running on the
roof above, while below the hungry
horse paws the earth and snorts with
impatience.
The weasel has eaten the horse's food
and now races away.
For thousands of years the horse and the
weasel have lived this way.
The plum blossoms, like snow, are mine
to enjoy.*

Sakai Hoitsu (Japanese, 1761-1828)
After Yosa Buson (Japanese, 1716-1783)
Farmer Feeding a Horse, late 18th-early 19th century
Ink, paint, and gold on silk
S. Woodson Canada and Evelyn Kehr Canada Fund (87.167)

Farmer Feeding a Horse is based on an earlier painting by the Japanese artist Yosa Buson. Buson repeated the theme of a farmer feeding a horse a number of times throughout his career. Hoitsu was key to the revival of the Rinpa school of decorative painting and the appreciation of indigenous Japanese artistic concerns in the nineteenth century. Hoitsu, however, concentrated on natural images, like those of the four seasons, instead of subjects from classical literature. He also brought a new attention to detail in his painting, which he combined with a keen decorative sensibility. Four Chinese-style poems, each added by a different high-ranking Confucian scholar, can be found at the top of the composition. A translation of each poem follows, proceeding from right to left as in the Japanese and Chinese traditions of reading. Please note that the second and third poems are from the horse's point of view.

Artist Biography

Hoitsu was the artist primarily responsible for the renewed interest in the Rinpa school of decorative painting in the early 19th century. He altered the style of Rinpa, sparking new interest, by adding new subject matter and by making the detail handling more naturalistic and refined.



Brackets for a Door Jamb

India, first half of 20th century

Wood

Gift of Mrs. Lillian Bischoff (77.1 & 77.2)

These carved, openwork brackets display Hindu gods and creatures. A mighty rearing horse appears at the top of each bracket. The great warrior Arjuna, one of the sons of Indra (a chief deity and god of war, storms, and rainfall), may be the figure riding the great steed. Below this appears the mythical animal Yali. With the head of a lion and tusks of an elephant, this creature was said to be more powerful than either of these beasts. Lastly, at the bottom appears an elephant spewing water from its mouth. In Hindu mythology, a mighty elephant sucked up the water from the underworld and then sprayed it into the clouds, which Indra then caused to rain forth water.



Statuette of Hayagriva

India, ca. 1800

Brass

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Samuel Eilenberg (66.188)

Hayagriva, a Hindu deity with the body of a man and the head of a horse, is an incarnation of the god Vishnu. In Sanskrit, the term *haya* means “horse” and the term *griva* means “neck,” referring directly to the deity’s appearance. According to legend, Vishnu became Hayagriva in order to retrieve the Vedas (ancient Hindu scripture) that had been stolen from Brahma (Hindu god of creation) by two demons.



Statuette of a Rearing Horse Wearing a Saddle

India, 18th or 19th century

Bronze

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Samuel Eilenberg (66.250)

This bronze statuette depicts an elaborately adorned rearing horse with its front hooves resting on the outstretched hands of a small man. There is also a small standing dog shown in relief at the base of the statuette.



Two Betel Nut Cutters
Indonesia, 19th-20th century
Iron and silver

Gift of the Estate of Dr. Samuel Eilenberg (2004.50 & 2004.51)

The practice of chewing betel dates back thousands of years. It is a popular custom among the people of the Indian Subcontinent and South East Asia. The chew is comprised of a betel leaf, which serves as a wrapper, sliced areca nuts, and sometimes powdered lime or tobacco. The chew acts as a mild stimulant. Betel cutters such as these are used for slicing the areca nuts. Knowing that betel is often used in ceremonies and rituals, it is interesting to contemplate if the addition of jingles on one of these cutters is conceptually related to the jingle-adorned bronzes belonging to the shamans of the ancient Asian grasslands.



Sally McClure Jackson (American, b. 1936)
Bust of an American Saddlebred Horse, 1977
Bronze

Lent by Stephens College, Equestrian Studies Program

The roots of the American Saddlebred extend back to the Galloway, Hobbie, and Thoroughbred horses which came to North America from the British Isles. By the time of the American Revolution, an all-purpose riding horse called the "American Horse" was recognized as a definite type, as evidenced by a 1776 letter to the Continental Congress from a US diplomat in France, who wanted to give one as a gift to Marie Antoinette.

