

# MEDIEVAL TREASURES FROM THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

## Teacher's Guide



The Frist Center for the Visual Arts presents **Medieval Treasures**, a teacher's guide to accompany selected works from the exhibition *Medieval Treasures from the Cleveland Museum of Art*.

The Cleveland Museum of Art possesses one of the finest and most comprehensive collections of early Christian, Byzantine, and medieval European art in the world. It includes rare examples of ivories, enamels, sculpture, paintings and illuminated manuscripts from the third through the sixteenth century. Presenting approximately one hundred works of art, this exhibition offers a rare opportunity to view these extraordinary treasures outside of Cleveland.

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Frist Center for the Visual Arts  
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# PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT ...

The *Medieval Treasures* teaching packet was designed to help teachers prepare students for their gallery visits and follow up in the classroom. This packet contains a teacher's guide, color art reproductions, supplemental resources, and curriculum connections.

## Teacher's Guide

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The teacher's guide begins with an introduction to *Medieval Treasures*. The subsequent sections include information about key artworks and artists that may be featured on docent-guided tours of the exhibition. This information may be used to initiate class discussion or assigned to older students for outside reading. Each section concludes with a list of supplemental resources to encourage further investigation.

## Color Art Reproductions

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Color art reproductions (8 ½ x 11 inches) are provided for the following images in the exhibition.\*

- *Jonah Swallowed*, ca. 280–90
- *Jonah Praying*, ca. 280–90
- *Fragment of a Floor Mosaic with Adam and Eve*, late 400s/early 500s
- *Celtic Head*, ca. 100–300?
- *Two Eagle-Shaped Fibulae*, 500s
- *Ornamental Fibulae*, First century–300s
- *Lion Aquamanile*, 1200–1250
- *Virgin and Child*, ca. 1385–90
- *Table Fountain*, ca. 1320–40
- *Hours of Isabella the Catholic, Queen of Spain: Saint Michael the Archangel*, ca. 1500–1504
- *Virgin and Child with Saints*, before ca. 1317
- *The Adoration of the Magi*, ca. 1440–45
- *A Bridal Pair*, 1400s

\*Please note that some of the works referenced in the supplemental resources are not included in this exhibition.

## Supplemental Resources

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Supplemental resources have been provided to help students of all ages understand the material in relation to their own lives. Symbols throughout the guide indicate references to these resources.



Overview of Medieval Art and Its Time\*



Materials and Techniques\*



Lesson Plans\*



Education Gallery Guide *Dig Deeper: Unearthing "Medieval Treasures"*

\* Excerpts from *Medieval Art: A Resource for Educators*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

# MEDIEVAL TREASURES FROM THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

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Opened in 1916, the Cleveland Museum of Art in Cleveland, Ohio, houses an encyclopedic collection assembled by a succession of extraordinary directors and curators and funded by generous benefactors. It is particularly renowned for having some of the finest medieval art in the United States. In 2005 the museum closed its permanent collection galleries for the first time since it opened to embark on a large-scale renovation and expansion. *Medieval Treasures* offers an unprecedented opportunity to view the museum's celebrated Early Christian, Byzantine, Western Medieval, and Early Renaissance works of art in Nashville before they return home to be installed in the renovated museum in Cleveland. The exhibition spans the history of Western art from the adoption of Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century to the eve of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century.

This exhibition has been organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art. The Cleveland Museum of Art gratefully acknowledges the Citizens of Cuyahoga County for their support through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture. The Ohio Arts Council helped fund this exhibition with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans.



**Learn more about Medieval Art.** See *Overview of Medieval Art and Its Time* in the supplemental resources.

## Curriculum Connections

*Medieval Treasures* Discovery Tours and Look and Learn Tours support the Tennessee Curriculum Frameworks by introducing ideas relevant to the visual arts, language arts, and social studies curricula. Specific standards are addressed at age-appropriate levels. You may view connections for all grade levels (K–12) at [www.fristcenter.org](http://www.fristcenter.org).

