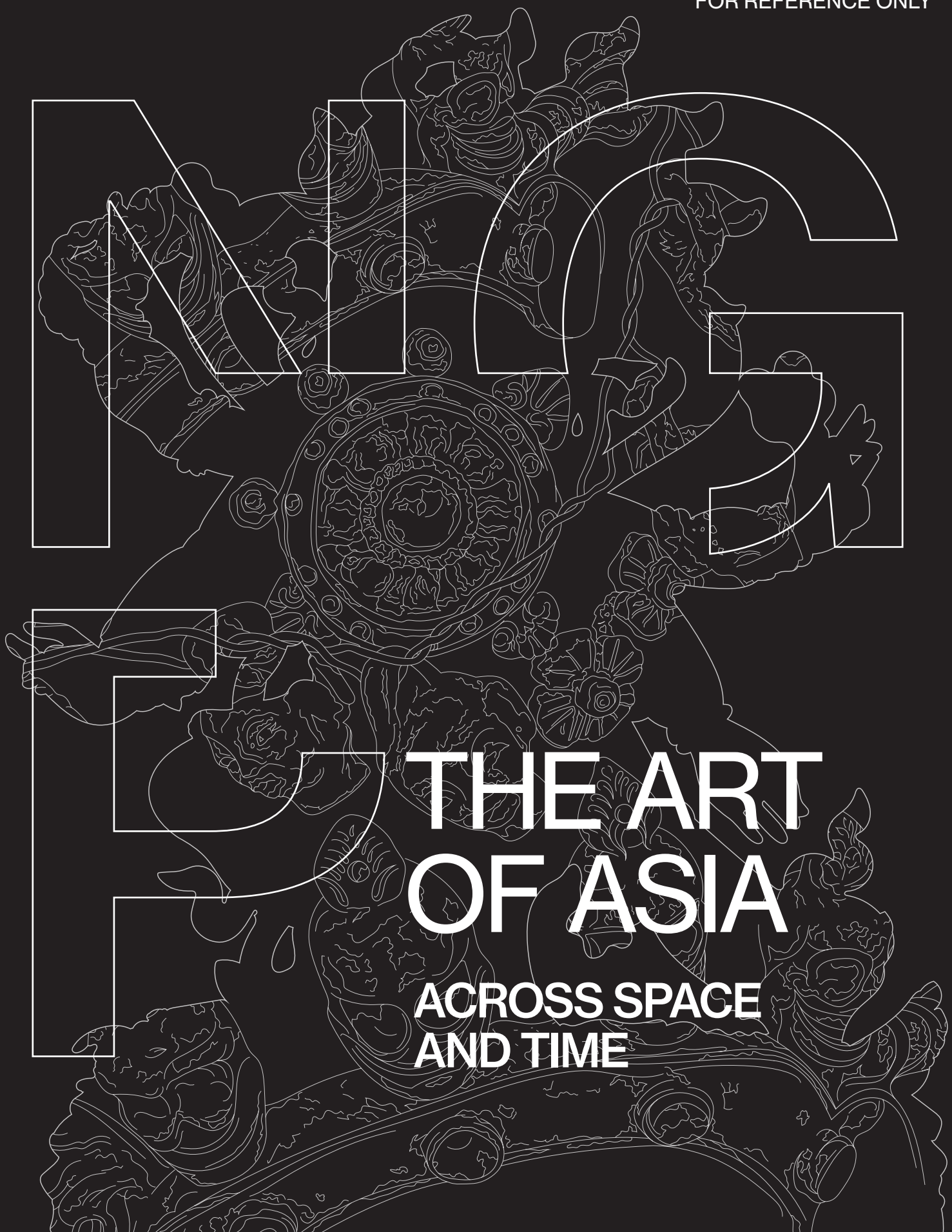
EXHIBITION GUIDE
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THE ART OF ASIA

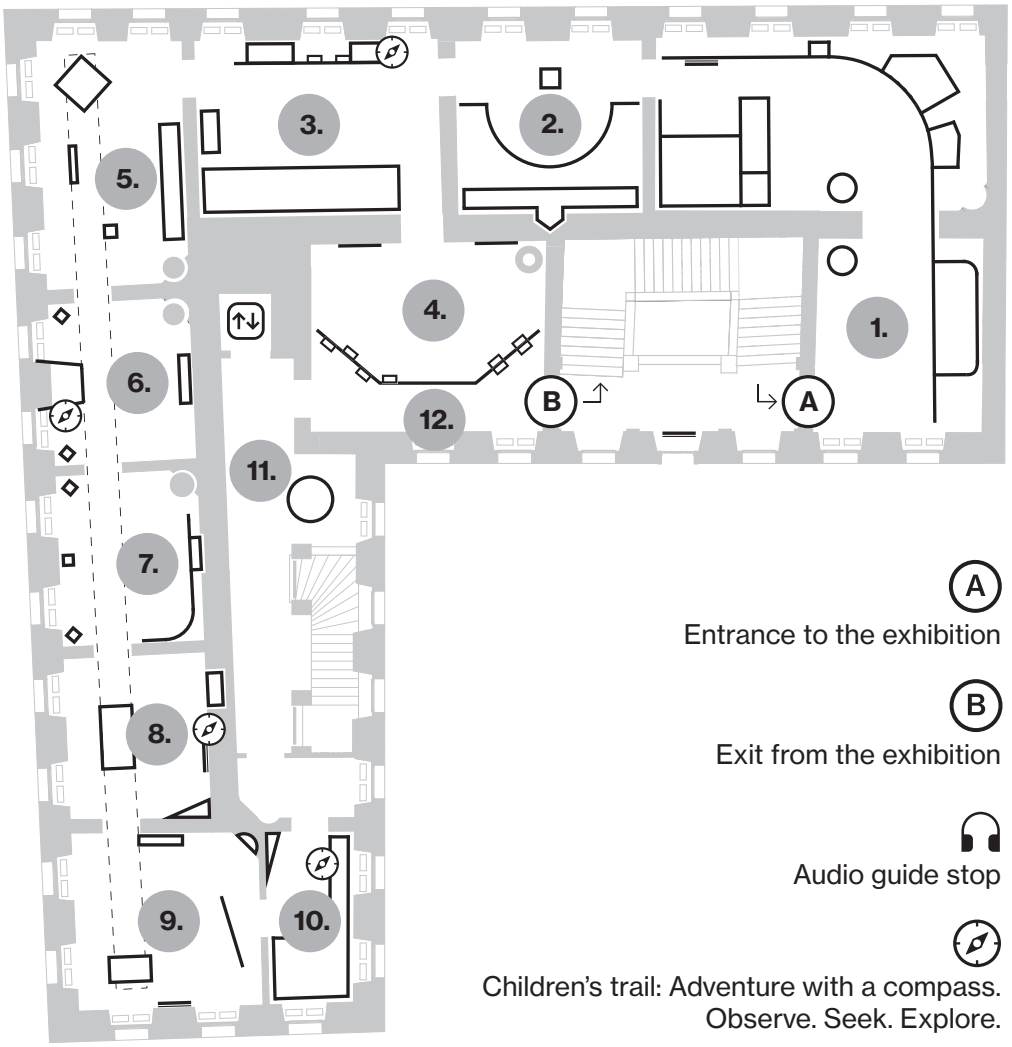
ACROSS SPACE AND TIME

Across Space and Time,
and Straight to Your Ears

Hear interesting facts about the selected works with our AUDIO GUIDE.
Just scan the QR code and follow the headphones pictograms.
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Exhibition Plan: **1st floor**



A
Entrance to the exhibition

B
Exit from the exhibition

Audio guide stop

Children's trail: Adventure with a compass.
Observe. Seek. Explore.

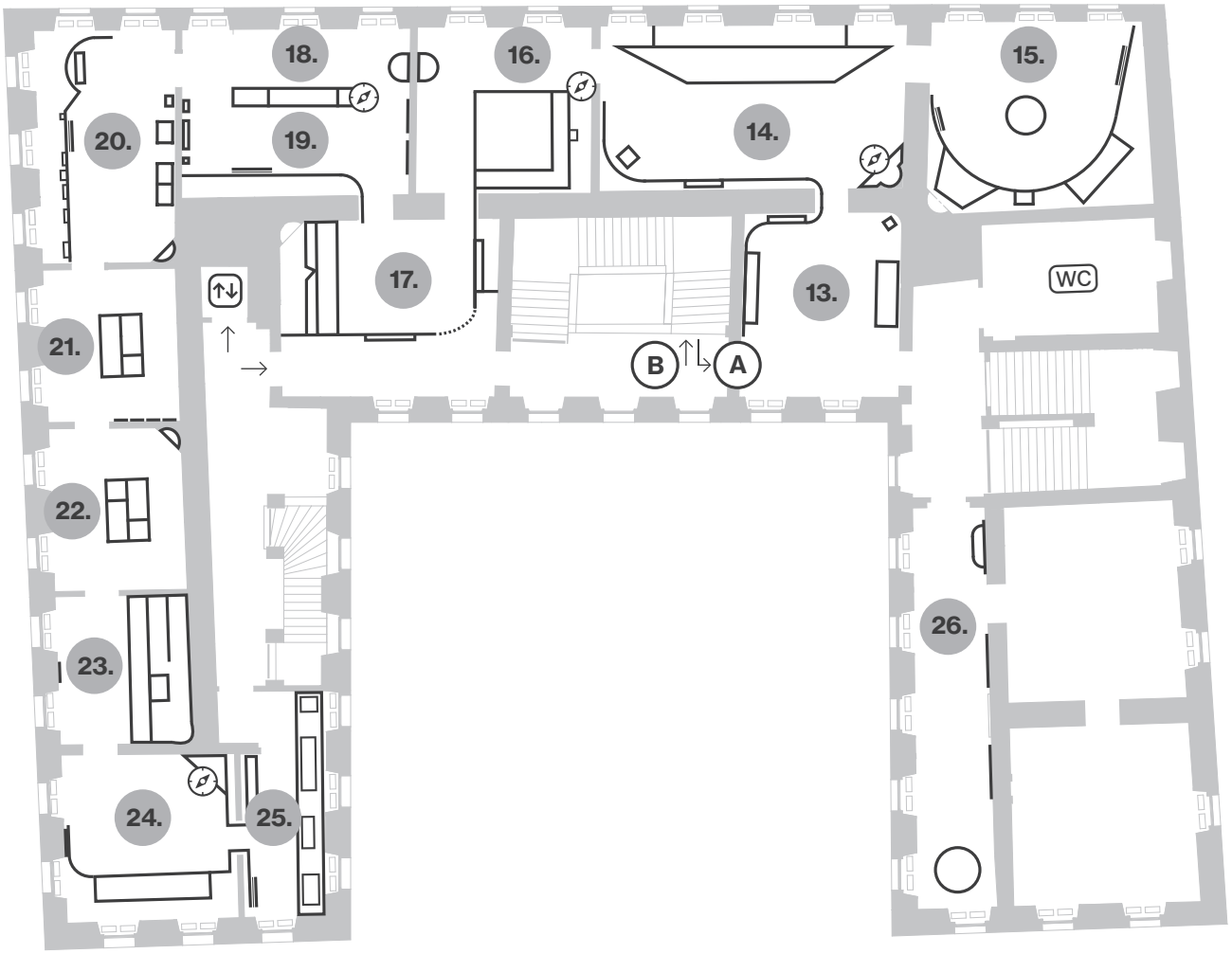
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12. From the History of the Asian Collections of the NGP — 35

Exhibition Plan: **2nd floor**

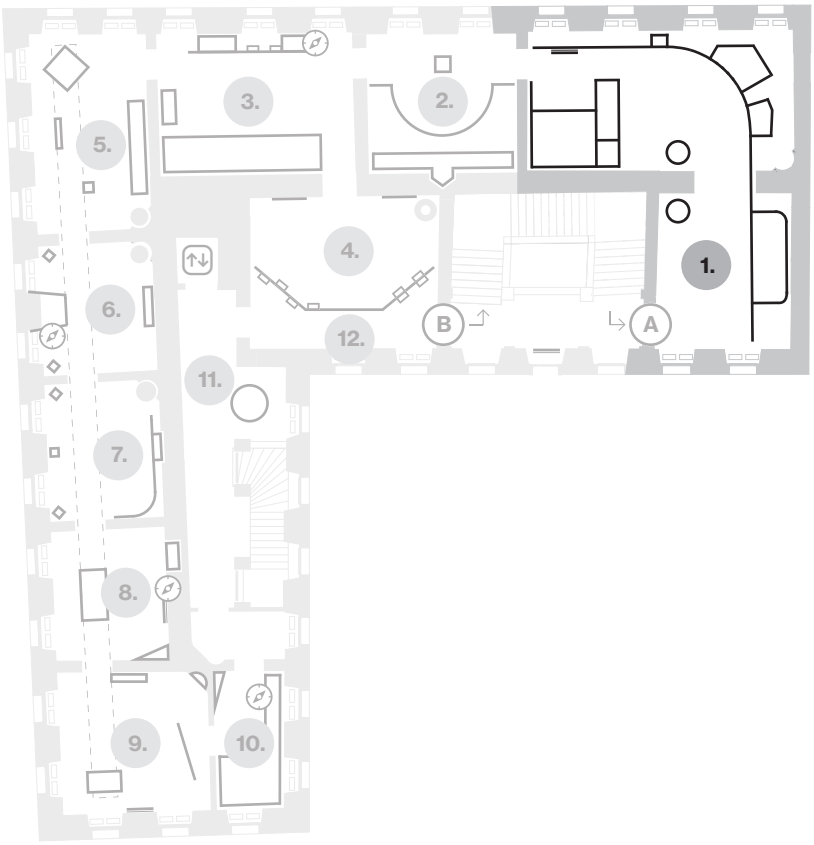


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I. The Czech Lands and the Art of Asian Cultures in the Past

1st floor

1. The Czech Lands and "the Orient"



1
Vase with Wide Grooved Neck and Vegetal Motifs in Medallions
Japan (probably Seto), 1870–1900
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the Josef Salač Collection 1961
Vu 493

2 🎧**1**
Sano Takachika (active during the Meiji era, 1868–1912)
Three Falcons on a Perch
Japan, ca 1894
bronze, wood, lacquered, patina
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975, originally Sychrov Chateau
Vp 2719

The falcon is a sublime representative of the avian kingdom in Japanese culture, and the motif of the falcon is anchored in Japanese ironmongery, painting, and wood carving. In 1893, the art dealer Hayashi Tadamasa presented the work *Twelve Bronze Falcons on a Perch* by Suzuki Chōkichi at the World's Fair in Chicago, gaining a highly positive reception. The model of perching falcons was subsequently widely copied. A sculptural group of three falcons was transferred into the property of the National Gallery in 1975 from a set of works confiscated from Sudeten Germans and housed at Sychrov Chateau after the Second World War.

3
Container with Lid with Chrysanthemum Motif
Japan (Arita), 1850–1890
porcelain, enamel, and gold painting over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, on deposit from the National Cultural Commission, Štiřín Chateau 1946
Vu 544

4
Vase with Chrysanthemum Motif
Japan (Aichi), 1890–1910
copper, cloisonné
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from M. Mayer in Prague 1896
Vu 1856

5
Josef Löwy (1834–1902)
The World's Fair in Vienna, Japanese Gallery, 1873
reproduction of a postcard photo, 8.5 × 17 cm
from the archives of the National Museum – Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures
1.93

6
Audio – Jan Neruda on the Japanese Pavilion in Vienna, 1873 (excerpt)
Jan Neruda (1834–1891)
Fejetony. Díl 2. Studie, krátké a kratší
[Feuilletons. Vol. 2. Studies, Short and Shorter]
In Prague: Publication of the bookshop of Dr Grégr and Ferd. Dattel, 1876

The writer and journalist Jan Neruda presented an account of the Vienna World's Fair in 1873 for *Národní listy* [National Newspaper] in the Czech lands. After a general introduction, he dealt extensively with the Japanese and Persian displays, concluding with observations on the curiosities of the exhibition. Neruda later published these and other feuilletons in book form.

Neruda was aware of the educational function of the fair. His engaging description is accompanied with a wealth of personal reflections, which are not free of the generalisations and romanticising projections characteristic of the time, with a perception of "the Orient" primarily as a quaint object of interest for Europeans.

7 **2**
Pair of Palace Vases with Flowers and Birds
China, 18th century
copper, cloisonné
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1951
Vu 90, Vu 91

Vases decorated using the compartment enamel technique were luxury items that stood at the entrance to palaces or temples in China. In Europe, they were sought after as a decoration for aristocratic interiors. The rich symbolism of this pair of vases includes the handles in the form of dragons, which are associated with the emperor and Chinese culture in general. The white lotus symbolises purity and the bat brings good luck. In the lower section is a pheasant representing a cultured gentleman and a flock of birds congregating around him, like ministers around a benevolent ruler.

8
Wiener Photographen-Association, Johann Justus Georg Kloess (1844–1913)
The World's Fair in Vienna, Chinese and Persian Gallery, 1873
reproduction of a postcard photo, 10.8 × 16.4 cm
Wien Museum
174005/81

9
Datong Monastery in Canton
China, 19th century
reverse oil painting, glass
NGP, purchased 1985
Vm 5905

10
Vases with Figural Motifs
China, 2nd half of 18th century – 1st half of 19th century
porcelain, *famille rose* enamel painting over the glaze
NGP, purchased 1960
Vu 339, Vu 340

11
***Ding* Incense Burner with Wooden Lid**
China, 16th–17th century
bronze, wood, stone, inlaid with gold, carving in semi-precious stone
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally the Heinrich and Martha Schicht Collection in Ústí nad Labem
Vu 404

12
Tray with Motifs of Boys in a Garden
China, ca 1800
red lacquer, carved
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983, originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vu 3802

13
Audio – Jan Neruda on the Persian Pavilion in Vienna, 1873 (excerpt)
Jan Neruda (1834–1891)
Fejetony. Díl 2. Studie, krátké a kratší
[Feuilletons. Vol. 2. Studies, Short and Shorter]
In Prague: Publication of the bookshop of Dr Grégr and Ferd. Dattel, 1876

14
Duck-Shaped Casket
Iran, 19th century
steel, smithed, overlaid with gold and silver
NGP, gift of the Office of the President of the Republic 1953
Vp 138

15
Table
Iran, 19th century
wood, carved, inlaid with bone and wood
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979, probably from the villa of Heinrich von Liebieg in Harcov
Vu 3466

16
Ewer with Basin
Turkey, 18th century
copper, hammered, chased, gilt (*tombak*), inlaid with enamels
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Theodor Graf in Vienna 1886
Vu 1691

17
Jug
Turkey (Iznik), ca 1570–1580
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Leopold Hamburger in Frankfurt am Main 1888
Vu 1545

18
Qurʾan Stand (*Rahle*)
Turkey, 19th century
wood, carved, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, bone, and wood
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979, probably from Trutnov Chateau
Vu 3462

19
Incense Burner
Iran, 19th century
brass, hammered, pierced, chased
NGP, purchased 1982
Vu 3688

20
Dagger with Scabbard
probably Caucasus, 19th century
Damascus steel, brass, wood, leather, overlaid with gold, inlaid with gemstones, mother-of-pearl, and coloured glass
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1963, originally Heřmanův Městec Chateau (from the Kinský family collection)
Vu 2398

21
Tile with Falconer and Mythical Bird *Simurgh*
Iran, 19th century
fritware, relief-moulded, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979, originally Dalovice Chateau (from the Riedel von Riedelstein family collection)
Vu 3516

22
Hilmi (probably workshop)
Bottle with Lid
Turkey (Kütahya), late 19th century
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, acquired from Josef Kořenský 1907
Vu 1571

23
Bottle
Iran, late 17th – early 18th century
earthenware, painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, purchased in London 1884
Vu 2897

24
Peacock-Shaped Incense Burner
Iran, 19th century
brass, hammered, pierced, chased, inlaid with turquoise
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1951
Vp 85

25
Oscar Kramer (1835–1892)
The World's Fair in Vienna, Egyptian Section with "Mosque", and Residential House (designed by architect František Schmoranz junior), 1873
reproduction of a photograph, 20 × 25.5 cm
Wien Museum
75608/12

26
Bottle with Lid
Kashmir, late 19th century
copper, tin-plated, hammered, chased
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1964, originally Mnichovo Hradiště Chateau (from the Waldstein family collection)
Vu 1971

27
Goblet on High Stem
Kashmir, late 19th century
brass with added lead and tin, cast, chased
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1974
Vu 2960

28
Flacon
India (Gujarat), late 19th century
silver, hammered, chased, probably cast
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963, originally Mnichovo Hradiště Chateau (from the Waldstein family collection)
Vu 1975

29
Goblet with Plant and Animal Motifs
India (Gujarat), late 19th century
silver, hammered, chased
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963, originally Mnichovo Hradiště Chateau (from the Waldstein family collection)
Vu 1973

30
Cigar Case
probably England (inspired by Indian models), late 19th century
silver, hammered, etched, chased
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, gift of M. Reimer 1907
Vu 1708

31
Water Vessel (*Lota*)
India, 2nd half of 19th century
copper, hammered, chased
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1966, originally Milíčeves Chateau
Vu 1974

32
Water Vessel (*Lota*)
India, 2nd half of 19th century
copper, hammered, chased
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1966, originally Milíčeves Chateau
Vu 3456

33
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

34
Navrátil's Restaurant "The Elephant", Jubilee Industrial Exhibition of the Chamber of Trade and Commerce at Prague Exhibition Grounds, 1908
reproduction of a postcard, 14 × 9 cm
East Bohemian Museum in Pardubice
PO-P1–004728

35
The Yokohama Japanese Tea House, Jubilee Industrial Exhibition of the Chamber of Trade and Commerce at Prague Exhibition Grounds, 1908
photo reproduction, 8.9 × 14.2 cm
from the archives of the National Museum – Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures
Ar. Hloucha 24/2–89

36
Video – Curio Shops with Artistic Goods from "the Orient"

A Curio Shop with Artistic Goods from "the Orient" 🎧 **3**

1
Candlestick
Iran, probably 19th century
brass, cast, chased
NGP, purchased 1981
Vu 3636

2
Camel Bell
Iran, probably 19th century
brass, cast, chased
NGP, purchased 1981
Vu 3637

3
Bowl
Egypt or Syria, late 19th – early 20th century
brass, hammered, chased, inlaid with
copper and silver
NGP, purchased in Soluna Prague 1982
Vu 3693

4
Case for Writing Implements (*Qalamdan*)
Iran, 19th century
steel, smithed, chased, overlaid with gold
NGP, gift of Adéla Marcusová 1965, originally
the Walter Marcus Collection
Vu 2500

5
Tray with Motif of Landscape, Flowers, and Birds
China, 18th century
brass, cloisonné
NGP, purchased 1974
Vu 2963

6
Ikebana Vase with Wide Neck and Lizard Sculpture
Japan, 19th century
bronze, patina
NGP, purchased in Tuzex Prague 1980
Vu 3683

7
Skeleton with Ritual Dagger (*Netsuke*)
Japan, 18th century
horn, carved
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques),
state enterprise 1977
Vp 2834

8
Ichigyoku (active late 18th – early 19th century)
Equestrian Statuette of "Captain" Oguri
on Chessboard (*Netsuke*)
Japan, early 19th century
ivory, carved
NGP, purchased in Tuzex Prague 1966
Vp 2354

9
Norishige (active 1830s)
Family on Mule (*Netsuke*)
Japan, 19th century
wood, carved
NGP, purchased in Tuzex Prague 1966
Vp 2356

10
Chest with Pheasant Motif (model)
Japan, 19th century
wood, brass, lacquered
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative
Arts in 1961, purchased at Dorotheum in Vienna 1909
Vu 1087

11
Isshi (active 2nd half of 19th century)
Badger – *Tanuki* (*Netsuke*)
Japan, 19th century
whale tooth, carved
NGP, purchased in Sawmill Prague 1975
Vp 2751

12
Round Incense Box with Cosmetic Motifs
Japan, 19th century
wood, lacquered, inlaid with metal and
mother-of-pearl
NGP, purchased 1972
Vu 2838

13
Four-Part Box (*Inrō*) with Fishermen Motif
Japan, 19th century
wood, lacquered, decorated with powdered gold
NGP, transferred from the State
Monuments Administration 1962
Vu 3568

14
Six-Part Box (*Inrō*) with Iris Design, Glass Button
(*Ojime*), and Ivory *Netsuke* in the Shape
of a Sumo Wrestler
Japan, 19th century
wood, lacquered, ivory, glass
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques),
state enterprise 1971
Vu 2818

15
Mussel-Shaped Fragrance Box with Inserted Tray
Japan, 1850–1880
wood, lacquered, decorated with powdered
gold and silver
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques),
state enterprise 1953
Vu 100

16
Personal Document Storage Box (*Tebako*)
Japan, 1860–1900
wood, lacquered, decorated with powdered gold
NGP, purchased 1957
Vu 173

17
Pumpkin-Shaped Basket with Metal Insert
Japan, 19th century
bamboo, metal
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased in Berlin, probably at Rex & Co. 1911
Vu 1394

18
Box with Garden Scenery
China, 19th century
red lacquer, carved
NGP, purchased 1974
Vu 3019

19
Bowl with Legendary Scenes
Myanmar (Burma), ca 1900
silver, hammered, chased
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963
Vu 1998

20
Table with Legendary Scenes
Myanmar (Burma), 1st half of 20th century
wood, carved, lacquered
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1953
Vu 103

21
Bowl with *Pardalote* Bird Motif
Spain (probably Manises, inspired by Islamic models), 18th century
earthenware, metal lustre
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1962, originally Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou Chateau (from the collection of the Bruntálští of Vrbno family)
Vu 2804

22
Chrysanthemum-Shaped Bowl with Two Lions Design
Japan, 18th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, with enamels and gold over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally the Ringhoffer family collection
Vu 744

23
Coffee Pot on Legs in the Form of Three Men and with Bird and Pine Tree Motif
Europe (imitation of Japanese model), 18th century
porcelain, enamel and gold painting
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, transferred from Jemniště Chateau
Vu 756

24
Coffee Pot with Embossed Motifs of Seven Gods of Fortune
Japan (Arita), 1720–1750
porcelain, metal spout, cobalt painting under the glaze, enamels and gold over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts in 1961, purchased at Liebermann in Vienna 1885
Vu 561

25
Large Bowl with Pomegranate Motif
Japan (Arita), 1700–1730
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975, originally Hrubý Rohozec Chateau
Vu 3043

26
Vase with Landscape and Literati Motifs
China (Jingdezhen kilns), late 17th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the Josef Morák Collection 1974, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vu 2973

27
The Buddha Dispelling Fear
Thailand, late 19th century
brass, lacquered, mirrors
NGP, purchased 1951
Vp 76

28
Monju, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom Standing on a Lion with an Aureole
Japan, 17th century
wood, polychromed, gilt
NGP, purchased 1975
Vp 2728

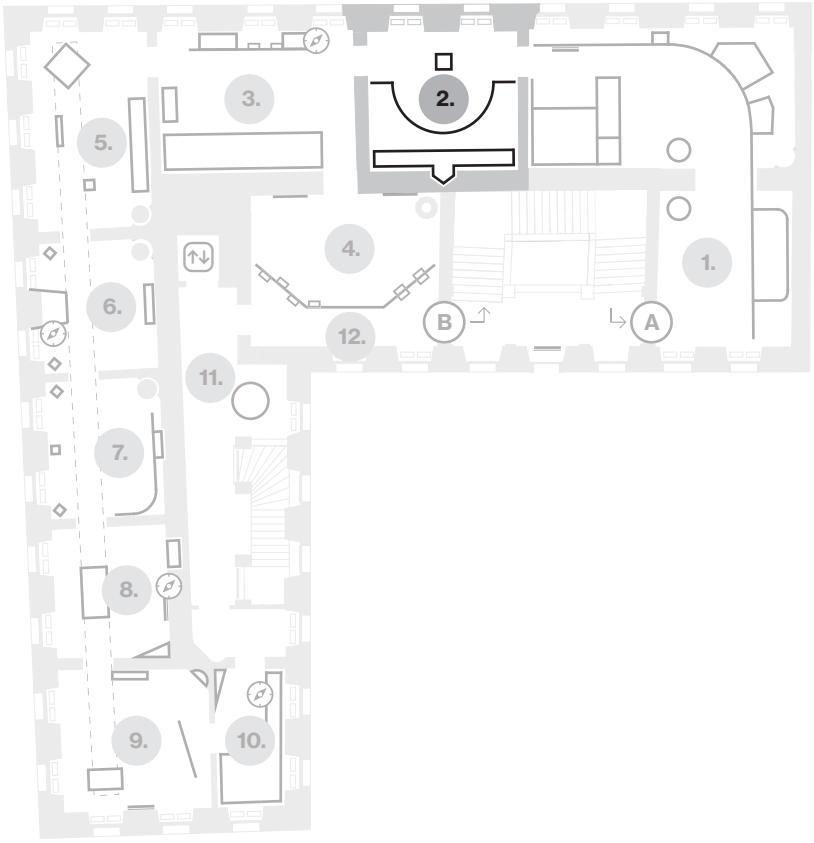
29
Ritual Dagger (*Phurba*)
Tibet, 19th–20th century
bronze, brass, enchased, hammered
NGP, purchased 1953
Vu 106

30
Mask of the Protector of the Buddhist Teachings *Dharmapala*
Nepal, 1st half of 20th century
wood, metal, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1985
Vp 3089

31
Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849)
Great Wave off Kanagawa, from the series **Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji** (facsimile)
Japan, 1831
colour woodblock print
NGP
(without inv. no.)

