Frank Stella, Chocorua IV, 1966, fluorescent alkyd and epoxy paints on canvas, 120 x 128 x 4 in. (304.8 x 325.12 x 10.16 cm). Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College: Purchased through the Miriam and Sidney Stoneman Acquisitions Fund, a gift from Judson and Carol Bemis ’76, and gifts from the Lathrop Fellows in honor of Brian Kennedy, Director of the Hood Museum of Art, 2005–2010; 2010.50. © 2010 Frank Stella / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo by Steven Sloman.
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Five years ago, in the autumn of 2005, I introduced my first “Letter from the Director” by welcoming an exhibition by the acclaimed American artist Fred Wilson. This show launched a series of some twenty permanent collection exhibitions and publications over the intervening period. As a result of this effort, the collections of the Hood Museum of Art are now much better known, and their contents more widely available. As I leave Dartmouth College to become President, C.E.O, and Director of the Toledo Museum of Art, we inaugurate a new exhibition, Frank Stella: Irregular Polygons, which features a remarkable series of paintings named after small towns in New Hampshire. In February 2010, U.S. President Barack Obama, describing Stella as “obviously a legend,” awarded the artist the National Medal of the Arts “for his accomplishments as one of the world’s most innovative painters and sculptors. His sophisticated visual experiments—often transcending boundaries between painting, printmaking, and sculpture—are modern masterpieces.” It is a great pleasure to welcome Frank Stella to Dartmouth College this fall as a Montgomery Fellow.

Over recent years, I have been engaged with Dartmouth faculty and students in discussions about visual literacy—the ability to construct meaning from all that we see. The Hood Museum of Art’s Learning to Look method has offered a great opportunity for staff members to work increasingly with members of the museum’s community, whether at the College or in the Upper Valley area of New Hampshire and Vermont. I held my first staff meeting in the center of Dartmouth Green to make it clear that we all needed to focus outward. It is a joy to record that with all of the activities that have been launched in recent years, the museum is a much more visible presence in the community. There are plans now too to provide expanded space for classrooms and art exhibitions, and this will be work for my successor as director.

I wish to thank President James Wright and Provost Barry Scherr, and their successors, Jim Yong Kim and Carol Folt, for their support, and for that received from many other administrators as we sought to gain ever greater visibility for the visual arts at Dartmouth. So many faculty members have taken advantage of the museum’s many resources, and I have also taken great pleasure in meeting countless brilliant students. It was my hope, coming to Dartmouth after spending years in public museums with hundreds of thousands of visitors, that I could seek to influence a class of Dartmouth students. After a year of getting to know the College, I then got to experience the journey of the Class of 2010, and to come to know many of them. I trust that these individuals have been influenced to appreciate the role and importance of art in their lives. Dartmouth is indeed gifted with its faculty and students, and with its huge capacity to teach the world about the role of aesthetic appreciation and art history, thereby supporting cultural understanding and mutual respect.

I have been honored to be the fifth director of the Hood Museum of Art and have quite simply had a splendid time. I am truly indebted to the great staff team at the Hood; they make everything possible with both talent and humor. Of all places at Dartmouth, they simply had a splendid time. I am truly indebted to the great staff team at the Hood; they make everything possible with both talent and humor. Of all places at Dartmouth, I have been extraordinary in their support. The future of the museum is very sound.

BRIAN KENNEDY
CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICAN LEDGER ART: DRAWING ON TRADITION
August 14, 2010, through January 16, 2011

Despite being stylistically diverse, the works in this exhibition are all linked both conceptually and formally to the tradition of Plains Indian ledger art of the nineteenth century. Created by artists who employ visual narrative as a means of exploring their cultural heritage and issues of present-day Native experience, these works may be read as expressions of solidarity and survival in the twenty-first century.


Dwayne Wilcox, From Here to Eternity, 2008, crayon, colored pencil, and felt-tipped pen on ledger paper. Purchased through the Guernsey Center Moore 1904 Fund, 2008.59.3

NATIVE AMERICAN LEDGER DRAWINGS FROM THE HOOD MUSEUM OF ART: THE MARK LANSBURGH COLLECTION
October 2 through December 19, 2010

This collection, brought together by Mark Lansburgh, Dartmouth Class of 1949, is considered to have been the largest and most diverse of its type in private hands; it was acquired by Dartmouth College in 2007. Guest-curated by Joe Horse Capture, the exhibition features drawings depicting both the struggle for cultural survival and the Native adaptation to an imposed non-Native lifestyle during a period of profound upheaval among the Plains peoples in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is presented in conjunction with a Leslie Center for the Humanities Institute entitled Multiple Narratives in Plains Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection.


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TRADITION TRANSFORMED: TIBETAN ARTISTS RESPOND
January 15 through March 13, 2011

Contemporary Tibetan artists are in a precarious position. While their work is informed by Tibetan artistic traditions, the majority of these artists do not live in Tibet, and some never have. Their challenge is twofold: as they forge a name for themselves in the competitive art world, they must also try to find their own place within Tibet’s rich and formalized artistic legacy. This exhibition features artists who grapple with issues of cultural and artistic negotiation and who work with traditional forms in innovative ways. The artists submitted new and recent works to the exhibition that highlight their styles and range.