# CHRISTIAN ART OF THE LATE ANTIQUE PERIOD, CA. 200–400

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Christianity emerged in Roman-occupied Palestine around the year 30 in response to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. By the beginning of the third century, the new religion had spread throughout the Roman Empire and attracted members of both the upper and lower classes. Christianity was initially a clandestine faith, but in the fourth century Constantine the Great (ca. 272–337) declared it the official religion of the Roman Empire. The emperor sponsored major ecclesiastical building programs such as the Lateran Basilica and St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem; these churches became important destinations for pilgrims.

Early Christian artists drew from the pagan imagery of the late Roman Empire. Images such as the sheep-bearer, a traditional Roman subject idealizing rustic life, were used and interpreted by Christians according to biblical scripture. The Roman sheep-bearer became the Good Shepherd, an allusion to Christ's promise to sacrifice his own life for that of his flock. The earliest Christian images of this type have been preserved in Roman funereal art, including marble sarcophagi and wall paintings in underground cemeteries known as catacombs. In addition to the Good Shepherd, images of the Old Testament prophet Jonah were especially popular.

## **The Jonah Marbles**

In 1965 the Cleveland Museum of Art acquired a group of eleven Late Roman marble busts and statuettes now known as the Jonah Marbles. Allegedly found buried together in a large *pithos*, or jar, the group consists of three nearly identical pairs of portrait busts of a Roman aristocratic couple, four small-scale statuettes depicting central events of the Old Testament story of the prophet Jonah; and one statuette of a youthful sheep-bearer, a common pastoral theme in Late Roman art that was interpreted by Christians as a representation of Christ as the Good Shepherd.

While the exact location and circumstances of the statues' discovery as well as their place of production remains elusive, technical analysis has helped to identify the Roman imperial quarries at Dokimeion in ancient Phrygia (near the modern Turkish city of Afyon) as the source for the highly crystalline white marble from which they were all carved. Likewise unknown is the original context in which these were displayed and the intended function of the sculptures.

The story of Jonah—one of hope, salvation, and the redemptive power of prayer and repentance—was often depicted in Christian funereal contexts. It is also possible that the sculptures decorated the house or garden of an affluent Christian Roman family; the Old and New Testament figures replaced those of the gods and heroes of classical mythology that adorned such spaces in the pre-Christian period. As the statuettes show, the Jonah Marbles are clearly indebted both to the cultural traditions of the Roman world and to the religious imagery of the new Christian faith.



### **Jonah Swallowed, ca. 280–90**

After disobeying the Lord's command to proclaim judgment on the city of Nineveh, the Old Testament prophet Jonah was cast into the sea and swallowed by a sea monster. Here, the beast swallows Jonah headfirst.

*Jonah Swallowed*, ca. 280–90. Late Roman (Asia Minor). Marble, 20 5/16 x 6 1/8 x 10 5/16 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, John L. Severance Fund 1965.237



### **Jonah Praying, ca. 280–90**

Here, Jonah stands with his hands raised in prayer. He may be praying in the belly of the sea monster, pleading with the Lord for Nineveh's destruction, or lamenting the withering of the gourd beneath which he found shelter after fleeing Nineveh.

*Jonah Praying*, ca. 280–90. Late Roman (Asia Minor). Marble, 18 1/2 x 5 1/2 x 8 1/8 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, John L. Severance Fund 1965.240

### **Learn more...**



#### **Dig Deeper: Wasn't Jonah swallowed by a whale?**

Discuss how the story of Jonah differs in ancient texts. Explore this question in *Dig Deeper: Unearthing "Medieval Treasures."*



#### **Materials and Techniques: Sculpture**

How were the Jonah marbles created? Investigate the tools and techniques used by sculptors in medieval times. Refer to page 149 in the Materials and Techniques supplement.