32, 33
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

2. “Oriental” Aristocratic Interiors 4



1
Tankard (*Maşraba*) with Mount
Turkey (Iznik), ca 1570–1580
fritware, painting under the glaze, gilt brass
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, purchased from the Vojtěch Lanna Collection 1909
Vu 2907

Turkish ceramic tankards were sought-after articles in Europe. The shaping of their bodies and handles indicates an inspiration from wooden or leather vessels used in the Balkan region. The NGP artefact also has a metal mount, the rendering of which attests to an addition to accommodate the demand of European users. Thus, it resembles similar vessels used in Europe, primarily for the consumption of wine and beer.

2
Chest with Convex Lid
Japan, 1620–1640
wood, lacquered, inlaid with mother-of-pearl
NGP, purchased 2013, originally Lobkowicz Collection
Vu 4372

This chest is an example of export – *Nanban* – lacquers that were imported from Japan to Europe by Portuguese merchants known as “southern barbarians” (*Nanban*). Lacquers produced for the European market in Kyoto workshops often copied the shapes of the supplied templates. In their decoration, traditional Japanese lacquer decoration is combined with European and Indian modes, since furniture from the Indian region of Gujarat, designated for European clients, served as a direct model. The chest is decorated with motifs of long-tailed birds, pine trees, and chrysanthemums.

3
Card Table
Europe, 19th century
wood
National Heritage Institute (Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou Chateau)
JR02616

4, 13
Two Folding Chairs
Egypt or Syria, 19th century
wood, carved, inlaid with mother-of-pearl
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979, originally Žamberk Chateau (from the Parish family collection)
Vu 3472, Vu 3473

5
Water Pot with Long Spout
Japan (Arita), 1670–1680
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1964
Vu 1957

6, 8
Pair of Flute Vases
China, 17th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963
Vu 2163, Vu 2164

7
Guanyin as the Madonna with Child
China, ca 1700
porcelain, white glaze, residues of polychromy
NGP, purchased 2019
Vp 4141

Porcelain figures of the Bodhisattva Guanyin with white glaze and delicately modelled details produced in southern Chinese Dehua kilns resembled the figure of the Madonna with Child. They established themselves on the European market in the 2nd half of the 17th century and were generally made to order for Western traders or missionaries. They can be found on mantelpieces as a part of the symmetrical layout of porcelain vessels. The traces of polychromy and gilding document the once elaborate additional decoration rendered in European ceramic workshops.

9
Jug with Figures in Landscape
Japan (Arita), 1660–1680
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased 1985
Vu 3903

10, 12
Pair of Fishbowls with Theatre Stages Design
China, 17th century
porcelain, *famille verte* enamel painting over the glaze
NGP, purchased 1972
Vu 2826, Vu 2827

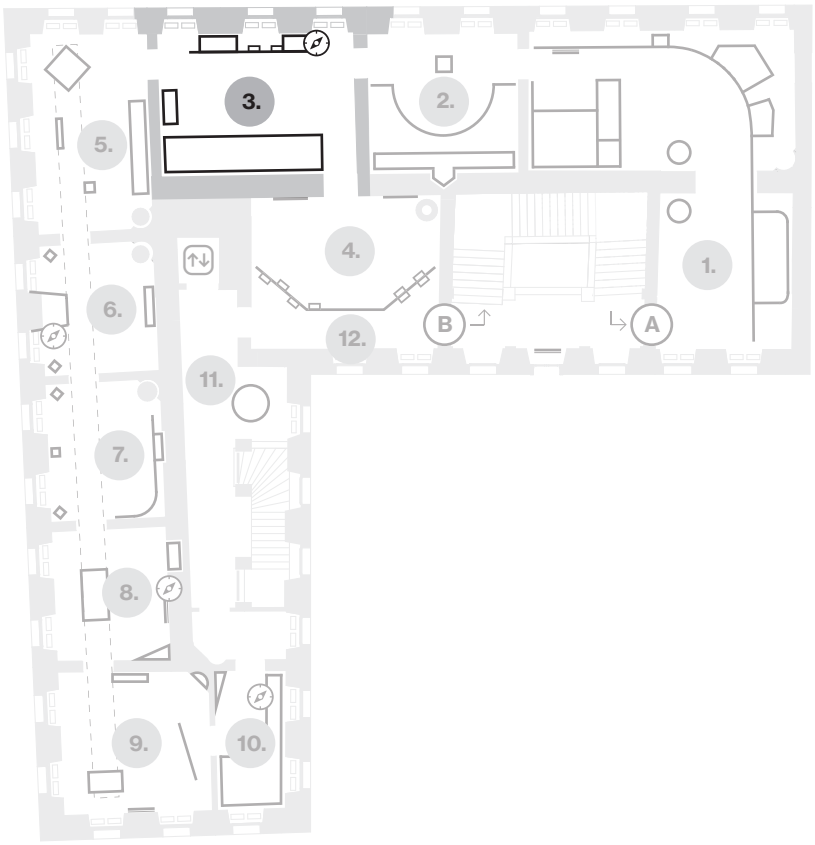
11
Container with Lid and Motifs of Phoenixes and Chinese Lions
Japan (Arita), 1720–1740
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, enamel and gold over the glaze
NGP, gift of Rainer Kreissl 2000
Vu 4075

14
Jug with Lid
Turkey, ca mid-19th century
(imitation of 16th-century model)
brass, copper alloy, electrotype casting, engraved, gilt
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, gift of Mr Fuchs 1885
Vu 1688

15
Table
Egypt or Syria, 19th century
wood, carved, inlaid with mother-of-pearl and wood
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979, originally Žamberk Chateau (from the Parish family collection)
Vu 3474

16
Wallpapers with Festoons, Birds, and Floral Design, ca 1810–1820
gouache, paper

3. A Collector's Room 5



Vojtěch Lanna (1836–1909)

Vojtěch Lanna, an industrialist and member of the Herrenhaus (House of Lords) of the Austrian Reichsrat (Imperial Council), was one of the most distinguished collectors and patrons of the arts within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy of his time. Although he was interested primarily in European art, Asian objects, especially from the Islamic region, occasionally appeared within his extensive collection, which was originally housed at the Lanna Palace in Hybernská Street in Prague. When a permanent exhibition of arts and crafts was opened in the 1870s, Lanna not only loaned objects from his collection but also co-financed the event. He subsequently became a prominent supporter and co-founder of the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague, from which several Asian items originally from Lanna's collection were transferred to the NGP.

1
Josef Václav Myslbek (1848–1922)
Freiherr Vojtěch Lanna, 1909
cast bronze
NGP, from the Picture Gallery of the Society of Patriotic Friends of the Arts 1910
P 1526

2
Dish (*Tabak*) with Floral Design
Turkey (Iznik), ca 1600
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, gift of Vojtěch Lanna 1886
Vu 1548

Bedřich Hrozný (1879–1952)

Bedřich Hrozný, an ancient oriental philologist and archaeologist, made a fundamental contribution to deciphering the Hittite language, the oldest attested Indo-European language. Between 1924 and 1925, he conducted an archaeological survey in Syria. In 1925, he then directed works on the site of Kültepe

in Turkey, where he discovered an extensive set of ancient Assyrian clay tablets, inscribed with cuneiform script.

Thanks to his professional eminence, diplomacy, and personal friendships, Hrozný acquired a set of approximately eleven hundred archaeological objects from these expeditions. In 1961, it was transferred from Charles University to the collections of the NGP. Part of this collection is exhibited in the Museum of Bedřich Hrozný in Lysá nad Labem, the archaeologist's birthplace.

Hrozný also contributed to the establishment of the Czechoslovak Oriental Institute.

J. F. Langhans Studio
Bedřich Hrozný as the Chancellor of Charles University in Prague, 1939
reproduction of a photograph, 26 × 34 cm (including mount)
Polabské Museum – Museum of Bedřich Hrozný
(without inv. no.)

3
Flat Flask
Syria, ca 10th–11th century
fired clay
NGP, transferred from the Faculty of Arts, Charles University 1961, found during archaeological surveys conducted by Bedřich Hrozný in Tell Erfad 1924–1925
Vp 2273

Alois Musil (1868–1944)

Alois Musil was an orientalist, biblical scholar, and writer originally from the Moravian village of Rychtářov, who was sometimes nicknamed the Czech Lawrence of Arabia. In 1898, during his expedition through the Jordanian desert with the Bedouins, he discovered the Islamic palace of Qusayr ʿAmra, built in the first half of the 8th century. The interior of the palace baths was decorated with figural frescoes, which was a groundbreaking discovery since it cast into doubt the previously entrenched European notions that Islamic art did not depict living beings.

Musil was employed at the University of Vienna and later at Charles University in Prague, and he contributed to the establishment of the Czechoslovak Oriental Institute. He was also the author of orientalist-based travelogues and adventure stories for young readers.

Alois Musil as Chief of the Beni Sakhr Tribe, 1901
In: Alois Musil, *Po prvé v poušti* [First Time in Desert], Prague, Novina, 1932, p. [2].

4
Audio – Archive Recordings of Lectures by Alois Musil

A. In the City of the Pious King (excerpt)
English translation of the original Czech recording from 15 November 1935
Czech Radio Archive
sign. CRA09563/04

B. Good and Bad Signs in the Desert (excerpt)
English translation of the original Czech recording from 22 December 1935
Czech Radio Archive
sign. CRA09563/03

Between 1933 and 1937, Alois Musil prepared and personally recorded a series of eight lectures for Czechoslovak Radio. In these he authentically described his observations and experiences from his travels around the Middle East and life among the Bedouins. For example, he engagingly recounted his adventurous survey of the ruins of the ancient city of Abde (Avdat) in the desert of present-day Israel. He also described the remarkable customs and superstitions of the Arab nomads.

Joe Hloucha (1881–1957)

Joe Hloucha first visited Japan in 1906, funded by his family inheritance and the success of his first literary *japonaiserie*, *Sakura ve vichřici* [Sakura in the Windstorm]. From his travels through China to Japan (where he visited for a second time twenty years later) he acquired a collection of Japanese woodblock prints, Buddhist sculptures, and craft artefacts, such as a Chinese type chest *karabitsu*. His enthusiasm for collecting and his interest in Japanese culture was also markedly manifested in the interiors where he resided. Around the turn of 1930, he organised a spectacular display of Asian, African, and Central American art in the Trade Fair Palace. Foremost among his collections now housed in the NGP is an impressive set of *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints.

Joe Hloucha in His Apartment in Vladislavova Street in Prague, 1940s
reproduction of a photograph, 14.9 × 10 cm
from the archives of the National Museum – Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures
ar. Hl. 24/1-30

5, 6, 7
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

8
Akasaka school
Sword Guard (*Tsuba*) with Flying Geese and Wild Grass Design
Japan, 18th century
iron, pierced
NGP, purchased 1996, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vu 4002

9
Clover Leaf-Shaped (*Mokkō*) Sword Guard (*Tsuba*) with Tea Ceremony Vessel Design
Japan, 18th–19th century
iron, coloured metal inlays in relief
NGP, purchased 1996, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vu 4004

10
Clover Leaf-Shaped (*Mokkō*) Sword Guard (*Tsuba*) with Waterfowl Motif
Japan (probably Mito), 18th–19th century
iron, gold, coloured metals, chased
NGP, purchased 1996, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vu 4003

11
Shōami school
Clover Leaf-Shaped (*Mokkō*) Sword Guard (*Tsuba*) with Blossoming Plum Tree Motif
Japan, 18th–19th century
iron, brass, coloured metal inlays in relief
NGP, purchased 1996, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vu 4005

Vojtěch Chytil (1896–1936)

Vojtěch Chytil studied at the Prague Academy of Fine Arts, after which he worked in the diplomatic services in China and taught Western painting techniques at the Beijing Academy of Fine Arts. It was here that he became acquainted with many celebrated modern painters and amassed a collection of their works, as well as sets of Tibetan, Japanese, and old Chinese art. Between 1928 and 1938, twenty sales exhibitions of Chytil's collection were held in European cultural centres. The objects he valued most remained within the ownership of his family until the beginning of the 1980s, when the entire collection, including a set of modern Chinese paintings unique worldwide, was bequeathed to the NGP by Chytil's wife Nina.

Vojtěch Chytil with His Chinese Students, Municipal House in Prague, 1929
reproduction of a photograph, 12 × 16 cm
private collection

12
Cabinet
China, 19th century
wood, carved, lacquered
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983, originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vu 3815

13
Snuff Bottles
China, 18th–19th century
porcelain, glass, coral, stone, painted with brown, red, cobalt, and enamels
NGP, purchased 1967, 1975 and 1979, from estate 1983 and 1991, originally the Vojtěch Chytil and Martha Dodd-Stern Collections
Vu 2663, Vu 3164–Vu 3166, Vu 3172, Vu 3173, Vu 3178, Vu 3182, Vu 3188, Vu 3591, Vu 3792, Vu 3793, Vu 3822, Vu 3975, Vu 3979–Vu 3982

14
Vase in Shape of a Pilgrim's Flask
China, 18th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983, originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vu 3795

15
Style of Ogata Kōrin
Box for Documents (*Bunko*) with Leaves and *Shintō* Gate Design
Japan, 1860–1880
wood, lacquered, powdered gold in high relief
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vu 488

16
Chest with the Mōri Family Crest
Japan, 1st half of 19th century
lacquered wood, canvas, copper
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vu 470

This chest in Chinese style, *karabitsu* in Japanese, was produced by applying lacquer layers onto pressed canvas. The arrowhead as the main motif of the *mon* emblem of the Mōri family from Aki province suggests that the chest may have belonged to this family. However, from the 18th century onwards, *mons* were commonly used also as purely decorative

items. Here they are lined with vegetal arabesque. The chest may have had various uses, from an item of furniture to a vessel for storing scrolls or clothing, to a treasure chest in Buddhist monasteries and *Shintō* shrines.

17, 19
Pair of Standing Soldiers
China, ca 700
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1931, originally
the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vp 90, Vp 91

18
Tomb Guardian
China, 1st half of 8th century
earthenware, tricolour glaze
NGP, purchased 1931, originally
the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vp 96

Josef Martínek (1888–1976)

Josef Martínek worked in the Chinese Maritime Customs Service, where he had good contacts on the local art market. During the 1920s, auctions of his collection took place in London. In the 1930s, he exhibited his collection in Czechoslovakia, where he also opened several outlets specialising in the direct import of artistic objects from China and Japan. After the Communist Party took power in February 1948, he emigrated first to Great Britain and later to Canada. The impressive collection of Asian art that he amassed in Prague remained within the private ownership of Martínek's heirs, from whom a series of works of Chinese and Tibetan art were subsequently purchased for the collection of the NGP.

Josef Martínek in His Shop in the Mánes Building in Prague, 1930s
reproduction of a photograph, 16 × 12 cm
private collection

20
Standing Man
China, 8th century
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, purchased 2008, originally
the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 4135

21
Standing Lady
China, 8th century
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, purchased 2008, originally
the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 4130

22
***Kabuki* Actor Mask**
Japan, 19th century
lacquered wood, glass, horsehair
NGP, purchased 1974
Vp 2672

23
Seated Buddha Amida
Japan, 18th century
wood, lacquered, gilt, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1997, originally
the Bedřich Forman Collection
Vp 3192

24
Crowned Buddha
China, 14th–15th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983,
originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vp 2965

25
The Bodhisattva Weituo
China, 18th–19th century
bronze
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983, originally
the Ladislav Weber and Vojtěch Chytil Collections
Vp 3013

26
Decorative Table with Circular Top
China, 19th century
wood, carved, lacquered, marble
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983,
originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vu 3816

27
Green Tara
Tibet, 18th century
bronze with high copper content,
inlaid with gold and silver
NGP, purchased 1968, originally
the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 2455

28
Buddha Amitayus
Tibet, 1st half of 18th century
brass, gilt
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1967
Vp 2688

29
Decorative Table with Rectangular Top
China, 19th century
wood, carved, lacquered, marble
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983, originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vu 3817

30
František Drtikol (1883–1961)
Božena Hlouchová in a Chinese Robe (facsimile), 1920s–1930s
NGP, photograph originally from the Božena Hlouchová Collection
Vx 786 (original photograph Vm 7240)

31, 32
Beauty with a Book and Beauty with a Fan
China, late 19th – early 20th century
reverse oil painting, glass
NGP, purchased 1981, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vm 5537, Vm 5536

Oil painting came to China from the West, and from the 18th century onwards artists in coastal regions also painted on mirrors or glass surfaces. The painting was applied from the inner side using bright, vivid colours unlike the more sober ink painting. Elegant scenes were produced, the subject of which was female beauties, foreigners, or Christian motifs. In the 19th and 20th centuries, European collectors sought out similar paintings, and a series of workshops specialising in production for export sprang up in China.

33
Helmet (*Kola-ye Khud*) with Horns
Iran, 19th century
steel, chased, overlaid with gold and silver
NGP, gift of Věra Kubíčková-Stivínová 1998
Vu 4014

This helmet with horns is a reference to Rostam, the legendary pre-Islamic ruler of Iran, and his mythical victory over the ruler of the demons (*div*s). Similar helmets were originally used in military parades, when Rostam's heroism was meant to be transferred to the wearer. In the 19th century, they became a popular export article for decorating European interiors. They were frequently produced in an archaic style of the period of the Persian Safavid dynasty (1501–1736), which was viewed as a historical apex.

34
Mace (*Gorz*) with Head of Demon
Iran, 1st half of 19th century
steel, hammered, chased, overlaid with gold
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased 1889
Vu 1669

35
Mace with Bull's Head (*Gorz-e Gavsar*)
Iran, 1st half of 19th century
steel, hammered, chased, overlaid with gold
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased 1886
Vu 1668

36
Double-Sided Axe
Iran, 1st half of 19th century
steel, hammered, chased, overlaid with gold
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased 1886
Vu 1666

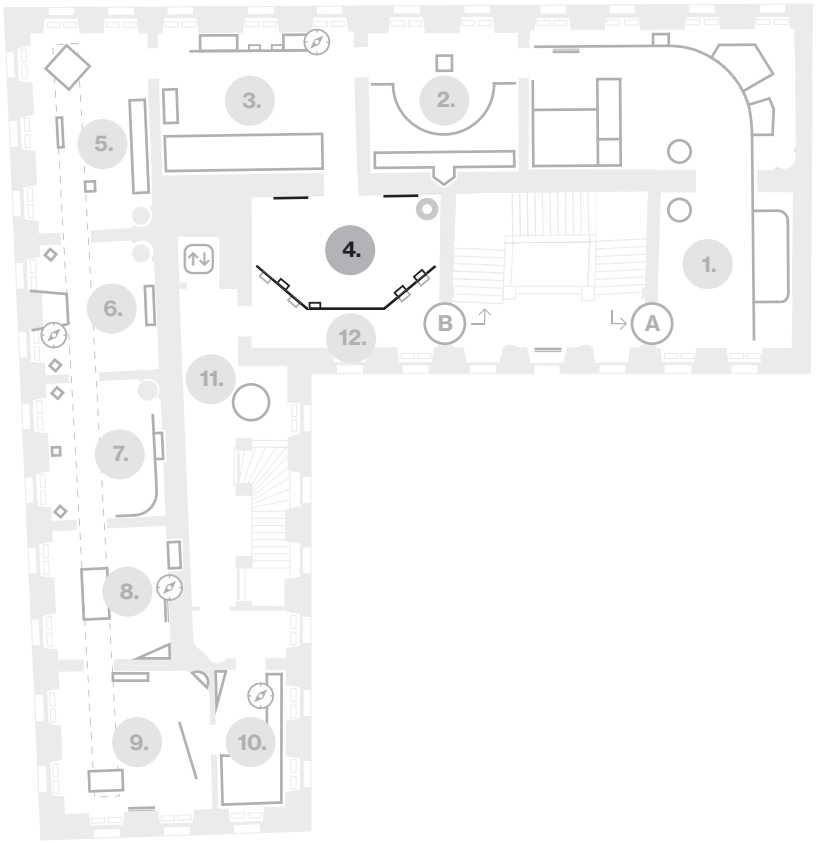
37
Axe (*Tabar*)
Iran, 19th century
steel, hammered, chased, overlaid with gold
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, gift of Leon Bondy 1911, originally the collection of the Imperial and Royal Major General Emil von Hueber
Vu 1665

38
Ceremonial Shield (*Separ*) with Hunting Scenes
Iran, 19th century
steel, brass, hammered, chased, overlaid with gold and silver
NGP, purchased in Antikva, state enterprise 1951
Vu 5

39
Pistol with Flintlock
Balkans, 1st half of 19th century
steel, wood, silver, hammered, chased, filigree
Moravian Gallery in Brno
U 26152

40
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

4. Asian Inspirations in Czech Visual Art



1, 2
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

3
Ferdinand Maxmilián Brokoff (1688–1731)
Kneeling Blackamoors, ca 1720
wood, carved, polychromed
NGP, acquired 1924, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
P 207, P 208

4 🎧 **6**
Jaroslav Čermák (1830–1878)
Montenegrin Women in a Harem, 1877
oil, wood
NGP, purchased 1898
O 4628

Czech *turquerie* is characterised by an intertwining of the ideas of Orientalism with pan-Slavism in the theme of the "oppression of the Southern Slavic brothers" by the Ottoman Turks. An example of this is provided by a series of paintings by Jaroslav Čermák on the theme of Montenegro, inspired by his travels to the Balkans in 1858 and again during 1862–1863. Čermák made use of established orientalist themes such as images of harems, which in a visually captivating rendering he imprecisely presents only as places of "subjugation" of Christian slave girls. In reality, they were complex institutions with several functions, including education.

5
Vojtěch Bartoněk (1859–1908)
Study of Oriental Woman with Harp, 1890
oil, canvas
NGP, gift of the author's daughter Eliška Bartoňková 1979
O 14404

6
Hanging Lamp
Nový Bor (inspired by Islamic models), 1893–1900
smoked glass, shaped in glassworks, enamel and gold painting
Glass Museum Nový Bor
NB 4813

In its shaping and decoration, this glass hanging lamp imitates Islamic models hung in mosques, where the light from the lamp symbolises the presence of God, analogously with the Christian context. It documents inspiration by Middle Eastern art objects in the glass-making industry within the Czech lands.

7
Vojtěch Hynais (1854–1925)
Portrait of Mrs Hrušová with Her Daughters, 1897
oil, canvas
NGP, from the estate of Filipina Hrušová 1947
O 2690

The painting presents a portrait of the family of the provincial lawyer in Pardubice, Leopold Hruša, in an interior decorated with a Japanese screen with silk-embroidered depictions on a theme of flowers and birds, and a porcelain vase on the fireplace mantel. These accessories illustrate the contemporary penchant for Japanese goods, which were imported to Europe in the second half of the 19th century and became a fashionable decoration of urban salons.

8
Otto Gutfreund (1889–1927)
Japanese Woman – 3rd draft
(for Prague's House of Silk), 1922
plaster
NGP, from the estate of the artist 1962
P 4924

Inscription written by the Japanese woman on the silk parcel: "Mode de Lyon – Weiss – Prague – Brno".

9
Tavík František Šimon (1877–1942)
City Street in Japan, from the series
Sketches from the Orient, 1926
oil, cardboard
NGP, acquired by transfer in 1961, originally property of the artist's son Ivan Šimon
O 8898

10
Ludvík Kuba (1864–1956)
Self-Portrait with Chinese Camel, 1941
oil, canvas
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti
(Antiques), state enterprise 1974
O 13264

11
Camel
China, 1st half of 8th century
earthenware, tricolour glaze
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983,
originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vp 2989

12
Zdeněk Sklenář (1910–1986)
Chinese Characters, 1963
oil, canvas
NGP, purchased 1963
O 9947

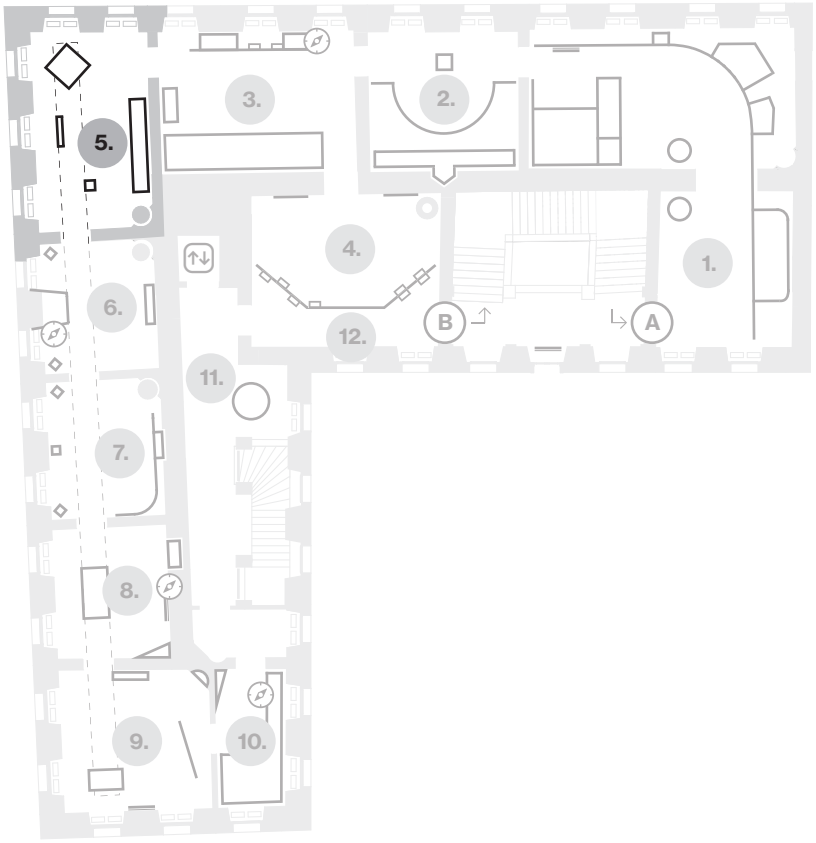
Zdeněk Sklenář was one of the most distinguished Czech painters, graphic artists, and book illustrators of the 20th century. He befriended Lubor Hájek, the head of the Department of Oriental Art at the NGP, and in 1955 he spent three months in China. Chinese art and literature strongly attracted Sklenář, and we can find their impact in some of his paintings as well as book illustrations to accompany translations of Chinese literary works. *Chinese Characters* is not a superficial inspiration but rather an abstract experiment with lines, shapes, and layering of surfaces and colours, only remotely referring to the structures of Chinese script.