This exhibition is on loan from the Rubin Museum of Art, New York.

Dedron, We Are the Nearest to the Sun, 2009, mineral pigments on canvas. Collection of Shelley and Donald Rubin.
Frank Stella has had a long and prolific career at the forefront of abstract art. A consistent innovator who prefers to produce works in series, he has immersed himself in visual thinking and creating, according to certain key artistic principles: “Line, plane, volume and point, within space.”¹ His famous 1964 quip about his work—“What you see is what you see”²—has long been misrepresented as a testament to secularism and literalism, though one suspects that his sentiment was in fact more in line with that of Albert Einstein: “Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.”³

In this sense, then, the Irregular Polygons series of 1965–66 is startlingly dramatic and original. Although based on simple geometries, these paintings comprise one of the most complex artistic statements of Stella’s career. Each of eleven compositions combines varying numbers of shapes to create daringly irregular outlines, and the artist made four versions of each composition, varying their color combinations. Until now, the paintings have never been shown together in their entirety.⁴ The Irregular Polygons marked a radical shift from Stella’s earlier striped paintings in their use of large fields of color. These asymmetric canvases played with illusion, thereby confronting Stella’s previous emphasis on flatness while anticipating his career-long exploration of space and volume in both painting and sculpture. The paintings were also the subject of art historian Michael Fried’s influential study “Shape as Form,” which in turn sparked a critical debate about “literal” and “depicted” shapes.⁵

In 1985, the year the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College opened to the public, Frank Stella spoke at the college’s annual convocation ceremony and received an honorary degree. In 1963, he had been an artist-in-residence at the college, making works for the series that became known as the Dartmouth Paintings, each of which was named after a city in Florida that he had visited on a road trip two years before. In 1965–66, in turn, he would name each of the eleven compositions of his Irregular Polygons series after small towns in New Hampshire. Here the connection between art and title is more direct: during his boyhood, his father had brought him to a


Frank Stella, Union I, 1966, florescent alkyd and epoxy paints on canvas, 102¾ x 174 x 4 in (261.62 x 441.96 x 10.16 cm). Detroit Institute of Arts: Founders Society Purchase, Friends of Modern Art Fund; 66.68. © 2010 Frank Stella / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.
family camp near Ossipee for fishing trips in the lakes and rivers of New Hampshire’s White Mountains. This connection, coupled with Stella’s previous interactions with Dartmouth, makes an exhibition bringing together one of each of his compositions for the Irregular Polygons an appropriate way of marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Hood Museum of Art in 2010. Along with the eleven Irregular Polygons, the exhibition includes preparatory drawings for them; the print series Eccentric Polygons (1974), which was based on the Irregular Polygons; and a few of his latest works, the Polychrome Reliefs. Together these objects testify to an outstanding artistic career and provide an exciting opportunity to engage with the “complex simplicity” that is the paradox of Stella’s art.

The book accompanying the exhibition provides an overview of the development of shaped paintings—those that are not square or rectangular in format—and details Frank Stella’s particular contribution to art in the early and mid-1960s, when he began exploring the pictorial possibilities of intentionally shaped paintings in series after series. In 1960 his Aluminum Paintings generated interest because their decorative patterns and the shape of their stretchers were in synchrony, causing them to be almost rectangular works but with notches and indentations at the edges. In 1962–63, he first made the drawings that would anticipate his dramatic development in 1965 of irregularly shaped paintings, the likes of which had never been seen before. The Irregular Polygons attracted a great deal of attention from critics, including especially Michael Fried’s close reading of them. The publication and exhibition invite a reassessment of Stella’s works up to 1966, culminating in the Irregular Polygons, a hugely fertile period of artistic exploration imaginatively executed by one of art’s truly profound thinkers.

Brian Kennedy

NOTES

2. Stella’s comment was made during a February 1964 discussion with Donald Judd that was broadcast on WBAI-FM, New York, as part of a series produced by Bruce Glaser. The exchange was edited by Lucy Lippard and published as “Questions to Stella and Judd: Interview by Bruce Glaser,” Art News (September 1966): 55–61, and reprinted in Gregory Battcock (ed.), Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 148–64 (quotation cited is on 158).
4. Ten of the compositions were displayed at the Pasadena Museum of Art (October 18–November 20, 1966) and at the Seattle Art Museum Pavilion (January 12–February 12, 1967). Seven were shown at the Leo Castelli Gallery, New York (March 5–April 6, 1966) and five at the 30th Biennial of the Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C. (February 24–April 9, 1966). Also in 1966, paintings from the Irregular Polygons series were shown at the David Mirvish Gallery, Toronto (April 15–May 8) and at Kasmin Gallery Limited, London (November 11–December 3). Since that year, groups of up to four of the paintings have appeared in various exhibitions of Stella’s works at venues in Europe and America.
Native American Ledger Drawings from the Hood Museum of Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

October 2–December 19, 2010

The Hood Museum of Art has recently acquired a large group of drawings created by the Native American tribes of the Great Plains region. Through partial gift and purchase, this acquisition makes the Hood one of the largest repositories of ledger drawings in an art museum in the country. The Mark Lansburgh Collection (Dartmouth Class of 1949) features over 130 drawings from at least seven different Plains tribes and serves as a testament to the artistic creativity of Plains Indian artists.

