

# Self-Guide

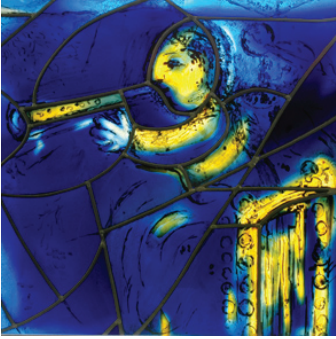
## Home for the Holidays

It's the time of the year when families gather and homecomings are rejoiced the world over. This year, the Art Institute joins in the celebration with a variety of its own holiday homecomings. Combine your festivities and ours with a family visit to a few of the wonderful works of art returning to new galleries this season.

GALLERY 144

### *America Windows* (1977) by Marc Chagall

Nearly 90 when he started creating these vibrant stained-glass windows for the Art Institute, Marc Chagall approached the work with a very deliberate philosophy: "It's not for a cathedral or for a private house that I do this. It's for a museum. So right away there are certain conditions. While not a cathedral, at the same time, it must be a place where people can reflect. If the windows are good, then the visitors who come, those who come to see them, will have a good feeling." Chagall was certainly right—his brilliant masterpiece immediately became a museum favorite, a must-see stop. After several years of intense study and conservation treatment, the much-missed *America Windows* return on November 1 to a new gallery fashioned just for them, once again ready to offer good feelings to all who visit.



GALLERY 55

### *The Bride Has Entered* (1982) by Lenore Tawney

Though she went on to become an international innovator in the emerging field of fiber art, Lenore Tawney began her studies in the Windy City under the tutelage of Alexander Archipenko and László Moholy-Nagy at the Chicago Institute of Design. Combining this art education with her studies of tapestry at the Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina, Tawney began making free-hanging textile works in the 1950s and 1960s. With her later work, she continued to explore new territories, moving away from woven structure as in this haunting piece that incorporates loose cotton threads, handmade Indian paper with Sanskrit writings, and pink pigment and gold leaf decoration. Not on display since 1999, the work serves as a key piece in the inaugural special exhibition of the new textile galleries, set to reopen on November 3.



GALLERY 236

### *Half Armor for a Hussar* (1683/1700), Polish

Renaissance armor was worn for several distinct purposes—battle, sport, and parade. This unique half suit functioned in the former warring category, which is somewhat surprising as it was originally festooned with enormous and elaborate wings. The suit belonged to one of the legendary 16th-century Polish Hussars, an elite rank of the army sometimes referred to as the Winged Horsemen—and winged they literally were! Huge wooden frames with large eagle or vulture feathers protruding from the rims were hinged to the backs of their battle armor. It is theorized that the thunderous noise made from the flapping of these extra appendages during a charge would frighten the enemy horses—a plausible speculation since these expert horsemen rarely lost a battle though they found themselves many times outnumbered. This special suit makes a dazzling reappearance after three years off view when the new installation of arms and armor opens November 1.

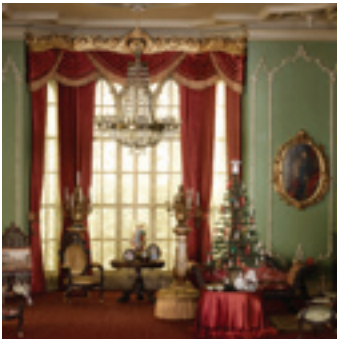




GALLERY 102

### **Horse (5th century), Japan**

During Japan's Kofun period (mid-3rd–6th century), *haniwa*, or funerary sculptures, like this earthenware horse, were made for the era's great burial mounds of chieftains and emperors. Haniwa came in a variety of forms—human figurines, animals, and houses—and were likely meant to represent the possessions of the deceased that he hoped to take with him after death. These burial figures, however, were not entombed with the deceased like Chinese tomb figures but rather stood partially submerged in the soil at the front of the burial site or outlining its sacred contours. After a seven-year loan to the Milwaukee Art Museum, this decorated horse returned to the Art Institute's Department of Conservation where small cracks were filled and discoloration treated before the haniwa made its grand re-debut with the opening of the Roger L. and Pamela Weston Wing in late September.



GALLERY 11

### **English Drawing Room of the Victorian Period, 1840–70 (c. 1937) by Mrs. James Ward Thorne**

This tiny gem of a room isn't coming home for the holidays, but its new era-appropriate holiday decorations certainly make it a much homier place for the season. Mrs. James Ward Thorne's original undecorated Victorian drawing room was full of portraits of the then-reigning monarchs, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, so it only seemed fitting that the royal couple should serve as the inspiration for the room's holiday trimmings. In fact, it was with the marriage of Victoria and Albert in 1840 that the tradition of the Christmas tree, or *tannenbaum*, was brought from Germany to Great Britain. A famous engraving of the royal couple and their children surrounding a trimmed and toy-bedecked tree would forever popularize this holiday fixture, and it was this image that was the basis for the design of the Thorne Room tree and accoutrements. Let the singing of "O Tannenbaum" begin with the opening of the festooned rooms on November 1.



MICHIGAN AVENUE ENTRANCE

### **Lions (1893) by Edward Kemeys**

While the Art Institute's lions were created at a time when these animals were placed at the entrances of many public institutions as symbolic guardians, our Edward Kemeys-sculpted pair has become more beloved than feared. They have cheered on the city's sports teams in playoffs, donning helmets of various sorts; sparked their own Facebook page; and kick-started the holiday season for 18 years with their festive wreathing. This year, the museum has invited Materious, a Chicago-based design team, to create the lions' holiday neckware. Composed of about 500 spheres in several different shades of red, the wreaths will combine the look of traditional North American cranberry wreaths with the hopeful spirit of Buddhist and Taoist wishing trees, for inside each sphere will be "a wish for the world in 2011" written by Chicago-area schoolchildren. See them for yourself at the 19th Annual Wreathing of the Lions on November 26 at 10:00.

## **Come "Home for the Holidays" at the Art Institute!**

The festivities begin on November 1 with the return of Chagall's *America Windows* and arms and armor as well as freshly decorated Thorne Rooms, but the celebration continues with a host of special events and family activities throughout the season. Visit [www.artinstituteofchicago.org](http://www.artinstituteofchicago.org) for all the ways we invite you to celebrate the holidays with us this year.