13
Emil Filla (1882–1953)
Woman with Carpet, 1921
oil, canvas
NGP, purchased 2004
O 18156

Emil Filla amassed an extensive art collection, focusing from the second half of the 1920s on East Asian and African art, which represented one of the sources of inspiration for his work. However, as early as in 1921, he painted the work *Woman with Carpet*, in which he depicted the pattern of a Turkish tapestry known as a *kilim* from his possessions. Today this *kilim* is in the collection of the Benedikt Rejt Gallery in Louny.

II. Collections of Asian and Islamic Art Today

5. The Cult of the Ancestors in China 🎧7



Model of Ancient Altar with Ceremonial Bronze Vessels

Food and drinks were offered in bronze vessels during rituals to revere deceased ancestors in China. The number of vessels reflected the social status of their owner, and the set was laid out on the ground or placed on an altar. Under the Shang dynasty (ca 1250–1046 BCE), *jue* and *gu* goblets for alcohol were of essential significance. Under the Zhou dynasty (1045–256 BCE), the most prestigious items included *ding* cauldrons, which were used for cooking and serving meat broths, and *gui* bowls for serving steamed millet.

Above – vessels for alcoholic beverages:

1
***Zun* Goblet**
China, 15th–14th century BCE
bronze
NGP, acquired as a gift 1958
Vp 375

2
***You* Wine Container**
China, 970–920 BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1952
Vp 20

3
***Gu* Goblet**
China, 1st half of 12th century BCE
bronze
NGP, acquired by transfer 1961
Vp 708

4
***Jue* Goblet**
China, 13th–12th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1979
Vp 2909

Below – vessels for food:

5
***Li* Tripod**
China, 9th–8th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1951
Vp 66

6
***Ding* Tripod**
China, 2nd half of 11th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1978
Vp 2885

7
***Gui* Bowl**
China, 1st half of 12th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1951
Vp 29

8
***Ding* Tripod**
China, 1150–1080 BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1952
Vp 3138

9
***Pou* Vessel**
China, 13th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1952
Vp 30

10
Mirror "of the Seven Planets"
China, 291
bronze
NGP, purchased 1958, originally
the Rudolf Hejný Collection
Vp 421

11
Mirror with Four Sea Animals
China, 3rd–5th century
bronze, tin
NGP, acquired by transfer 1961,
originally the Emil Filla Collection
Vp 717

12
Mirror with Grapes and Seven Lions
China, 1st half of 7th–8th century
bronze
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983,
originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vp 2963

13
Mirror with Motif of Clover Leaves
China, 5th–4th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic
of China 1952
Vp 19

14
Mirror with Geometric Decoration
China, 11th–10th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1965
Vp 1796

15
Mirror
China, early 1st century
bronze
NGP, gift of the government of the People's
Republic of China 1957
Vp 382

16
Mirror with Motif of Birds
China, 5th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased in the People's
Republic of China 1952
Vp 18

17
Garment Buckle
China, 5th–4th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques),
state enterprise 1967
Vp 2416

18
Garment Buckle
China, 5th–4th century BCE
bronze
NGP, gift of the government of the People's
Republic of China 1957
Vp 383

19
Garment Buckle
China, 4th–3rd century BCE
bronze
NGP, gift of the government of the People's Republic of China 1957
Vp 384

20
Garment Buckle
China, ca 400 BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1967
Vp 2414

21
Garment Buckle
China, 1st half of 5th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1984
Vp 3044

22
Tiger
China, ca 1200 BCE
jade, carved
NGP, purchased 1968, originally the Zdeněk Braunschläger Collection
Vp 2440

Jade is one of the hardest minerals, and it was imported to the territory of China from the oldest times from relatively remote regions. It was a luxury material for ceremonial objects of great symbolic significance, since it was believed that placing jade in a tomb helped preserve the body of the deceased in an untarnished state. It was also used to produce small talismans decorated with fine ornaments, which later became popular among collectors.

23
Cicada
China, 10th–9th century BCE
jade
NGP, purchased 1968
Vp 2441

24
Disc (*Bi*) with Coral on String
China, ca 3rd century BCE
glass
NGP, purchased 1968
Vp 2443

25
Disc (*Bi*)
China, ca 4th century BCE
jade
NGP, gift of the government of the People's Republic of China 1957
Vp 390

26
Bell
China, ca 2nd half of 6th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1960, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 687

27
Bell
China, ca 2nd half of 10th century BCE
bronze
NGP, purchased 1958
Vp 451

28
Container
China, ca 22nd–20th century BCE
earthenware
NGP, gift of the government of the People's Republic of China 1957
Vp 416

29
Container
China, 23rd–21st century BCE
earthenware
NGP, purchased 1972, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 2611

30
Wild Duck-Shaped Vessel
China, 4th century BCE
fired clay
NGP, purchased 1972, originally the Adolf Hoffmeister and Josef Martínek Collections
Vp 2572

31
Duck-Shaped Vessel
China, 4th–3rd century BCE
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1979
Vp 2908

32
Vessel with Figural Decoration
China, 2nd–1st century BCE
earthenware
NGP, transferred 1961, originally the Emil Filla and Josef Martínek Collections
Vp 739

33
Container with Green Incandescent Glaze
China, ca 1st century
earthenware, lead glaze
NGP, gift of the government of the People's Republic of China 1957
Vp 419

34
Pair of Dancers
China, ca 100 BCE
earthenware
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1952
Vp 27, Vp 41

35
Equestrienne
China, 2nd half of 7th century
earthenware, residues of polychromy
NGP, purchased 1973, originally the Vojtěch Chytil and Jakub Obrovský Collections
Vp 2634

36
Standing Lady
China, 7th century
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975
Vp 2708

37
Six Lamenting Officials
China, 1st–2nd century
earthenware
NGP, purchased 1962, originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vp 1092–Vp 1097

38
Pair of Peasants
China, ca 150 BCE
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1952
Vp 12, Vp 13

39
Standing Lady
China, 2nd century BCE
wood, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, residues of polychromy
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1957
Vp 349

Funeral statuettes represented an escort that was meant to accompany the deceased in their existence in the afterlife. As a result, a large proportion of them were of court ladies, servants, or musicians. Statuettes from older times were mostly simple and schematic. They were produced from earthenware pressed into pair moulds and decorated after firing. In exceptional cases more luxurious wooden figurines have been preserved. The face of the lady is elegantly symmetrical, and remainders of the decoration of inlaid mother-of-pearl can be found on her chest. The clothing thus reflects her higher social status.

40
Heavenly King as Tomb Guardian
China, ca 700
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1952
Vp 14

41
Cart Pulled by Buffalo
China, 7th–8th century
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, acquired as a gift 1961, originally the Emil Filla Collection
Vp 740

42
Camel with Load
China, 1st half of 6th century
earthenware
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983, originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vp 2973

43
Military Official
China, ca 700
earthenware, tricolour glaze
NGP, from estate 1983, originally the Ladislav Weber and Vojtěch Chytil Collections
Vp 3007

44
Standing Foreigner with Raised Arm
China, 7th–8th century
earthenware, tricolour glaze
NGP, purchased 2008, originally
the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 4136

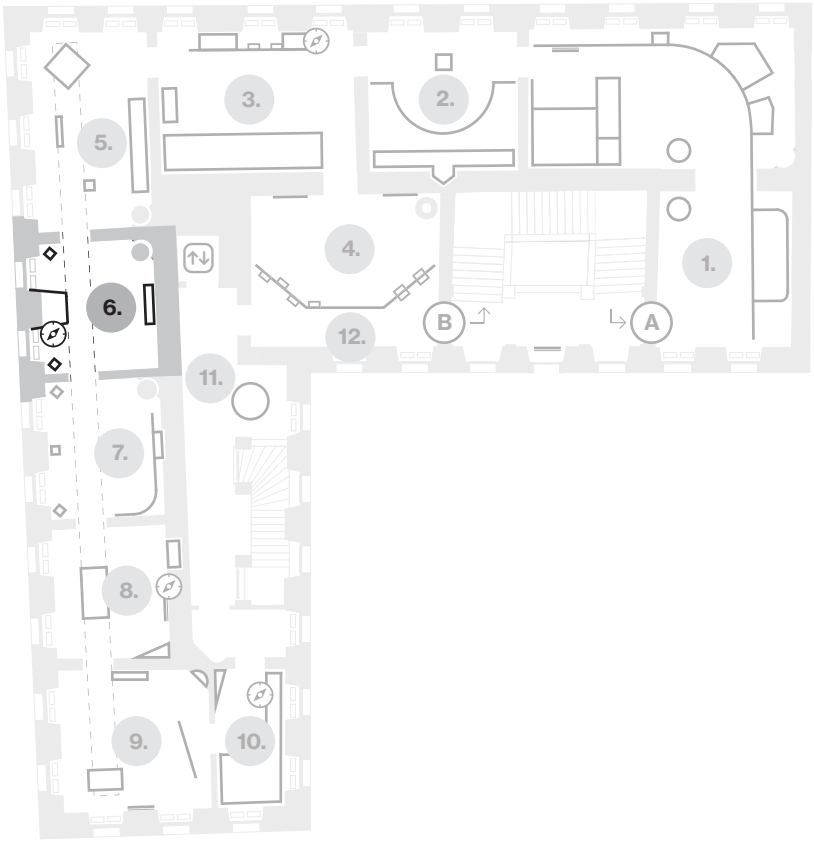
45
Protective Animal – Tomb Guardian
China, 1st half of 8th century
earthenware, tricolour glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques),
state enterprise 1979
Vp 2889

46
Standing Camel
China, 7th–8th century
earthenware, tricolour glaze
NGP, purchased 2008, originally
the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 4138

47
Thoroughbred Horse
China, Tang dynasty (618–907)
earthenware, polychromed, tricolour glaze
NGP, purchased 2008, originally
the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 4128

Later tomb sculptures depict people and animals in realistic proportions, and their expensive decoration reflects the status and prestige of their owner. In the best-known pieces, tricolour glaze is used masterfully to highlight the clothing made of luxury fabrics or the beautiful proportions of the animal, including its elaborate accoutrements. The Tang aristocracy originated in part from western, non-Chinese regions, and therefore appreciated thoroughbred horses, with which they organised elegant entertainment and tournaments.

6. Chinese Ritual Art



1
Zhenwu, the Perfected Warrior
China, 14th–15th century
bronze
NGP, gift of the Office of the President of the Republic 1953, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 141

2 🎧**8**
Set of Six Tiles with Musicians and Dancer Design
China, 12th–13th century
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1974, originally the Hana and Alena Vlčková and Josef Martínek Collections
Vp 2665–Vp 2670

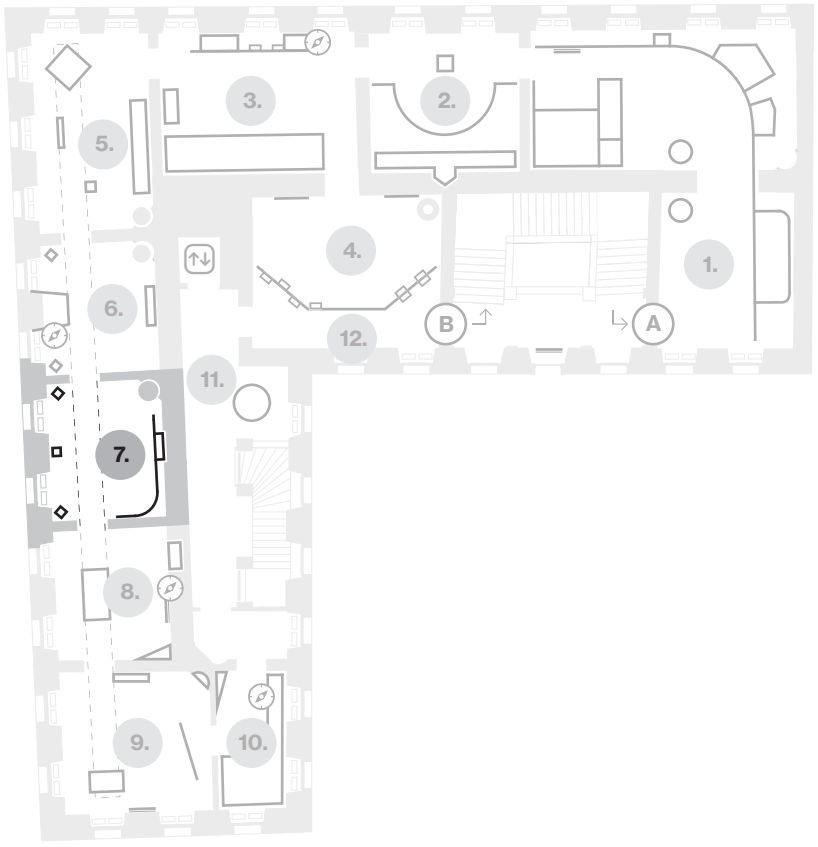
The walls of tombs in China were decorated with murals depicting the deceased and members of their family, as well as with embossed tiles with motifs of beautiful ladies. The set presents musicians with a tabor, a lute, a mouth organ, a flute, and castanets, and a dancer in a flowing robe. It was brought by the art dealer Josef Martínek from his journey to China in the summer of 1931, and offered for sale during the exhibition in the Mánes building in Prague.

3
Death Mask
China, 10th–11th century
copper, silver coated
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1952
Vp 26

4
Wenchang, the God of Literature
China, 17th century
porcelain, white glaze
NGP, purchased 1975, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 2684

5
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

7. Japanese Reverence for Nature – *Shintō*



1
Edo school
Sword Guard (*Tsuba*) with Motif of *Torii* Gate, Pine, Birds, and Water
Japan, 18th–19th century
iron, pierced, latticework
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963
Vu 2052

2
Style of Ogata Kenzan
Tea Bowl with *Shintō* Oracle
Japan, 19th century
stoneware
NGP, gift of Rainer Kreissl 1998
Vu 4021

3
Tray with Motif of *Torii* Gate
Japan, 19th century
wood, lacquered
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1967
Vu 2673

4
Seated Prince Maeda
Japan, 17th–18th century
wood, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1980
Vp 2913

The statue depicts a prince from the Maeda family, whose members belonged to the circle of vassals of the first medieval unifier of Japan, Oda Nobunaga. The prince is dressed in a ceremonial robe with the family emblem of an apricot blossom and a court cap. In Japan, the cult of the ancestors, which the statue symbolises, is associated not only with Confucianism, the Chinese teaching emphasising social and family ties, but also with the native *Shintō* religion in the linkage of humanity with roots that consist in ties to the surrounding environment (living and inert nature) and generations of ancestors.

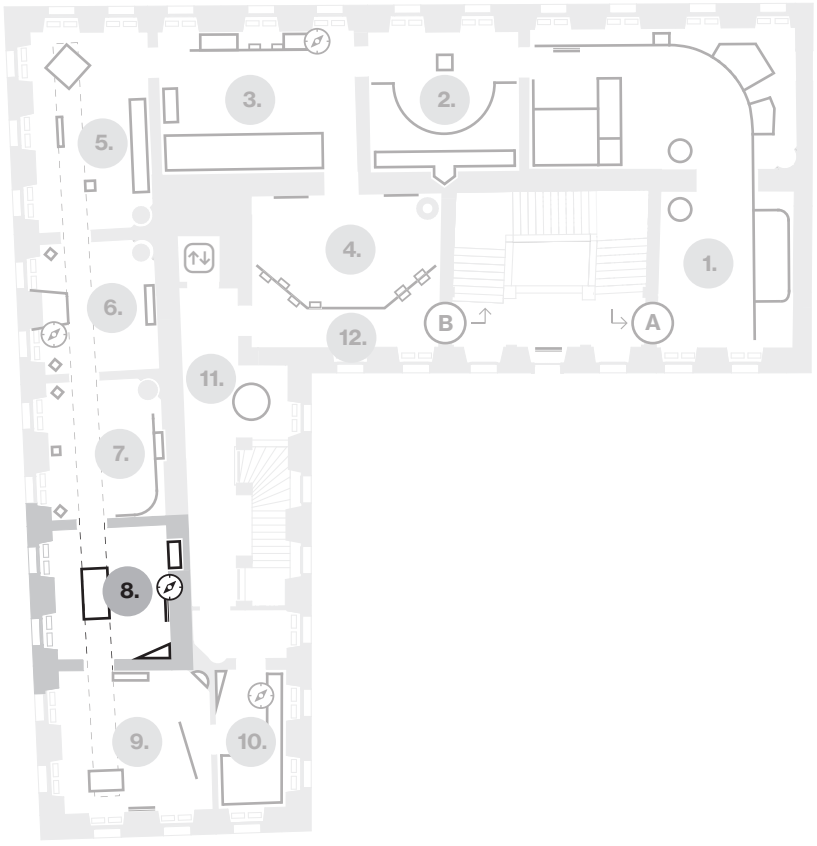
5 **9**
Mask for Lion Dance
Japan, 16th–17th century
wood, lacquered, gilt
NGP, purchased 1972
Vp 2594

6
Video – Lion Dance of *Shishi-kagura* Category
Sankō Kumano Shrine, City of Akita, 2011
courtesy of: © Akita International University, Sankō Kumano Shrine

Scan the QR code to watch the video.

7
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

8. The Religious Art of India



Votive Ceramics of Gujarati Tribes **10**

The exhibited sculptures represent votive sacrifices created by Hindu potters for the tribal population that had inhabited the eastern frontier of the western Indian state of Gujarat since pre-Aryan times. They exemplify extensive production whose formal aspects have not changed for generations – on one hand it is defined by the purpose and ritual, on the other by local tradition. The tribal religion is animistic, and the pantheon is entirely different from its Hindu counterpart. It is an expression of faith in the afterlife of ancestors, the protective power of deified heroes, faith in deities representing the forces of nature, and conversely fear of the power of evil spirits.

1st level

1
Bhula Bhai (active ca 2000)
Horse
India (southern Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay, polychromed
private collection, acquired 2007

2, 3, 4
Three Horses
India (southern Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay, polychromed
private collection, acquired 2003, 2008, 2009

5
Horse (Himaryo, "Sitting Horse", God of Harvest)
India (southern Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay, polychromed
private collection, acquired 2009

6
Kesha Bhai (active ca 2000)
Horse
India (southern Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay, polychromed
private collection, acquired 2007

2nd level

7
Ganga Ben (active ca 2000)
Horse
India (border of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh), ca 2000
fired clay, polychromed
private collection, acquired 2007

8, 9, 10, 11
Four Horses
India (central Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay, polychromed
private collection, acquired 2009, 2011

12
Fakeera Bhai (active ca 2000)
Horse
India (border of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh), ca 2000
fired clay
private collection, acquired 2007

3rd level

13
Horse
India (central Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay
private collection, acquired 2009

14, 15
Daya Bhai (active ca 2000)
Two Horses
India (central Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay
private collection, acquired 2008

16, 17
Two Horses
India (northern Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay
private collection, acquired 2007, 2008

4th level

18
Horse
India (central Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay
private collection, acquired 2007

19
Ritual Repository (*Dhabu*)
India (border of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh), ca 2000
fired clay, polychromed
private collection, acquired 2011

20, 21
Two Ritual Repositories (*Dhabu*s)
India (central Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay, polychromed
private collection, acquired 2008, 2011

22
Urmila Bhen (active ca 2000)
Ritual Repository (*Dhabu*)
India (southern Gujarat), ca 2000
fired clay
private collection, acquired 2008

23
Video – Indian Votive Ceramics, Creation, and Ritual Practice
Jan Petránek
India (Gujarat), 2007–2023
© Jan Petránek 2025, courtesy of the author

24, 25
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

26
Miniature Temple (*Kavad*)
India, 20th century
wood, lacquered
private collection

God Vishnu, Lord of the Universe, Guardian of Humanity, and Sustainer of the Universe, is most frequently worshipped by the faithful Hindus in the form of one of his ten incarnations, *avatar*s, including by means of a series of stories contained in the epic *Ramayana*. One of the folk forms of spreading these myths was the wandering of the Hindu priest-singer through the countryside carrying a portable folding altar, more precisely a miniature temple known as

a *kavad*. He would impart to his listeners the legends of the originally Vedic sun god Surya, or the mischief of little Balakrishna. The listeners could see Vishnu sleeping on the thousand-headed snake Shesha, and after the full opening of the wings also the trinity of Rama with his wife Sita and brother Lakshmana.

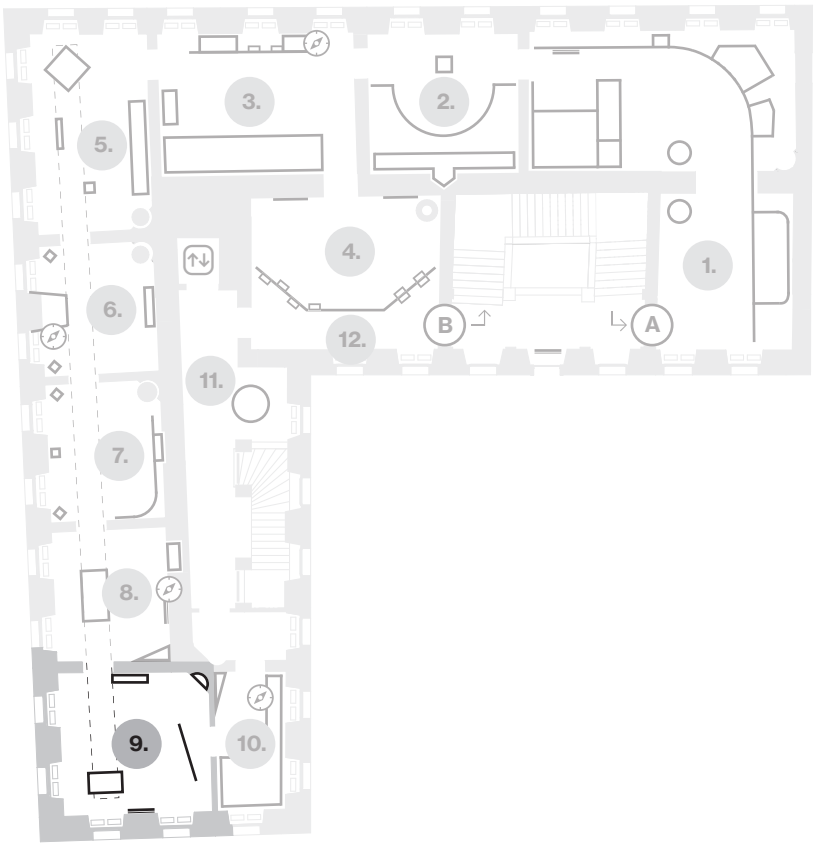
27
Vishnu with Attendants
Western India, 11th–13th century
sandstone, additional black coating
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1990, originally the Bedřich Forman Collection
Vp 3146

28
Worshipper
Western India, 11th–13th century or later
marble
NGP, purchased 1990, originally the Bedřich Forman Collection
Vp 3148

29
Jain Saint
Western India, late 11th–13th century
marble
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1990, originally the Bedřich Forman Collection
Vp 3147

30
Four Jain Saints
Western India, 11th–12th century
marble
NGP, purchased 1952, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vp 97

9. Islam and Religious Art



1
Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Tabrizi (calligraphy of original), Ivan Kopáčik (facsimile)
Manuscript of the Qurʾan (facsimile, opening bifolio)
Iran, 1462 (866 in Islamic calendar)
ink, colours, gold, paper, leather, stamped and tooled
NGP, original transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from the Vojtěch Lanna Collection 1909
Vx 783 (original manuscript Vm 1888)

According to the Muslim faith, the Qurʾan was revealed by God to the Prophet Muhammad through the words of the Angel Jibril (Gabriel). The first recording of the established wording was completed around the year 650. The Arabic text is in verse, and is divided into 114 sections, known as *sura*s. The significance of the Qurʾan is underscored by the artistic rendering of its volumes, which are frequently elaborately illuminated and gilt.

Scan the QR code to view the original manuscript.

2
Qurʾan Stand (*Rahla*)
India, ca 18th century
wood, carved, inlaid with bone
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, gift of Vojtěch Lanna 1893
Vu 1800

3 **11**
Aqa Jan (workshop production)
Tile with the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) and Zolaykha
Iran, 19th century
fritware, relief-moulded, painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, from the estate of Heinrich von Liebieg 1904
Vu 2914

The tile depicts a Qur'anic story adopted from the Old Testament. The married Zolaykha fell in love with the handsome slave Yusuf (Joseph), who was a prophet and did not reciprocate her affection. The rejected woman falsely accused him of dishonouring her, but herself became the target of ridicule. In order to put an end to her disgrace, she invited the women from the neighbourhood to her home and then called Yusuf. When they beheld Yusuf's beauty, the women, who were cutting up oranges, cut their fingers and some of them fainted. They then understood Zolaykha.

4
Touch Screen – The Prophet and King Solayman (Solomon) and the Queen of Sheba

Panel with Solayman and the Queen of Sheba
Iran, late 19th – early 20th century
colour, lacquered, wood, 130 × 62 cm
NGP, purchased from a private collection 1962
Vm 2192

5
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

Islamic Mysticism

Studio Sabah & Joallier
"Whirling Dervishes", last quarter of 19th century
reproduction of a photograph, 20.5 × 25.5 cm
Archive of the Moravian Gallery in Brno
7555

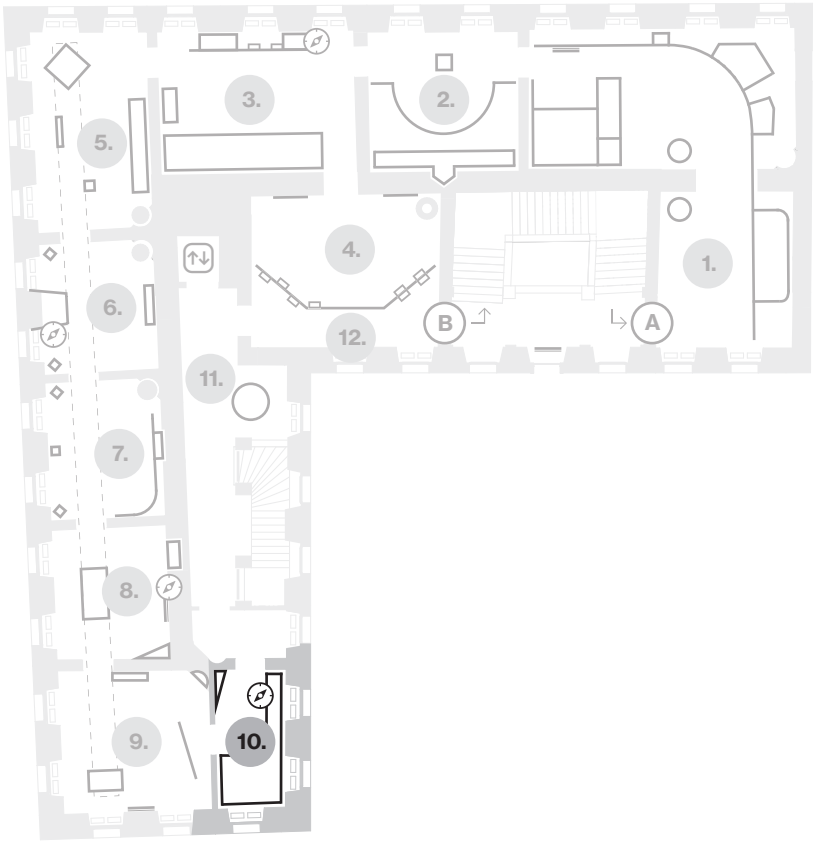
6
Beggar's Bowl (*Kashkul*)
Iran or Turkey, ca 19th century
coco-de-mer (*Iodoicea*) nutshell, steel, carved
NGP, purchased from a private collection 1953
Vu 115

7
Beggar's Bowl (*Kashkul*)
Iran, 19th – early 20th century
brass, cast, hammered, chased, inlaid with enamels, turquoises, and glass
NGP, purchased from a private collection 1958
Vu 245

8
Audio – Turkish Sufi Music on Reed Flute *Ney*

Semi-Improvised Prelude (*Taksim*)
in melodic mode (*makam*) Hicazkar for the composition *Hicazkar Ayin-i Şerif* by the composer Mustafa Cazim el-Mevlevi (active late 19th – early 20th century)
performed by Ömer Bildik, Meshk Ensemble led by Timuçin Çevikoğlu, © 2011 Meshk Ensemble, courtesy of Meshk Ensemble

10. Relaxation Room



که ز دل تا دل یقین روزن بود
نه جدا و دور چون دو تن بود
متصل نبود سفال دو چراغ
نورشان ممزوج باشد در مساغ

Surely there is a window from heart to heart,
they are not separate and far, like two bodies.
The two clay lamps are not joined,
but their light is mingled as it moves.