# ART IN THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE, CA. 330–1453

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A new chapter in the history of the Roman Empire began in 330, when Constantine the Great transferred the imperial residence from Rome to Byzantium, a small city on the Bosphorus, and renamed it Constantinople (City of Constantine) in his honor. The city grew in size and importance under Constantine and his successors and flourished as the capital of the Christianized Roman Empire, which came to be known as the Byzantine Empire. A city of legendary wealth, Constantinople was sacked and looted in 1204 by Crusaders, who made it the capital of the Latin Empire. Only in 1261 was the Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus (1223–82) able to recapture the city. The Palaeologan dynasty would rule the Byzantine Empire until it finally fell to the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II (1432–81). Under the Turks, Constantinople was renamed Istanbul. Currently, it is the largest city in Turkey and is one of the ten largest cities in the world.

Throughout its history, artistic production in the Byzantine Empire was intimately tied to its Roman heritage and Christian religious practices. Between 726 and 843 the use of religious images (icons) was hotly debated, but Byzantine art and culture flowered afterward, as the exquisite quality and technical refinement of liturgical objects, books, and items of personal adornment and devotion from the Middle and Late Byzantine period attest.

## **Fragment of a Floor Mosaic with Adam and Eve, late 400s/early 500s**



This panel representing the Fall of Adam and Eve once formed part of a much larger mosaic decorating the floor of an Early Byzantine church in northern Syria. Adam and Eve share the forbidden fruit while covering themselves with large leaves. At the top of the panel, the Greek inscription states, “And he ate, and they were made naked,” highlighting the two moments in the biblical narrative of the Fall simultaneously depicted here.

*Fragment of a Floor Mosaic with Adam and Eve*, late 400s/early 500s. Early Byzantine (northern Syria). Marble and stone tesserae, 56 ¼ x 42 ¼ in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, John L. Severance Fund 1969.115

## Learn more...



### **Dig Deeper: Where is the rest of the floor?**

This panel representing the Fall of Adam and Eve once formed part of a much larger mosaic. Where is the rest of the floor? This question is explored in *Dig Deeper: Unearthing "Medieval Treasures."*



### **Materials and Techniques: Mosaic**

Mosaic was the most elaborate and expensive form of decoration for the walls and floors of churches and palaces. Learn more about the way artists created these intricate designs. Refer to page 146 of the Materials and Techniques supplement.



### **Lesson Plan: Mosaic**

The floor mosaic of Adam and Eve is made up of small pieces of marble and stone set into a bed of mortar. Notice how the individual pieces are placed at angles to each other, following the shape of the face.

After examining the technique of the Byzantine mosaic artists, plan and create your own mosaic design using what you have learned. Refer to page 170 of the Lesson Plan supplement for guidance.



*Fragment of a Floor Mosaic with Adam and Eve (detail), late 400s/early 500s. Early Byzantine (northern Syria). Marble and stone tesserae, 56 1/4 x 42 1/4 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, John L. Severance Fund 1969.115*

# THE ART OF THE MIGRATION PERIOD, CA. 300–700

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From the fourth century onward, the northern borders of the Roman Empire came under increasing attack by Germanic peoples who had started to move westward following the arrival of the Huns, a central Asian nomadic tribe, in eastern and central Europe. The wave of migrations set in motion by the Huns' incursion into Europe eventually led to the collapse of the western half of the Roman Empire and the establishment of powerful "barbarian" kingdoms by the Goths, Vandals, Franks, and Langobards in the empire's former territories. Given the nomadic past of these tribes, their material culture consisted largely of personal and portable objects, including elaborately decorated weapons, tools, and jewelry. By the seventh and eighth centuries, the Christianization of most Germanic and Celtic tribes of Continental Europe resulted in an increased demand for ecclesiastical buildings, liturgical objects, and illuminated manuscripts that were often a rich blend of both Roman and Germanic artistic styles, techniques, and traditions.



**Celtic Head, ca. 100–300?**

A complete composition in itself, this stone head was never attached to a torso. Celtic tribesmen placed monumental stone heads such as this one throughout their religious shrines and practiced ritualistic veneration of the human head. A depression in the crown may once have held libations or offerings.