Commonly known as "ledger drawings," these works were created on lined and unlined paper that was originally bound in either sketchbooks or account books. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, Plains Indian men drew their battle and hunting exploits, courting scenes, and other scenes from their lives in these books, and these images provide an important insight into the world of the nineteenth-century warrior-artist. Mostly executed in pencil, the drawings themselves were created in a style that shows little or no background scenery but plenty of detail in the aspects that were important to the artist. Traditionally, men created pictographic works, and women, geometric designs. Before the introduction of paper and pencil, men drew or carved on stone and animal hides. Like ledger drawings, these scenes were mnemonetic devices that were meant to be accompanied by a narrative from the owner. Unfortunately, nearly all of the original narratives are gone. Scholars who have specialized in this field have learned to "read" this fascinating visual language, so many of these stories created over a century ago can be retold. Graphically bold and carefully detailed, the drawings often depict a scene where the victor is the main subject, whether in battle or while courting.

These drawings were later removed from their original bound books, usually by dealers, because it is more profitable to sell them individually. Through Mark Lansburgh’s efforts to collect as many individual pages from a specific book as he could, however, we can formulate a narrative of a complete book from his collection.

The exhibition is divided into several themes, including hunting, battle, ceremony, and daily life. Among its highlights are several drawings by the Apsaalooka man named White Swan, who was a scout for George Custer. He was working for Custer during the Battle of Little Big Horn and became well known for his association with that famous event. His drawings often feature U.S. soldiers on horseback and may reference particular participants in the battle. Though such heroic scenes of battle and horse-stealing were the primary themes of this type of drawing, scenes of daily life became increasingly common during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

This exhibition, the first of its kind at the Hood, was coordinated in conjunction with the Leslie Center for the Humanities Institute titled Multiple Narratives in Plains Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection, which will bring a number of major scholars in the field to Dartmouth College during fall 2010. See the calendar of events for information about free public gallery talks offered throughout the fall in conjunction with the institute.

Joe Horse Capture
Associate Curator of Native American Art, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and guest curator of the exhibition

White Swan, untitled, about 1890, graphite and colored pencil on wove canvas paper. Mark Lansburgh Ledger Drawing Collection: Partial gift of Mark Lansburgh, Class of 1949, and partial purchase through the Mrs. Harvey P. Hood W’18 Fund and the Offices of the President and Provost of Dartmouth College; 2007.65.93

Unknown Southern Tsiitsistas (Cheyenne) artist, untitled, page number 192 from the Old White Woman Ledger, about 1880–90, graphite, colored pencil, watercolor on wove ledger paper. Mark Lansburgh Ledger Drawing Collection: Partial gift of Mark Lansburgh, Class of 1949, and partial purchase through the Mrs. Harvey P. Hood W’18 Fund and the Offices of the President and Provost of Dartmouth College; 2007.65.71
The works in this exhibition are all connected, formally or conceptually, to the tradition of Plains Indian ledger art of the nineteenth century. This style of figurative visual narrative derived from the inscription of heraldic images of war and hunting onto rock, buffalo hides, and tipis to memorialize the accomplishments of the male warrior-artists and to designate their positions within the tribe. As increased contact with Euro-Americans from the 1850s through the 1870s led to the transformation of life on the Great Plains, these men turned to drawing on balance sheets in ledger books that they obtained from white settlers, traders, and the military. Recognizing that ledger books were used to record important information, the Native artists appropriated them to chronicle heroic deeds, battles between Natives and non-Natives, and nostalgic scenes of pre-reservation life. During the reservation era these drawings served as both personal narratives and as stories in images of the transitions brought on by captivity, life on the reservation, and the subjugation of Native cultures. These drawings depict the struggle for cultural survival as the Natives adapted to an imposed non-Native lifestyle while attempting to preserve their history, resist white authority and domination, and negotiate tribal and individual identities.

Incorporating a wide variety of perspectives, materials, techniques, and aesthetic choices, contemporary ledger artists employ the visual narrative as a means of exploring both their cultural heritage and issues of present-day Native experience. These works often critique the contested histories of Native America and have come to constitute vehicles through which Native identity can be explored, constructed, and expressed. Over the past two decades, a number of women artists have also become active in the field of ledger art, joining their male peers in celebrating the cultural perseverance and survival of this art form through deliberate references to historic ledger drawing in their own work. Some contemporary ledger artists use historical photographs and documents as a means of reassessing and reclaiming their family and tribal histories. Others use ironic humor, fused with the unexpected, to compel the viewer to confront cultural stereotypes.
SEPTEMBER

18 September, Saturday, 1:00–3:00 P.M.
FAMILY WORKSHOP
Looking to Write; Writing to Look
Works of art can be a great source of inspiration for creative writing, and writing about a work of art can help us see it more clearly. Through simple, playful writing activities, we’ll create some artistic poetry and prose inspired by the museum’s collection. In the studio, we’ll make a handmade book for our work. For children ages 6 to 12 and their adult companions. Participation is limited. Please call (603) 646-1469 by September 14 to register.

