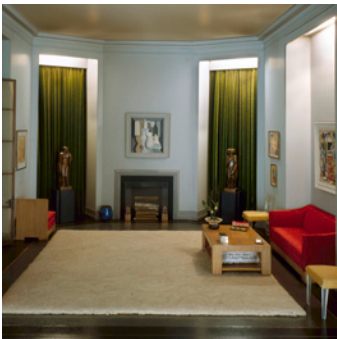


NIGHTLIFE

IN

ART

This month, the night is our stage. Let this guide escort you to works in the collection that embrace the night's restless, insomniac moods as well as its peaceful times of slumber.



GALLERY 11

California Hallway, c. 1940 (c. 1940) by Mrs. James Ward Thorne

The French doors of this swank, albeit pint-sized, apartment open up onto a spectacular view of San Francisco's Treasure Island and the then newly built Golden Gate Bridge silhouetted by twinkling lights against the night sky. Elegantly appointed, this room includes the smallest original artworks of the museum's collection. Two bronze sculptures by John Storrs flank either side of the fireplace, while Cubist paintings by Amédée Ozenfant and Fernand Léger hang over the fireplace and couch. The color and movement of these artworks, commissioned especially for this room, stand out against the clean, restrained lines of this modern California interior.



GALLERY 124

Neckrest Depicting a Building on Stilts (Mid-19th/early 20th century), Yaka; Democratic Republic of Congo

Tired of bedhead? In parts of Africa neckrests have been used for centuries to preserve elaborate hairstyles during nighttime slumber. The sleeper generally reclined on his side with his neck supported from ear to chin. Among the Yaka of central Africa, the neckrest was a status object and helped to preserve the intricate headdress that symbolized the office of land chief, though the practice appears to have faded since the mid-20th century. Because the land chief's headdress also functioned as a protective charm, it had to be worn day and night. With supernaturally charged medicine nestled inside the building's passage, this neckrest might also have inspired dreams that would help in advising and guiding a community on important matters.



GALLERY 216

The Denial of Saint Peter (c. 1628) by Hendrick Terbruggen

The warm glow of a crackling fire intensifies the dark shadows that veil Saint Peter in this depiction of the well-known Bible story, in which Peter denies his friendship with Christ. Hendrick Terbruggen, a Dutch painter who specialized in nocturnal subjects full of rich colors and strong contrasts of light and shade, set this nighttime interrogation in an atmosphere of fear and betrayal. A woman points an accusatory finger at Peter, who retreats into the shadows as he utters his words of denial. In the background, a group of torchlit soldiers lead Christ to his death.



GALLERY 205

At the Moulin Rouge (1895) by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec

This masterful work offers a glimpse into one of Paris's hottest nightspots, the Moulin Rouge. The famous cabaret, set under its signature red windmill, was the spot to be at the turn of the 20th century. Performers such as La Goulue, Jane Avril, and May Milton, all depicted in this painting, graced its stage with their risqué performances. Toulouse-Lautrec's lively depiction of the dance hall helped to secure the celebrity of these underground artists; their faces were plastered all over Paris in the posters that he also created. A notorious denizen of the nightclub in his own right, Toulouse-Lautrec made sure to include his own diminutive figure strolling next to his lanky cousin in the background.



GALLERY 263

Nightlife (1943) by Archibald Motley, Jr.

Like Toulouse-Lautrec, Motley loved to venture into nightclubs and nocturnal society to find his subjects. In this painting, Motley captured the frenetic vibrations of a crowded cabaret in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood. As the clock above the bar indicates, it is one in the morning, and the place is hopping with drinkers and dancers. Couples have paired off and swing rhythmically to the music blasting from the jukebox, while drinkers sidle up to the bar for another round. Bartenders take care of orders and restock the well-lit shelves filled with colorful bottles. Motley's energetic work beautifully depicts the vibrant fashion and vivacity of jazz joints in the 1940s.



GALLERY 163

Nocturne: Blue and Gold—Southampton Water (1872)

by James McNeill Whistler

This peaceful depiction of an inlet of the English Channel by American expatriate painter James McNeill Whistler shows the artist at his full force. Waterscapes were one of the artist's strengths, and these quiet, nighttime scenes are daring in their abstraction. Just over the horizon, a faint golden moon is rising. Although it is dusk, large ships and small boats hover in the port, taking on passengers and preparing to go to sea. Whistler's composition pays little attention to all of this activity; rather, the subtle variations in color and simplified forms create a serene atmosphere. As one critic noted, "The air might be said to be visible, so dense is the deep, warm twilight which obscures all things here."



GALLERY 156A

Lamp (2nd century), Roman

Created at a time when most lamps were made from terracotta, this bronze lamp with twin nozzles would have been a cherished companion on a dark night. The handle is carved with a bust of Jupiter and an imperial eagle crossing past a crescent moon. Let the Art Institute light your night on May 11! Join us at Looptopia, Chicago's first dawn-to-dusk artistic celebration. The museum will be open until midnight and will feature gallery talks, family activities, and late-night viewings of *Cézanne to Picasso*.