*Celtic Head*, ca. 100–300? Romano-British (northern England?). Sandstone with traces of original red paint, 13 x 11 ¾. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Jacob Hirsch 1955.555

## Learn more...



### **Dig Deeper: Why is there an indentation on the back of the head?**

The triangular groove in the head may have served a special purpose. What do you think it was used for? Explore this question in *Dig Deeper: Unearthing "Medieval Treasures."*



### **Materials and Techniques: Sculpture**

How was this stone head created? Investigate the tools and techniques used by sculptors in medieval times. Refer to page 149 in the Materials and Techniques supplement.



### Two Eagle-Shaped Fibulae, 500s

A military and imperial emblem in the Roman world, the eagle remained a symbol of power for the Barbarian tribes. Many pairs of Migration Period fibulae (decorative garment fasteners) take the form of these great birds of prey, rendered in the ornamentally distorted style favored during that era. Owing to their symbolic charge, their precious materials, and intricate craftsmanship, these fibulae would have reflected and projected the high rank of their wearer.



*Two Eagle-Shaped Fibulae*, 500s. Frankish. Copper alloy with gilding and garnet insets, 1 x ½ in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of the John Huntington Art and Polytechnic Trust 1918.926 and 1918.928

*Ornamental Fibulae*, first century–300s. Gallo-Roman or Romano-British. Bronze and champlevé enamel, 3/8 x 3/4 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchase from the J. H. Wade Fund 1930.230

### Ornamental Fibulae, First century–300s

This fibula is one in a group of ten Fibulae found together on an archaeological dig. Fibulae are brooches that primarily function as garment fasteners. Many, such as the present one, were highly decorative and prized as luxurious personal adornments. Although these fibulae are distinct from each other in shape and decorative patterning, their colorful enameling was executed in the same technique called champlevé, in which small cells are cut or cast into bronze to receive paste that ultimately achieves a glassy appearance.

#### Learn more...



#### **Dig Deeper: Why were these objects buried?**

The ten ornamental fibulae were found at a medieval burial site. Find out why in *Dig Deeper: Unearthing “Medieval Treasures.”*



#### **Materials and Techniques: Enamel**

Notice the highly distinctive and colorful enamel work of these fibulae. Learn how medieval artists created works such as these. Refer to page 146 of the Materials and Techniques supplement.



#### **Lesson Plan: Enamel**

Create your own fibulae using a basic technique inspired by medieval artists. Refer to page 173 in the Materials and Techniques supplement.

# THE RISE OF LUXURY ARTS IN EARLY MEDIEVAL EUROPE, CA. 800–1100

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The coronation of Charlemagne (768–814) as emperor by Pope Leo III in Rome on Christmas Day of 800 resulted in a wide range of political and religious reforms as well as an unprecedented surge of interest in the arts and culture of antiquity. Northern artists, deeply rooted in the abstract traditions of their Germanic ancestors, started to copy classical and late Roman models in architecture, sculpture, painting, and fine metalwork, thus adopting styles and techniques of the Graeco-Roman past and blending them with their own traditions. Charlemagne's interest in the promotion of classical art and culture continued under his imperial successors in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The luxury arts of this period are characterized by a new degree of sophistication, artistic accomplishment, and technical refinement on par with the most refined products of contemporary Byzantine court culture. In addition to the emperor and his court, powerful bishops, abbots, abbesses, and aristocrats excelled as patrons of the arts. In the case of the Guelph Treasure, on display in this gallery, an initial commission by a wealthy aristocratic patron developed into an important collection of sacred objects and relics tied to the Church of Saint Blaise in Brunswick, Germany.



*Lion Aquamanile*, 1200–1250. German (Lower Saxony, Hildesheim?).  
Cast, chased, and punched copper alloy, 10 1/2 x 11 7/8 x 5 7/8 in.  
The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Chester D. Tripp in honor  
of Chester D. Tripp 1972.167

## Lion Aquamanile, 1200–1250

An *aquamanile* is a water vessel used for hand washing in both sacred and secular contexts. Many were made in northern Europe during the Middle Ages and used at church altars and dinner tables of upper-class patrons. *Aquamanilia* often took the form of fantastic beasts such as dragons and unicorns or animals such as horses, birds, dogs, and lions.