The breed continued to gain in popularity, becoming known as Kentucky Saddlers in the early 1800s. Saddlebreds served as the mount for numerous famous Generals, including Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, William T. Sherman, and Stonewall Jackson. In 1891, the American Saddlebred Horse Association was founded in Louisville, Kentucky. Today, the American Saddlebred is viewed as an excellent show horse thanks to its proportions, stance, and ability to perform high stepping and elegant gaits. Indeed, this bust shows the horse with the braids that are typically worn in the arena.

Artist Biography

As a child, Jackson suffered through two bouts of Rheumatic fever which kept her bed ridden. It was during this time in her life that she first began carving horses out of large bars of laundry soap. When Jackson fell sick the second time, her father promised to buy her anything she wanted if she got better. She asked for a pony, thus beginning her lifelong love affair with the horse. Throughout her life, Jackson both competed in horse shows and served as a judge. She also served on the board of trustees for the American Saddlebred Museum in Kentucky for six years. Jackson has been an important figure in promoting the American Saddlebred breed, both within the United States and abroad.



Aleksandr Orlovski (Russian, 1777–1832)
*A Knight in Medieval Chain with His Companions
on Horseback, 1819*

Lithograph

Gift of Barbara Stratton Bolling and Deborah S. Booker
in memory of Arthur Mills Stratton (78.57)

This image of a knight on horseback follows the centuries-old tradition of equestrian portraiture. The placement of the figure mounted on an impressive horse bestows the rider with an air of dignity and power. In this lithograph, the strength and energy of the knight atop his lively steed is enhanced by the horse's excitement and vigor.

This print comes from the series "Lithographic Costumes of Russia and Persia," which was originally printed in St. Petersburg in 1819 and subsequently reprinted in London in 1821.

Artist Biography

When Orlovski was a teenager, living with his parents in the small Polish town of Sedlitz, he met the Princess Isabella Czartoryskich. She was impressed by the young artist's work and sent him to train with the court painters in Warsaw. Orlovski was a talented artist who painted battle scenes, portraits, and caricatures. He was also one of the first Russian artists to produce lithographs. As a young man, he was a staunch supporter of the Polish liberation movement. After the failed uprising of 1794, however, he briefly moved to Lithuania before eventually settling in St. Petersburg in 1802, where he was a court artist for Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich.



Finial

Palestine, Chalcolithic, 4th century BCE

Silver

Weinberg Fund (84.23)

A finial is a decorative piece that either tops the apex of an object, such as a crown, scepter, standard for (flag or banner), or is found on furniture and architecture.

This silver finial probably crowned the top of a wooden standard pole. Its onion-shaped head is decorated with a small bird and four horses; their legs, ears, and eyes are incised. The animal imagery probably had religious connotations.



