

# Presentation # 1 Notes (4/11/2024)

Jessica A. Randall, Docent Trainee, presented...



Harriet Goodhue Hosmer (American, 1830–1908), *Puck*, ca. 1855–56, Marble,  
Gift of James H. Ricau and Museum purchase, 86.471

Harriet Goodhue Hosmer (1830 - 1908) led a singular, unconventional life. She is considered the first, famous American woman sculptor. She achieved international fame as a Neoclassical sculptor during her lifetime, while living in Rome in the Nineteenth Century. She favored works with

Classical themes; heroines from Greek and Roman Mythology; as well works with literary themes, derived from popular literature. Harriet is perhaps best known for her whimsical marble sculpture, “Puck” from the 1850s. Some fifty replicas were carved and sold to European aristocracy and wealthy American patrons alike, during her lifetime. Puck’s plump, mischievous persona proved irresistible. She also produced large-scale sculpture, like “Beatrice Cenci” now displayed at The St. Louis Mercantile Library, at The University of Missouri, in Saint Louis, Missouri.

Nicknamed, “Hattie,” she was born in Watertown, Massachusetts outside of Boston, in 1830. Tragically, Hattie’s mother, older sister and two younger brothers died of tuberculosis, before she was twelve years old. Her father Hiram Hosmer, a prominent physician, raised her. Hiram was determined not to lose her. He fostered Hattie’s physical stamina; he particularly encouraged rigorous physical fitness, like swimming, horseback riding and hiking outdoors; all pursuits considered rare for women of her day. With her father’s life-long endorsement, Hattie thrived. Mischievous, with a great sense of humor, Hattie performed harmless pranks on her father’s friends as a girl, just for fun. As a young girl exploring outside, she discovered a claypit not far from her home. It was there that she first modeled dogs, and other animals from her environment, in clay. Hiram also nurtured Hattie’s intellectual independence, by sending her to the progressive girls’ boarding school, “Mrs. Sedgwick’s School for Young Ladies” in Lenox, Massachusetts; founded by philanthropist, Elizabeth “Lizzie” Sedgwick.

While studying at “Mrs. Sedgwick’s School for Young Ladies” Hattie further developed her clay modeling skills. As she became interested in sculpting the human form, it became essential to study human anatomy. Hattie applied to medical schools in the Boston area, and was rejected by all. As a woman, she was not permitted to examine naked bodies, participate in dissections or sketch live, nude models. Fortunately, the father of a good friend, Wayman Crow, facilitated Hattie’s acceptance into the newly founded, “Dr. Nash McDowell’s Missouri Medical College” in Saint Louis, Missouri. Dr. Nash McDowell was a physician who championed the study of human

anatomy using cadavers; an unorthodox medical practice, at the time. Although highly respected, Dr. McDowell became somewhat infamous for his dubious methods. (As an aside, Mark Twain's character, "Dr. Robinson," could have been based on Dr. Nash McDowell). Harriet Goodhue Hosmer, was the first woman to receive a professional certificate in human anatomy, from the new, esteemed school. Doctor McDowell's medical school later became part of Washington University, in Saint Louis.

For American artists of the day, study abroad was considered essential. Hattie moved to Rome in 1852, along with her father, and her good friend from Mrs. Sedgewick's School for Young Ladies, Charlotte Cushman. Hattie studied Classical sculpture, with the well-known Welch Neoclassical sculptor, John Gibson. She became part of an international circle of artists, actors and writers, including her beloved friend (some say, lover) actress Charlotte Cushman; poets Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and writers Henry James and Nathaniel Hawthorne. The independent Hattie also possessed "Joie de vivre;" she was vivacious, fun-loving and courageous. She was often called, "the life of the party!"

Harriet established her sculpture studio in Rome, where she employed over twenty skilled stone carvers. She was a savvy businesswoman. Hattie fostered relationships with international clients, including European aristocracy and wealthy American patrons, alike. The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) visited her studio in Rome and purchased a replica of her whimsical sculpture, "Puck" in 1859. "Puck," its companion piece, "Wil' O' The Wisp", and other works by Harriet Goodhue Hosmer, can be found in museum collections worldwide, including those of: The National Museums Liverpool, in Liverpool, England; The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, NY; The Museum of The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, in Philadelphia, PA; The Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington D.C; The Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington D.C., The Huntington Museum of Art, in Huntington, West Virginia; and of course, right here at The Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, Virginia. The list goes on. Hattie led a singular, unconventional life. She was a remarkable woman and a brilliant artist, far ahead of her time. Harriet Goodhue Hosmer was a trailblazer for women in the arts; she is considered the first, famous American woman sculptor.