18 September, Saturday, 2:00 P.M.
TOUR
Follow the Money: Andy Warhol’s American Dream

25 September, Saturday, 2:00 P.M.
TOUR
Contemporary Native American Ledger Art: Drawing on Tradition

29 September, Wednesday, 6:30–8:00 P.M.
ADULT WORKSHOP
Art and Creative Writing
Get inspired at the museum as you try your hand at poetry and creative prose! Museum staff will lead participants in a number of simple, evocative writing activities with works of art. No previous art or writing experience is necessary. Participation is limited. Call (603) 646-1469 by September 27 to register.

OCTOBER

1 October, Friday, 5:30 P.M.
PANEL DISCUSSION AND OPENING RECEPTION
Arthur M. Loew Auditorium
Native American Ledger Drawings
Opening event for Native American Ledger Drawings from the Hood Museum of Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection, moderated by Colin Colloway, The John Kimball Jr. 1943 Professor of History, Dartmouth College. Participants include Joyce M. Szabo, Professor of Art, University of New Mexico, Seminar Director; and William H. Morton Distinguished Fellow; Joe Horse Capture, guest curator of the exhibition and Associate Curator, Minneapolis Institute of the Arts.

2 October, Saturday, 2:00 P.M.
TOUR
Highlights of American Art

7 October, Thursday, 2:00 P.M.
GALLERY TALK
Second-floor galleries
Striving for Recognition: Ledger Drawings and the Construction and Maintenance of Social Status during the Reservation Period
Michael Jordan, doctoral candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Oklahoma
Offered in conjunction with the Leslie Center for the Humanities Institute Multiple Narratives in Plains Indian Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

8 October, Friday, 4:30 P.M.
LECTURE
Arthur M. Loew Auditorium
Frank Stella: Irregular Polygons
Brian Kennedy, President, CEO, and Director, Toledo Museum of Art, and Former Director, Hood Museum of Art

9 October, Saturday, 12:00–5:00 P.M.
25th Anniversary Community Celebration
Enjoy an afternoon of free activities for all ages, both inside and outside the museum, including art making, live music by Sol Food, art scavenger hunts, door prizes, mini art talks and light refreshments. For more information, call (603) 646-2808 or visit www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu.

11, 18, 25 October and 1 November, Mondays, 3:30–5:00 P.M.
MEMBER COURSE
Looking Under the Hood
This four-week course exclusively for members will explore how and why museums collect, preserve, exhibit, and interpret the objects in their care. Join Hood staff members for a hands-on, behind-the-scenes exploration of what they do and how they do it. Participants must be able to attend all four sessions. The cost is $100 per person. To register, call (603) 646-9660 or email hoodmembership@dartmouth.edu.

16 October, Saturday, 2:00 P.M.
TOUR
Native American Ledger Drawings from the Hood Museum of Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

21 October, Thursday, 2:00 P.M.
GALLERY TALK
Second-floor galleries
The Mark Lansburgh Collection of Plains Indian Ledger Art: Recognizing the Artists and Identifying the Subjects
Mike Cowdrey, independent scholar
Offered in conjunction with The Leslie Center for the Humanities Institute Multiple Narratives in Plains Indian Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

21 October, Thursday, 4:30 P.M.
THE MONTGOMERY ENDOWMENT FALL LECTURE
Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center
A Conversation with Frank Stella
Artist and Montgomery Fellow Frank Stella and Former Hood Director Brian Kennedy

22 October, Friday, 5:30 P.M.
LECTURE
Arthur M. Loew Auditorium
The Mission of Eleazar Wheelock, the Vision of Luther Standing Bear, and Why Ledger Art Matters to Dartmouth College
Colin Calloway, John Kimball Jr. 1943 Professor of History and Native American Studies and director of the Leslie Center for the Humanities Institute Multiple Narratives in Plains Indian Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

23 October, Saturday, 3:00 P.M.
PANEL DISCUSSION
Alumni Hall, Hopkins Center
The Hood at 25: A Discussion with Three Former Museum Directors
Brian Kennedy, Director of the Toledo Museum of Art (2005–2010), Derrick Cartwright, Director of the Seattle Art Museum (2001–2004), and Timothy Rub, Director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art (1991–2000), will discuss their time at the Hood, reflect on the museum’s accomplishments, and also discuss the Hood’s opportunities and challenges going forward into the next phase of its development. Moderated by Katherine Hart, Interim Director.

23 October, Saturday, 6:00–11:00 P.M.
Hood Museum of Art Silver Anniversary Benefit Gala
See membership page in this quarterly. Call 603-646-2808 for ticket information.