### Learn more...



#### Lesson Plan: Medieval Beasts and Bestiary

Animals and fantastic beasts are common figures in medieval art. Discuss the qualities and features of the *Lion Aquamanile* (and other depictions of medieval animals) and then create your own beast using the instructions on page 161 in the Lesson Plan supplement.

Visit Martin ArtQuest Gallery to create your own medieval beast at the new exhibition-related station *Connect with "Medieval Treasures."*



# ART IN FRANCE, CA. 1150–1300

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During the rule of the Capetian kings, France became a unified kingdom in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Paris, its capital, evolved into a great artistic center where exquisite illuminated manuscripts, ivory carvings, and metalwork were made to suit the royal court's taste for luxury goods. As a consequence of the Capetians' geographical expansion, cathedrals were erected throughout France. Built in an entirely new style, these light-filled buildings soared triumphantly toward heaven. Stone sculpture enriched their exterior façades and stained-glass windows decorated their interiors; both employed sacred narratives for the benefit of the faithful. Cathedrals also housed treasuries of church furnishings fashioned from expensive materials. Not surprisingly, these impressive new churches were seen by many as an image of the Heavenly Jerusalem, an embodiment of heaven on earth.



## Virgin and Child, ca. 1385–90

The Virgin as humanity's most effective intercessor with Christ was the most important focus of medieval devotion. Statues such as this one were placed throughout French churches and offered the faithful the opportunity to venerate the church's foremost saint. The Virgin casts a benevolent gaze downward. She is situated far above the beholder, somewhere between heaven and earth, with her attention eternally poised on all mortals seeking her help.

*Virgin and Child*, ca. 1385–90. French (central Loire Valley?). Limestone with traces of polychromy, height: 53 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchase from the J. H. Wade Fund 1962.28

Learn more...



### Materials and Techniques: Sculpture

How was this statue created? Investigate the tools and techniques used by sculptors in medieval times. Refer to page 149 in the Materials and Techniques supplement.

# ART AT THE COURT OF THE BURGUNDIAN DUKES, 1364–1477

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From 1364 until 1477, four successive dukes of Burgundy presided over one of the most sophisticated courts in medieval Europe. The dukes sought to enhance their status by displaying their wealth and taste, and became brilliant patrons of the luxury arts. Fine tapestries decorated the walls of their residences. They offered extraordinary gold, enameled, and bejeweled objects as wedding gifts or to celebrate the New Year. Their libraries housed impressive collections of illuminated manuscripts. They founded and supplied the Carthusian monastery of Champmol near Dijon in eastern France with sculpture, devotional panel paintings, altarpieces, liturgical vessels, and illuminated manuscripts. Many of these works were created by Parisian artists already accustomed to creating highly refined objects for the French royal court, the opulence of which the Burgundian court rivaled and surpassed.



*Table Fountain*, ca. 1320–40. French (Paris). Gilt silver with translucent enamel, 12 1/4 x 9 1/2 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of J. H. Wade 1924.859

## ART AT THE COURT OF THE BURGUNDIAN DUKES, 1364–1477 (CONTINUED)



*Table Fountain*, ca. 1320–40. French (Paris). Gilt silver with translucent enamel, 12 1/2 x 9 1/2 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of J. H. Wade 1924.859

### **Table Fountain, ca. 1320–40**

Although this table fountain is the most complete example known to have survived from the Middle Ages, Europe's royalty and aristocracy owned substantial numbers of such objects by the late medieval period. Admirable for the beauty of its craftsmanship, this fountain is a feat of technical ingenuity that would have entertained beholders with its continuous movement of cascading water and the accompanying sound of ringing bells. Table fountains also perfumed banqueting halls and private rooms with the fragrance of flowers.