#### Bibliography:

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- Google Arts & Culture; [www.artsandculture.google.com](http://www.artsandculture.google.com); "Harriet Hosmer;" visited site 4/5/2024.
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- National Portrait Gallery, London, UK; [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk); "Harriet Goodhue Hosmer - Person;" visited site on 4/10/24.
- Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C; [www.Americanart.si.edu](http://www.Americanart.si.edu); "Harriet Goodhue Hosmer," Luce Artist Biography; visited site from 4/5/24 - 4/10/2024

Jessica: " *I would love to invite [the docents] to learn more about Harriet Hosmer and her singular, unconventional life! I had fun with this; fun practicing telling her story.*

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## **BLIND EARL PORCELAIN**

**(Specifically #25, Sweetmeat Dish, “Blind Earl” Pattern, ca. 1765, L2005.10.43)**

**Porcelain Gallery**

**Presented by Sherry Warren, Docent in Training**

The Porcelain Gallery holds approximately 200 pieces of porcelain manufactured by the Worcester Porcelain Company, Worcester England, made between 1751 and 1784 (called the “First Period” of Worcester Porcelain). These pieces represent a portion of the approximately 900 pieces of porcelain gifted to the City of Norfolk by Elise Nusbaum Hofheimer and Henry Clay Hofheimer, II. The city subsequently lent these pieces (a long-term loan) to the Chrysler Museum. The current installation was opened in 2019.

This dish has scalloped edges, blue decorations of leaves and insects, and some raised features such as the twig that is three-dimensional and in part separate from the main body of the dish, and some of the stems in the design that are in relief.

**Blue and white porcelain-** has been popular in many diverse cultures for centuries, including 9th century Iraq and China, 16th & 17th century Turkey & the city of Delft in the Netherlands. The Chinese blue & white porcelain, known as Nanking ware, was very popular in England in the 1700’s and was imported. The Worcester Porcelain Company discovered how to make blue & white porcelain that was good quality, readily available, lower cost than imports, and had a greater variety of designs.

**Sweetmeat dish-** this particular dish was used to serve “sweetmeats,” which were any type of sweets or food coated in sugar, such as candy, candied fruit, preserves, etc. These were generally served at tea. [Note- “mete” in Old English meant “food”]

**“Blind Earl”-** There is a story that tells of George William Coventry, 5th Earl of Coventry, who lost his sight in a hunting accident in 1780. After this tragic incident, he supposedly commissioned the Worcester Porcelain Manufactory to produce a set of fine china with raised decorations so that he could experience the beauty of the dishes through touch. Thus, “Blind Earl” pattern was created. However, this pattern was produced prior to 1780 (this particular dish circa 1765, for example). Historians now believe that blindness may have been hereditary in the Earl’s family, and that the hunting accident story was a more romantic way to explain the condition. George William Coventry may have either commissioned these dishes prior to his going blind (knowing that it would happen), or he obtained them later and the name was just applied to them to go along with a good story. At any rate, “Blind Earl” porcelain continued to be popular into the 19th and 20th centuries.

**NOTE:**There are two other examples of sweetmeat dishes with “Blind Earl” pattern in the gallery- one with “Hawks” pattern ca 1760-65, and one with an image of a teapot, ca 1780-85

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**Sweetmeat Dish, "Blind Earl"  
Pattern, ca. 1765**

L2005.10.43





### **Samurai Armor, 19th Century**

**Myochin Ki Muneyoshi**

**Gift of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr., 71.3011**

**Presented by Minako Klena, Docent in Training**

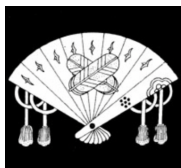
#### **Armor:**

This Japanese Samurai armor was created for the Akita family clan in the 19th century by a respected armor maker, Myochin. Myochin originated in the 12th century. The Edo period (1603 to 1867) was a time of peace and stability in Japan and this type of armor served as more of an aesthetic and status symbol to demonstrate the power and prestige of the military elite.

#### **Construction:**

The armor's main components are a skirt, breast/back plates, shoulder covers, sleeves, gloves, face mask, and a helmet. The small metal plates are overlapped with silk cording and tied to a cloth background to cover the body of the wearer. The use of small metal plates achieves flexibility and reduces weight. The plates are covered by urushi lacquer for beauty and durability. The sleeves are covered with wire mesh chain mail. This type of ceremonial armor typically weighs between 55 to 65 lb. The laminar structure is designed to reduce the weight on shoulders. The helmet (Kabuto) is an essential element for head/neck protection as well as a symbolic element as it reflects the samurai warrior's personal designs. The face mask functions as protection as well as an intimidation to opponents.