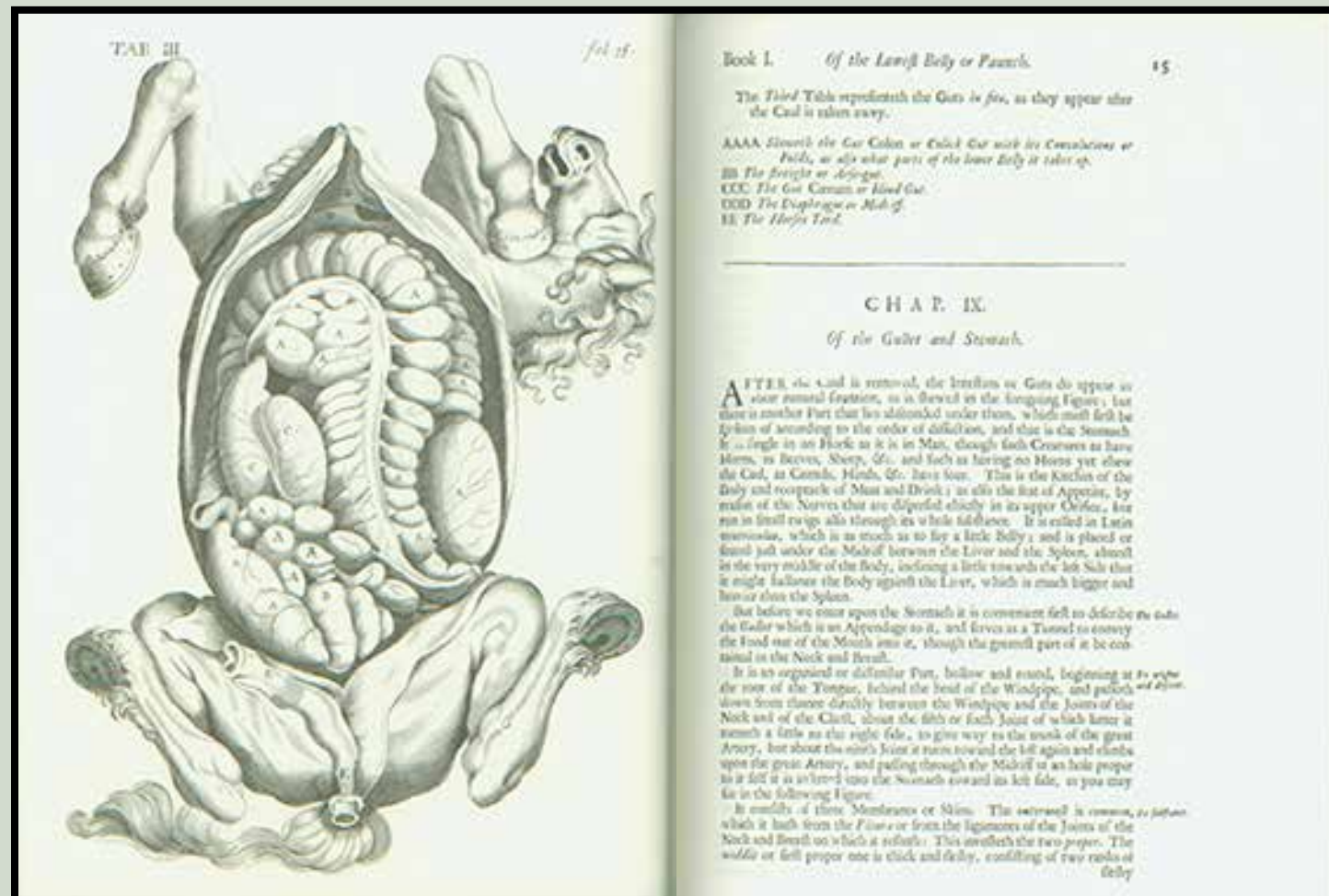
Rhyton in the Shape of a Horse

Palestine, Iron Age IIA–B, ca. 1000–800 BCE

Pottery

Weinberg Fund (84.3)

A rhyton is a spouted vessel for pouring ceremonial libations or offerings to the gods or spirits of the dead. This one, in the shape of a horse, has a hole in the animal's back for filling. The spout is located at the tip of the horse's muzzle. While simplified in form, the horse has been embellished with a series of tiny holes, lines, and various moldings.



Anonymous after Carlo Ruini (Italian, 1530–1598)

Plate 3, in *The Anatomy of an Horse*

By Andrew Snape (British, 1644–1685)

Engraving, 1683

Lent by Zalk Veterinary Medical Library, MU

Snape's *The Anatomy of an Horse* was the second book on equine anatomy ever published. The first was *Anatomia del cavallo, infermità, et suoi rimedii* by Carlo Ruini in 1598. The images in Snape's publication are transposed copies of the woodcuts found in Ruini's book nearly one hundred years earlier. As the first book of its kind, the text and images of Ruini's *Anatomia del Cavallo* were often plagiarized. Ruini's publication was also the first anatomical book to focus on a species other than man, demonstrating the significance of the horse in European society.



