

Winter 2022

# ARTiculate

MEMORIAL ART GALLERY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

**STRIKING POWER: ICONOCLASM IN ANCIENT EGYPT**

**IN PRAISE OF TREES: WOODCUTS BY NAKO MATSUBARA**

**THE PERMANENT COLLECTION: EXCITING ADDITIONS**

**CANNUPA HANSKA LUGER: A BRIEF CONVERSATION**

NOVEMBER 20, 2022 – MARCH 5, 2023

# Striking Power: Iconoclasm in Ancient Egypt

by Nancy Norwood, Curator of European Art

**Why are the noses broken on Egyptian statues? Why were other body parts, including eyes, arms, and feet of statues purposely shattered in antiquity?**

MAG's holiday exhibition this year, *Striking Power: Iconoclasm in Ancient Egypt*, presents 39 objects from the Brooklyn Museum's stellar collection of ancient Egyptian art. Originated and curated by Edward Bleiberg, curator emeritus



of Egyptian art at Brooklyn, it examines the patterns of damage inflicted on works of art for political, religious, and criminal reasons—the results of organized campaigns of destruction. *Striking Power* illustrates how damage to a statue can be interpreted to reveal who broke it and the motivation behind the destruction. It does so by pairing damaged works—from fragmented heads to altered inscriptions—alongside undamaged works.

The ancient Egyptians believed that deities, as well as the souls of deceased humans could inhabit stone, wood, or clay images, allowing these supernatural beings to have a presence in this world.

#### ON THE COVER:

*Bust of a King*, 285–246 BCE, Limestone, 17<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 13<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in., BMA 37.37E

#### THESE PAGES (l to r):

*Face and Shoulder from an Anthropoid Sarcophagus*, Ptolemaic Period (332–30 BCE), Greywacke, 18<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 20<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 5 in., BMA 37.1516E

*Temple Statue of Pawarem, Priest of Bastet*, 570–510 BCE, Diorite or basalt, 18<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 11 in., BMA 37.36E

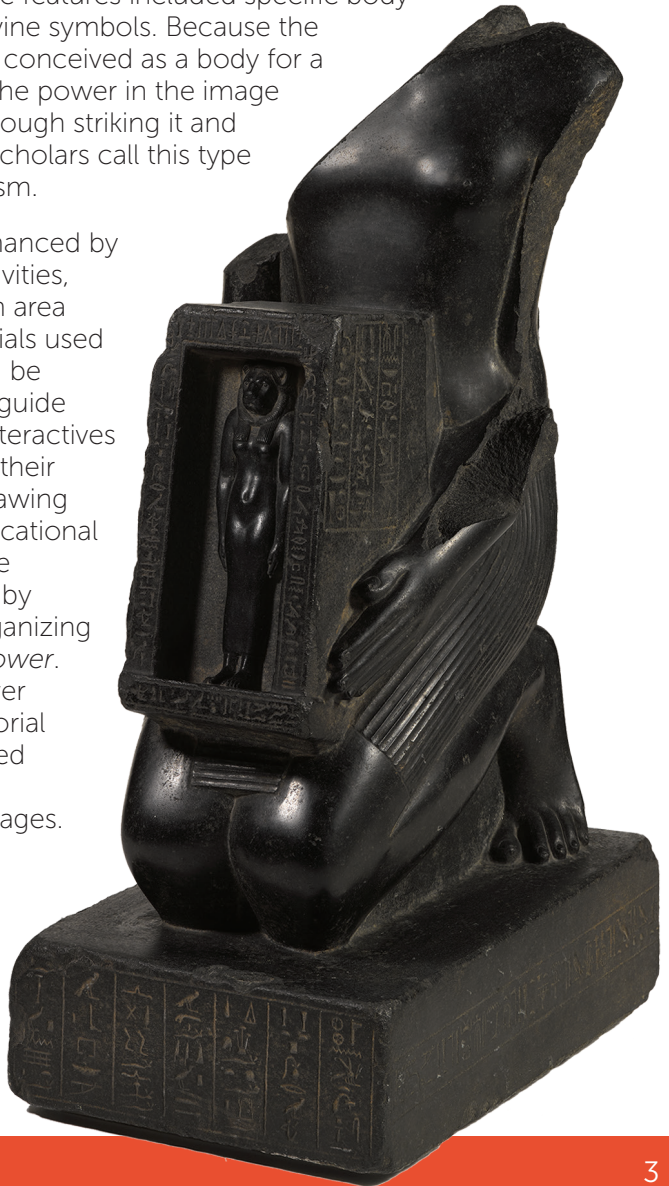
*This exhibition is organized by the Brooklyn Museum in collaboration with the Pulitzer Arts Foundation and is curated by Edward Bleiberg, Curator Emeritus, Brooklyn Museum.*