### **Learn more...**



#### **Dig Deeper: How did this work?**

Though fanciful in design, this table fountain was created to be a completely functional mechanism. How did it work? This question is explored in *Dig Deeper: Unearthing "Medieval Treasures."*



#### **Materials and Techniques: Enamel**

Notice the translucent enamel work on this fountain. Learn how medieval artists accomplished this technique. Refer to page 144 of the Materials and Techniques supplement.

## Hours of Isabella the Catholic, Queen of Spain: Saint Michael the Archangel, ca. 1500–1504



*Hours of Isabella the Catholic, Queen of Spain: Saint Michael the Archangel, ca. 1500–1504.*

Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian and others Flemish (Bruges and Ghent).  
Tempera and gold on vellum, 279 folios, 8 13/16 x 5 15/16 in.  
The Cleveland Museum of Art, Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund 1963.256

Isabella the Catholic, Queen of Spain (1451–1504), used this prayer book for her private devotions. Vibrant colors, rich decorative and illusionistic effects, naturalistically rendered landscapes, and a strong sense of visual narrative distinguish the book's many miniatures. This style characterizes a group of artists working in the Flemish towns of Ghent and Bruges around 1500. An elaborate border found throughout the book features different kinds of flowers, scrolling acanthus leaves, birds, and butterflies set upon grounds the color of which varies from page to gloriously illuminated page.

### Learn more...

#### **Materials and Techniques: Manuscript Making**

The medieval manuscript was the result of many skills, from the parchment maker to the scribe, rubricator, gilder, painter, and binder. To learn about the various steps involved in making a manuscript, refer to the Materials and Techniques supplement beginning on page 142. Assign specific roles to students and have them research and describe their contribution to the making of a manuscript.

#### **Extended Activity: Make your own manuscript!**

The creation of an illuminated manuscript was carried out in a series of very distinct stages and required the coordinated efforts of several skilled artisans. Learn about the role of each artisan and download your own manuscript template at [http://www.leavesofgold.org/learn/children/make\\_your\\_own/templates.html](http://www.leavesofgold.org/learn/children/make_your_own/templates.html).

# ART IN LATE MEDIEVAL ITALY, CA. 1250–1450

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During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, civic pride and religious fervor swelled in the newly built town halls and churches of Italy's prosperous cities. So, too, did the motivation to create works of art to adorn them. While traditional art forms such as sculpture and manuscript illumination were of continued importance, painting on wooden panels constituted a significant innovation. Large-scale altarpieces focused unprecedented attention on the altar, while smaller panels satisfied individuals' growing desires for personalized devotional stimuli. Turning to the Byzantine icon tradition for inspiration, artists adopted their gold backgrounds, schematized settings, and hieratic figure style, but direct observation of the real world, an interest in storytelling, and attention to human emotion increasingly informed their works. Such developments contributed to the artistic Renaissance of the next century.

## **Virgin and Child with Saints, before ca. 1317**



*Virgin and Child with Saints*, before ca. 1317. Ugolino da Siena (Italian, Siena, documented 1317–27). Oil on panel, 48 7/16 x 75 7/16 x 3 5/16 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund 1961.40

In this remarkably complete altarpiece from a Franciscan church, the Virgin and Child are surrounded by saints. On the left are Francis, displaying his stigmata (the five wounds of Christ), and John the Baptist, identifiable by his wooly beard and hair shirt. On the right are James and Mary Magdalene holding the jar of ointment with which she anointed Christ. In the pinnacles above, flanking the Crucifixion, are four other saints, including Peter, holding the keys to heaven, and Paul, holding the sword with which he was beheaded.

## The Adoration of the Magi, ca. 1440–45



*The Adoration of the Magi*, ca. 1440–45.  
Giovanni di Paolo  
(Italian, Siena, active  
1417–died 1482).  
Tempera (and oil?)  
and gold on wood,  
52 1/2 x 59 x 7 1/2 in.  
The Cleveland  
Museum of Art, Delia  
E. and L. E. Holden  
Funds 1942.536

According to the Gospel of Matthew, three Magi, guided by a star, found the newborn Christ and laid gifts before him. Artists throughout the fifteenth century elaborated upon this biblical account and devoted particular attention to the Magi's entourage, which gave them an opportunity to depict the splendor of contemporary aristocratic life. Here, the Magi supplicate solemnly before the divine child in the Virgin's arms, while their bustling retinue of courtiers and animals provides an exuberant visual diversion.