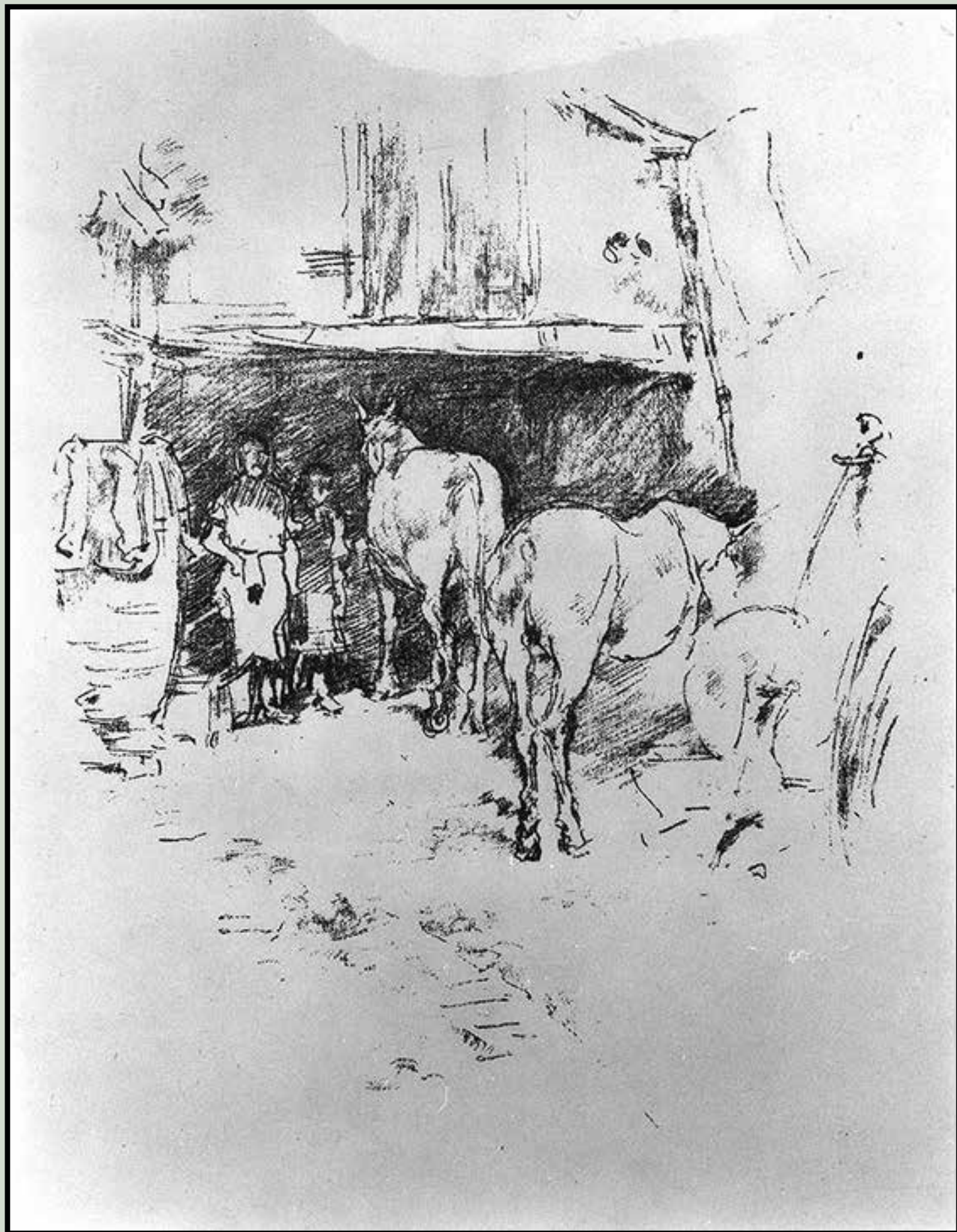
Belt

Anatolia (Urartian), mid-8th century BCE

Bronze

Weinberg Fund (84.2)

The Urartian kingdom was located in Anatolia (modern Turkey), to the north of the Assyrian Empire. Appearing sometime after the destruction of the Hittite state in 1200 BCE, Urartu thrived through the seventh century BCE. Bronze belts of varying sizes were particularly popular in Urartu. They were made of thin sheet bronze with repoussé and chased decoration. Horses were commonly portrayed on these pieces. This belt represents one of the taller known examples and measures 15.3 cm tall.