*In Rochester, the exhibition is sponsored by these supporting donors: an anonymous donor, the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation, and the Robert Lehman Foundation.*

In ancient society, religion and politics were inextricably linked; as a result, this imagery also held powerful ties to political leadership. Through the examination of these sculptures, *Striking Power* explores the complex and often surprising relationships between rulers and their children, rulers and their gods, and the ancient Egyptian belief in the afterlife.

Just as the image or sculpture could be activated by ritual prayers and practices, it could be deactivated through selective destruction of key features. These features included specific body parts and royal or divine symbols. Because the activated image was conceived as a body for a supernatural being, the power in the image could be harmed through striking it and damaging its form. Scholars call this type of damage iconoclasm.

*Striking Power* is enhanced by several in-gallery activities, including a hands-on area where various materials used in the sculptures can be touched. An activity guide and technological interactives help visitors tap into their creativity through drawing and exploration. Educational highlights include the opening-day lecture by Edward Bleiberg, organizing curator of *Striking Power*. Special "Striking Power Sundays" offer curatorial tours as well as related entertainment and programming for all ages.



DECEMBER 9, 2022 – MAY 21, 2023

# In Praise of Trees: Woodcuts by Naoko Matsubara

by Nancy Norwood, Curator of European Art



Naoko Matsubara (Japanese/Canadian, born 1937), *Cherry*, from the portfolio *In Praise of Trees*, 1985, Woodcut. Gift of Annabelle Martin, 2018.51.24

*In Praise of Trees* showcases the work of the contemporary Japanese-Canadian print artist Naoko Matsubara (b. 1937). The exhibition presents 39 woodcuts from her portfolio *In Praise of Trees*. Each print represents a single tree or a quality associated with trees, such as hardness, strength, stability, and vitality. All were inspired by her childhood memories of Kyoto, Japan, where she grew up as the daughter of a Shinto priest.

Matsubara writes in her artist's statement that the work is rooted in her childhood experiences at Kenkun Jinja, the Shinto shrine where her father was chief priest. She recalls "the joy with which I had gazed at the gnarled branches of aged pines, at giant oak or ginkgo trees, with their infinitely varied shapes. Kyoto too came back to me; that ancient city steeped in the culture of the Japanese court, the Buddhist monasteries and the Shinto shrines, and bowered with gardens, sacred woods, and hills."

The portfolio *In Praise of Trees* includes woodcuts that Matsubara originally designed for a book of art and poetry she published in 1984, a year before the work in this exhibition was created. In addition to the woodcuts, the portfolio includes her artist's statement; a poem, *Wood*, written specifically for her work by Robin Skelton; and statements by The Honourable John Roberts, Canadian Minister of the Environment, and Harry Somers, the influential Canadian composer.

# MAG Voices

**Kathryn  
D'Amanda**

**President, MAG Board of  
Managers**

My first introduction to MAG was as an eight-year-old student in the Creative Workshop. A perfectionist, I kept tearing off my drawing to start over, but Miss Blum encouraged me to keep going, saying that it might turn into something good.

Art became my career, and over many years as a graphic designer, I got to know MAG's wonderful staff through working on exhibition identity and invitations and many beautiful scholarly publications.

In the late 1980s, along with Leslie Allen and Kristin Vanden Brul, I was a founding member of the Averell Council, an under-40 group at MAG—and many of us became "lifers." We chose the name after James G. Averell, the son of Emily Sibley Watson, in whose memory the "Memorial" Art Gallery was named.

Another profound connection was made in 2015. We lost our own son at nearly the same age James Averell was when he died, and his memorial service was held in the very building Emily created to honor hers.

Since being elected to the Board of Managers in 1996, I have been honored to serve in many capacities, including on Art Committee, as vice-president, and on the search committee that brought Jonathan Binstock here eight years ago.

For over 30 years now I've been in love with MAG, its dedicated staff and Board. I look forward to helping lead this great institution in its ongoing evolution, holding on to the best of the best and embracing the spirit of new thinking. Miss Blum was certainly right, each one of us who has "kept going" for MAG through the years has helped create something very good.