Mavlana Rumi (d. 1273), *The Mathnavi*, III,
4391–4392

The cloud laughed at the rainbow
saying that it is an upstart,
gaudy in its emptiness.
The rainbow calmly answered:
“I am as inevitably real
as the sun himself.”

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941),
Fireflies, 1933

ཉམས་སྐྱོབས་རྒྱང་བའི་སྒྲོས་བོས་ཀྱང་།།
ཆེན་པོ་གཞན་ལ་བསྟེན་ན་འགྲུབ།།
རྒྱ་ཡི་ཐིགས་པ་ཉམ་རྒྱང་ཡང་།།
མཚོ་དང་འདྲེས་ན་སྐམ་མི་ནུས།།

Even the little ones, if backed up by a giant,
will grow to success, though slowly and quietly.
The water drop is weak, not knowing where to go,
but if it mingles with the sea, it will not dry up.

Sakya Pandita (1182–1251), *Treasury of Good Advice*, quatrain no. 311

十年种树成林易，
画树成林一辈难。

It is not hard to plant trees for ten years
and to cultivate an orchard,
but painting trees and seeing the fruit from this orchard
is hard for a lifetime.

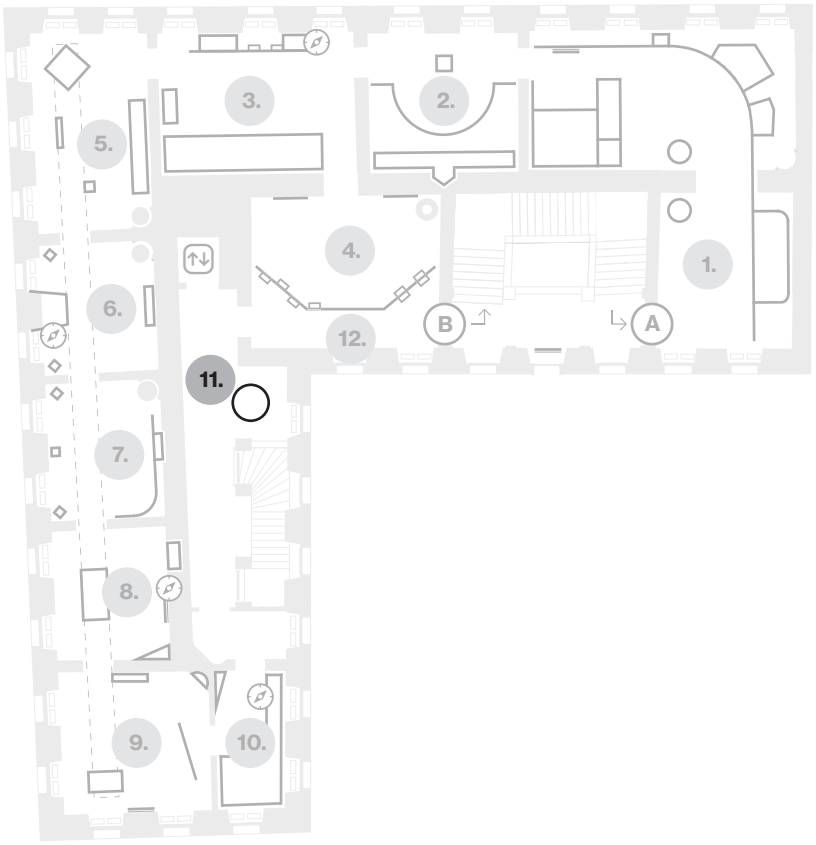
Qi Baishi (1864–1957), an inscription on the painting *Mountain Village after Rain*, 1926

万葉集・34
白波寄せる浜辺の松の
枝に結んで神さまに
祈った幣は結ばれてから
どれほど時が過ぎたろう

The Man'yōshū, poem no. 34
How many generations
has the prayer cloth passed
hung from a branch
of the pine on the beach
where white waves break?

The Collection of a Myriad Leaves, 8th century

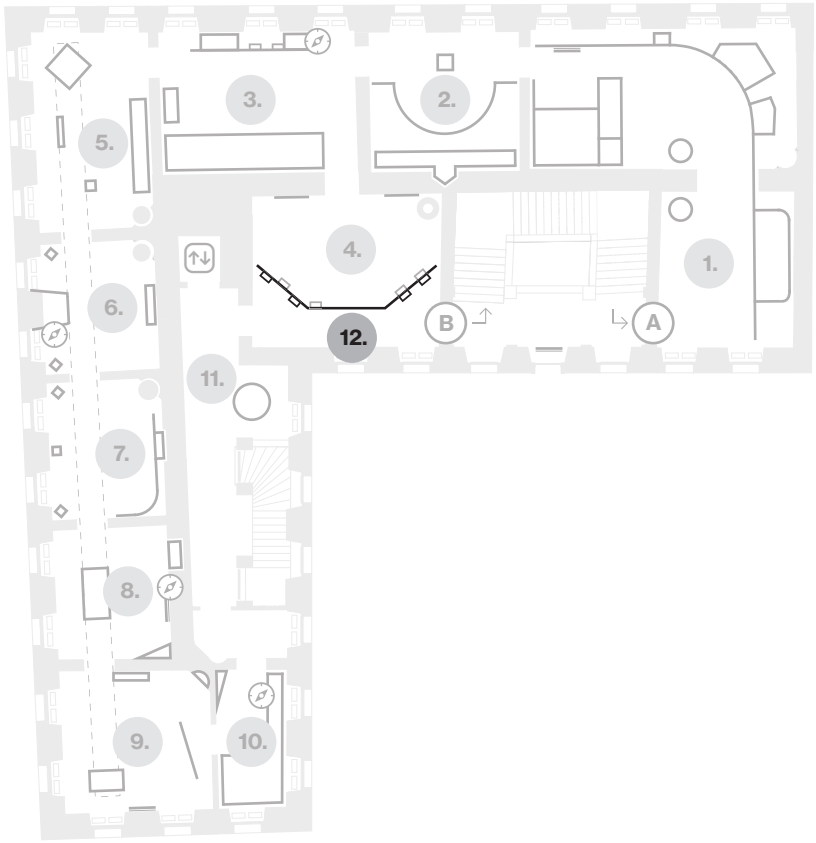
11. An Encounter with the Buddha



1
The Buddha
Myanmar (Burma), 2nd half of 20th century
marble, partially polychromed
NGP, gift of Bhante Y. Wimala 2022
Vp 4143

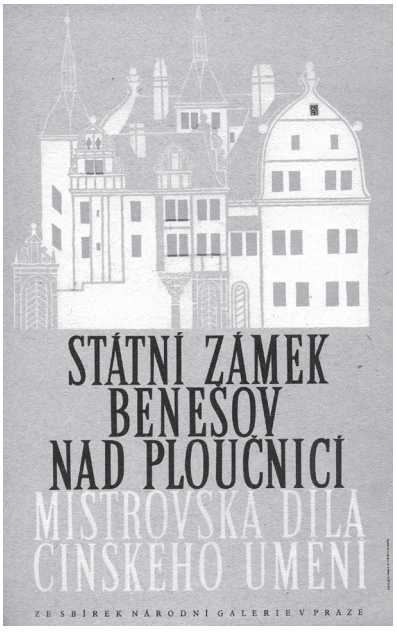
The statue represents the founder of the Buddhist teachings at the moment of his spiritual awakening. With his right hand he shows the gesture of touching the ground, by which he summons the goddess of the earth to witness that he is prepared to become the Buddha, “The Awakened One”.

12. From the History of the Asian Collections of the NGP

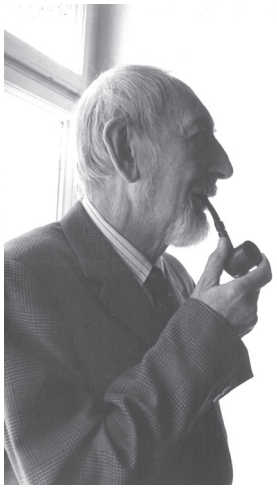




Installation of the Exhibition *Masterpieces of Chinese Art*, Benešov nad Ploučnicí Chateau, 1961–1969
NGP Archive, Documentation of Exhibitions of the NGP (1959–1964)



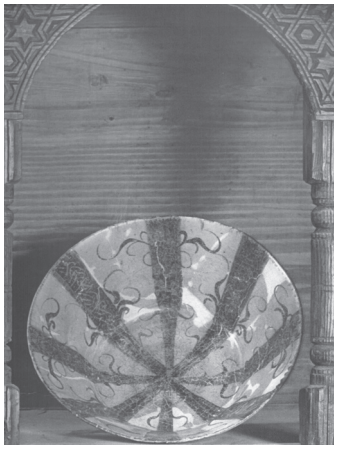
Václav Rykr (1927–1991)
Flyer for the Exhibition *Masterpieces of Chinese Art*, Benešov nad Ploučnicí Chateau, 1961
NGP Archive, Documentation of Exhibitions of the NGP (1959–1964)



Lubor Hájek (1921–2000), Head of Department of Oriental Art, 1980s
Archive of the Collection of Asian Art, NGP

Works damaged in the fire at Benešov nad Ploučnicí Chateau on 19 December 1969

1
Bowl, fragment
Iran, 13th century
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, acquired 1961, originally the Emil Filla Collection
Vp 761



In: Hájek, Lubor et al., *Umění čtyř světadílů z českých sbírek mimoevropského umění* [The Art of Four Continents from Czech Collections of Non-European Art], vol. 2, Prague: Orbis, 1957, p. 68.

2
Bowl, fragment
Iran, 13th century
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, acquired 1961, originally the Emil Filla Collection
Vu 353

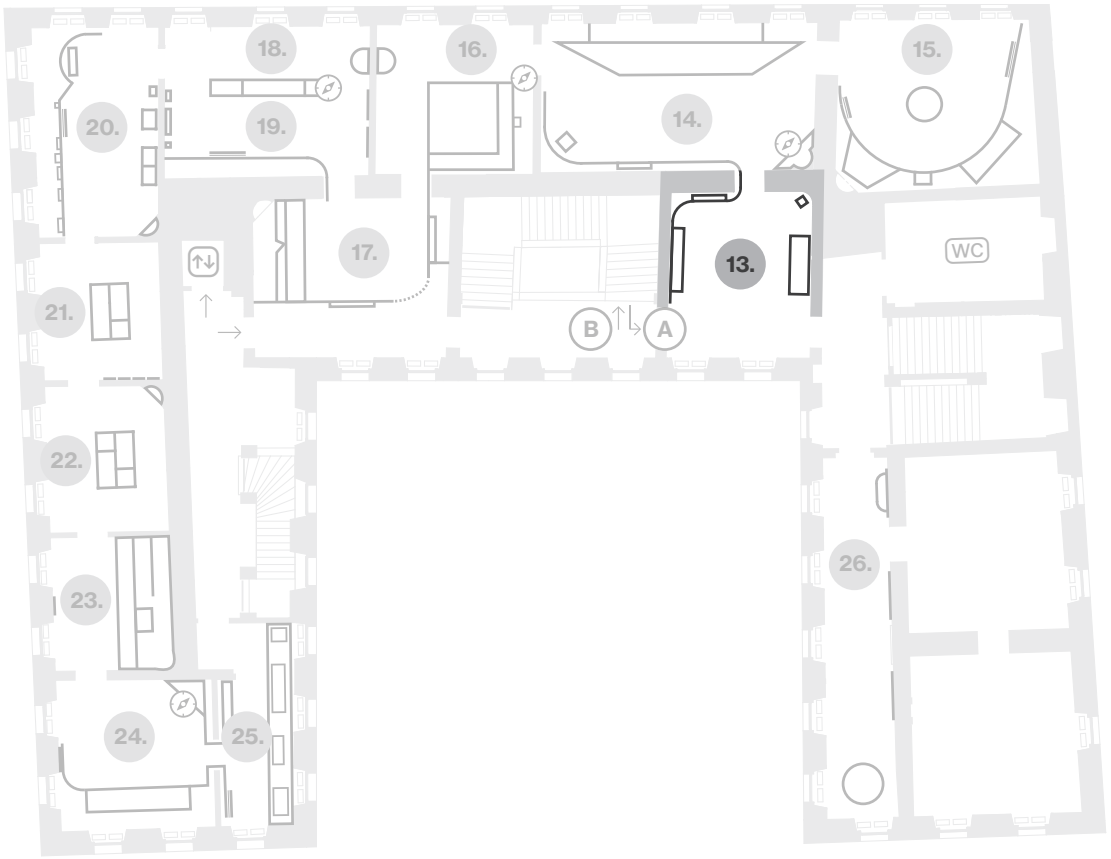


In: Hájek, Lubor et al., *Umění čtyř světadílů z českých sbírek mimoevropského umění* [The Art of Four Continents from Czech Collections of Non-European Art], vol. 2, Prague: Orbis 1957, p. 66.

3
Case with Lid
Japan, 19th century
wood, lacquered, gilt
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1963, originally Sychrov Chateau
Vu 2372

4
Vase with Lion Motif
China, 18th century
metal, cloisonné
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally Klášterec nad Ohří Chateau 1952 (from the collection of the Thun-Hohenstein Salm-Reifferscheidt family)
Vu 405

13. Who Was the Buddha?



1 **12**
Meditating Buddha Shakyamuni
Pakistan (Gandhara), 2nd–3rd century
schist
NGP, acquired 1961, originally the Emil Filla Collection
Vp 783

Several routes of the Silk Road led through the Gandhara region, linking the Mediterranean with Central and East Asia. In the 1st–7th centuries, a sculptural style developed here combining Buddhist themes with Greco-Roman elements. Schist reliefs with figures of the Buddha and bodhisattvas covered the walls of buildings in monastery complexes.

2
Scenes from the Life of the Buddha Shakyamuni
Pakistan (Gandhara), 3rd–4th century
schist
NGP, purchased 2001
Vp 3205

3
Head of the Buddha Shakyamuni
Pakistan (Gandhara), 4th–5th century
stucco, residues of polychromy
NGP, acquired by transfer 1961, originally the Emil Filla Collection
Vp 782

4
The Buddha with a Fiery Aureole
China, ca 420
bronze, gilt
NGP, purchased 1958, originally the Rudolf Hejný Collection
Vp 453

The Buddha Shakyamuni sits in the lotus position on a stepped throne. His face is captured in a state of meditation with closed eyes and a slight smile, his arms are depicted in the gesture of meditation. This portable statue is one of three rare preserved and almost identical pieces, cast in short succession at the beginning of the 5th century in northern China. Similar artefacts played a significant role in the

spread of Mahayana Buddhism across the Asian continent. The statue comes from the estate of Rudolf Hejný, the interwar Czechoslovak consul in the Chinese city of Harbin.

5
The Buddha Shakyamuni
Thailand or Myanmar (Burma), ca 9th century
bronze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1988
Vp 3131

6
The Buddha Subduing Mara
Thailand, 15th century or later
bronze
NGP, purchased 1962
Vp 1046

In Thailand and Myanmar, the most common depictions of the Buddha were those of him subduing Mara. This refers to the legendary occurrence said to have taken place shortly before the moment of the Buddha's spiritual awakening, when Mara, the demon of ruin and death, tempted the Buddha in an attempt to wrest him from his meditation and prevent him from attaining awakening. With the gesture of touching the ground (*bhumisparsha-mudra*), the Buddha summons the goddess of the earth to testify to his readiness.

7
Head of the Buddha Protected by the Serpent King
Thailand, 13th century or later
sandstone
NGP, purchased 1973
Vp 2630

8
The Buddha Shakyamuni
China, 11th century
wood, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1951, originally the Adolfina Juránková Collection
Vp 65

9
Standing Buddha Shakyamuni
Laos, 18th century
bronze, gilt, semi-precious stones
NGP, purchased 1958
Vp 583

10
The Buddha Shakyamuni as a Newborn
Northern Vietnam, 18th–19th century
wood, silver, lacquered
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1979
Vp 2888

11
The Buddha Shakyamuni
Myanmar (Burma), 2nd half of 19th century
wood, lacquered, gilt, mirrors
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1981
Vp 2928

12
Reliquary in the Shape of a Pagoda on a Lotus
Japan, 2nd half of 19th century
wood, silver, glass, lacquered
National Museum – Náprstek Museum, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
34704

13
The Buddha Subduing Jambhupati
Myanmar (Burma), 19th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, long-term loan from a private collection
VVp 1337

14
Head of the Buddha Shakyamuni
Cambodia or Thailand, late 12th – early 13th century
sandstone
NGP, purchased 1951
Vp 69

The last of the peak phases of the art of the Khmer Empire, the Bayon style, came within the period of the reign of Jayavarman VII (ca 1181–1218). Mahayana Buddhism became the state religion, and Jayavarman himself adopted the conception that pronounced the ruler the incarnation of the Buddha. A number of sandstone sculptures considered portraits of him have been preserved, with iconographic attributes of the Buddha's form. The faces of the statues from the Bayon period bear the legendary mysterious "Angkor" smile and concentrated expression of almost closed eyes.

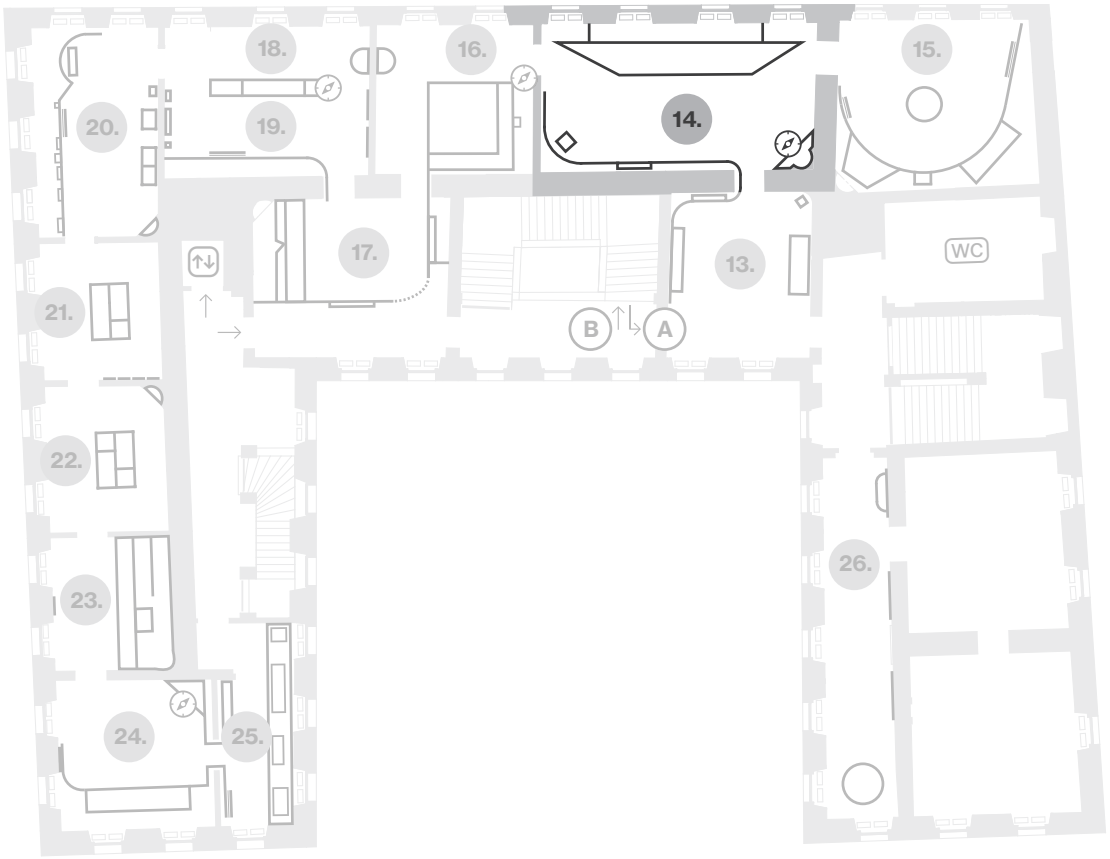
15
The Legend of the Buddha
Japan, 17th–18th century
ink, pigments, gold, paper
NGP, transferred from the Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 1979, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vm 4732, Vm 4733

This paired scroll with scenes from the life of the historical Buddha Shakyamuni was created at the turn of the 18th century, i.e., approximately 1,700 years after the appearance of the first representations in India, and furthermore in a Japanese painting style. During the 8th century, the Buddhist teachings gained a larger reception in Japan thanks to the missionary activity of Chinese and Korean monks, who disseminated written records of the Buddha's teachings – the sutras. This scroll contains a total of 24 scenes and is accompanied with a calligraphic text on a separate scroll.

Scan the QR code to view the full version of the handscroll.

16
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

14. The Spread of Buddhism



1
Maitreya in the Realm of Tushita
Pakistan (Gandhara), 2nd–3rd century
schist
NGP, purchased 1965
Vp 1758

2
Bodhisattva
Pakistan (Gandhara), 2nd–3rd century
schist
NGP, purchased 1955
Vp 323

This fragment of a relief representing a bodhisattva originates from the Gandhara region. Unlike the Buddha's restrained stylisation, (not only) early Buddhist art presents bodhisattvas in a form resembling a self-assured prince, with an artfully arranged turban, earrings, and jewellery. The attribute has not survived, and as a result it is not possible to determine which bodhisattva this represents.

3
The Bodhisattva Quan Am on a Rock
Northern Vietnam, 18th–19th century
wood, silver, lacquered
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1985
Vp 3100

4
The Bodhisattva Quan Am
Northern Vietnam, 18th–19th century
wood, silver, lacquered
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1985
Vp 3078

5, 6
Lions, Crowns of Ceremonial Bells
Indonesia (Java), 13th–14th century
bronze, cast
NGP, purchased in Antikva, state enterprise 1952
Vp 52, Vp 53

7
Jambhala, the God of Wealth
Indonesia (Java), late 9th – 10th century
bronze
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963, originally Mnichovo Hradiště Chateau
Vp 2924

Jambhala as the god of wealth was worshipped in Java by Buddhists, and under the name of Kuvera by Hindus. It is believed that small statuettes of him were also placed on household altars. He generally takes the form of a corpulent youth surrounded by wealth and comfort. In his left hand he holds a pouch containing treasures, with his right he displays the gesture of mercy (*varada-mudra*). The heads of mythical beings known as *makara*s protrude from the throne, and from the pedestal what are probably lions' heads. The mongoose, Jambhala's animal guide, emerges from an opening in the pedestal.

8
The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara
China, 8th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1954
Vp 274

9
The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara
China, 8th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, purchased 1967
Vp 2408

10
The Amitabha Trinity
China, 6th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, acquired as a gift 1965
Vu 2473

11
The Buddha
China, 5th–6th century
bronze
NGP, purchased in VADAMO 1994
Vp 3181

12
The Buddha
China, 5th–6th century
bronze
NGP, purchased in VADAMO 1994
Vp 3182

13
The Bodhisattva Guanyin on a Rock
China, ca 1500
bronze, gilt
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975
Vp 2726

14 🎧 **13**
The Bodhisattva Guanyin Seated in the Royal-Ease Pose
China, 12th–13th century
wood, polychromed, residues of gilding and silvering
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1951
Vp 43

The bodhisattva of mercy, referred to as Guanyin in China, sits on a rock with his feet hanging down so that he can step out to help those who call upon him. At first glance, the statue attracts attention with its appealing face and full lips, with a green shawl flowing from his shoulders, which is his attribute. The statue bears traces of several applied layers of painted, gilt, and silver-plated details. These form a thick layer of patina, reflecting the development of the surface treatment over the course of seven hundred years.

15
Head of Bodhisattva
China, 12th–13th century
wood, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1951, originally the Václav Materna and Josef Martínek Collections
Vp 87

16
Head of Bodhisattva
China, 14th century
wood, residues of polychromy
NGP, purchased 1958, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 461

17
The Arhat Maha Kashyapa
China, late 13th – 1st half of 14th century
wood, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1979, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vp 2886

Based on the physiognomy of the monk, it is possible to identify the figure as Maha Kashyapa, the oldest of the direct pupils of the Buddha Shakyamuni, who were referred to as *luohan*s (in Sanskrit *arhat*s). They have divested themselves of all earthly ties, and after death may pass into nirvana, thus the final release.

In Chinese art, *luohan*s were depicted very expressively, with pronounced wrinkles, eyebrows, large noses, and other distinctive details.

18
Seated Budai
China, 19th century
ivory
NGP, from estate 1991, originally the Martha Dodd-Stern Collection
Vp 3155

19
Guanyin with a Supplicant
China, 18th century
ivory
NGP, purchased 1983
Vp 3020

20
Standing Bodhisattva
Inner Mongolia, 18th century
wood, stucco, lacquered, gilt
NGP, transferred from Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 1975, originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vp 2862

21
Altar with the Amida Trinity
Japan, 18th century
wood, polychromed, gilt
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975, originally Sychrov Chateau
Vp 2718

In the centre of the altar, protected by gilt dragons, sits the Buddha Amida. He is flanked by the Bodhisattva Kannon and the Bodhisattva Jizō. These are carved differently and decorated with a different lacquer and colours, and so may be older than the altar. Painted on the door are the two heavenly guardians Kōmokuten and Tamonten (Bishamonten). Kōmokuten, the Guardian of the West, has a tiger skin at his waist, and in his hand holds a sword to vanquish evil. Bishamonten, the Guardian of the North, holds a spear in his right hand and a stupa in his left. Amida holds a palm sprig, with his hands in the gesture of teaching.