James McNeill Whistler (American, 1834–1903)

The Smith's Yard, 1895

Lithograph

(X-76)

This lithograph shows the blacksmith's shop of Samuel Govier in Lyme Regis (a town on the south coast of England), which the artist visited in 1895. While the smith's job involved the working of metal for a variety of purposes, his main task was the shoeing of horses. At the center of the composition are two horses seen from behind. Not known for his depictions of animals, Whistler shows in this print another aspect of his versatility and accomplishment as an animal draughtsman. Whistler's butterfly monogram can be found towards the upper right corner.

Artist Biography

At the age of nine, Whistler moved with his parents from the USA to St. Petersburg, Russia where he began taking art lessons. After his father's death in 1849, he returned to the USA to attend the military academy at West Point, but was forced to leave the academy after failing chemistry. He learned to etch while working for the US Coast and Geodetic Survey in Washington, DC. Whistler sailed for Europe in 1855, committed to making a career as an artist. After studying the European masters, he became a successful painter and etcher, working primarily in London and Paris. Whistler was a leading member of the aesthetic movement as well as an important proponent of Japonisme.



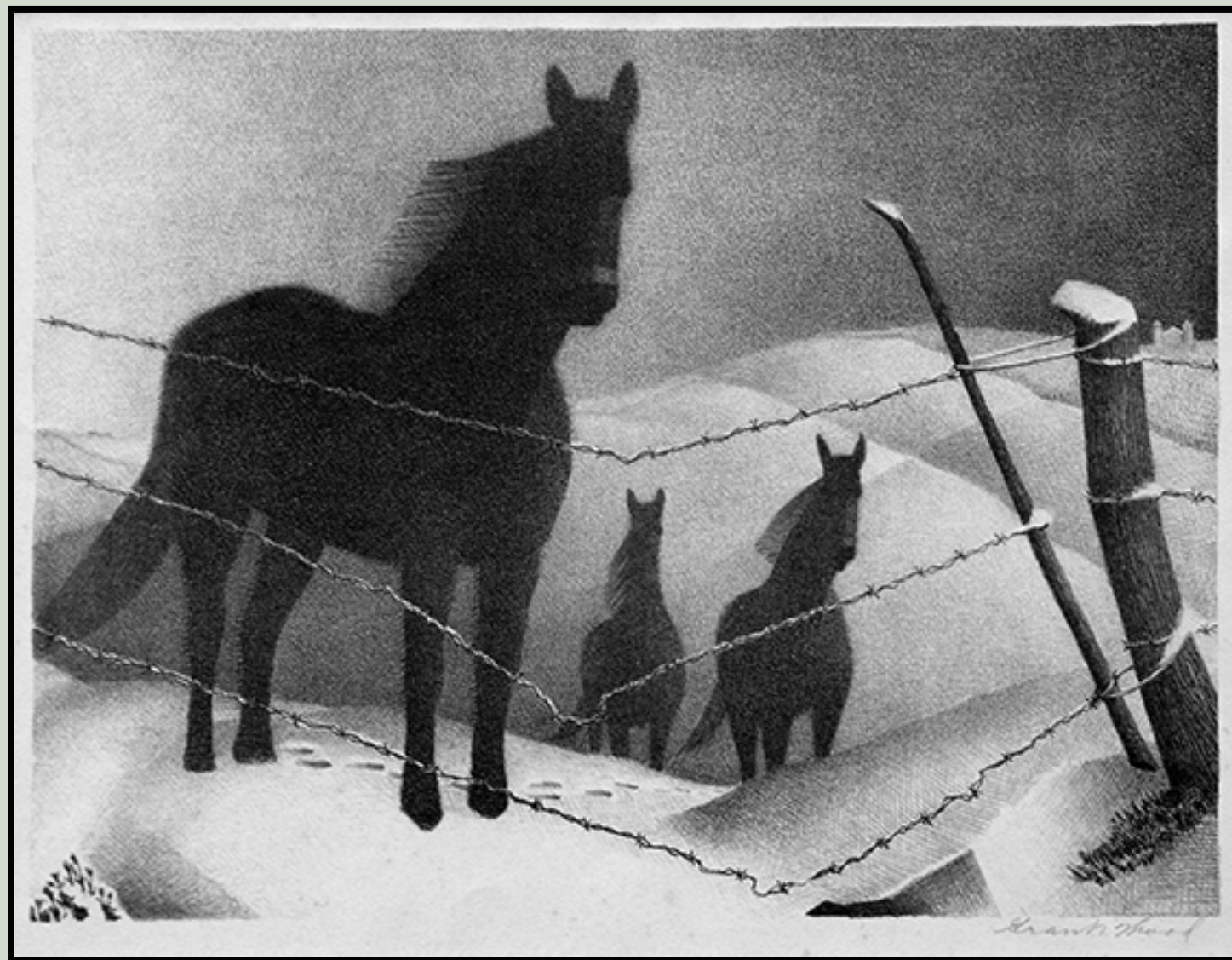
Pola Winski Coggeshall (American, b. 1936)