27 October, Wednesday, 6:30–8:00 P.M.
ADULT WORKSHOP
Does a Painting Have to Be a Rectangle?
Explore the exhibition Frank Stella: Irregular Polygons in this discussion-based workshop and discover the bold, innovative paintings of this contemporary artist. Stella built irregularly shaped canvases that incorporate geometric shapes and dynamic zigzags. In the studio, we’ll create “shaped canvases” of our own. Participation is limited. Call (603) 646-1469 by October 25 to register.
NOVEMBER

3 November, Wednesday, 6:30–8:00 P.M.
ADULT WORKSHOP
Drawing for Survival: Native American Drawings from the Great Plains
In this discussion-based workshop, we’ll explore historic and contemporary Native American drawings from a variety of Plains cultures. Historically, these drawings were created by warrior-artists to recount and celebrate their heroic deeds. During the reservation era, they depicted the struggle for cultural survival. Recently, contemporary artists have referenced these drawings as expressions of Native solidarity and self-identity in their own work. In the studio, we’ll explore the idea of drawing personal moments and stories. No previous art experience necessary. Call (603) 646-1469 by November 1 to register.

4 November, Thursday, 2:00 P.M.
GALLERY TALK
Second-floor galleries
Joe Horse Capture, Hood guest curator and Associate Curator, Minneapolis Institute of the Arts
Offered in conjunction with the Leslie Center for the Humanities
Institute Multiple Narratives in Plains Indian Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

6 November, Saturday, 2:00 P.M.
TOUR
Frank Stella: Irregular Polygons

7 November, Sunday, 12:00–5:00 P.M.
FAMILY DAY
Shaped Canvases
Rectangles, triangles, zigzag stripes, and bold colors are the building blocks of Frank Stella’s irregularly shaped canvases. On this special day for families, written guides and activities will help adults and children learn about these innovative paintings. In the studio, participants will be invited to create a “shaped canvas” of their own. For children ages 6–12 and their adult companions. No pre-registration is required.

11 November, Thursday, 2:00 P.M.
GALLERY TALK
Second-floor galleries
(Un)settling Accounts: The Violent Economies of the Ledger
Melanie Benson, Assistant Professor of Native American Studies, Dartmouth College
Offered in conjunction with the Leslie Center for the Humanities
Institute Multiple Narratives in Plains Indian Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

12 November, Friday, 5:30 P.M.
THE DR. ALLEN W. ROOT CONTEMPORARY ART DISTINGUISHED LECTURE
Arthur M. Loew Auditorium
Okwui Enwezor
This internationally recognized curator and art historian is currently an Adjunct Curator at the International Center of Photography, New York, and the former Dean of Academic Affairs at the San Francisco Art Institute. He served as Artistic Director of Documenta 11, Kassel, Germany (1998–2002), as well as other prestigious art festivals around the world. A reception will follow in Kim Gallery.

13 November, Saturday, 2:00 P.M.
TOUR
Contemporary Native American Ledger Art: Drawing on Tradition and Native American Ledger Drawings from the Hood Museum of Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

17 November, Wednesday, 6:30–8:00 P.M.
ADULT WORKSHOP
Learning to Look at European Art
Explore paintings by Georgia O’Keeffe, Pablo Picasso, Sol Lewitt, and Frank Stella as you learn techniques for interpreting and appreciating any work of modern art. The workshop will be discussion-based and participatory. Enrollment is limited. Call (603) 646-1469 by November 29 to register.

18 November, Thursday, 2:00 P.M.
GALLERY TALK
Second-floor galleries
Ledger Art and Prison Work
Vera Palmer, Senior Lecturer, Native American Studies, Dartmouth College
Offered in conjunction with the Leslie Center for the Humanities
Institute Multiple Narratives in Plains Indian Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

20 November, Saturday, 2:00 P.M.
TOUR
Frank Stella: Irregular Polygons

DECEMBER

1 December, Wednesday, 6:30–8:00 P.M.
ADULT WORKSHOP
Learning to Look at Modern Art
Explore paintings by Georgia O’Keeffe, Pablo Picasso, Sol Lewitt, and Frank Stella as you learn techniques for exploring and appreciating any work of modern art. The workshop will be discussion-based and participatory. Enrollment is limited. Call (603) 646-1469 by November 29 to register.

2 December, Thursday, 2:00 P.M.
GALLERY TALK
Second-floor galleries
Mary Coffey, Associate Professor of Art History, Dartmouth College
Offered in conjunction with the Leslie Center for the Humanities
Institute Multiple Narratives in Plains Indian Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

8 December, Wednesday, 5:30–7:00 P.M.
Hood Museum of Art Holiday Open House
A community celebration of the season in the museum galleries, including live performances by local high school students, family-friendly scavenger hunts, door prizes, and light refreshments.