"For over 30  
years now  
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Photograph by Frank Kapusta

# Exciting additions to the Permanent Collection

by Jessica Marten, Curator in Charge/  
Curator of American Art

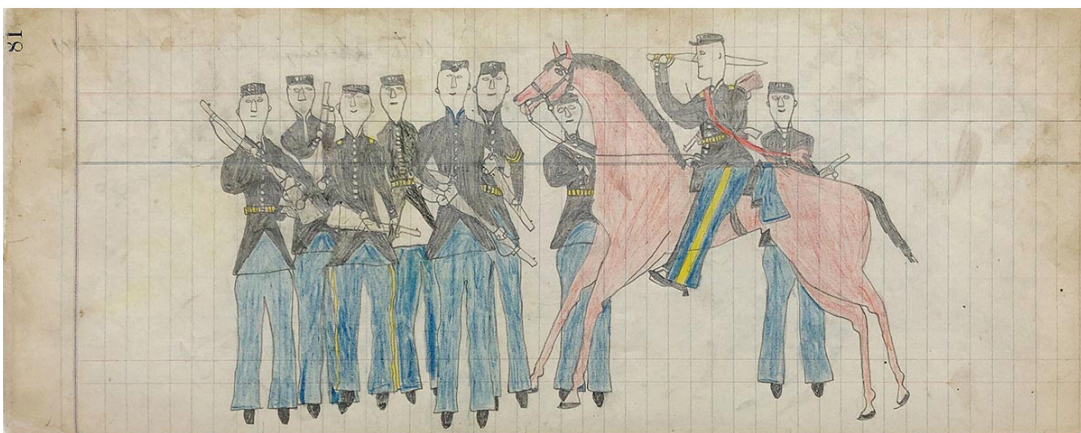
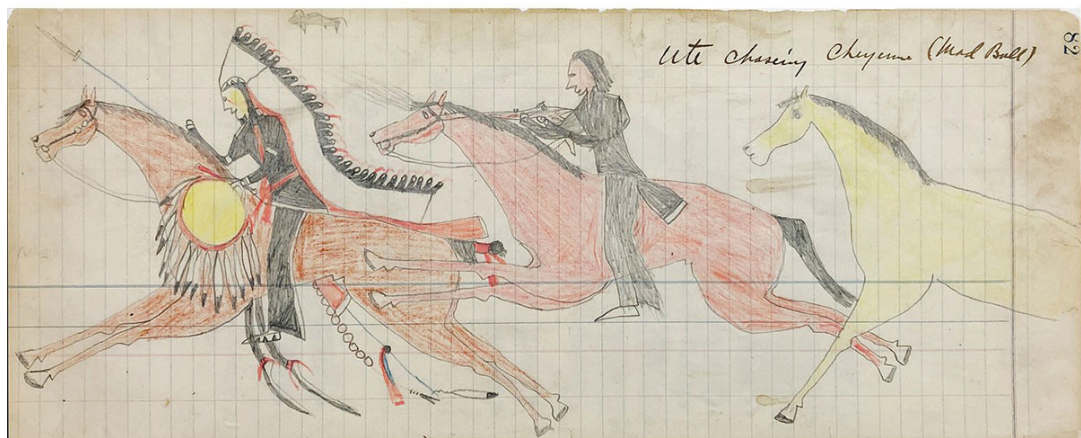
Earlier this year, MAG's Andy Warhol portrait of Jackie Kennedy was replaced on the wall in the Hawks Gallery with this small, powerful portrait painted by Rochester artist Unique Fair-Smith. Fair-Smith attended the World of Inquiry School No. 58, just down the street from the museum, and received his Master's in Fine Arts from Rochester Institute of Technology in 2021. He also teaches in MAG's Creative Workshop. The



Unique Fair-Smith (American, born 1996), *The Eclectic Man*, 2020, Oil on panel, 12 x 9 in., Marion Stratton Gould Fund, 2021.57

The artist has said that he seeks to depict his sitters on their own terms: "This portrait of my friend Jordan Whiteside-Johnson captures his dynamic nature and places him within the canon of fine art in a way that has not always been allowed to communities of color. I hope other people can see this work and feel empowered; my message is that people like Jordan are present, noteworthy, and powerful."