22
Standing Buddha Amida with the Gesture of Admission to the Western Paradise
Japan, 19th century
wood, lacquered, gilt
NGP, purchased 1980
Vp 2915

23
The Bodhisattva Kannon with a Lotus Bud
Japan, 18th century
wood, lacquered, gilt, inlaid with crystal and gemstones
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1968, originally the Václav Hořejš Collection
Vp 2451

24
The Bodhisattva Jizō on a Lotus Pedestal
Japan, 19th century
bronze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1979
Vp 2906

25
The Seated Bodhisattva Kongōsatta with *Vajra*
Japan, 17th century
wood, polychromed, gilt
NGP, purchased 1931, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vp 92

26
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

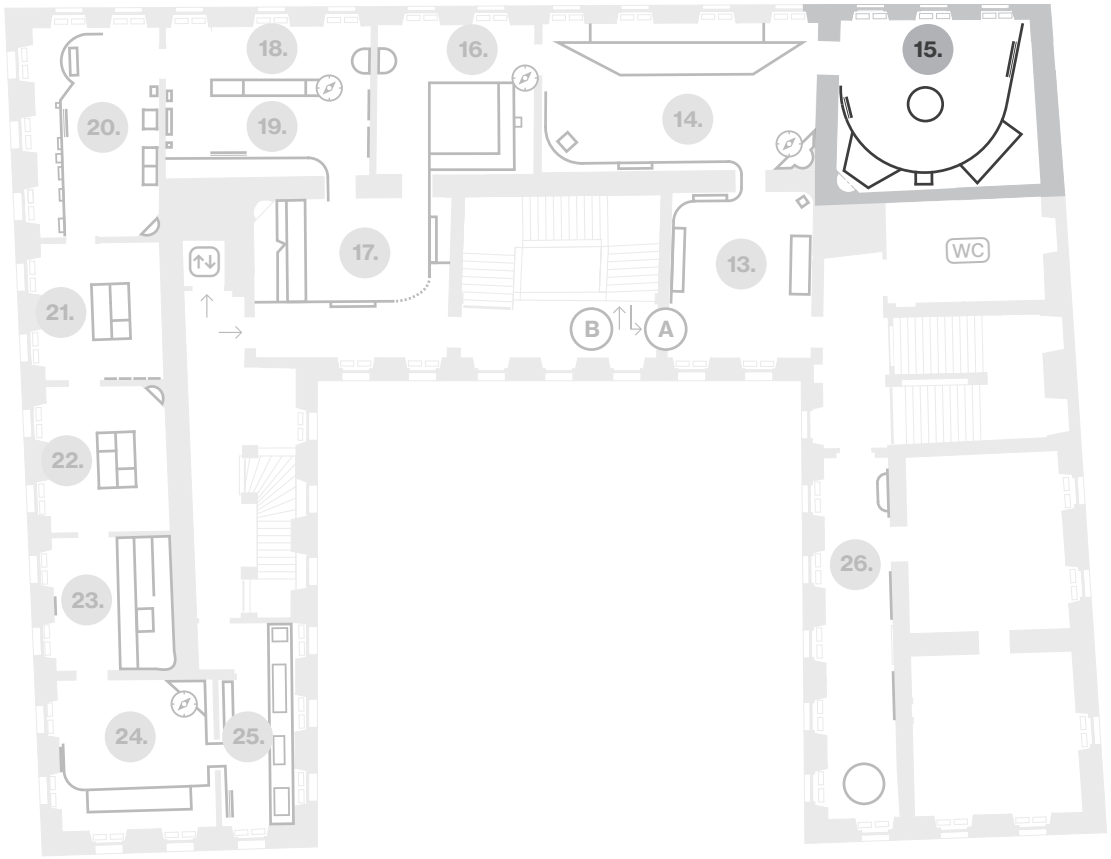
27
Enma, King of the Underworld
Japan, 16th century
wood, polychromed, gilt
NGP, purchased from the Pavel Stránský Collection 1951
Vp 77

This statue is the oldest example of Japanese Buddhist sculpture in the collection of the NGP. It was created by joining wooden parts, without the use of metal joints or glue. Enma (in Sanskrit Yama) is the chief of the "ten heavenly kings". He judges the dead according to the degree of their good and bad deeds. His face is covered with red lacquer, his eyes are inlaid with crystal and dark gemstones. He is dressed in a judge's robe and cap; the sceptre he originally held in his right hand is missing. The lower part of the statue bears the inscription *Enma daiō* ("the Great King Enma").

28
The Scripture on the Ten Kings, folio
Tibet, 19th century
colours, paper
NGP, purchased 1955, originally
the Ladislav Weber Collection
Vm 739–Vm 760

The Scripture on the Ten Kings is a popular text in both China and Japan. Its Tibetan version is rather a loose paraphrasing than a translation from Chinese. Typical Tibetan elements appear here, for example, in the representation of the characters. The sutra is composed of 43 double-sided folios, 16 of which bear small illuminations of Buddhist deities and dignitaries, and ten of which show representations of the rulers of the individual hells.

15. The Art of Tibetan Buddhism



1
Video – *Thangka* with the Wheel of Life

Wheel of Life (*Bhavachakra*)
Tibet, early 19th century
colours, canvas
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1969
Vm 2770

Essentially, the *Bhavachakra* represents the fundamental element of the Buddhist doctrine – the laws of becoming and being, as well as the way to overcome and transcend them.

In the centre are three animals symbolising the three spiritual poisons – the pig (ignorance), the rooster (greed), and the snake (hatred), from which the whole of *sansara* (the cycle of rebirths) originates.

The six states of existence consist of the world of people, the world of animals, the hot and cold hells, the realm of the hungry spirits, the realm of the demigods, and the heaven of the gods.

The outer circle with twelve links explains dependent becoming and the subsequent chain reaction.

2
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

3
Ritual *Kangling* Trumpet
Tibet, 17th–18th century
bone, leather
NGP, purchased 1982
Vu 3783

The *kangling* trumpet is used at various *chod* religious ceremonies, for example at funerals, together with a drum and bell. It is ideally produced from the thigh bone of a person who has died a violent death, or of a distinguished Buddhist teacher.

4
White *Shankha* Conch
Tibet, 18th century
conch, copper, silver-coated
NGP, purchased 1982
Vu 3782

A white, dextrorotatory conch is used in religious ceremonies. The tip of the conch is fashioned as a mouthpiece, and its sound symbolises the true *dharma*, i.e. the Buddhist teachings. Its whiteness represents the purity of the heavenly realms.

***Tsatsa* – Votive Plaques**

Tsatsa are Tibetan votive tablets produced with the aid of special moulds from fired or unfired clay. Sometimes the ground bones or ashes of deceased lamas were added to the clay. *Tsatsa* were used as fillings for sacred objects or stupas. They could also be painted, and served instead of statues on household altars, or were parts of *gau*, cases for amulets.

5
The Protector Mahakala
Tibet, 19th–20th century
fired clay
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1984
Vp 3042

6
Green Tara
Tibet, 19th–20th century
fired clay
NGP, purchased 1982
Vp 2956

7
Tsongkhapa
Tibet, 19th–20th century
fired clay
NGP, purchased 1972, originally the Josef Hejzlar Collection
Vp 2597

8
The Protector Mahakala
Tibet, 18th–19th century
bronze, gilt, polychromed
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1977
Vp 2781

9
The Protector Pehar
Tibet, 18th–19th century
bronze, gilt, polychromed
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1977
Vp 2782

10
The Protector Vajrabhairava
Tibet, 17th–18th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, purchased 1968
Vp 2446

11
The Protector Vajrakumara
Tibet, 19th century
brass, gilt
NGP, purchased 1969
Vp 2478

12
The Buddha Akshobhya
Tibet, 17th–18th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979
Vp 2869

13
The Buddha Amitabha
Tibet, 15th–16th century
bronze, gilt, lacquered, polychromed
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1973
Vp 2642

14
Rigdzin Padma Thinle
Tibet, 19th century
copper, gilt, polychromed
NGP, purchased in Pražské starožitnosti (Prague Antiques) 1994
Vp 3186

15
Arhat
Inner Mongolia, 18th century
copper, gilt
NGP, purchased in Pražské starožitnosti (Prague Antiques) 1968
Vp 2458

16
The Buddha Shakyamuni
Tibet, 18th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1968
Vp 2453

17
Tsongkhapa
Tibet, 18th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, purchased 1958, originally the Rudolf Hejný Collection
Vp 460

18
The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara
Tibet, 15th–16th century
brass, gilt, polychromed
NGP, purchased 1958, originally the Rudolf Hejný Collection
Vp 479

19
The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara
Tibet, 16th–17th century
bronze, gilt
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961
Vp 896

20 🎧**14**
The Buddha Amitayus
Tibet, 17th century
bronze, gilt, inlaid with turquoises
NGP, purchased 1955
Vp 320

21
The Bodhisattva Manjushri
Tibet, 17th–18th century
bronze, gilt, polychromed, inlaid with turquoises
NGP, purchased 1983
Vp 3033

22
White Tara
Tibet, 1644–1661
bronze, gilt
NGP, purchased 1985, originally the Boris Mikhailov Collection
Vp 3093

23
Green Tara
Tibet, 17th century
bronze, gilt, inlaid with turquoises
NGP, purchased 1985, originally the Boris Mikhailov Collection
Vp 3094

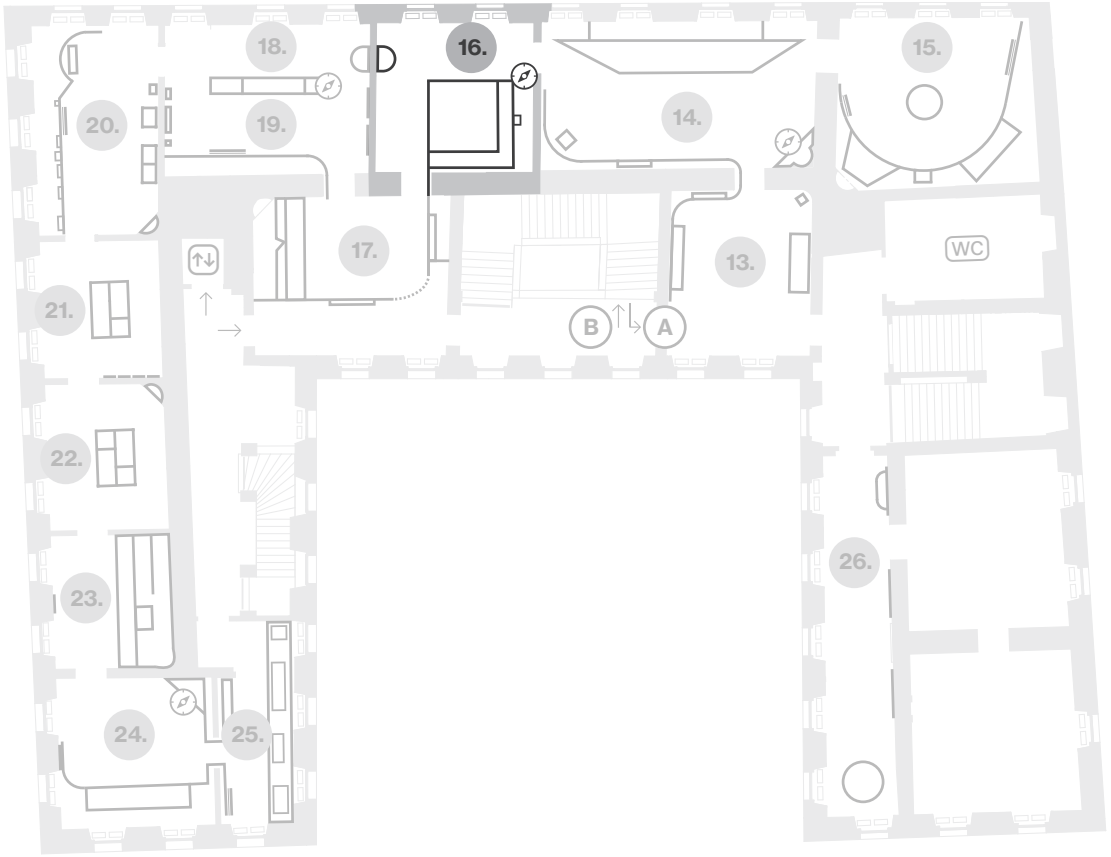
24
Video – Tibetan Sculpture and Modern Survey Technologies

Using non-invasive X-ray fluorescence analysis, a method serving to identify the composition of the materials, it has been determined that the Buddhist sculptures under examination are predominantly made of copper with various admixtures, subsequently gilt or added to with colours or gemstones. The measurements and results were processed by the Chemical-Technological Laboratory of the NGP.

The method of neutron tomography was used to determine the inner content of the sculpture. With the aid of neutrons, it was possible to penetrate the outer metal layer and see the small offerings inside the sculpture (such as consecrated grains, fabrics, sutras, and prayers on paper). The survey was conducted in 2025 in co-operation with the Department of Nuclear Reactors at the Faculty of Nuclear Sciences and Physical Engineering at the Czech Technical University in Prague.

25
Audio – Recitation of Sutras by Tibetan monks
Source: Freesound, BR_092v2_Himalaya_BuddhistMonks.mp3 by kevp888, https://freesound.org/s/440239/, license: Attribution 4.0
recorded at a Buddhist monastery in the Himalayas 2007

16. Zen Art and the Kaeru-An Collection



1
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

2
Kasumi Bunshō (1905–1998)
The Eastern Mountain Passes over the River (Calligraphy on Zen Stick)
Japan, 1985
ink, cedar wood
NGP, gift of Felix Hess 2019, originally the Kaeru-An Collection
Vm 6801

3
Inaba Shinden (1906–1986)
Zen Vase
Japan, 1960–1986
ceramics
NGP, gift of Felix Hess 2019, originally the Kaeru-An Collection
Vu 4376

This geometric vase is decorated on one side with the Zen circle and the inscription "What is it?" On the other side, it is decorated with an outline of the meditating Zen patriarch Daruma and the inscription "I don't know!", supplemented with Shinden's initials.

4 **15**
Ōtagaki Rengetsu (1791–1875)
***Mizukoboshi* Bowl with Sculptural Decoration of Frog and Calligraphy**
Japan, 1860–1875
ceramics
NGP, gift of Felix Hess 2019, originally the Kaeru-An Collection
Vu 4377

Mizukoboshi is a type of bowl for water used in the Japanese tea ceremony. This bowl is signed with the name of Rengetsu and decorated with calligraphy in the verses:
"When the ice on the lakelet melts and you hear the frogs croaking, you know that the long sleep is at an end."

5
Ōtagaki Rengetsu (1791–1875)
Teapot with Sculptural Decoration of Frog and Calligraphy
Japan, 1860–1875
ceramics
NGP, gift of Felix Hess 2019, originally the Kaeru-An Collection
Vu 4375

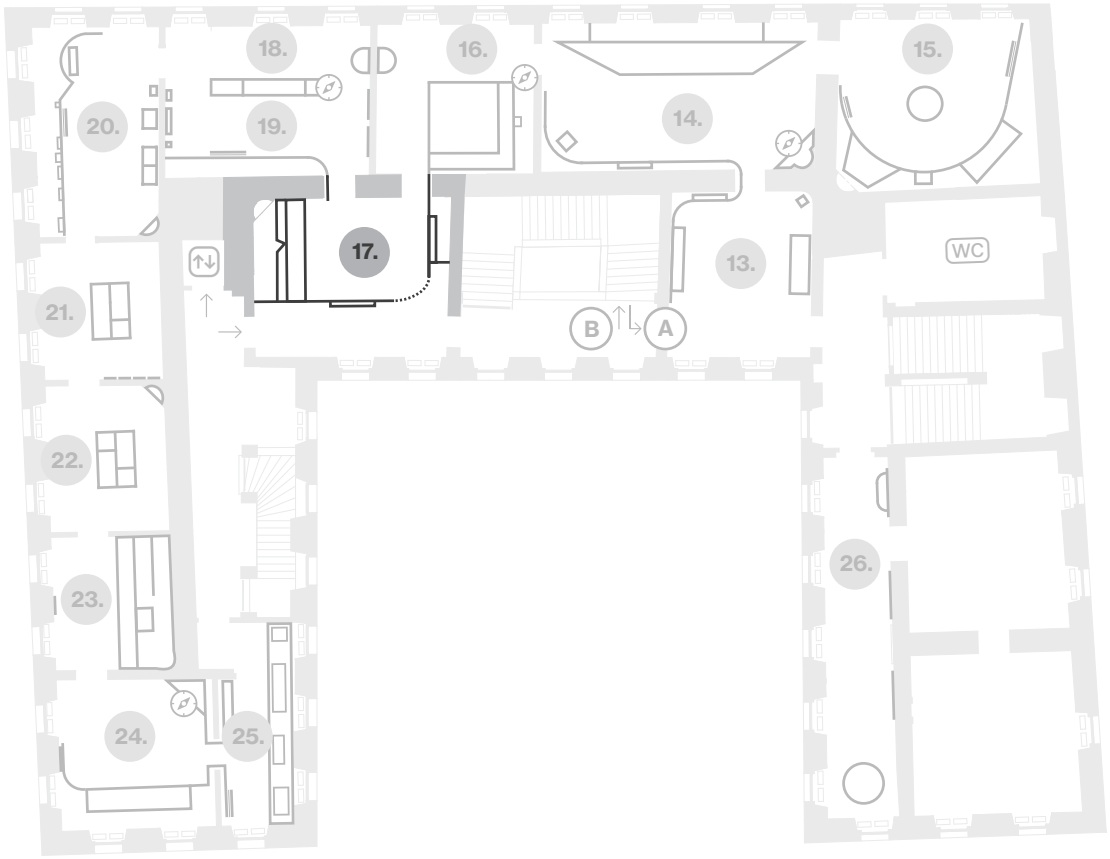
The teapot is signed with the name of Rengetsu and decorated with calligraphy in the verses:
"As the days pass by in the celebration of life they cannot be counted, and one age succeeds another, bamboo sprouts by the hut."

6, 7, 8
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

9
Audio – *Shakuhachi* Flute

Taki ochi, ryūgenji; taki ochi, fudaiji
performed by Vlastislav Matoušek, from the album *Shakuhachi. Taki ochi*, © 2003 Vlastislav Matoušek; 2HP Production, s. r. o., courtesy of V. Matoušek and 2HP Production, s. r. o.

17. Chinese Writing and Calligraphy



1, 2
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

3
Han Hyang Lim (b. 1956)
The Mountain in My Thoughts
Korea, 20th century
ceramics, glaze
NGP, gift of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea 2007
Vu 4349

4
Roe Kyung Joe (b. 1951)
Marbled Vase
Korea, 20th century
ceramics, glaze
NGP, gift of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea 2007
Vu 4343

5
Shin Chul (b. 1963)
Marbled Vase
Korea, 20th century
ceramics, glaze
NGP, gift of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea 2007
Vu 4347

6
Hwa Ja Moon (active 20th century)
Vase with Blue-Grey Glaze
Korea, 20th century
ceramics, glaze
NGP, gift of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea 2013
Vu 4371

7
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

8
Illustrated Stories of Filial and Fraternal Love
China, 19th century
black and white woodblock print
NGP, purchased 1974
Vm 3371

Book printing became widespread in China in the second half of the 9th century. Initially, individual texts were carved into wooden blocks. In the 11th century, the printing process was improved and under the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368) this knowledge spread to Europe, where printing of the first books began in the mid-15th century.

The Chinese family was patrilineal, and sons were therefore entrusted with the task of making offerings to deceased ancestors. According to the Confucian tradition, a son should obey his parents in all matters, and stories of filial devotion are well known.

9
Seal with Carving of Three Lions in the Jungle
China, 17th–18th century
jade
NGP, purchased 1973
Vu 2938

10
Seal in the Shape of a Rock and Clouds
China, 18th–19th century
amber
NGP, purchased 1987
Vp 3124

11
Seal with Carving of a Lion on a Cliff
China, 17th–18th century
jade
NGP, purchased 1973
Vu 2936

12
Seal in the Shape of a *Qilin* Unicorn
China, 18th century
ivory
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1995
Vp 3188

13
Sea Dragon-Shaped Seal
China, 17th–18th century
jade
NGP, purchased 1973
Vu 2935

14
Double Seal
China, 18th century
stone
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1968
Vu 2681

15
Lotus Blossom-Shaped Seal
China, 10th–11th century
jade
NGP, purchased in VADAMO 1994
Vp 3183

16 **16**
Six-Piece Writing Set
China, 18th century
porcelain
NGP, purchased 1974
Vu 2947–Vu 2952

This porcelain writing set is composed of two containers for brushes, a hexagonal tray, a cube-shaped box, an easel, and a flat bowl. It is decorated by painting with motifs of seal imprints, documenting the diversity of the shapes of their designs. From the oldest times, seals were produced from metal and later carved into stones such as soapstone, amber, jade, as well as ivory and less common materials.

17
Tube for Brushes with Landscape and Farmhouse Motif
China, 19th century
ink, ivory
NGP, purchased 1983
Vu 3987

18
Seal Ink Box
China, 17th–18th century
stoneware, pressed decoration, craquelure glaze
NGP, purchased 1985
Vu 3925

19
Water Vessel
China, 18th century
porcelain, glaze
NGP, purchased 1969
Vu 2726

20
Water Vessel
China, ca 1700
porcelain, dark glaze
NGP, purchased 1985
Vu 3924

21
Lotus Leaf-Shaped Bowl
China, 16th–17th century
jade
NGP, purchased 1985, originally
the Josef Martínek Collection
Vu 3923

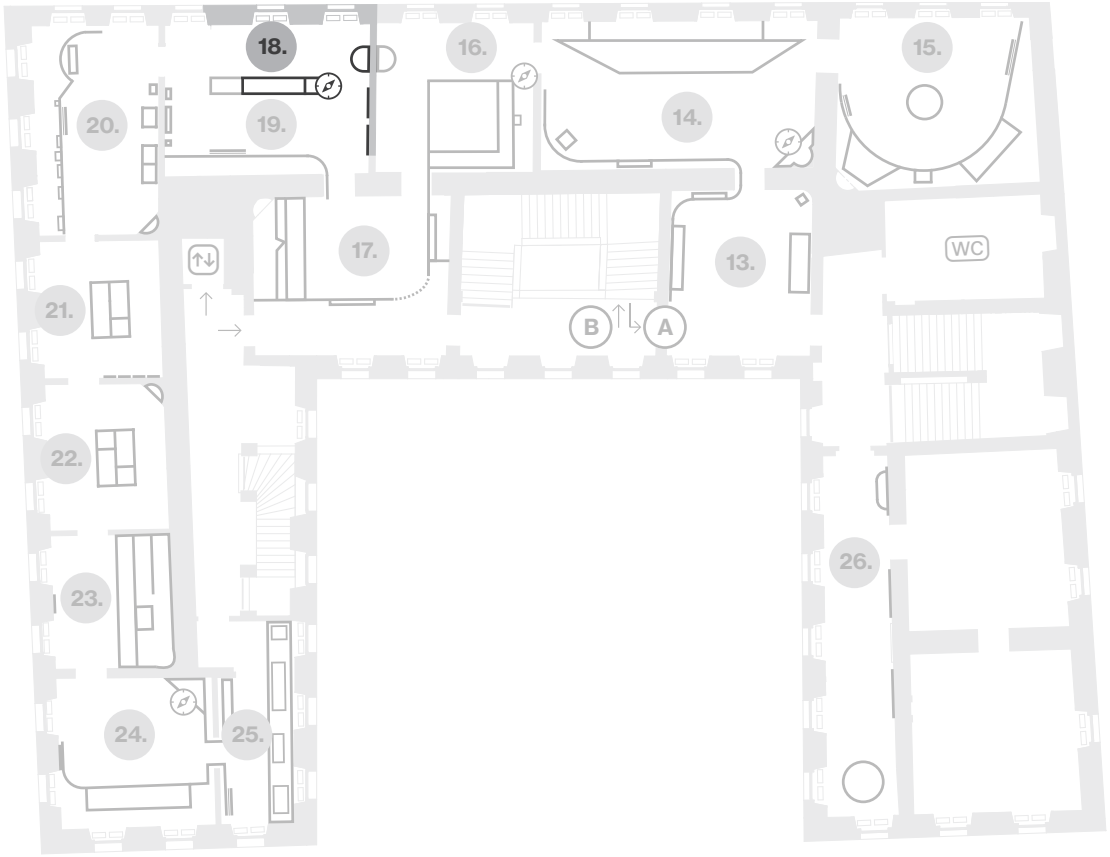
22
Duck-Shaped Paperweight
China, 17th–18th century
steatite
NGP, purchased 1974, originally
the Mujing Novotná Collection
Vp 2664

23
Ink Pressed into a Circular Plate with One Hundred Birds Design
China, 19th – early 20th century
ink
NGP, purchased from Juraj Iványi 1968
Vu 2683

Ink is produced from soot and a variety of admixtures. It was pressed into durable rods, which had to be mixed with water, for which an inkstone was used. The Chinese literati referred to the brush, ink, inkstone, and paper as the “four treasures of the scholar’s study” (*wen fang si bao*).

24
Inkstone with Poem
China, 18th century
stone
NGP, purchased 1972, originally
the Adolf Hoffmeister Collection
Vp 2590

18. Japanese Calligraphy 17



1, 2
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

3
Oyama Hōrai (b. 1926)
Grove
Japan, 2010
wood, carved
NGP, gift of the Association for International Advancement of Calligraphic Culture (*Kokusai shodō bunka hatten kyōgikai*) 2015
Vm 6654

The calligraphy of the character "Grove" (林) displays a new style of artistic rendering of script, which Japanese calligraphers carry over from traditional work with ink and flat paper to other techniques and three-dimensional materials, thereby attempting to innovate a sculptural conception of brush strokes. The engraving of the characters into wood lends them a sculptural quality. A number of contemporary artists specialise in calligraphy carved into wood – *kokuji*.

4
Box for Writing Implements (*Suzuribako*) with Landscape Motif
Japan, 2nd half of 18th century
wood, lacquered, decorated with powdered gold
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1953
Vu 125

This box for writing implements is covered with natural lacquer and decorated with powdered gold in low and high embossment, specifically using the *nashiji* technique, which resembles the skin of the *nashi* pear. Gold leaf, linear drawing with lacquer, sprinkling of powdered gold, and drawing by scouring were also used for decoration. Although the object serves a practical purpose, at the same time it is an excellent example of a refined sense of decoration and a predilection for natural motifs.

5
Vessel for Paintbrushes
Japan, 19th century
bamboo
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg 1888
Vu 1411

6
***Tokuri* Sake Bottle with Calligraphic Inscription**
Japan (Arita), 18th century
stoneware, glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1976
Vu 3346

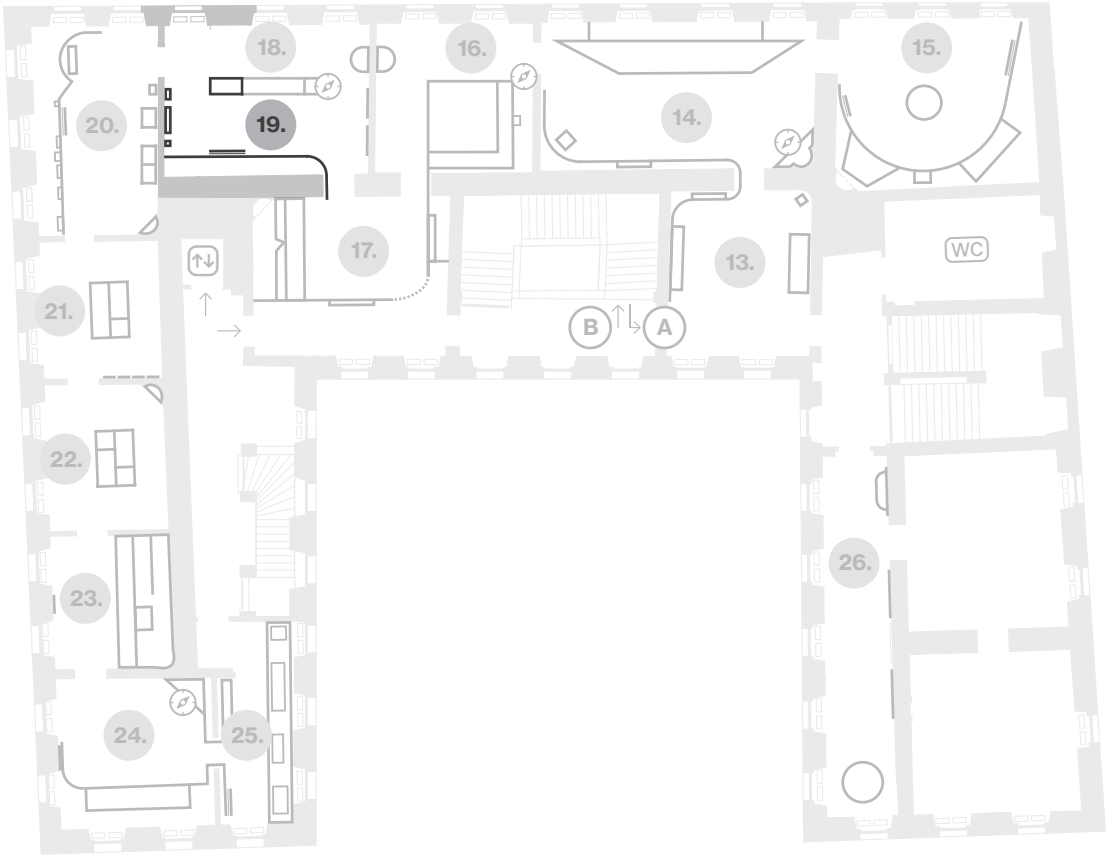
Inscription: "Takahashi-chō (district or town), Matsuo Jinbei (maker or owner)."