9 December, Thursday, 12:30 P.M.
LUNCHTIME GALLERY TALK
Second-floor galleries
Joyce Stobo, Professor of Art, University of New Mexico, Seminar Director, and William H. Morton Distinguished Fellow
Offered in conjunction with the Leslie Center for the Humanities
Institute Multiple Narratives in Plains Indian Ledger Art: The Mark Lansburgh Collection

All museum exhibitions and events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. For the safety of all of our visitors, the Hood Museum of Art will enforce legal seating capacity limits at every event in accordance with RSA 153:5 and Life Safety Code 101. Assistive listening devices are available for all events. The museum, including the Arthur M. Loew Auditorium, is wheelchair accessible. For accessibility requests, please call 603-646-2809 or e-mail Access.Hood@Dartmouth.edu.

Access.Hood@Dartmouth.edu.

There is no Tibetan equivalent for the word “art” as it is defined in the West. The closest approximation is lha dri pa—literally, “to draw a deity.” Traditionally, neither the Tibetan language nor the Tibetan cultural framework has recognized art for art’s sake, and an artist’s efficacy rests in his ability to precisely replicate an established visual language and portray the essence of a particular deity.

This puts contemporary Tibetan artists in a precarious position. While their work is informed by Tibetan artistic traditions, the majority of these artists do not live in Tibet, and some never have. The challenge for contemporary Tibetan artists, then, is twofold: as they forge a name for themselves in the competitive art world, they must also try to find their own place within Tibet’s rich and formalized artistic legacy. What does it mean to be a Tibetan artist who does not follow Tibetan artistic prescriptions?

Tradition Transformed: Tibetan Artists Respond features artists who grapple with these very issues of cultural and artistic negotiation and who work with traditional forms in innovative ways. Technology, travel, displacement, and personal artistic freedom have informed their individual responses to the complex interaction between tradition and modernity in both art and culture. The artists—Dedron, Gonkar Gyatso, Losang Gyatso, Kesang Lamdark, Tenzin Norbu, Tenzing Rigidol, Pema Rinzing, Tsherin Sherpa, and Penba Wangdu—were invited to submit new and recent works. Specific works by the same artists were then selected from private collections to complement these new pieces and highlight each artist’s range.

Of the artists, five were born in Tibet, three come from Nepal and one was born in India. Dedron (the only woman featured in the exhibition and one of a handful of Tibetan woman artists), Tenzin Norbu, and Penba Wangdu continue to live in their Himalayan homelands, while the others have emigrated to Europe and the United States at different stages in their lives. The majority of these artists are trained in traditional painting and the strict interpretations prescribed by Buddhist religion—spiritual formulas and artistic norms from which they break by experimenting with alternative media and by extracting sacred symbols from their religious context, repurposing them for self-expression.

Many of their works consistently juxtapose and merge the sacred with the profane. The large Buddha in Gonkar Gyatso’s L.A. Confidential (2007) is filled with tiny, disarmingly colorful stickers. Though born in Lhasa, Gyatso describes his life as “imbued with Chinese tradition,” a source of great frustration and disconnect from the cultural observations of previous generations of Tibetans. It is this cultural rift that Gyatso explores in his art.

Tsherin Sherpa makes a case for the value of transforming traditions. His Preservation Project #1 (2009) warns against the pitfalls of forced cultural preservation. It features the Buddha’s head and many hands in the shape of various mudras, all pressed against the inside of a glass jar. Sherpa describes his painting as “an attempt to question and provoke all of us to check and see how we are actually preserving” traditions. For Sherpa and for many of these artists, Tibet’s traditions may be kept alive and relevant through their very transformations.

The exhibition is on view from January through March 2011 and is on loan from the Rubin Museum of Art, New York.


Tsherin Sherpa, Preservation Project #1, 2009, gouache, acrylic, and gold on paper. Collection of Shelley and Donald Rubin.
COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

A Heartfelt Thank You to the Museum’s Docents

The term docent, originally from the Latin, means someone who teaches or instructs. The Hood Museum of Art has been extremely fortunate over the past twenty-five years to have a wide range of community members volunteer their time and energy and serve as docents, or gallery teachers at the museum. Docents learn about—and then teach others about—all of the museum’s collections and exhibitions. In a single year this can encompass art as diverse as frescoes by the Mexican muralist José Clemente Orozco (located in Baker Library), ancient Assyrian reliefs, African figural sculpture, American, European, and Native American objects, and paintings by contemporary abstract artist Frank Stella. They are lifelong learners who give back to the community by sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm for art with others.

These extraordinary individuals contribute hundreds of hours each year to the Hood and increase exponentially the museum’s ability to create learning encounters and cultivate teaching with original works of art. Engaging visitors ranging in age from preschool through seniors, docents lead tours for roughly four thousand school children and adults each year. If you multiply that by the twenty-five years this museum has been open, the number is transformed into a staggering 100,000 visitors for whom the docents have provided personalized tours and programs. Without their dedication and commitment, the impact of the museum and the opportunity for people to make personal connections with visual art would be reduced dramatically.

We thank our docents for all that they contribute to the work of the museum and the life of the community.

Expanding the Museum’s Teaching Role

Every year the Hood offers professional development opportunities in the form of workshops and written and online resources for regional teachers. The goal of these programs and resources is to cultivate teaching with original works of art in the K–12 curriculum. Workshops introduce teachers to the art on display at the museum and provide them with skills and information to help them integrate the visual arts into the curriculum—no matter what subject(s) they teach. Whenever possible, we hope they will bring their classes to the museum so that students can engage with and learn from original works of art. Each year, several thousand school children visit the museum and do just that.

