GIFTS TO THE CITY GAME

This past year brought many generous donations and exciting additions to the museum’s collection, including the extraordinary gift of 44 iconic works of contemporary art from Chicago collectors Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson. These works—paintings and sculpture by artists such as Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, and Robert Rauschenberg—go on display for the first time in The New Contemporary, opening December 13 on the second floor of the Modern Wing.

And across the entire museum this holiday season, we’re presenting some of the other remarkable works that joined the collection in 2015—our gifts to the residents of and visitors to Chicago. We invite you to celebrate these works by playing the following game.

Visit each gallery listed to find the featured artwork. Write the word that’s missing from the work’s title or the artist’s name beside the correct number, and a secret word will appear vertically. When you’ve figured it out, take this guide to the Museum Shop at the Michigan Avenue entrance to claim your special gift (while supplies last)!

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1. GALLERY 11
Virginia Dining Room, 1758 (about 1940) by Mrs. James Ward ____________

This 18th-century American interior features Asian-inspired accents including door molding in the shape of pagodas, a serving table and sideboard based on Chinese designs, and wallpaper decorated with East Asian flowers and birds. This year the room is decorated for the holidays with newly designed miniatures depicting period-appropriate food and servingware used on Twelfth Night, which is a feasting holiday celebrating the Epiphany, the day in the Nativity story when the three wise men visited Jesus. Look closely and you’ll see a king cake, a pyramid of apples, goblets full of colorful jellies, and even a marzipan hedgehog. Take a tour around the gallery to find 12 more miniature rooms decked out for the season.
2. GALLERY 233
*The Brand Cabinet* (about 1768), execution attributed to William ________, designed by Horace Walpole

This elaborate padouk-wood cabinet with decorative ivory reliefs was designed to hold enamels and miniatures collected on the owner’s Grand Tour of Europe. The shape and details of the cabinet itself are meant to complement the classically inspired architecture of the collector’s home. The carefully carved ivories inlaid on the front depict ancient portraits and scenes of love between gods and mortals, including images of Leda and Venus.

3. GALLERY 218

*Helen* (about 1787)
by ________ Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein

This painting of the mythological Helen of Troy is one of a pair—look to the left to see a portrait of Paris, the prince who started the Trojan War by abducting Helen. Both portraits are excerpts from a larger painting that details a scene from Homer’s *The Iliad* in which Paris eventually agrees to a duel with Helen’s husband in order to end the war and determine which man will have her as his wife. In late 18th-century Rome, where Tischbein lived and worked, classical themes like this were quite popular.

4. GALLERY 125

*Malcolm X and Cassius Clay* (1964)
by LeRoy ________

In 1964, the same year that boxer Cassius Clay and this American painter and printmaker began a lifelong friendship, the artist made this powerful brush and ink drawing pairing Clay with Malcolm X, the athlete’s spiritual advisor. In retrospect, this was a particularly important moment to capture these two iconic Americans. Clay soon joined the Nation of Islam and changed his name to Muhammad Ali, while Malcolm X was assassinated just a year later.

5. GALLERY 137

*Barrister’s Crown* (______________)
(mid-20th century), Yoruba, Southwestern Nigeria

Within many African communities, headwear is used to signify social, religious, political, and personal status. This beaded crown would have been worn by a Yoruba oba, or king, at the opening of the legislature or for other occasions related to the Nigerian legal system. During the mid-20th century, when this crown was made, Nigeria was under British rule, and the form explicitly references the wigs of British judges. However, it also incorporates traditional Yoruba iconography: the projection on the top refers to the sacredness of the oba’s head and his role as mediator between the Yoruba people and the gods.
6. GALLERY 10
Collum (2011) by Tillmans

Tillmans’s work is recognized for its suggestive depiction of contemporary culture—from the provocative to the banal—through a deliberate mix of portraiture, still life, landscape, and abstraction. This image exemplifies Tillmans’s unique approach to portraiture, in which his subjects appear tough yet vulnerable. Collum depicts the neck of a man we know only as Karl. Tillmans made a series of 30 intimate studies of this man, though his relationship to the artist is never made clear.

7. GALLERY 165
Wine Cup (about 1660) by John Sanderson and Robert Sanderson

This incredibly rare example of mid-17th-century colonial American silver is the work of two of the country’s earliest silversmiths. In addition to running Boston’s first mint, they created custom silver pieces for a variety of local religious and political leaders. This cup was commissioned by William Needham (look closely to see his name engraved along the top), and its unadorned simplicity reflects Needham’s modest Puritan values. Before Needham donated it to the church for use during communion services, he would have used it with his family at home.

8. GALLERY 289
Bicho—Monumento a Todas as Situações (1960) by Clark

This pioneering Brazilian artist began her career as an abstract painter, but her practice quickly expanded to include sculptural and performance works. In the early 1960s, she created a series of abstract three-dimensional objects called Bichos (“beasts” or “critters”). These movable metal works collapse into flat square shapes, but the hinged planes can also be unfolded into a variety of positions that might resemble skyscrapers or winged creatures. When asked about how many different ways a Bicho can move, the artist replied, “I don’t know, you don’t know, but it knows.”

TOP IMAGE © Wolfgang Tillmans.