### Learn more...



#### **Materials and Techniques: Panel Painting**

Painting on wooden panels was a significant and growing art form in late medieval Italy. Large-scale panels adorned altars, while smaller panels satisfied individuals' growing desires for personalized devotional objects. To learn how these panels were created, refer to page 148 of the Materials and Techniques supplement.

#### **Extended Activity: Create and illustrate a personal narrative**

Artists in late medieval Italy showed increasing interest in storytelling and human emotion. Find an interesting story (or write your own) and illustrate a single scene from it. Think about the tone of the scene. Is it celebratory or somber? How would you communicate this emotion through the facial expressions and body language of your characters?

# ART IN LATE MEDIEVAL GERMANY, CA. 1300–1530

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While the territories of the Holy Roman Empire initially resisted the new trends in French art and architecture, German artists and architects soon began to adopt French Gothic aesthetic ideals and fuse them with local traditions. Employing Europe's preeminent architects and artists, Emperor Charles IV (1347–78) attempted to transform Prague into a capital city on par with Paris and Constantinople. In urban areas, new artistic patrons emerged in response to the economic boom experienced in many cities throughout medieval Europe. Well-to-do individuals, guilds, and religious confraternities displayed their wealth, piety, and pride by furnishing churches with stained-glass windows, devotional sculptures, and altarpieces. Artists created new types of religious images to facilitate the highly spiritual private prayer promoted by new religious orders. As in Byzantine and Italy, painting on wooden panel became widespread in Germany. Small-scale works were employed for private devotion in domestic and monastic settings, while large-scale altarpieces ornamented churches and chapels.

## **A Bridal Pair, 1400s**

Two lovers enjoy an embrace. Their rings and the circlets crowning their heads indicate that they are newly wed; the blossoming bower surrounding them promises the fertility of their union. However, this panel was once joined to another called the *Rotting Pair* (Strasbourg, Musée de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame), in which the young couple transforms into a pair of hideous corpses. Together, the ensemble constituted a *memento mori*, a macabre reminder of the vanity of all things in the face of death.



*A Bridal Pair* (detail), 1400s. South German. Oil on panel, 30 1/2 x 20 1/16 x 2 15/16 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Delia E. Holden and L. E. Holden Funds 1932.179



*A Bridal Pair*, 1400s. South German. Oil on panel, 30 1/2 x 20 1/16 x 2 15/16 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Delia E. Holden and L. E. Holden Funds 1932.179

### Learn more....



#### **Materials and Techniques: Panel Painting**

To learn about the techniques used to create a panel painting such as this, refer to page 148 of the Materials and Techniques supplement.

#### **Extended Discussion: *A Momento Mori***

*A Bridal Pair* may elicit a different interpretation when seen together with the *Rotting Pair*. Discuss how your interpretation changes when the works are viewed separately then together. What is the cautionary message in these two works?

To view an image of the *Rotting Pair*, visit [http://www.musees-strasbourg.org/F/musees/ond/ond\\_oc.html](http://www.musees-strasbourg.org/F/musees/ond/ond_oc.html).

## MEDIEVAL RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS\*

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\* Suggested resources from *Medieval Art: A Resource for Educators*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

COVER: *The Death of the Virgin*, ca. 1400/1410. Master of Heiligenkreuz (Austrian, possibly Bohemian, active early 1400s). Tempera and oil with gold on panel, 26 x 21 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of the Friends of the Cleveland Museum of Art in memory of John Long Severance 1936.496



### VISION

The vision of the Frist Center is to inspire people through art to look at their world in new ways.

### MISSION

The mission of the Frist Center is to present and originate high quality exhibitions with related educational programs and community outreach activities.

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