Sometimes we learn that a professional development workshop or resource that the museum offered continues to have an ongoing impact in the lives of teachers and their students in the classroom. This fall the impact of the museum as a place of learning is being taken a step further: at the end of October two regional teachers, Matt Fisk and Jill Chastenay, will present at the annual New Hampshire Council for Social Studies conference on integrating art into the curriculum. Their presentations will highlight professional development experiences they participated in at the Hood, and the ways these inspired changes in their teaching. Through these dynamic teachers, the educational role of the museum is expanding and hopefully will inspire more regional educators to integrate the museum’s collections and exhibitions into the curriculum.

Matt Fisk taught U.S. history at Concord High School for many years and just recently accepted the position of head of the history department at New Hampton School. He will talk about attending a Learning to Look workshop at the museum several years ago. The workshop modeled the five-step, discuss-based approach to exploring works of art that the Hood developed in the early 1990s to empower visitors to observe carefully and think critically about any work of art they encounter. Matt will be speaking to social studies teachers from around the state who teach advanced placement history courses. He will share the ways he has integrated the Learning to Look teaching technique, images from the museum’s collections, and trips to the Hood into classroom and homework assignments. Based on his experiences at the Hood, Matt no longer feels that art is peripheral to social studies but is in fact core to the study of human experience.

Jill Chastenay teaches U.S. and world history, Asian cultures, and modern world history at Stevens High School in Claremont. She will present on ways that she combines art and writing in her social studies class, inspired by attending a Summer Institute on Art and Writing at the Hood in 2005. Jill will also discuss the museum’s Learning to Look teaching technique, and then will share some of the writing curriculum she developed at the Summer Institute and has adapted in subsequent years.

The museum thanks and commends Jill and Matt for their deep commitment to integrating the visual arts into the lives and academic pursuits of their students—and now their colleagues. We hope their presentations at the New Hampshire Council for Social Studies conference will inspire more teachers to utilize the Hood and other art museums as curricular and cultural resources to enhance their vital work educating the future generations and leaders of our country.
THE HOOD MUSEUM OF ART
Twenty-Five Years of Teaching and Learning

The Hood represents one of the many great resources in the Upper Valley . . . at no cost, anyone can explore the world of art. —VERMONT STANDARD

Going to the Hood changed my perspective on art, because I didn't realize how many different ways there are of making art. —GRADE-SCHOOL STUDENT

Words can't describe how much I enjoyed this class! It let us learn about ourselves, our peers, and the art in the museum. —TEENAGER AFTER A HOOD WORKSHOP

This fall, the Hood Museum of Art celebrates twenty-five years in its award-winning Charles Moore building. The occasion is an opportunity to reflect on the ways that the Hood has served the campus and broader community through its commitment to creating learning encounters and cultivating teaching with objects. In this media-saturated world, visual literacy is vital to critical thinking. It is our goal that all museum visitors are able to navigate the visual, including the textual, realm with skill and dexterity.

Examining works of art provides opportunities to learn about diverse cultures and time periods and opens a dialogue on issues and ideas that are central to human experience.

On these two pages, we share with gratitude what you have said about how you value the Hood’s contribution to your lives and to the community.

Please join us on Saturday, October 9, from noon until 5 PM for a twenty-fifth anniversary community celebration. See page 8.
The advantages [of art in a museum] are to show the students that art is real, that it was made by a real person, that it has three-dimensional quality, that it is valuable but accessible. — Dartmouth faculty member

It is a truly world-class organization. It is just an amazing combination of closeness and community that you don’t get at other museums. — Dartmouth student

All the publications are top quality that the Hood produces. It’s great to have them because the exhibitions come and go. — Hanover resident

I can’t say enough how valuable it is and how unusual it is for students and faculty to have such an unobstructed access to works of art in the collection. — Dartmouth faculty member

I LOVE the chance to do art alongside my children. — Parent after one of the Hood’s free family programs

Seeing art has helped me understand the world so much better. — Grade-school student

I love the chance to do art alongside my children. — Parent after one of the Hood’s free family programs

Some Quick Facts about the Hood

Dartmouth College has been collecting objects since 1772, just three years after the founding of the college. With about 65,000 objects in its care, the museum has a collection that is among the oldest and largest of any college or university in the country.

The Hood Museum of Art is, above all, a teaching museum that cultivates direct engagement with works of art within an interdisciplinary setting for visitors of all ages. The Hood makes all of its collections available for use by Dartmouth students and faculty in a special classroom setting.

The Hood offers ten or more special exhibitions and more than one hundred lectures, gallery talks, tours, workshops, family programs, programs for regional schools, and Dartmouth student programs each year.