7
Book of Fans
Japan, 17th century
ink, colours, paper
NGP, purchased 1955, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vm 725

The Book of Fans (*Ōgi no sōshi*) is a unique collection of illustrated *waka* poems by various anonymous and famous authors and from several different sources, in which the verses are accompanied by small fans rendered in the Japanese painting style of *yamato-e*. The Prague collection contains 40 sheets of three poems written in the calligraphic style of grass script (*sōsho*), and with 120 poems it is therefore the longest of the hitherto known preserved copies of the *Book of Fans*. The individual sheets of the collection are alternated in the exhibition.

8, 9, 10
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

19. Islamic Calligraphy



1
Video – Islamic Calligraphy and Arts of the Book

Manuscript of the 25th *Juzʾ* of the Qurʾan
Iran, 17th century
ink, colours, gold, paper, stamped and gilt leather, 24.3 × 18.3 cm
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Franz Johann Joseph Bock 1888
Vm 1890

2
One-Half *Qistan* Glass Token, Inscription with Name of Provincial Treasurer al-Qasim ibn ʿUbayd Allah
Egypt, 734–742 (116–124 Islamic calendar)
green glass, minted
National Museum – Náprstek Museum, originally the Solnice Collection
N 9774

3
***Dirham* Coin, Obverse with a Profession of Faith in the One God**
Spain, 781–782 (165 Islamic calendar)
silver, minted
National Museum – Náprstek Museum, originally the Bedřich Augst Collection
N 772

The central inscription bears the Arabic text: “There is no deity but God alone. He has no associate.” The use of Arabic script on Muslim coins was essential in the initial period of Islam in order to differentiate them from the coins of the Byzantines and Persian Sasanians, which mostly bore figural representations of the sovereign. The inscription often presented a profession of faith in one God, also in a definition against the faith in the Holy Trinity of the neighbouring Christians. Thanks to their circulation among the population, coins were an effective means of proclaiming the new political-religious identity of the early Muslim states.

4
***Dirham* Coin, Reverse with a Profession of Faith in Muhammad as Messenger of God**
Iran and Central Asia, 896–897
(283 Islamic calendar)
silver, minted
National Museum – Náprstek Museum
N 8403

5
***Guruş* Coin, Reverse with Stylised Calligraphic Insignia (*Tuğra*) of the Sultan Ahmed III**
Turkey (Constantinople), 1703–1704
(1115 Islamic calendar)
silver, minted
National Museum – Náprstek Museum,
originally the Bedřich Augst Collection
N 1279

The *tuğra* of the Ottoman Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–1730) reads: "Ahmed Khan, son of Mehmed, [may he be] eternally victorious." The inscription at the bottom indicates the place and year of minting.

6
Panels with Qurʾanic Inscription in Foliated Kufic Style
probably Spain, ca mid-11th century
wood, carved, residues of polychromy
NGP, purchased 1971
Vp 2614, Vp 2616, Vp 2619, Vp 2621

The panels are decorated with an Arabic inscription in the angular Kufic style in embellished foliated form. The Qurʾanic text at the top presents unconnected excerpts from the 285th verse of the second *sura*. The verse speaks of the belief of Muhammad and his followers in God, the angels, the holy text and the prophets. The inscription on the lower panel states that "all dominion belongs to God".

The panels present a fragment of a calligraphic band, most probably from the interior of a mosque. They possibly originate from the Iberian Peninsula, various parts of which were under Arab rule between the 8th and 15th centuries.

7, 8 🎧18
Two Tiles (*Kashis*) with Qurʾanic Inscription in *Naskh* Cursive Style
Iran (probably Kashan), 1261–1262
(660 Islamic calendar) and 2nd half of 13th century
fritware, metal lustre
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased at Bourgeois Frères in Cologne 1892
Vu 1555, Vu 1556

The tiles are lined with an Arabic inscription in the *naskh* cursive style. The eight-pointed tile quotes the first *sura* of the Qurʾan, "the Opener". The cross-shaped tile bears the 190th–192nd verses of the third *sura*, which state that God is all-powerful and created the world perfect. The tiles most probably adorned the façade of a religious building. Their decoration was rendered using the expensive technique of metal lustre, which gave them a highly valued iridescent shimmer.

9
Tile from a Frieze with Arabic Calligraphic Band
Iran (probably Kashan), 14th century
fritware, relief-moulded, metal lustre, cobalt painting under the glaze
Moravian Gallery in Brno, purchased at Mitteldeutscher Kunstgewerbeverein in Frankfurt am Main 1889
U 7476

10
Tile (*Kashi*) with Motif of Hares and Calligraphic Band
Iran (probably Kashan), late 13th – 14th century
fritware, metal lustre, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961
Vu 1554

11, 12
Two Pharmacy Containers (*Albarelli*) with Pseudo-Inscriptions on Central Bands
Spain (probably Manises, inspired by Islamic models), 16th century
earthenware, metal lustre, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, gift of the vice-consul of the USA Arnold Weissberger 1911
Vu 1572, Vu 1799

From the 10th century onwards, the aesthetic qualities of Islamic calligraphy and its characteristic use in the art of the Islamic world led to the application of pseudo-calligraphic decorative motifs. In shape, they imitate Arabic script, although they have no lexical content. They were used not only in the Islamic but also in the Christian environment, as documented by these two pharmacy containers from 16th-century Spain, with a pseudo-inscription in the band in the centre of the body.

13
Table with Inscriptions "God Has Willed It" ("Ma shaʾa-llah") in Geometrised Kufic Style
Turkey, 19th century
wood, carved, inlaid with bone, mother-of-pearl, and wood
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979, originally Žamberk Chateau (from the Parish family collection)
Vu 3470

The sides of the table are decorated with the Arabic inscriptions "ma shaʾa-llah", or "God has willed it". These are rendered in the Kufic style, distinguished by its straight lines and angular shapes, and are stylised in square format. The decorative function of the calligraphy predominates here.

14
Washbowl with Garlands and Benedictory Verses in Ottoman Turkish
Turkey, mid-18th century – mid-19th century
copper, hammered, chased, gilt (*tombak*)
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Theodor Graf in Vienna 1886
Vu 1699

A bowl used in Turkish baths (*hammam*). The verses in Ottoman Turkish proclaim the purity and immaculateness of the water, its healing property as "living water", and celebrate it as a source of abundance. The inscription thus indirectly blesses both the content and the user of the bowl.

15
Bowl with Inscriptions Containing Royal Titles in Cartouches
Egypt or Syria, 19th century
brass, cast, hammered, chased
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1974
Vu 3028

The decoratively rendered Arabic inscriptions in cartouches contain royal titles such as "wise ruler" ("al-sultan al-ʿalim"), "sublime one" ("al-ʿali") or "ruler of kings" ("al-sultan al-muluk"). In this case, the text celebrating the sovereign is based on an imitation of earlier models and does not indicate the bowl's use at court.

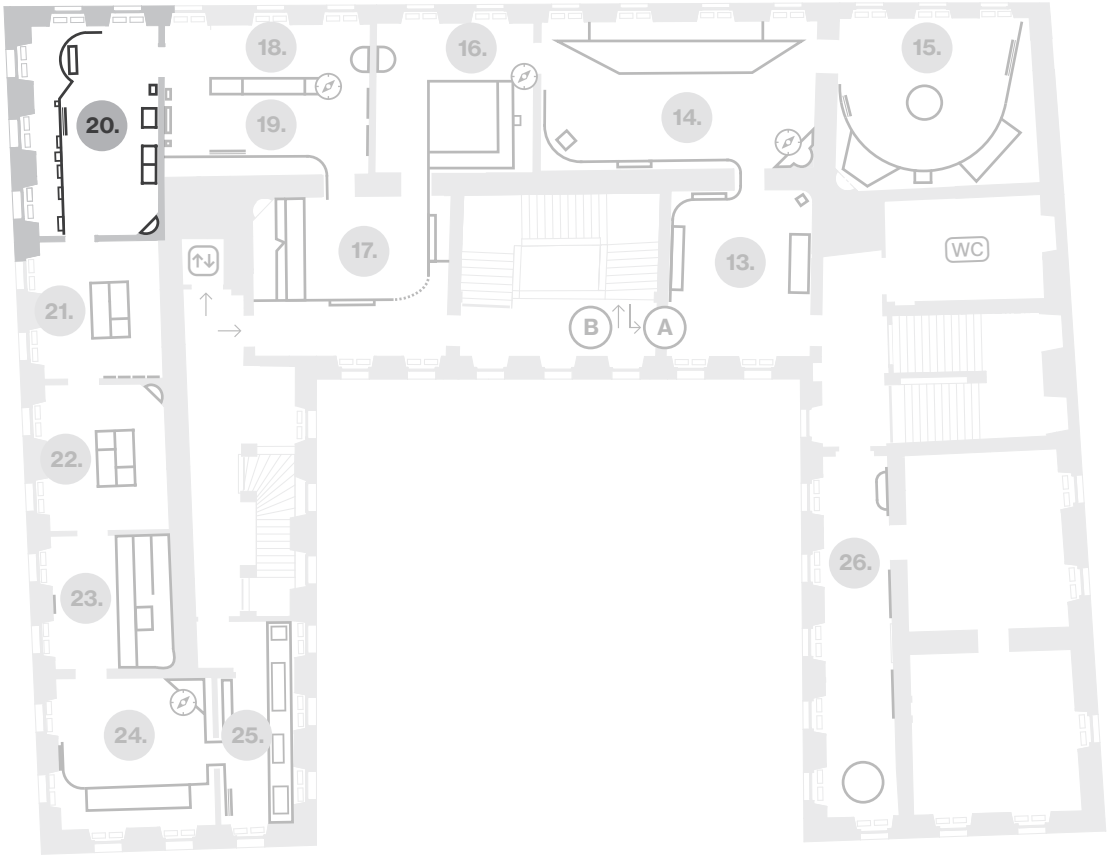
16
Mohammad (probably studio production)
Dish with Persian Inscription in the *Nastaʿliq* Cursive Style
Iran, 1864–1865 (1281 Islamic calendar)
eathenware, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, gift of Adéla Marcusová 1965, originally the Walter Marcus Collection
Vu 2506

The dish bears a Persian inscription in the cursive style of *nastaʿliq*. This developed from the 15th century onwards as part of the rendering of the Persian language, the visual aspect of which differs from Arabic in the absence of the definite article "al" written as two vertical lines. *Nastaʿliq* is distinguished by its more pronounced slope and emphasis on the fluidity of the line. The text quoted on the dish among other matters states the year of its production.

17
el-Hacc Mustafa
Sword (*Yatağan*) with Scabbard, Inscribed on Blade with Names of Producer and Owner and Year of Completion
Turkey or Balkans, 1860–1861 (1277 Islamic calendar)
steel, silver, enchased, filigree, gilt, inlaid with coral
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased 1953
Vu 1677

The inscription on the blade of the sword states the year of its completion and the name of the author "el-Hacc Mustafa" and the owner "Süleyman". The motif of the six-pointed star, within the Islamic context the symbol of the seal of the King and Prophet Solomon, fulfils a protective function.

20. Decorative Design in Islamic and Indian Art



1 19
Door in Frame
Egypt, 19th century
wood, carved, inlaid with bone, ivory, coral, and wood
NGP, purchased from a private collection 1965
Vu 2405

The door illustrates the interconnection of vegetal and geometric ornamentation with calligraphy in an elaborate decorative design over an extensive surface. The Arabic inscription quotes a biblical verse: "Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in." (Psalm 24:9) The door possibly originates from the interior of a Coptic (most likely Egyptian-Christian) church, or was perhaps produced as an export article to Europe. In either case, it demonstrates that, considering the vibrant trade and communities of various religious persuasions in Muslim countries, art objects in "Islamic" style need not always be linked exclusively with the demand or production of Muslims.

2
Panel with Arabesque Motif
Egypt or Syria, 14th–15th century
wood, carved
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Franz Johann Joseph Bock 1887
Vu 1788

3
Printing Block of Edge Band with Arabesque
Iran, 19th century
wood, carved
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975
Vu 3122

4
Incense Burner with Arabesque Design
Iran, 1st half of 19th century
brass, hammered, pierced, chased
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, gift of Heinrich Havel 1887
Vu 1686

5
Video – Persianate *Chinoiserie* and a Collector's History

Tapestry (*Kilim*), fragment
Iran (probably Kashan), ca 1600
silk, metal thread, hand flat-woven,
160 × 124 cm
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Solomon in Dresden 1894
Vu 949

6
Dish (*Tabak*) with Grape Motif
Turkey (Iznik), ca 1560
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Leopold Hamburger in Frankfurt am Main 1886
Vu 1549

In the 15th and 16th centuries, Chinese inspirations were also reflected in the decorative designs of the Turkish dynasty of the Ottomans. This is documented by the example of ceramics with the centre of production in the city of Iznik. Technological innovations led to a greater whiteness and thinning of the wall of the ceramic vessels, enabling a visual resemblance to Chinese blue and white porcelain. This also formed the basis for the motif of the grapes.

7
Dish (*Tabak*) with Bunches of Carnations and Motifs of Three Pearls of Wisdom (*Chintamani*)
Turkey (Iznik), ca 1580
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, purchased from Franz Johann Joseph Bock in Aachen 1886
Vu 2916

In Ottoman art, Chinese inspirations also led to the use of the *chintamani* motif – the Buddhist symbol of the three pearls of wisdom – and waves crashing against rocks, here in combination with bunches of carnations.

8
Jug with Wave Design
Turkey (Iznik), 1585–1600
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased at Rosenberg in Paris 1887
Vu 1546

9
Jug with Tulip Design
Turkey (Iznik), ca 1565
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the architect Jan Kaplický 1986, originally the Vojtěch Lanna Collection
Vu 3935

10
Dish (*Tabak*) with Bunch of Flowers and *Saz* Leaf
Turkey (Iznik), ca 1570–1600
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, purchased at Bourgeois Frères in Cologne 1884
Vu 2909

Around the mid-16th century, Ottoman design developed into a distinctive form. The range of colours was extended with green, turquoise, and brick-red tones. The vegetal repertoire was broadened with the serrated *saz* leaf and Turkish flowers – the tulip, carnation, rose, and hyacinth. Chinese patterns can be seen, for example, in the motif of the waves around the edge of the dishes.

In their decoration, Iznik ceramics significantly inspired European production.

11
Dish with Bunch of Flowers
Italy (probably Padua, inspired by Turkish Iznik models), 17th century
earthenware, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally Klášterec nad Ohří Chateau (from the Thun-Hohenstein Salm-Reifferscheidt family collection)
Vu 3425

12
Tiles with Vegetal Design Containing Tulip and Lotus Motifs
Turkey (Iznik), early 17th century
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963, originally Mnichovo Hradiště Chateau (from the Waldstein family collection)
Vu 2021 a, c

13
Tiles with Motif of Flowers in a Vase
Syria, 17th–18th century
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, acquired from V. Herzfeld in Prague 1894
Vu 1547

14
Dish with Stylised Vegetal Design and Heraldic Motif of Eagle
Spain (probably Manises, inspired by Islamic models), 17th–18th century
earthenware, metal lustre, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, gift of the vice-consul of the USA Arnold Weissberger 1911
Vu 1573

The decorative design and the technique of metal lustre with goldish glitter provide evidence of the enduring inspiration that the Spanish craftsmen drew from the Muslim ceramics after the end of the Arab dominion on the Iberian Peninsula in 1492. The geometrised vegetal motifs imitate Islamic patterns. Here, however, they are combined with the depiction of an eagle, rendered after the fashion of the European heraldic tradition.

15
***Teton* Dish with Stylised Vegetal Design and Double-Headed Eagle Motif**
Spain (probably Manises, inspired by Islamic models), 17th century
earthenware, metal lustre, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased in Antikva, state enterprise 1951
Vu 3

16
Incense Burner (*Mijmar* or *Mabkhara*) with Stylised Figural Motifs
Syria, mid-13th – mid-14th century
bronze, pierced, inlaid with gold and silver
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, from the estate of Jan Eduard, Knight of Neuberg 1892
Vu 1683

The incense burner shows the use of stylised figural motifs on Islamic utility objects. The body is decorated with simplified figures of sitting courtiers and musicians. The zoomorphic legs are inlaid with motifs of a double-headed eagle.

Similar burners were used at the court for burning incense and sandalwood. The lid is perforated to spread the fragrant essence. The upper section bears the inscription: “State of burning, weapons with Allah.” The handle, which was originally on the side of the vessel, has not been preserved.

17
Extension Piece (*Sarpush*) for Water Pipe (*Qalyan*) with Irises and a Motif of Rose and Nightingale, fragment
Iran, 19th century
brass, enamel painting
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1968, originally Klášterec nad Ohří Chateau (from the Thun-Hohenstein Salm-Reifferscheidt family collection)
Vu 3414

18
Tile with Rose and Nightingale (*Gol o Bolbol*)
Iran, 1st half of 19th century
fritware, relief-moulded, painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, purchased from J. Krauth in Frankfurt am Main 1886
Vu 2868

The motif of the devoted nightingale adoring the beautiful but inaccessible rose is a metaphor for the lover and the beloved in Persian literature, and a symbol of the human soul relating to the Prophet Muhammad or God in Islamic mysticism. The theme spread to visual art inspired by European still-lifes and the Chinese artistic genres of flowers and birds. The rendering displays the more realistic approach applied in Persianate painting from the 17th century based on European models.

19
Tile with Horseman and Mythical Bird *Simurgh*
Iran, 1st half of 19th century
fritware, relief-moulded, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from W. D. Vivié in Liberec 1886
Vu 1559

20
Tile with Prince Bahram Gur and Harpist Azada, His Concubine
Iran, late 19th – early 20th century
earthenware, relief-moulded, painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased 1982, probably originally the Emil Filla Collection
Vu 3780

Figural scenes were also applied in the depiction of themes from belles-lettres and profane mythology. The tile presents the story of Prince Bahram Gur and Azada, the harpist and his concubine, familiar from medieval Persian legends about the pre-Islamic history of Iran. Azada accompanies Bahram Gur on a gazelle hunt. The tile depicts both protagonists as they ride together on a camel – Bahram Gur holds

a bow and Azada a harp. It thus follows the type of representation established in Persianate ceramics since the 12th century.

21
Printing Block with Prince Bahram Gur and His Concubine Azada Hunting Gazelle
Iran, 19th century
wood, carved
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975
Vu 3121

22
Tea Urn with Vegetal Design and Calligraphic Bands
Kashmir, 19th century
brass, hammered, pierced, cast, chased
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1953
Vu 88

23
Teapot with Vegetal Design
Kashmir, ca 1870s
copper, tin-plated, hammered, cast, chased
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963, originally Mnichovo Hradiště Chateau (from the Waldstein family collection)
Vu 1970

24
Zoomorphic Vessel with Vegetal Design and *Buta* Motifs
Kashmir, 2nd half of 19th century
silver, cast, chased, gilt
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963, originally Mnichovo Hradiště Chateau (from the Waldstein family collection)
Vu 1976

The shape was inspired by askos, an ancient Greek vessel for oil. In the second half of the 19th century, silversmiths used this as a model for making vessels for water and wine used in Britain, where in addition to their practical function these served as decorations. The surface is covered with the *buta* droplet motif, widely used in Kashmiri handicrafts of the colonial period and associated with a notion of "oriental" luxury in Europe.

25
Printing Block with *Buta* Motif
Iran, 19th century
wood, carved
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975
Vu 3120

26
Salver with Vegetal Design
India (Hyderabad), ca 1800
predominantly zinc alloy, inlaid with silver, *bidri* technique
NGP, purchased from a private collection 1956
Vu 165

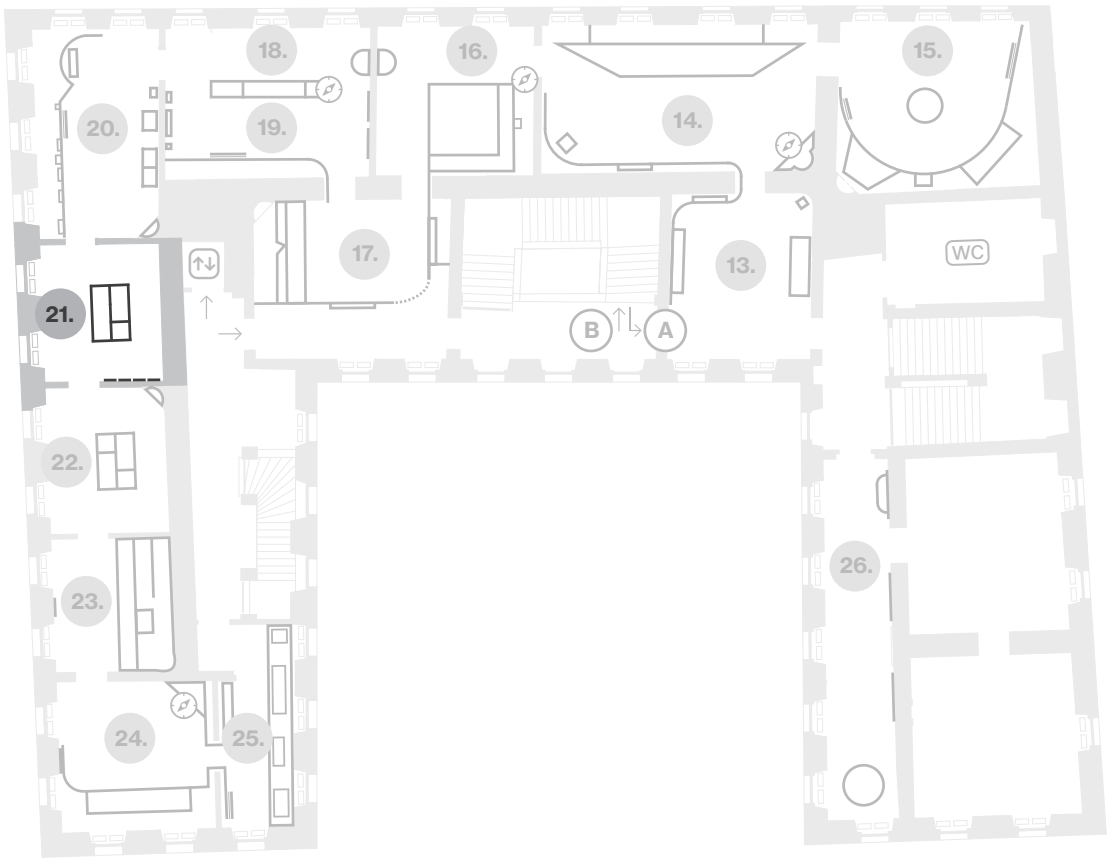
27
Water Pipe (*Huqqa*) Base with Floral Design
India (Hyderabad), 18th century
predominantly zinc alloy, inlaid with silver and brass, *bidri* technique
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, originally the Heinrich von Liebieg Collection
Vu 2919

28 **20**
Cabinet with Hunting Scene and Vegetal Design
Western India, early 17th century
wood, inlaid with (partially coloured) ivory, metal details
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased at Dorotheum in Vienna 1914
Vu 487

A combination of vegetal and figural motifs was a common feature in the Indian decorative arts. Cabinets with hunting scenes were produced under the patronage of the Portuguese in western India from the 16th century onwards. They were an export article, but were sought out for the storage of personal items also by European merchants in Asia. Items produced for foreign customers generally had a function and shape corresponding to their requirements, whereas the craftsmanship and decoration were based on local traditions.

29
Pierced Window Screen (*Jali*)
India, probably 19th century
sandstone
National Museum – Náprstek Museum, purchased by Otokar Feistmantel in Delhi 1881
A 14268

21. Chinese Decorative Art



1
Container
China, 1st century BCE
earthenware, polychromed
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1951
Vp 33

2
Amphora with Dragon-Shaped Handles
China, 7th–8th century
stoneware
NGP, from the estate of Nina Otavová 1983, originally the Vojtěch Chytil Collection
Vu 3786

3
Vase with Dual Handles
China, late 6th century – early 7th century
stoneware, celadon glaze
NGP, purchased 1958
Vp 579

4
Tiger-Shaped Vessel
China, 2nd half of 3rd century
stoneware, celadon glaze
NGP, purchased 1957
Vu 172

5
Archaic Vessel-Shaped Container
China, 4th century
stoneware, celadon glaze
NGP, gift of the government of the People's Republic of China 1959
Vu 218

6
Jug
China, 10th–11th century
stoneware, dark glaze
NGP, gift of the government of the People's Republic of China 1958
Vu 226

7
Vase with Bamboo Leaf Motif
China, 13th century
stoneware, painted, brown glaze
NGP, gift of the government of the People's Republic of China 1958
Vu 231

8
Pillow with Chrysanthemum Motif
China, 11th century
stoneware, sgraffito
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1973
Vu 2896

9
Vase with Three Forms of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara
China, 2nd half of 6th century
earthenware, leaded glaze
NGP, purchased 1973
Vu 2934

10
Bowl with Lotus Motif
China, early 12th century
stoneware, celadon glaze
NGP, purchased 1985
Vu 3902

11
Tea Bowl
China, 12th century
stoneware, black glaze
NGP, purchased 1987
Vu 3944

12
Bowl
China, 14th century
stoneware, streaked blue glaze
NGP, purchased 1969, originally the Václav Materna Collection
Vu 2737

13
Container (*Guan*) with Floral Motif
China, 13th–14th century
stoneware, celadon glaze
NGP, acquired as a gift 1969
Vu 2698

Stoneware and porcelain products with a delicate greenish glaze in several different shades are referred to as celadon. In China, these became popular under the Tang dynasty (618–907) but were brought to perfection under the Song dynasty (960–1279).

14
Container with Dragon and Phoenix Motifs
China, 14th century
stoneware, painted
NGP, purchased 1969, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vu 2738

15 **21**
Dish with Leafwork Motif
China, early 15th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, purchased from Franz Johann Joseph Bock in Aachen 1886
Vu 2908

From the period of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), blue and white porcelain painted with cobalt blue under the glaze began to predominate in ceramics production. Products from the early 15th century, painted with cobalt imported from Iran, are distinguished by darker points on light blue surfaces.

From the end of the Ming dynasty, figural and landscape motifs inspired by Chinese ink painting appeared on blue and white porcelain.

