

Art and Culture in the City



McNay Art Museum

www.mcnayart.org

Art for the Sake of Art: Ornament Prints from the Blanton Museum of Art
April 27 – August 7, 2016

The Blanton Museum of Art in Austin has one of the finest encyclopedic print collections in the region, with objects tracing the entire history of the graphic arts in Western Europe. This small exhibition, drawn entirely from the Blanton's outstanding old master collection, focuses on jewel-like ornament prints from the sixteenth century. While this art may seem out of place at the modern McNay, there is something about the specific phenomenon of ornament prints that presages much of what was to come later in the world of printmaking. Ornament prints, with their emphasis on pure form—sinuous lines and entrancing patterns and textures—allowed artists to experiment and freed them from the constraints that come with biblical or historical narratives or with portrait commissions. Looking at these incredibly complex images, one can imagine the artist getting lost in the process, completely absorbed by the very act of artistic creation. The abstract quality of ornament prints as well as their emphasis on pure line can seem almost modern in conception.



One of the highlights of the exhibition is a beautiful, silvery impression of Veneziano's *Panel of Ornament with Acanthus and a Swan* of the mid-1530s (image above). This is considered to be the single finest ornament print of the High Renaissance.



www.samuseum.org

Highest Heaven: Spanish and Portuguese Colonial Art
June 18 – September 28, 2016

Highest Heaven, opening at the San Antonio Museum of Art on June 11, explores the paintings, sculpture, furniture, ivories and silverworks of the Altiplano, or high plains, of South America in the 18th century. Through the work of both well-regarded

masters and lesser-known artists, *Highest Heaven* highlights the role of art in the establishment of new city centers in the Spanish Empire and the propagation of the Christian faith among indigenous peoples. Drawn exclusively from the distinguished collection of Roberta and Richard Huber, the exhibition showcases the distinct visual language created by the cultural and creative exchanges that occurred between Spain and Portugal and their South American colonies.



Saint Michael the Archangel

Cuzco, Peru, 18th century

The exhibition features more than 100 works, including religious paintings, carved and gilded wooden sculptures, intimate ivories, and silverwork, originally housed in ecclesiastical and private collections throughout the former colonial possessions of Spain and Portugal. Most of these works were created for functional purposes, as articles of faith or symbols of civic order, and were displayed in a manner that enhanced religious understanding, brought social order, and spurred conversion among colonial populations. *Highest Heaven* examines these uses, focusing in particular on the translation of Christian imagery to the colonies and the ways in which these objects worked to establish an ordered society and promote the blending of religious traditions.



www.wittemuseum.org

Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed
May 14 – September 5, 2016

Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed is so grand, so immersive, and so comprehensive that the Witte Museum brought it to San Antonio as the debut exhibition of the Museum's new Mays Family Center.

Maya is the largest traveling exhibition about the Maya ever to be toured in the United States, and this is the Texas premiere of the exhibition. *Maya* uses a combination of authentic artifacts along with multimedia and interactive, hands-on activities to reveal our deep ties to this astonishing civilization.

"The Witte is breaking the mold with the Mays Family Center, and it is only fitting to have this world-class exhibition open San Antonio's new cultural gem," says Marise McDermott, President and CEO of the Witte Museum. "*Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed* beautifully represents the impact the Maya had on the world we live in today. The exhibition is immersive, so that entire families can experience the way Mayans lived, learning their calendars, mathematics, and cosmology through interactive opportunities. The exhibition is massive, the largest ever at the Witte, so we recommend scheduling a longer than average time to enjoy the exhibition, demonstrations, and programs."