The Hood has a growing number of dedicated members whose support helps to keep admission to the museum and nearly all of its programs free of charge for everyone.
From the letter of Carol Folt, Provost, to the Dartmouth community:

While at Dartmouth, Brian Kennedy took the Hood Museum of Art out onto the campus, opening its doors in new and wonderful ways to faculty and students. He and his colleagues pulled nearly 5,000 works of art annually from storage for study by Dartmouth classes. Brian held his first Hood staff meeting on the Dartmouth Green to make the point that the museum had to position itself within the community. He launched many art initiatives with partner institutions, from the Dartmouth Medical School to the Norris Cotton Cancer Center to Kendal at Hanover. He worked closely with the dedicated Hood Board of Overseers, began a new membership drive, and was a talented and effective fundraiser. He brought many new works of art to the collections, often with deep connections to Dartmouth, such as the portrait of Second Earl of Dartmouth William Legge by Pompeo Batoni and an early painting by Jackson Pollock that was influenced by the painter’s viewing of the Orozco murals at Dartmouth. Among the major gifts received during Brian’s tenure were collections of Indonesian textiles, Australian Aboriginal art, and Native American Ledger drawings.

The exhibitions and publications Brian organized during his tenure inspired and energized the community. Some twenty books about Hood collections have been published since 2005, and the museum’s Web site has become a critical resource. He curated several exhibitions himself, including Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters and one-person shows of artists Sean Scully and Frank Stella (upcoming fall 2010). No one who has listened to Brian lecture will ever forget his infectious enthusiasm, affection, and deep appreciation for art and artists. He taught us the value of public art and brought art to Dartmouth’s Baker Library with the works of Wenda Gu—the unforgettable hair screen—and most recently Felix de la Concha’s portraits. Sculptures by Allan Houser, Richard Nonas, and Richard Serra, along with the Inuksuk of Peter Irniq located in front of McNut Hall, also have been added under his leadership. Behind the scenes, he oversaw the creation of needed facilities and has been developing plans to expand the Hood so that it can offer more space for teaching with the collections. His deep engagement with Dartmouth students and faculty, and especially the museum’s constituent departments and the Hopkins Center for the Arts, will continue to enhance the museum’s role at the college well into the future.
The staff of the Hood Museum of Art invites members at every level to celebrate the role of the art museum in a community at the Hood Museum of Art’s Silver Anniversary Benefit Gala on October 23, 2010. The evening will begin with festivities, entertainment, and art adventures in the museum, followed by dinner and dancing in the Hanover Inn’s Daniel Webster Room with the band Swing Machine. Honored space is limited, and tickets are $250 per person. Table sponsorships are available. All proceeds benefit the educational programs of the Hood Museum of Art, which are offered free of charge to all ages. Join us for a night to remember! To purchase tickets, call (603) 646-2808 or email hoodmembership@dartmouth.edu.

Since the origins of Dartmouth College’s art collections, beginning with a gift in 1772—only three years after the founding—the study of art has been an integral component of the curriculum. Through the years the collections grew and were housed in various locations around campus until the opening of the Hood Museum of Art in 1985, which provided for the first time, on campus and in the community, a center where all of the collections could be gathered together and accessed more easily through permanent collections displays, changing exhibitions, and classroom study. For a quarter of a century, the Hood Museum of Art has provided invaluable art experiences for students, faculty, and an ever-expanding local community free of charge.
GENERAL INFORMATION

Museum and Shop Hours
Tuesday–Saturday: 10 A.M.–5 P.M.
Sunday: 12 noon–5 P.M.
Wednesday evening to 9 P.M.

Group Tours
Guided tours of the museum are available for groups by appointment.
Call (603) 646-1469 for information.

Assistive listening devices are available for all events. The museum, including the Arthur M. Loew Auditorium, is wheelchair accessible.

Admission and Parking
There is no admission charge for entrance to the museum. Metered public parking is available in front of the museum on Wheelock Street and behind the museum on Lebanon Street. All-day public parking is available at the Parking Garage on Lebanon Street.
For more information please call (603) 646-2808 or visit our Web site: www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu

Advertising for the Hood Museum of Art’s exhibitions and programs has been generously underwritten by the Point and the Junction Frame Shop.

The Hood Museum of Art is committed to environmental mindfulness and stewardship. This publication is certified to the Forest Stewardship Council Standard.

HOOD MUSEUM OF ART
Dartmouth College
Hanover, NH 03755

This autumn and winter at the Hood:

FRANK STELLA: IRREGULAR POLYGONS
October 9, 2010, through March 13, 2011

NATIVE AMERICAN LEDGER DRAWINGS FROM THE HOOD MUSEUM OF ART: THE MARK LANSBURGH COLLECTION
October 2 through December 19, 2010

CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICAN LEDGER ART: DRAWING ON TRADITION
August 14, 2010, through January 16, 2011

TRADITION TRANSFORMED: TIBETAN ARTISTS RESPOND
January 15 through March 13, 2011

Arrow (Elk Society), untitled (detail), p. 94 from the Arrow’s Elk Society Ledger, about 1874–75, graphite, colored pencil on ledger paper. Gift of Mark Lansburgh, Class of 1949, in honor of Jim Yong Kim, 17th President of Dartmouth College; 2009.45