16
Bowl with Peony Motif
China, early 15th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, acquired as a gift 1969
Vu 2704

17
Jug with Grape Motif in Cartouches
China, early 15th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, acquired as a gift 1969
Vu 2707

18
Peach-Shaped Wine Jug with Landscape Motif
China, late 17th – early 18th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased 1974, originally the Mujing Novotná Collection
Vu 2967

19
Goblet on High Stem with Lotus and Tibetan Script Motif
China, 2nd half of 18th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1979
Vu 3585

20
Taoist Goblet with Motif of Crane, Zither (*Qin*), and Calligraphy
China, 17th century
porcelain, white glaze
NGP, purchased 1980
Vu 3596

21
Rhinoceros Horn-Shaped Goblet
China, late 17th – early 18th century
porcelain, white glaze
NGP, purchased 1981, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vu 3644

22
Pair of Plates with Motif of Beauties
China, late 17th – early 18th century
porcelain, *famille verte* enamel painting over the glaze
NGP, purchased 1969
Vu 2727, Vu 2728

23
Bottle with Three Buddhist Lions
China, ca 1700
porcelain, painted with red copper
NGP, purchased 1962
Vu 1037

24
Vase with Red Glaze
China, 2nd half of 18th century
porcelain, red glaze
NGP, purchased 1981
Vu 3622

25
Cylindrical Vase with Two Sculpted Dragons on Shoulders
China, 2nd half of 18th century
porcelain, light blue glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1961
Vu 592

26
Plate with Phoenix and Peony Motif
China, early 18th century
porcelain, blue glaze, carved decoration
NGP, purchased 1987, originally the Jan Prousek Collection
Vu 3945

27
Vessel with Lid and Plum Tree Motif
China, 18th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased 1980
Vu 3607

28
Container with Women and Children Motif
China, ca mid-17th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze and enamels over the glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1961
Vu 593

29
Lidded Vessel with Flower and Bird Motif
China, 18th century
porcelain, *famille rose* enamel painting over the glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1970
Vu 2789

30
Vase with Lotus Lagoon Motif
China, ca 1730
porcelain, *famille rose* enamel painting over the glaze
NGP, purchased 1962
Vu 1042

31
Bottle with Motif of Flowers and Butterflies
China, mid-16th century – mid-17th century
copper, bronze, cloisonné
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally Klášterec nad Ohří Chateau (from the Thun-Hohenstein Salm-Reifferscheidt Family Collection)
Vu 403

Techniques of enamelling also penetrated to China from the West, including compartment enamel (cloisonné), raised field enamel (champlevé), embossed decoration (repoussé), and enamel painting on a metal base.

32
Goblet in Stylised Lotus Blossom Shape
China, 18th century
metal, coloured enamel painting
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1967
Vu 2628

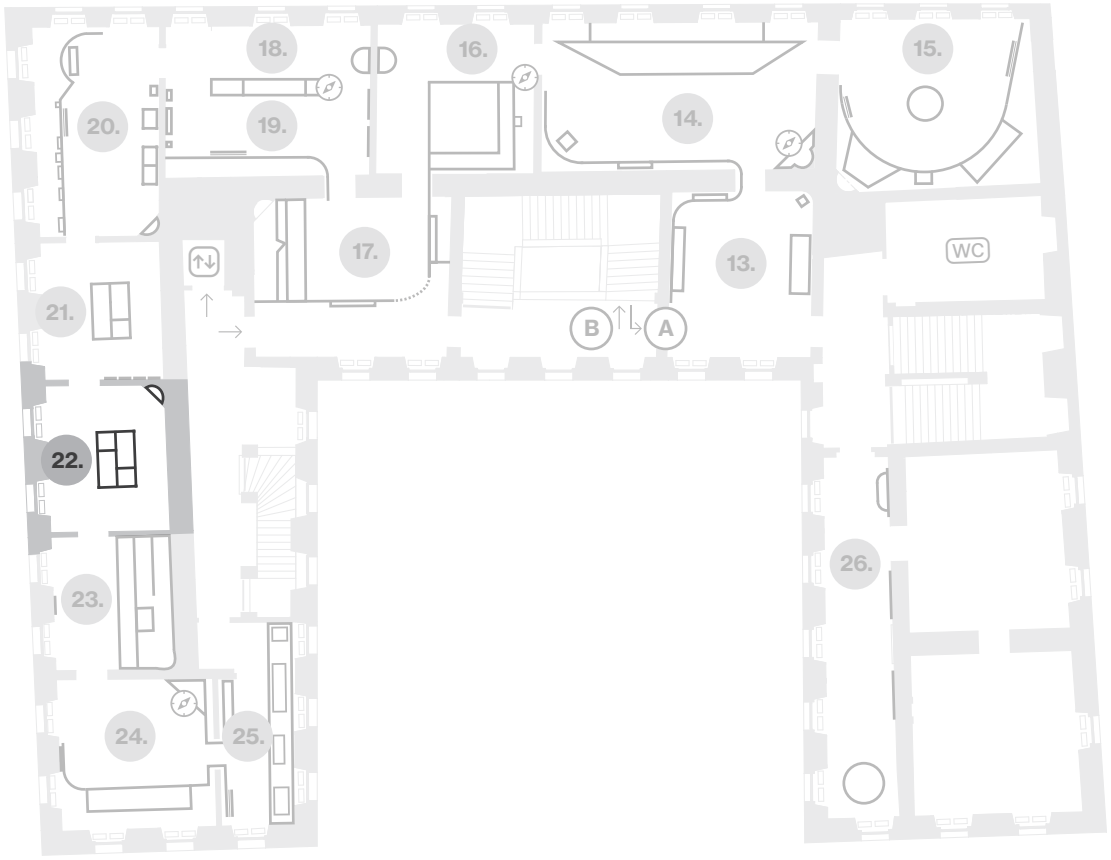
33
Two Containers on High Stem
China, 18th century
copper, cloisonné
NGP, gift of Rainer Kreissl 1998
Vu 4042 a, b

34
Three-Legged Bowl
China, 17th century
metal, cloisonné
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1982
Vu 3699

35
Pair of Quadrilateral Vases with Flowers of the Four Seasons
China, early 20th century
copper, cloisonné
NGP, purchased 1967, 1968
Vu 2617, Vu 2641

36
Tao Junxuan (d. 1915)
The Four Seasons in the Garden of Zhushan
China, before 1915
porcelain, colour painting over the glaze
NGP, purchased 1951
Vm 9–Vm 12

22. Japanese Beauty of Precision and the Principle of Emptiness



1
Yoshimitsu (active 1870–1880)
Archer
Japan, 1870–1880
bronze, inlaid with coloured metals
NGP, purchased 2003
Vp 3226

2
Kurihara Kenji Nobuhide (1815–1881)
"Historicising Sword" (*Shin-Shintō Katana*)
Japan (Edo), 1861
steel, iron scabbard, rim of handle and head (*kashira*) from copper and silver alloy
North Bohemian Museum in Liberec
Z 531

3
Quadrangular Sword Guard (*Tsuba*) with Latticework
Japan, 16th century
iron, pierced
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963
Vu 2133

4
Clover Leaf-Shaped (*Mokkō*) Sword Guard (*Tsuba*)
Japan, 17th–18th century
iron, pierced, patina
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1982
Vu 3705

5
"Kyoto Style" (*Heianjō*)
Sword Guard (*Tsuba*) with Phoenix Motif
Japan, 17th century
iron, inlaid with brass, chased
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1981
Vu 3767

6
Sword Guard (*Tsuba*) with Plum Tree Motif
Japan, 17th century
iron, pierced, chased
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963
Vu 2049

7
Shōami school
Sword Guard (*Tsuba*) with Motif of Chrysanthemums with Buds
Japan, 17th century
iron, inlaid with coloured metals, black patina
NGP, acquired as a gift 1961, originally the Emil Filla Collection
Vu 347

8
Five-Part Tower-Shaped Incense Burner
Japan (Hirado), 2nd half of 18th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally the Alexander Thurn-Taxis Collection
Vu 538

9
Bowl with Motif of Pine Trees and Sakura Branches
Japan (Arita), 1690–1720
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, enamels and gold over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, confiscated from the Nostitz Palace in Prague 1945
Vu 733

10
Sake Bottle
Japan (Arita), 1710–1740
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, enamels and gold over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased at Liebermann in Vienna 1885
Vu 1528

11 **22**
Nabeshima ware
Bowl with Pomegranates
Japan (Ōkawachi), 1690–1730
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze and enamels over the glaze
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, originally purchased from the Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Cologne
Vu 2856

The bowl combines geometric and vegetal decoration. The pomegranate is intended to symbolise a wish for longevity and abundance, plentiful property, and offspring. In Europe, the (originally Chinese) motif of the pomegranate became the popular "onion pattern". The geometric pattern in the background denotes a bamboo fence. The asymmetrical decoration is characteristic of porcelain from Ōkawachi to the north of Arita, produced for the influential princely Nabeshima clan.

12
Nabeshima ware
Bowl with Two Phoenixes
Japan (Ōkawachi), early 18th century
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, enamels over the glaze
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, probably a gift of Heinrich von Liebieg 1884–1887
Vu 2855

13
Bowl with Motif of Seated Warrior Katō Kiyomasa on Tiger Skin
Japan (Kyoto), ca 1900
stoneware, enamel and gold painting over the glaze
NGP, gift of Rainer Kreissl 1998
Vu 4028

14
Bowl with Leafwork and Peony Motif
Japan (Arita), 1770–1820
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, enamels and gold over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961
Vu 1534

15
Bowl with Flowers and Dragons in Clouds
Japan (Arita), 1790–1840
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, enamels and gold over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Rudolf Fišer in Prague 1952
Vu 613

16
Plate with Motif of Two Phoenixes
Japan (Arita), 1670–1690
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, gift of Rainer Kreissl 2000
Vu 4147

17
Sake Bottle in Shape of Double Pumpkin with Plum Blossom Motif
Japan (Arita), 1790–1830
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased at Dorotheum in Vienna 1909
Vu 1544

18
Bowl with Motif of Rock, Peonies, Chrysanthemums, and Phoenix
Japan (Arita), 1690–1720
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963
Vu 2170

19
Vase for Ikebana with Maple Leaf Motif
Japan, late 19th century
bronze, inlaid with silver embossment
NGP, from the estate of Vojtěch Chytil 1983
Vu 3804

20
Style of Hayashi Kōdenji
Decorative Plate with Flying Crane Motif
Japan, ca 1880
copper, cloisonné
NGP, purchased in Galerie Arcimboldo 2011
Vu 4358

The plate has a copper core decorated with latticed cloisonné enamel with a matt finish. The decoration in the form of a flying crane is a typical gratulatory motif, a wish for a long and full life. It is reminiscent of the production of the Shippō Kaisha workshop in Nagoya, which especially in the 1880s set the tone of Japanese enamel production with use of the cloisonné technique. As in other branches and in Japanese enamel production, subtle and detailed use of floral and animal motifs is most frequently applied.

21
Bowl with Lid with Geometric and Floral Motifs
Japan, 18th century
porcelain, cloisonné
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased at Liebermann in Vienna 1885
Vu 761

22
Style of Hayashi Kōdenji
Vase with Plum Blossoms and Spring Flowers
Japan (Nagoya region), ca 1885
copper, silver, cloisonné
NGP, purchased 2004
Vu 4338

23
***Wan* Type Bowl with Crane**
Japan, 1st half of 19th century
wood, lacquered, decorated with powdered gold and silver
NGP, gift of the Walter Marcus Collection 1965
Vu 2496

24
Box for Fragrances (*Jinbako*)
Japan, 1st half of 19th century
wood, lacquered, copper mounting, silk strings
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally the Liebermann Collection
Vu 472

25
Workshop of Sasaya family, attributed
Oval Plaque with Portrait of Jean Domat
Japan (Kyoto), 1780–1790
copper, lacquered, gilt
NGP, purchased in Galerie Arcimboldo 2017
Vu 4374

From the beginning of the 1780s onwards, lacquer objects produced in Japan according to European templates, which were imported to the European market, appeared in the orders of the Dutch East India Company. This also applies to the oval plaques inspired by illustrations in the then contemporary encyclopaedia of distinguished personages *L'Europe Illustré* published by Dreux du Radier in the years 1755–1765. Beneath the inscription "JEAN DOMAT (1625–1696)" on the frontal face of the oval plaque is a bust of the renowned judge and advocate. The reverse bears the inscription "Avocat du Roy au Presd. I de Clermont en Auvergne, auteur des Loix Civils, Né le 30.9bre 1625 mort à Paris le 14. Mars 1696".

26
Decorative Sake Bowl (*Sakazuki*)
Japan, ca 1910
cloisonné without solid core (*plique-à-jour*)
NGP, purchased 2005
Vu 4340

27
Comb
Japan, 18th–19th century
wood, lacquered, gilt
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from R. Wagner in Berlin 1899
Vu 1493

28
Salver with Motif of Turtles on a Rock in the Sea and Setting Sun
Japan, 19th century
wood, lacquered, gold, silver, copper mounting
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1963, originally Sychrov Chateau
Vu 2393

29
Jitokusai Gyokuzan (active late 19th century)
Bowl with Motif of Carp in Waves
Japan, 3rd quarter of 19th century
wood, lacquered, gilt
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Antonín Raschin 1903
Vu 1523

30
Deep Bowl with Pine Tree Motif
Japan (Northern Kyūshū), 18th–19th century
stoneware, painted with iron and copper oxides
NGP, purchased 1980, originally the Hrdlička family collection
Vu 3597

31
Beauty with Vase
Japan (Arita), ca 1670–1690
porcelain, painting over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1972, on deposit from the Municipal Museum in Duchcov 1953
Vu 2834

32
Flute Vase
Japan (Arita), 1730–1760
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, red enamel and gold over the glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1981
Vu 3685

33
Beauty in Cloak with Emblems and Peony
Japan (Arita), 1720–1740
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, red and black enamel and gold over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1972, on deposit from the Municipal Museum in Duchcov 1953
Vu 2835

34
Katō Mokuzaemon II (active 2nd half of 19th century)
Vase with Motif of Cranes and Flowering Bushes
Japan (Seto), 1870–1900
porcelain, painted with colours under the glaze and over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975, originally Hrubý Rohozec Chateau
Vu 3039

35
Container with Figure of Lion on Lid and Brocade Decoration
Japan (Arita), 1720–1740
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, red enamel and gold over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1963, originally Sychrov Chateau
Vu 2295

Mingei Ceramics

1
Mori Tōgaku (b. 1937)
Vase in Shape of Mace
Japan (Bizen), mid-20th century
ceramics
Vlasta and Jan Winkelhöfer Collection

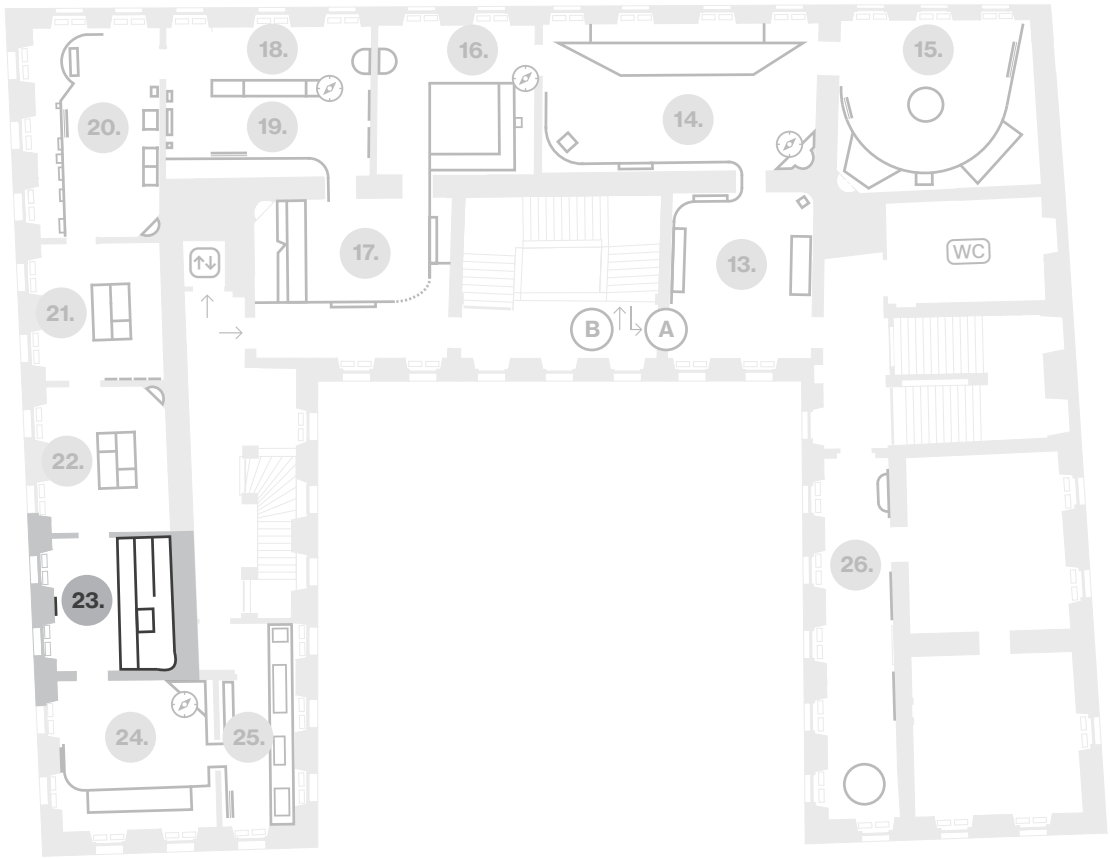
2
Tenryū (still operating workshop)
Large Bulbous Vase (*Hagi-Yaki*)
Japan (Yamaguchi prefecture, Hagi), 2nd half of 20th century
ceramics
Vlasta and Jan Winkelhöfer Collection

3
Nakajima Ensō (active 20th century)
Pot (*Dobin*)
Japan (Seto), 1950s
ceramics
Vlasta and Jan Winkelhöfer Collection

4
Nakajima Ensō (active 20th century)
Large Plate with Plum Branch Decoration
Japan (Seto), 1950s
ceramics
Vlasta and Jan Winkelhöfer Collection

5
Niō Kobashigawa (active mid-20th century)
Vessel for Lard (*Abura-Tsubo*)
Japan (Okinawa, Naha), early 1960s
ceramics
Vlasta and Jan Winkelhöfer Collection

23. Landscape and Society in China



1
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

2
***Ruyi* Sceptre**
China, 19th century
wood, carved
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1973
Vu 2879

3
***Ruyi* Sceptre**
China, 19th century
soapstone
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1967
Vu 2634

4
Court Necklace
China, 19th century
flat silk cord, glass, amber, and jade beads
NGP, purchased 1985, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vu 3900

5, 6
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

7
Chrysanthemum-Shaped Box
China, 18th century
red lacquer, carved
NGP, acquired as a gift 2000
Vu 4066

Lacquer is obtained as a translucent sap from the Toxicodendron vernicifluum plant. After cleaning, it is applied to the object so that decorative motifs can be carved or inlaid into it after drying.

This chrysanthemum-shaped box is an example of precise carving in lacquer in a highly aesthetically processed utility object. The chrysanthemum is also a symbol of longevity, immortality, and tenacity.

8 **🎧23**
***Qin* Zither**
China, 16th–17th century
wood, lacquered
NGP, transferred from the Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 1975, originally a gift of Xu Beihong to Jaroslav Průšek 1951
Vu 3536

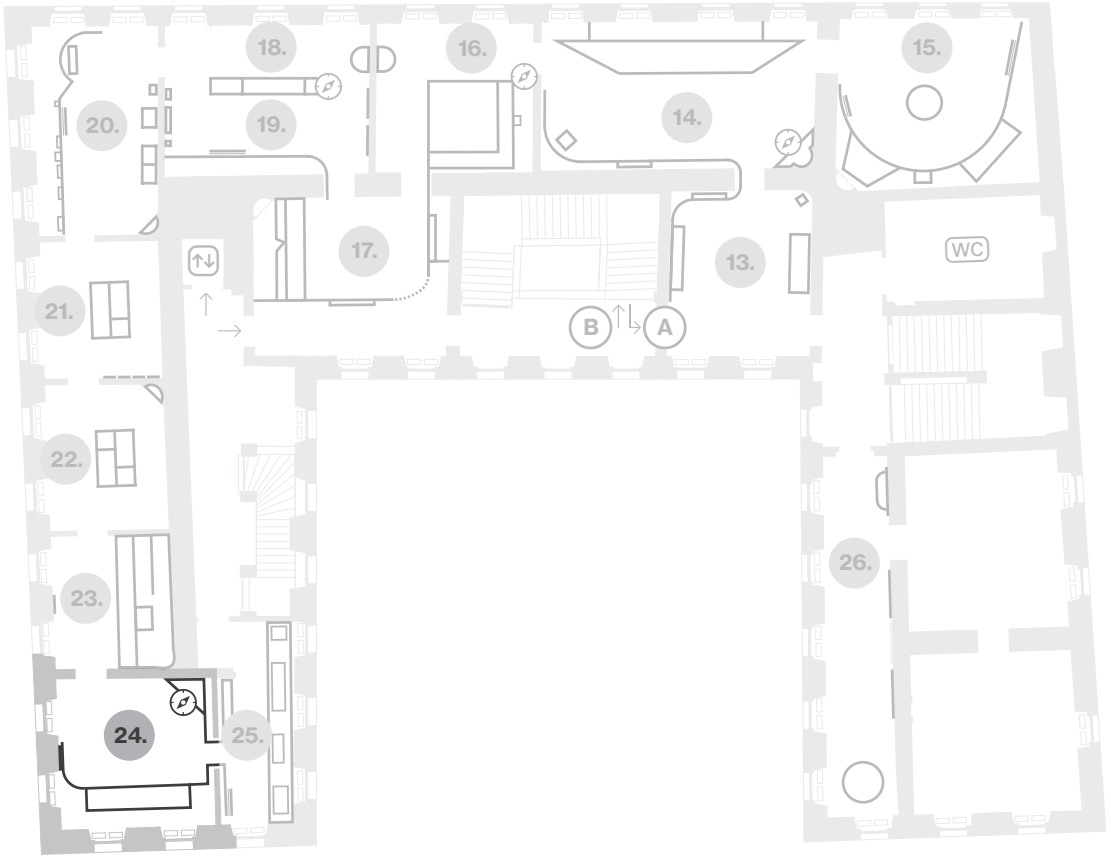
The *qin* was considered the instrument of scholars, reputedly played fondly by Confucius himself. It is a zither with seven strings, although in certain periods it could have one, two, five, or nine strings. Most of the scholars in the time of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) learned to play on it themselves, scorning other musical instruments. From the 16th century, all scholars had a *qin* hung in their study, whether they actually played it or not.

9
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

10
Landscape with Kingfisher Clouds
China, 18th–19th century
marble
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1975, originally the Eduard Riedl von Riedelstein Collection
Vu 3129

11
Audio – Classical Chinese Music Played on a *Qin* Zither
Source: Freesound, Guqin-2.wav by xserra, https://freesound.org/people/xserra/sounds/161907/, license: Attribution 4.0
recorded at a guqin store in Beijing, China 2012

24. Japanese Pictures of the Floating World



1
Conical Basket
Japan, 19th century
bamboo splints
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg 1888
Vu 1375

2
Oval Vase-Shaped Basket
Japan, 19th century
brass bands, brown pigment
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from R. Wagner in Berlin 1891
Vu 1388

3
Smoking Table with Emblem of Tokugawa Clan
Japan, 1st half of 19th century
wood, lacquered, silver
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Antonín Raschin 1903
Vu 475

4
Folding Pipe and Case
Japan, 19th century
metal, reed, horn
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973
Vu 2927, Vu 2928

5
Basket with Oval Mouth
Japan, 19th century
bamboo splints
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg 1888
Vu 1380

6
Mask of Old Man
Japan, 18th–19th century
wood, horsehair
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1970, originally Hrubý Rohozec Chateau
Vp 2714

This mask of an old man (*okina*) is an example of one of the characters of *Noh* theatre, where it lends plasticity to the character. The actors were able to work precisely with the angle under which the light fell upon the mask, and thereby alter its expression. The rhythm of the presentation and the content of the *Noh* theatre plays accentuate the spiritual subtext of this genre. Like acting itself, the creation of masks is a valued art, passed down from generation to generation in Japanese families. Even today, both actors and crafts producers may become a part of the Japanese cultural heritage within the category of "living national treasure".

7
Mythological Fish *Shachi* (*Netsuke*)
Japan, 18th century
wood, carved, inlaid with bone
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1970
Vp 2520

8
Bowl for Powdered Tea with Floral Medallions
Japan (Kyoto), late 19th century
stoneware, enamel and gold painting over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased at Zacharias in Berlin 1887
Vu 664

9
Case for Smoking Utensils with Pouch
Japan, 1850–1880
tortoiseshell, leather, canvas, bone, metal, coral, lacquer decorated with powdered gold and silver
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961
Vu 1611

10
Box (*Inrō*) for Medicaments with Landscape Motif
Japan, 19th century
wood, lacquered, decorated with powdered gold
NGP, purchased 1997
Vu 4013

11 **24**
Picnic Set (*Sagejū-Bako*)
Japan, 18th–19th century
wood, lacquered, metal
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased from Antonín Raschin 1903
Vu 471

This picnic set was created using the technique of applying lacquer, which in the resulting "siliceous" gloss imitates aventurine. The bottles are produced from white metal. The body of the cabinet is decorated with a motif of flying cranes, a gratulatory motif of constancy and longevity, the sides of the cabinet with a motif of a boat with a taut sail rendered in gold lacquer. The set is a good example of the Japanese practical approach to space and its division, which is combined with a penchant for perfect craftsmanship and artistically accomplished products.

12
Plate with Scene of Combing Hair
Japan (Arita), 1810–1860
porcelain, painting in pale and dark red, green and black enamel and gold over the glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1990
Vu 3963

13
Bowl with Motif of Poet and Waterfall
Japan (Arita), 1st half of 19th century
stoneware, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1976
Vu 3347

This bowl documents that Japanese pottery was inspired by the Chinese (not to mention Korean) environment, not only in technological but also in artistic terms. Japanese potters not only adopted the technology of producing blue and white porcelain but also sources of decoration, namely vegetal motifs, literati painting, etc. The motif on the bowl reflects the typical harmony of humanity with nature, which we encounter in Chinese, Korean, and Japanese ink painting.

