



**San Antonio
Museum
of Art**

**SAMA Announces Acquisition of Two Major Gifts of Ancient Art from the Americas
Museum Also Acquires Selection of Contemporary and Historic Works
Across Its Encyclopedic Holdings**

San Antonio, TX – November 28, 2023 – The San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA) announced today the acquisition of two extensive collections focused on the art of the Americas before 1500. The first is a gift from collectors and longtime SAMA supporters John M. and Kathi Oppenheimer and features nearly 200 objects, primarily ceramic and stone figures and vessels, that represent societies that thrived in West and Central Mexico and Central America, including the Aztec, Mixtec, Colima, Nayarit, and Jalisco, as well as objects made by the Maya, Zapotec, and Olmec cultures. Together, the works were made over two thousand years, from approximately 1200 BC to AD 1500. The second collection comes from Lindsay and Lucy Duff and includes 110 objects, including ceramics, textiles, and carved stone and wood objects, from early South American cultures, such as the Moche, Nasca, Wari, Chimu, and Inca and spanning from around 500 BC to AD 1500. Several of the works in the Duff Collection are currently on loan to SAMA, including a large gold beaker and a ceramic portrait vessel.

SAMA is home to an extraordinary collection of approximately 10,000 works of Latin American art, spanning nearly four thousand years of history and from across a diversity of regions and cultures. The collection is presented in The Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Latin American Art, a two-story, 30,000-square-foot space within the Museum with galleries dedicated to art of the Americas pre-1500; Latin American art of the viceregal period; modern and contemporary Latin American art; and Latin American popular art. The Oppenheimer Collection and the Duff Collection add new depth to SAMA’s holdings. In alignment with SAMA’s commitment to provenance research, exemplified by the promotion of Dr. Lynley McAlpine to Associate Curator of Provenance Research, both collections have been rigorously reviewed by the museum’s staff.

“We are thrilled to add more than 300 objects to our extensive holdings of art of the Americas before 1500 and to continue our focus on establishing new scholarship and understanding of the complex societies from which they emerged. These objects provide new insights into the skilled makers who produced them, the importance of artistic ingenuity within these cultures, and the practices and values that led to their creation,” said Emily Ballew Neff, PhD, The Kelso Director at SAMA. “I also want to extend my gratitude to our generous donors and the curatorial team for shepherding these acquisitions, in support of our vision to continue to grow and diversify our collections with historic and contemporary works that hold the stories of global cultures across time.”

As part of SAMA’s fall acquisitions, the Museum also acquired a range of objects across its Contemporary, American, Latin American, Asian, and Ancient Mediterranean collections. Some

of the highlights include the oil on metal work *Emma Tenayuca Retablo (1993)* by **Santa Barraza**, a major figure in Chicana/o art and the Chicano Art Movement in South Texas; the mixed-media sculpture *Space In Between: Nopal (Candelaria Cabrera) (2010)* by **Margarita Cabrera**, which continues the artist's ongoing explorations of cultural identity, migration, labor, violence, and empowerment through sculpture, craft, and social practice; a photograph by **Stuart Allen**, titled *Shadow No. 10, 9 Pixels (2005)*, which reflects the artist's interest in examining abstract composition through digital photographic pixelation; two **Transport Amphorae (Roman-Byzantine, 5th–7th century AD)**, which were likely used to ship commodities like wine across the Mediterranean; and **ten ceramic works by modern and contemporary Japanese artists**, including **Nakamura Takuo, Koie Ryoji, Takiguchi Kazuo, Ito Motohiko,** and **Seto Hiroshi**, among others.

More About the Gift from John M. and Kathi Oppenheimer

The collection includes nearly 200 objects, with most of the works representing Aztec, Mixtec, Colima, Nayarit, and Jalisco cultures as well as select examples made by the Maya, Zapotec, and Olmec. The group represents the earliest to the latest phases of the complex societies of this region. The collection includes numerous earthenware vessels, such as bowls and vases in a range of styles, as well as female figures that reflect regional dress and adornment styles. Important examples of these objects include a female figure carrying a basket from the Nayarit region, and a large Maya incense burner in the form of an elderly deity wearing an elaborate headdress. The collection also includes stone objects, including several significant examples of carved and incised jadeite plaques and masks. Based on archaeological studies, many of the objects in the collection were likely originally used in elite and ceremonial contexts. A few objects were tools used in the production of other materials, such as textiles, paper, and earthenware figurines.

More about the Gift from Lindsay and Lucy Duff

This collection of 110 objects spans time and cultures from the earliest complex societies in South America, including the Moche, Nasca, and Chimu cultures, to the period just prior to European contact. It is unique in the breadth of materials represented, including ceramics, metals (bronze, gold, and silver), bone and shell, stone and wood, textiles, and basketry. Highlights include several large textiles from Moche, Wari, and Inca cultures; finely made earthenware vessels with a focus on avian motifs and mythical creatures; spindle whorls; shell and textile bracelets; silver spoons, musical instruments made of bone and earthenware, and weighing scales made of bone and shell. Many of the objects would have been used in elite and ceremonial contexts, but several were used in the process of making other products, such as textiles.

About the San Antonio Museum of Art

The San Antonio Museum of Art serves as a forum to explore and connect with art that spans the world's geographies, artistic periods, genres, and cultures. Its collection contains nearly thirty thousand works representing five thousand years of history and is particularly strong in arts of the Americas, ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman art, Asian art, and modern and contemporary art.

San Antonio is the nation's seventh-largest city and is consistently listed as one of its fastest-growing. The Museum is housed in the historic Lone Star Brewery on the Museum Reach of San Antonio's River Walk and is committed to promoting the rich cultural heritage and life of the city. It hosts hundreds of events and public programs each year, including concerts,

performances, tours, lectures, symposia, and interactive experiences. As an active civic leader, the Museum is dedicated to enriching the cultural life of the city and the region, and to supporting its creative community.

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