Headin' South, 20th century

Bronze

Lent anonymously

With the development of ranching in the American west came the cowboy. The large numbers of cattle grazing over vast unfenced territories needed overlooking. The cowboy depended on the horse just as the Native American did. This cowboy rides a Quarter Horse, a product of American horse breeding. This breed derived mainly from Spanish stock, which contained Arabian and Barb horses, and then became crossed with English Thoroughbred horses. The result was a fast horse that interacted well with cattle. In this sculpture, the cowboy struggles to hold onto a young calf while the horse stands dramatically poised on a slight incline.



Grant Wood (American, 1892–1942)

February, 1941

Lithograph

Gift of Mrs. Donald Alexander Ross (93.16)

This lithograph was created in 1941, a year before Wood's death in February of 1942. The print silhouettes three dark horses against a bleak landscape and gray sky, suggestive of a cold, misty atmosphere. While the horses stand eerily still, their hair blows in the harsh winter wind. The barbed wire in the foreground physically separates the world of the viewer from the world of the horses. Some critics speculate that this eerie image might have reflected Wood's emotional state as he battled pancreatic cancer at the end of his life.

Grant Wood's depictions of rural life in the Midwest reflect the humble, "down-home" values of his upbringing. Wood eventually became a leader of the Regionalist movement.

Artist Biography

Born into a Quaker family in Anamosa, Iowa, Grant Wood's depictions of rural life in the Midwest reflect the humble, "down-home" values of his upbringing. Wood eventually became a leader of the Regionalist movement, and his painting *American Gothic* (now in the Chicago Art Institute) is perhaps the most famous example of the genre. Wood described his goals as an artist as follows:

I am building an art of, and for, a specific locality. If I have reached an audience wider than my own region, it is only proof that Iowa is a cross section of the world.



Larry Young (American, b. 1943)

Pegasus and Bellerophon, 1985

Bronze (#5/20)

Lent by Dr. Robert Doroghazi

Fascinated with movement as well as the subjects and compositions of classical art, Young gives new life to familiar stories. In this instance, the artist has depicted in a highly stylized form the winged horse Pegasus and the Greek hero Bellerophon, who tamed the wild and magnificent creature. Born from Young's striking use of curving lines, the horse and rider are about to take flight.

Artist Biography

Young is known for his monumental abstract bronze sculptures, which he conceptualizes and creates himself in his 6,000 square-foot foundry. Because he oversees every aspect in the creation of a sculpture, his pieces reveal a remarkable attention to detail and beautiful surface patinations. The artist first learned to cast bronze while serving in the Navy as a molder. After leaving the Navy, Young achieved fame as a two-time Olympic medalist in long distance racewalking. It was at this time that he began studying sculpture, first at Columbia College, Columbia, MO, and then in Italy.