14
Incense Burner in the Form of a Seated Female Beauty
Japan (Arita), 1700–1720
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, enamels and gold over the glaze
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963, originally Buchlovice Chateau
Vu 2152

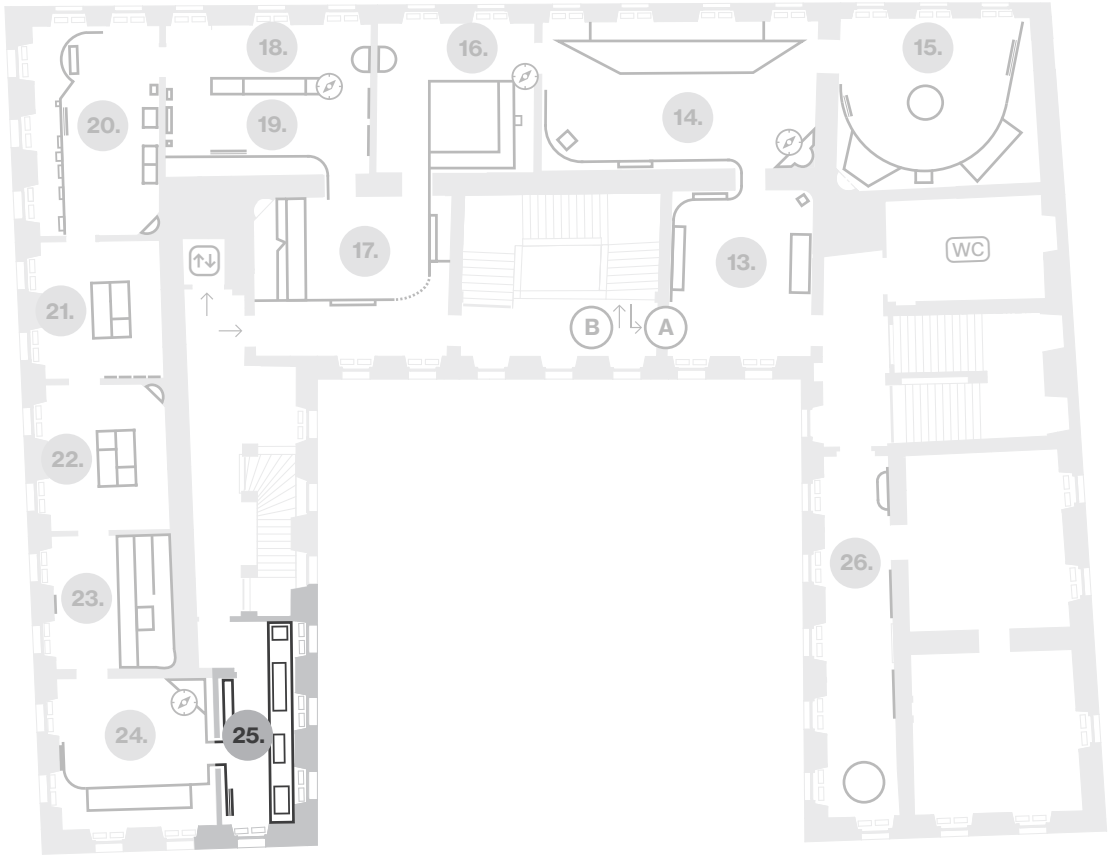
15
Vessel for Tea Leaves (*Chatsubo*) with Playing Children Motif
Japan (Arita), 1670–1690
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1963, originally Sychrov Chateau
Vu 2218

16, 17
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

18
Container with Genre Themes
Japan (Arita), 1710–1740
porcelain, cobalt painting under the glaze, red enamel and gold over the glaze
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1976
Vu 3349

19, and possibly 20
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

25. Court Culture in India, Iran, and Turkey



1, 2
These works are rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

3
Touch Screen – Painting Albums

4
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

5 **25**
Portrait of Bahram and Gol-andam
Iran, 1st half of 19th century
oil, canvas
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979, originally Dalovice Chateau (from the Riedl von Riedelstein family collection)
Vm 4744

The portrait depicts the romantic couple Bahram, the Persian king of the pre-Islamic period, and the Chinese princess Gol-andam. The clothing of the figures based on 19th-century Persianate fashion attests to a contemporary interpretation. The erotic atmosphere of the scene is underlined by the diaphanous bodice of the princess. The intimacy between the figures is expressed in gestures, although the gaze faces the viewer, which is characteristic of Persianate painting of the period of the Qajar dynasty. In its style and the technique of oil painting, the portrait documents the growing European inspiration in Persianate painting.

6
Tile with Court Scene
Iran, 1st half of 19th century
fritware, relief-moulded, painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec 1973, purchased from J. Krauth in Frankfurt am Main 1886
Vu 2870

7
Tile with King Eskandar (Alexander) at a Banquet
Iran, 19th century
fritware, relief-moulded, painting under the glaze
NGP, purchased from Werner Forman 1951
Vu 6

8
This work is rotated periodically. For more information, please refer to the appendix at the back of this guide.

9, 10
Sabre with Scabbard and Set of Accessories (spurs, belt, pectoral jewel, chains for sword, clasp for turban, and buttons)
Iran or Turkey, 19th century
Damascus steel, silver, enamel, pearls, filigree, gilt, wood, velvet
NGP, transferred from the State Monuments Administration 1963, originally Jemniště Chateau (the Oskar Daněk von Esse Collection)
Vu 2014, Vu 2015

Urban Coffeehouses

Folio from the Album for Prince Paar, View of Turkish Coffeehouse
Turkey, before 25 April 1783
colours, paper, 29 × 41 cm
NGP, purchased from a private collection 1990
Vm 6167

11
Extension Piece (*Sarpush*) for Water Pipe (*Qalyan*), fragment
Iran, 19th century
brass, enamel painting
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1968, originally Klášterec nad Ohří Chateau (the Thun-Hohenstein Salm-Reifferscheidt family collection)
Vu 3415

12
Extension Piece (*Sarpush*) for Water Pipe (*Qalyan*)
Iran, 19th century
wood, brass, carving, enamel painting
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979, originally Klášterec nad Ohří Chateau (the Thun-Hohenstein Salm-Reifferscheidt family collection)
Vu 3458

13
Teapot
Uzbekistan, 19th century
copper alloy, brass, hammered, cast, chased
NGP, purchased in Soluna Prague 1980
Vu 3615

14
Water Pipe (*Nargile*) Base
Turkey (Kütahya), 19th century
fritware, painting under the glaze
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1979
Vu 3459

15
Water Pipe (*Huqqa*) Base
India, 19th century
brass, hammered, cast, chased, gilt, polychromed
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1960
Vu 1635

16
Water Pipe (*Huqqa*) Base
India, early 19th century
predominantly zinc alloy, *bidri* technique
NGP, acquired as a gift 1960
Vu 331

17
Audio – Indian Classical Music Played on *Sarod* Lute

Atish Mukhopadhyay (b. 1973)
Composition in Melodic Mode (*Raga*) Mian ki Malhar (excerpt)
part of *gat* in *vilambit* (introductory slow tempo) and *tintal* metre
performed by Atish Mukhopadhyay, © 2008 Atish Mukhopadhyay, courtesy of the performer

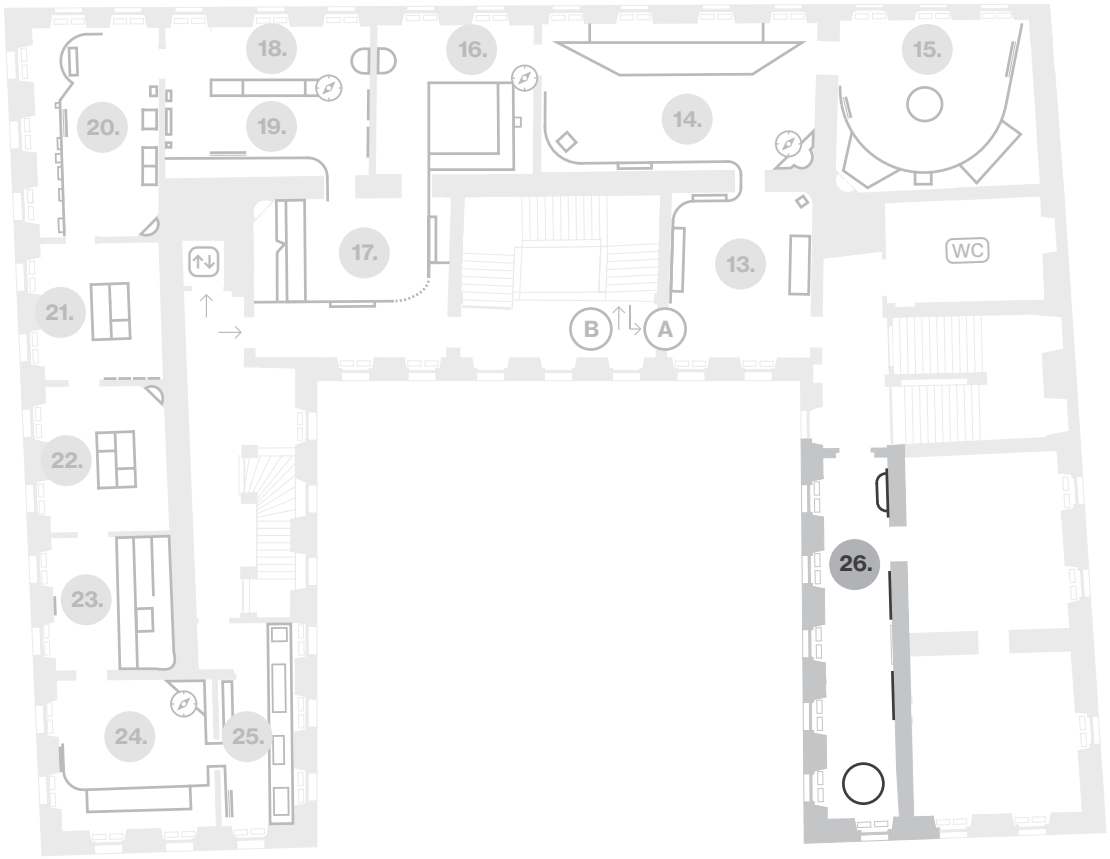
18
Audio – Persian Classical Music

Kourosh Taghavi (b. 1965)
Ascend
Avaz section of the composition in melodic mode (*dastgah*) Bayat-e Tork
performed by Namâd Ensemble, directed by Kourosh Taghavi, from the album *Ode to Love*, © 2020 Namâd Ensemble, courtesy of Namâd Ensemble

19
Audio – Ottoman Turkish Classical Music

Sultan Selim III (1761–1808)
***Saz Semaʿisi* (instrumental form) in Melodic Mode (*Makam*) Büzürg**
performed by Elhân Ensemble, directed by Burak Kaynarca and Timuçin Çevikoğlu, from the album *Elhân*, © 2012 Elhân Ensemble, courtesy of Elhân Ensemble

26. Studio: A Space for Playing, Creating, and Meditating



Kamila Housová Mizerová
Origami Object, 2025

Observe the subtle vibrations of the aerial installation – the floating cloud made of origami lotus blossoms. Influence the flow of the blossoms through space: without touching them, just by waving your hands.

Kamila Housová Mizerová
Chinese Zodiac, 2025

Courtyard

Temple Lantern
Japan, 1870–1890
bronze
NGP, purchased 1953, originally
the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vu 104

The cast inscription on the leg and base features the name of the producer Fujiwara Masatoki. The lantern consists of five parts: a base with relief cartouches, a six-sided lantern decorated with an openwork hexagonal lattice with a barberry trefoil and stylised Chrysanthemum flowers, a massive canopy and a little hat shaped like an inverted lotus flower on the top. A flaming pearl, the symbol of eternity, is set into the lotus like into a chalice. It is a commission from the highest classes which probably appeared in Europe with the decline of the Japanese nobility during the Meiji era (1868–1912). However, no precise information about the lantern's arrival to Bohemia is available.

Foyer

Pair of Chinese Guardian Lions *Karajishi* with a Pearl
Japan, 18th–19th century
bronze, cloisonné
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques),
state enterprise 1964
Vp 1050, Vp 1051

A pair of *Karajishi* "Chinese Lions" guarded staircases or gates to the sacred areas of monasteries from both sides. *Kara* is an ancient Japanese term for China or Korea, while *jishi* is the Japanese reading of the character meaning lion. Lions carved in stone or cast in bronze are generally of large to monumental dimensions, as mythical beasts that often play with a Buddhist attribute, the sacred *tama* pearl, which in this case is decorated using the cloisonné coloured enamel technique.

List of Abbreviations:

NGP – National Gallery in Prague

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PRAGUE

APPENDIX TO THE EXHIBITION GUIDE

Due to their sensitivity to light, the exhibited textiles and works on paper are rotated periodically.
The works currently on display are listed here.

1st floor

I. The Czech Lands and the Art of Asian Cultures in the Past

1. The Czech Lands and "the Orient"

33
Carpet with Hunting Scenes
probably Turkey, 2nd half of 19th century
silk, handwoven with symmetrical knot
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1968, confiscated from the villa of Heinrich and Martha Schicht in Ústí nad Labem 1945
Vu 3393

A Curio Shop with Artistic Goods from "the Orient"

32
***Sanna* Type Carpet**
Iran, 2nd half of 19th century
wool, cotton, handwoven with symmetrical knot
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1953
Vu 1331

33
Camel Trapping (*Asmalyk*)
Turkmenistan, 2nd half of 19th century
wool, cotton, handwoven with asymmetrical knot
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1970
Vu 2785

3. A Collector's Room

5
Utagawa Hirosada (active 1819–1865)
Kataoka Gadō II as Nuregami Chōgorō
Japan (Osaka), 1848
colour woodblock print
NGP, transferred to the Collection of Prints and Drawings 1943, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vm 259

6
Utagawa Hirosada (active 1819–1865)
Jitsukawa Enzaburō I as the Boatman Kikuhei, from the series **Tales of Filial Piety and Heroism**
Japan (Osaka), 1848
colour woodblock print
NGP, transferred to the Collection of Prints and Drawings 1943, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vm 236

7
Utagawa Hirosada (active 1819–1865)
Nakamura Shikan III as Ume no Yoshibei, **Moon**
folio from the series **Snow, Moon, and Flowers**
Japan (Osaka), ca 1849
colour woodblock print
NGP, transferred to the Collection of Prints and Drawings 1943, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vm 260

40
Ladies' Informal Robe
China, late 19th – early 20th century
silk, embroidered
NGP, acquired as a gift 2009
Vu 4353

4. Asian Inspirations in Czech Visual Art

Rotation 1
(on view from 20 October 2026 to 17 January 2027)

Wenceslaus Hollar in Tangier, North Africa

1
Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677)
Mulay al-Rashid ibn Sherif, 1670
etching
NGP, from the estate of Jindřich Klazar 1951
R 117853

2
Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677)
Tangier from the North, title page from the series **Divers Prospects in and about Tangier**, 1673
etching
NGP, transferred from the National Museum 1949
R 51196

In 1669, Wenceslaus Hollar, an eminent Baroque draughtsman and graphic artist originally from Prague, took part in an English voyage to the North African port city of Tangier, which at that time was an English colony. As part of his pictorial documentation, he produced coloured drawings of the town, based on which he compiled a series of etchings. He also created a portrait of the Moroccan Sultan Mulay al-Rashid.

Rotation 2
(on view from 19 January to 18 April 2027)

Japonisme

1
Tavík František Šimon (1877–1942)
Mount Fuji, 1928
colour etching
NGP, acquired by transfer 1949
R 25962

2
Tavík František Šimon (1877–1942)
Mount Fuji, 1928
pencil drawing
NGP, acquired by transfer 1961
K 35265

2

The painter and printmaker Tavík František Šimon left both a literary and visual account of his travels in Japan. He was particularly drawn to motifs from Japanese life (*japonaiserie*), which he studied on site. Much like the Japanese landscape painters Hokusai and Hiroshige before him, he was captivated by the monumental beauty of Mount Fuji – the dominant landmark of the Japanese landscape – which he depicted from various perspectives.

II. Collections of Asian and Islamic Art Today

6. Chinese Ritual Art

5
Zhongli Quan with Carp
China, probably 16th–17th century
ink, colours, silk
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1952
Vm 6

The scene is likely a depiction of the figure of Zhongli Quan, one of the Eight Immortals. He was also known as Han Zhongli, as he supposedly lived during the Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE), in the period before the Common Era. He is usually portrayed with a bare chest, holding a fan and drinking wine. In this painting, he is shown holding a vessel shaped like a double gourd – a symbol of immortality – and speaking with a carp, a symbol of perseverance, transformation, and prosperity.

The painting is signed with the name Cheng Zongdao, an artist active during the Northern Song dynasty (960–1127) who specialised in Buddhist and Daoist themes and also carved images into stone. This work, however, is not by Cheng Zongdao, but rather a later copy, likely dating to the Ming dynasty in the 16th–17th century.

7. Japanese Reverence for Nature – *Shintō*

7
Fūjin, the God of Wind
Japan, 19th century
ink, colours, silk
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Cultural Facilities 1963, originally Sychrov Chateau
Vm 3662

Fūjin, the god of wind, is depicted as a demonic protector of the Buddhist teachings. The scroll is divided into two parts, the heavenly realm and the earthly world of humans at the mercy of the element of the wind. Fūjin is one of the oldest deities of *Shintō* mythology, and in figural form is usually dressed in a loincloth made of leopard skin and carrying a large sack filled with a whirlwind. He is frequently depicted in a pair together with Raijin, the god of thunder.

8. The Religious Art of India

24
Devi on a Lotus Throne, from the series
Ten Aspects of One Goddess
India (Jaipur), late 19th century
ink, colours, gold, silver, paper
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally the Jan Bartoš Collection
Vm 2006

25
Varaha, the Third Incarnation of Vishnu
India (Jaipur), late 19th century
ink, colours, gold, silver, paper
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, originally the Jan Bartoš Collection
Vm 1986

In the form of a wild boar, the Hindu god Vishnu battles with the demon Hiranyaksha and raises the earth from the waters.

9. Islam and Religious Art

5
***Konya* Type Prayer Rug (*Seccade*)**
Turkey, late 18th – early 19th century
wool, colours, handwoven with symmetrical knot
NGP, transferred from the Museum of Decorative Arts 1961, purchased 1886
Vu 1325

Prayer rugs fulfil a practical and symbolic function. They are generally decorated with the motif of an arch, which resembles the niche of the mosque facing the direction of the sanctuary in Mecca. Along with the vegetal motifs, this evokes the entrance to the Gardens of Paradise.

The characteristic design of the region of the Turkish city of Konya links nomadic floral patterns with the style of 16th-century Ottoman carpets featuring the motif of a triple arch with coupled columns.

2nd floor

13. Who was the Buddha?

16
The Thousand Buddhas
Tibet, late 18th century
colours, gold, canvas
NGP, purchased 1958, originally the Josef Morák Collection
Vm 1161

The Buddha Shakyamuni in the centre of the painting sits on a lotus throne in the vajra posture. His arms denote the *mudra* of turning the Wheel of Dharma (*dharmachakra-mudra*), which represents Buddha's teachings. He is surrounded by two hundred smaller beings – transcendent *dhyana* Buddhas in five colours: Ratnasambhava (yellow), Akshobhya (blue), Vairochana (white), Amitabha (red), and Amoghasiddhi (green). The large number of them suggests an infinite amount. This painting may have been part of a series on the theme of the Buddha, thus representing a total of a thousand buddhas in five paintings.

14. The Spread of Buddhism

26
Pictorial Biography of the Great Monk Enkō
Japan, early 20th century
ink, colours, gold, silk
NGP, purchased 1980
Vm 5054 a

15. The Art of Tibetan Buddhism

2a
The *Kalachakra* Mandala
Tibet, 2nd half of 18th century
colours, canvas
NGP, purchased 1969, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vm 2758

The *Kalachakra* or Wheel of Time is often depicted in the form of a mandala. A mandala is a mystical diagram composed of squares and circles, which is used as an aid for visualisation and meditation. The deity with which the meditating person wishes to identify is depicted or represented by certain symbols in the centre of the diagram.

The *Kalachakra* mandala is based on the Kalachakra Tantra, which is considered one of the most advanced forms of Vajrayana practice and among the most comprehensive systems of Tantric Buddhism. It is rooted in the concepts of time (*kala* in Sanskrit) and cycles (*chakra* in Sanskrit). The mandala represents an aerial view of the palace of the *chakravarti* (universal ruler) with four gates, individual courtyards, and the palace centre.

2b
Mandala of Amitayus
Tibet, early 19th century
colours, gold, canvas
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1978
Vm 4549

16. Zen Art and the Kaeru-An Collection

1
Tōkai Yūzen Gentatsu (1841–1917)
Daruma, the Patriarch of Zen
Japan, 1910–1917
ink, paper
NGP, gift of Felix Hess 2019, originally the Kaeru-An Collection
Vm 6989

6
Gōchō Kankai (1749–1835)
Zen Circle with Calligraphy
Japan, 1790–1835
ink, paper
NGP, gift of Felix Hess 2019, originally the Kaeru-An Collection
Vm 7201

7
Matsuzaka Kian (1893–1959)
Bow and Arrows
Japan, 1940–1959
ink, paper
NGP, gift of Felix Hess 2019, originally the Kaeru-An Collection
Vm 7060

Rotation 1
(on view from 20 October 2026 to 17 January 2027)

8
Jozef Ort-Šnep (b. 1939)
Zuihō-in, Pathway to the Teahouse (Stepping Stones)
Japan, 2013
colour photograph
NGP, gift of the author 2025
Vm 7259

Rotation 2
(on view from 19 January to 18 April 2027)

8
Jozef Ort-Šnep (b. 1939)
Tōkai-an, Subtemple of Myōshin-ji Monastery
Japan, 2013
colour photograph
NGP, gift of the author 2025
Vm 7395

17. Chinese Writing and Calligraphy

1a
Sok-ha-san-in (1880s–1930s)
Watery Depths in the Peace of the Mountains
Korea, ca 1905
ink, colours, paper
NGP, purchased 1993
Vm 6250

1b
Kanō Tadanobu (1823–1879)
Daybreak in the Mountains
Japan, 2nd half of 19th century
ink, vermilion, paper
NGP, purchased 1962
Vm 2246

2
Zhang Daqian (1899–1983)
The Calligrapher Wang Huizhi and Bamboo
China, 1934
ink, colours, paper
NGP, purchased in the People's Republic of China 1953
Vm 538

7
Two Circular Fans with Calligraphy
China, 18th century
ink, silk
NGP, acquired as a gift 1977, originally the Josef Sudek Collection
Vm 4504, Vm 4505

18. Japanese Calligraphy

1
Tadokoro Kōfū (b. 1942)
Love Poem from the Manyōshū Collection
Japan, 2013
ink, colours, paper
NGP, gift of the Association for International Advancement of Calligraphic Culture (*Kokusai shodō bunka hatten kyōgikai*) 2013
Vm 6623

2
Matsushita (active 2nd half of 20th century)
The Way to Salvation Is Gateless (六道無門 *Rokudō mumon*)
Japan, late 1970s
ink, paper
NGP, purchased in Antikvariát (Antiquarian Bookshop) 1983
Vm 5844

8
Ikkansai Shujin (calligrapher, active 2nd half of 19th century)
Book of Treasures of the Women's University
Japan, probably 1863 (reprint)
black and white woodblock print
NGP, transferred from the Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 1976, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vm 4089

9
Textbook of Alphabetic Characters
Japan, 1883
black and white woodblock print
NGP, transferred from the Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 1976, originally the Joe Hloucha Collection
Vm 4051

10
Hasegawa Mitsunobu (active ca 1730–1760)
Pictorial Mirror of the Heroes, part two
Japan (Osaka), reprint from the Meiji era (1868–1912), original edition 1751
black and white woodblock print
NGP, purchased in Kniha (Book), state enterprise 1971
Vm 3018

23. Landscape and Society in China

1
Qiu Ying (ca 1494–1552), attributed
The Garden of Literati Delights
China, 17th–18th century
ink, colours, silk
NGP, transferred from the Collection of Prints and Drawings 1931, originally the Josef Martínek Collection
Vm 159

5
Li Keran (1907–1989, painting), Qi Baishi (1864–1957, calligraphy)
Buffalo Herdboys Playing with Birds
China, 1953
ink, colours, paper
NGP, purchased 1975
Vm 3394

Li Keran, born in Jiangsu province in eastern China, displayed an exceptional talent for art from an early age. During the Second World War, he began exploring the motif of the water buffalo – the subject for which he became most renowned. From the mid-1940s onwards, he taught at the art academy in Beijing, where he established his signature style under the mentorship of the masters Qi Baishi and Huang Binhong. He was also a dedicated student of Chinese Buddhist cave art,

as well as landscape painting, in which he blended Western and Chinese traditions.

This scroll represents a collaboration between two distinguished artists. Li Keran painted the herdboys on water buffaloes, while Qi Baishi contributed the calligraphic inscription evoking bygone times: “In my generation, we all had stories to tell!” Both artists also added their signatures and seals.

6
Pan Tianshou (1897–1971)
Bank with Lotus Blossoms
China, 1953
ink, colour, paper
NGP, purchased in the People’s Republic of China 1958
Vm 1070

9
Ceremonial Robe with Five Dragons
China, early 20th century
silk brocade
NGP, purchased 1961
Vu 490

24. Japanese Pictures of the Floating World

16
Nishikawa Sukenobu (1671–1751)
Doctor, Poet, and Hairdresser
Japan, 1723
black and white woodblock print
NGP, transferred to the Collection of Prints and Drawings 1945
Vm 51

17
Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849)
Mount Fuji above the Storm Clouds, from the series **Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji**
Japan, after 1831
colour woodblock print
NGP, purchased 1958
Vm 1050

19
Folding Screen with Illustrations on the Tale of Sagoromo
Japan, ca 1800
ink, colours, gold, paper
NGP, gift of Satsuma Jirōhachi 1938
Vm 894

25. Court Culture in India, Iran, and Turkey

Rotation 1
(on view from 20 October 2026 to 17 January 2027)

1
Gujri *Ragini*
India (Avadh), 1760–1780
ink, colours, gold, paper
NGP, transferred from the Collection of Prints and Drawings 1956
Vm 1170

Gujri *Ragini* depicts the emotion of unfulfilled love. The heroine kneels alone beneath a tree in a sparse landscape dotted with small temple buildings – or rather just their cupolas – and several trees in the background.

2
Malkora (Malava) *Ragini*
India (Avadh), 1760–1780
ink, colours, gold, paper
NGP, transferred from the Collection of Prints and Drawings 1956
Vm 1184

Lovers in a close embrace retreat to the privacy of a palace at dusk. The heroine of Malava *ragini*, whose role is usually more passive, takes the initiative here, leading the man to the open door.

Rotation 2
(on view from 19 January to 18 April 2027)

1
Deshaka *Ragini*
India (Avadh), 1760–1780
ink, colours, gold, paper
NGP, transferred from the Collection of Prints and Drawings 1956
Vm 1182

Deshaka *ragini* represents physical strength and prowess. The men perform various exercises with weights or on a pole.

2
Siddha Malara *Ragini*
India (Avadh), 1760–1780
ink, colours, gold, paper
NGP, transferred from the Collection of Prints and Drawings 1956
Vm 1196

A hermit and his pupil sit in a dark landscape. The hermit's beard, dreadlocks, skin smeared with ash, and three yellow stripes on his forehead identify him as a devotee of the god Shiva. In his hand he holds a loop of prayer beads called a *japamala*, while his pupil hands him what is likely a water pipe.

4
The Commemorative Album of Count de Bonneval

The Turkish album pays posthumous tribute to Count de Bonneval (1675–1747), also known as Ahmed Pasha, the French military commander who converted to Islam and became the chief bombardier of the Ottoman army. It contains predominantly conventional scenes from the Turkish court and the urban environment.

Rotation 1
(on view from 20 April to 18 July 2027)

Folio from the Commemorative Album of Count de Bonneval, Audience with the Grand Vizier
Turkey, after 1747
colours, paper
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1967
Vm 2603

The folio depicts an audience of a European delegation with the grand vizier, the highest Ottoman dignitary.

Rotation 2
(on view from 19 January to 18 April 2027)

Folio from the Commemorative Album of Count de Bonneval, Outdoor Festival with a Wrestling Contest
Turkey, after 1747
colours, paper
NGP, purchased in Starožitnosti (Antiques), state enterprise 1967
Vm 2605

The folio depicts a view of an Ottoman court festival with a wrestling contest set in a landscape. Among the prominent spectators are three Europeans in characteristic attire.

8
Carpet with Portraits of Rulers of Iran
Iran (probably Kashan), 1910–1920
wool, cotton, handwoven with asymmetrical knot
NGP, transferred from the Administration of Services of the Diplomatic Corps 1963
Vu 1878

The carpet presents portraits of 44 mythological and historical rulers of Iran. It depicts rulers from the pre-Islamic period, including two Sasanian queens, and representatives of the ruling Qajar dynasty. In the centre is a portrait of the last Qajar ruler Ahmad Shah (r. 1909–1925), still with a youthful face without a beard, since he acceded to the throne at the age of 11. The carpet may have been produced at the beginning of his reign, intended to reinforce the legitimacy of the young shah through its reference to his heroic predecessors.

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