"I hope other people can see this work  
and feel empowered." —Unique Fair-Smith



Attributed to Mad Bull (Native American, Southern Arapaho, n.d.), *Drawings from Mad Bull Ledger Book* (recto and verso, pgs. 82/81), ca. 1880, graphite and colored pencil on lined paper, 6 x 14 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in., Virginia Jeffrey Smith Fund, 2022.35

This two-sided drawing, attributed to the Southern Arapaho artist Mad Bull, includes a dynamic image of Indigenous warriors on horseback and an illustration of white soldiers in the U.S. Infantry. Between 1860 and 1900, Indigenous artists within the Great Plains region of the United States developed a new art form known as ledger drawing. Conditions created by the United States government's systematic eradication of buffalo herds and forceful relocations of Native American tribes to reservations transformed the Plains tradition of painting on buffalo hides. As a result, Indigenous artists turned to paper often found in ledger books to create vivid drawings in colored pencils, ink, and watercolor.

## A Brief Conversation with Artist Cannupa Hanska Luger

by Jonathan P. Binstock, Mary W. and Donald R. Clark Director, and Cannupa Hanska Luger



Cannupa Hanska Luger, *Lost*, 2021. Ceramic and mixed media, 13½ x 58 x 37 in. Clara and Edwin Strassenburgh Fund, 2021.60. Courtesy the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

Guests visiting the Cameros Gallery featuring MAG's outstanding 19th-century American art collection will notice a few contemporary outliers. These curatorial interventions are designed to spark conversation and new ways of seeing and thinking about how the contemporary and the historical not only relate but, in the broadest sense, also depend upon each other for their meaning. A recent acquisition and the newest addition to the space is the monumentally scaled severed arm titled *Lost* by Cannupa Hanska Luger, who is an enrolled member of the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation and is of Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Lakota, and European descent. In a recent phone call, I asked Luger two questions about this sculpture.

**Cannupa, why is the arm severed?** The arm is severed because it is the arm of something monstrous that has been left behind and that we must navigate in the

world today. Sometimes an issue or a concern is so daunting that it seems difficult to make headway on it. You take it one step, or in this case one piece, at a time. You know the phrase, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts? I was asking what happens to the whole when you take away a part? The red triangular shapes on the arm point toward the whole, toward the center or body, but the hand no longer has its power. It can't be controlled by the center.

**What do you think about MAG's strategy of juxtaposing your sculpture with historical art to encourage conversation and new narratives about art history?** The most important thing is to complicate these

narratives, to create complexity in these narratives. That arm could be the arm of the farmer in MAG's *Portrait of a Dark-haired Man Reading the "Genesee Farmer"* [displayed nearby]. A person doing what is best for their family. The arm is part of a system that supports its values, and over time the arm becomes monstrous. The idea of working the land can become totally perverted when people are killed, decimated, forced off the land so that another person can provide for his family. Don't all of our heroes become monstrous once we celebrate them, and the system that supports their growth, to that level? It's no longer about the farmer. It's about what enables the farmer.



The Memorial Art Gallery's Creative Workshop is an art school designed to inspire students of all ages and abilities. From the walls of our museum, to the walls of our classrooms, inspiration is everywhere!

# Take classes at the CREATIVE WORKSHOP



Winter session classes begin the week of January 9, 2023

**Member registration** opens November 28th @ 10 am

**General registration** opens December 5th @ 10 am



For questions or assistance,  
call 585-276-8959  
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# Merry MAG Members' Night



**December 1, 2022 5-9 pm**

Your membership makes MAG possible. We want to show our appreciation for your support and give back. As a thank you, we invite you to join us for an evening of holiday cheer, **free to members.**

**On December 1 from 5-9 pm, MAG is offering to members:**

- ❁ Sara Silvio Trunk Show and 15% off your total purchase at THE STORE @ MAG\*
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Tickets include museum admission and access to our current exhibition, *Striking Power: Iconoclasm in Ancient Egypt*.

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## Accessibility

Wheelchairs are available in the Vanden Brul Pavilion coatroom. The auditorium is equipped with an assistive listening system made possible by the Mark and Bobbie Hargrave Hard of Hearing Fund of the Rochester Area Community Foundation, the MAG Community Access Endowment Fund, and an anonymous donor. To schedule a sign language interpreter or touch tour for the blind, or to request a braille or text calendar, contact [calendar35@mag.rochester.edu](mailto:calendar35@mag.rochester.edu) (585.276.8971). People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing may call via relay service. We also offer a special cell phone tour for the visually impaired.

## Thank you to our Sponsors

ARTiculate is underwritten by Helen H. Berkeley and the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation. The Memorial Art Gallery is supported primarily by its members and the University of Rochester. Additional funding is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, and from the National Endowment for the Arts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Half-price admission is made possible by Monroe County, with additional support from the FULL MEASURE Community Endowed Fund.**



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