

Bard Gallery Presents Two Faculty Exhibitions

NEW YORK CITY — The Bard Graduate Center Gallery continues its Focus Project series with two faculty-curated exhibitions, both running through June 24. The first is titled “The Codex and Crafts in Late Antiquity,” the other is titled “Fabricating Power with Balinese Textiles.”

The transition from roll to codex as the standard format of the book is one of the most culturally significant innovations of Late Antiquity, the period between the Third and Eighth Centuries CE. “The Codex and Crafts in Late Antiquity” examines the structural, technical and decorative features of the major types of codices — the wooden tablet codex, the single-gathering codex and the multi-gathering codex. Along with surviving artifacts and iconographic evidence, handmade replicas are used to explore the craft processes applied in the making of these early books.

The exhibition presents the codex as an innovation, rather than an invention, that evolved using techniques already widely employed by artisans and craftspeople in the creation of everyday items



78 Upper cover of Morgan M.569, Ninth–Tenth Century CE, leather over papyrus board; decorated with cutout openwork, stitching, gilding and lacing. The Morgan Library and Museum, purchased for J. Pierpont Morgan, 1911. MS M.569A.

such as socks and shoes, revealing that the codex was a fascinating, yet practical, development.

The exhibition is curated by Georgios Boudalis, head of the Book and Paper Conservation Laboratory, Museum of Byzantine

Culture, Thessaloniki, Greece; Research Fellow, Bard Graduate Center, February–May 2015. It is accompanied by a richly illustrated book that is available in the gallery and the store.

Anthropologists Margaret Mead (1901–1978) and Gregory Bateson (1904–1980) collected textiles, puppets, paintings and carvings from the island of Bali, Indonesia, as they conducted research 1936–38. Most of these objects are housed today at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

This exhibition explores the Mead-Bateson textiles as forms of religious power that act within a Balinese Hindu cosmology. The textiles displayed are significant for their aesthetic and ritual powers, derived from techniques of fabrication and use in various life cycle ceremonies, as well as serving as records of a period in Balinese history. Based on information from the 1930s and recent research, the exhibition presents an overview of Balinese textiles as windows into a unique culture and encourages viewers to consider the value of these objects as



Ngurah Hendrawan and Ni Gede Diari. Cagcag (backstrap loom), comprising frame, yoke, shuttle, blade/beater, reed, lease bar, string heddle, and loom cloth. Nusa Penida, Bali, Indonesia, 2017. Wood, bamboo, cotton. Bard Graduate Center Study Collection. —Bruce White photo

they are made and used to this day.

“Fabricating Power with Balinese Textiles” is curated by Urmila Mohan, Bard Graduate Center/American Museum of Natural History post-doctoral Fellow in Museum Anthropology. Its accompanying book, which will be available in the gallery and the store, reveals how the “power”

of Balinese textiles depends upon the efficacies attributed to these objects as they journey from fabrication and ritual use in their native context to curation and display in the West.

The Bard Graduate Center Gallery is at 38 West 86th Street. For additional information, www.bgc.bard.edu or 212-501-3023.

Portland Museum Exhibition Examines German Art In A Time Of Crisis

PORTLAND, MAINE — The Portland Museum of Art (PMA) is showing “The Robbers: German Art in a Time of Crisis” in the Palladian Gallery to July 15. The exhibition of approximately 30 German prints executed between the World Wars will highlight the complete portfolio of George Grosz’s 1922 “The Robbers.”

Grosz based his lithographic suite on Friedrich Schiller iconic 1781 play of the same name, yet when Grosz depicted the canonical story he situated the action in the tumultuous climate of early 1920s Berlin. With figures culled from the modern era, Grosz’s imagery suggests the vast social discord where the traumatic effects of the mechanized war, greed, industry and poverty intersected to undermine national stability in the young Weimar Republic.

Grosz’s prints were part of a broader artistic culture in which other printmakers and theater directors produced modern interpretations of canonical of German literature, overtly politicizing the hallmarks of the nation’s cultural heritage. Their work, available to broad audiences through widely disseminated prints or stage performances, was a type of social intervention at a moment when conceptions of German identity vacillated wildly. The interplay between contemporaneous politics and historic literature highlighted the tensions between tra-

“Lions and tigers nourish their young, ravens feast their brood on carrion... Series: The Robbers” (detail) by George Grosz (German, 1839–1959), 1922, photolithograph on paper, 27½ by 19¾ inches. Gift of David and Eva Bradford. Art ©estate of George Grosz/Licensed by VAGA, New York, N.Y.

dition and modernity, which strained German society and which remain continually resonant today across the world.

In addition to the Grosz’s “Robbers” portfolios, the exhibition will include provocative artworks by printmakers including Max Beckmann, Otto Dix and Käthe Kollwitz. These works, many of which are gifts to the PMA from David and Eva Bradford, add context to Grosz’s social and artistic expression and are equally probing in their evaluation of German society and national identity.

Many of these prints, including the Grosz series, represent a post-World War I aesthetic known as “New Objectivity.” Whereas German Expressionists of an earlier generation often depicted emotional responses to the modern condition, highlighting themes of angst, inner turmoil and social alienation, the leaders of New Objectivity rooted their prints in a type of biting, provocative realism, often relying on satire and caricature. The division between the two styles was never absolute, and both allowed artists to participate actively in cultural debates about social class, politics and modern, urban phenomena. Because of their goals to be social-

ly engaged artists shaping the national discourse, many of the artists working in these styles found the print medium to be especially efficient as prints could be disseminated more broadly than painting or sculpture.

The Portland Museum of Art is at 7 Congress Square. For more information, 207-775-6148 or www.portlandmuseum.org.



Musee Picasso-Paris To Celebrate 80th Anniversary Of ‘Guernica’

PARIS — The Musée National Picasso-Paris, in partnership with the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, will celebrate the 80th anniversary of Picasso’s “Guernica” with an exhibition dedicated to the story behind this iconic work, March 27–July 29. The painting will remain in its permanent location at the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid.

Painted in 1937 in response to the bombing of the Basque village Guernica by Nazis and Fascist Italian warplanes, “Guernica” is seen simultaneously as an anti-Franco, anti-fascist and pacific symbol that helped bring interna-

tional attention to the Spanish Civil War.

In celebrating “Guernica’s” 80th birthday, the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia has loaned numerous sketches and post-scriptums to tell the story behind the painting.

The exhibition will show the story and posterity of “Guernica,” as well as question the influence of “Guernica” on Twentieth Century and present-day art.

The Musée National Picasso-Paris is at 5 Rue de Thorigny.

For additional information, www.museepicassoparis.fr or 33 1 85 56 00 36.

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