#### **Design elements:**



The Akita family crest of a Hinoki (Japanese cypress) fan and two crossing feathers with tassels are shown in the helmet, breastplates, and gloves in this armor. Fans are traditionally considered to bring good luck due to the shape of the opening fan, which represents a prosperous future. Beautifully dyed fabric with flowers, plants, and animals are integrated into the design.

**Summary:**

This armor is an excellent example of Japanese craftsmanship incorporating beautiful artistic and functional elements.

**Special Note:**

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is having a special exhibition "Samurai Armor from the Collection of Ann and Gabriel Barbier-Mueller" from April 20th, 2024 to August 4th, 2024. If you are interested in learning more about Japanese armors, it is a great opportunity!

In Japan, replicas of Kabuto (helmet) are still decorated in many houses to celebrate and wish children's growth and prosperity on Children's Day, May 5th. Japanese children enjoy making Kabuto origami in schools (as shown in the MET site).

"Armor (Yoroi) - Explore - MetKids." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*,

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/online-features/metkids/explore/22506/Japanese-Armor-Yoroi>.

**Reference:**

Suga, Takaaki. "Perceptions of Armor during the Edo Period." *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts*, vol. 88, no. 1/4, 2014, pp. 34–43. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43493626>.

"An Inside Look at Japanese Armor." *Tokyo National Museum, YouTube*, 21 January 2021, <https://youtu.be/yVvapRv0Ggg>.

*Samurai Armor: The Dignified Aesthetics of the Warrior Class - Core Kyoto | NHK WORLD-JAPAN*, 15 March 2023, <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/shows/2029189/>.

"Japanese Samurai Armor — Minneapolis Institute of Art." *Minneapolis Institute of Art*, <https://new.artsmia.org/programs/teachers-and-students/teaching-the-arts/artwork-in-focus/japanese-samurai-armor>.

"Kamon Symbols of Japan — Encyclopedia of Japan." *Encyclopedia of Japan*, <https://doyouknowjapan.com/symbols/>.

"三春の歴史こぼれ話7 秋田家家紋の話 | Web資料館 | 三春町歴史民俗資料館 | 歴史民俗資料館." 三春町, 22 February 2012, <https://www.town.miharu.fukushima.jp/soshiki/19/kamon.html>.

**New VMFA Exhibition:**

"Samurai Armor from the Collection of Ann and Gabriel Barbier-Mueller - Exhibitions." *Virginia Museum of Fine Arts*, 20 April 2024, <https://vmfa.museum/exhibitions/exhibitions/samurai-armor-collection-ann-gabriel-barbier-mueller/>.

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## **Vase, ca. 1926 - Maria Martinez**

Chrysler Museum of Art catalog number 81.120

Jill Campbell, Docent-in-Training



Jill

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The following is the text of the 7 Minute Tour/Presentation with a target audience of



adults. This Tour is written from the starting point at, or in view of, the Georgia O'Keefe painting in the modern gallery, Black Door with Red, 1954. This vase is located in Gallery 222 in a small glass case against the wall.

## Tour

I'm excited to share with you a piece of art made by a woman born in the same year as George O'Keefe, 1887, and who also lived into her nineties.

Remarkably, she worked just 35 miles down the road from Georgia's home in Abiquiu. To get there - let's imagine we're hopping on Highway 84 south from Abiquiu - we'll take an exit just before we get to Santa Fe and head west. This is the same exit you'd take for Los Alamos, but we won't go quite that far - we'll stop at San Ildefonso Pueblo, lifelong home of Maria Pove'ka Montoya Martinez.

Maria Martinez was one of 123 members of the San Ildefonso Pueblo according to the 1900 US Census. Her people speak the Tewa language and this 39,000 acre Pueblo was established in 1300 CE. In 1900, Maria was thirteen years old and she had already been making pottery for over two years, a skill she learned from her Aunt.

Now - let's look at this spectacular large vase on the right in this case - perhaps you've noticed it before? The smaller piece was made by an artist at another Pueblo - will touch on that Pueblo in a moment. Make sure to take turns coming around to the right side of the case so you can see the photograph of Maria and her husband.

The story of Maria, and the journey to create this pot, can be thought of as: To

**Recreate -> To Rediscover -> To Reinvent**

*Let's start here. I invite you to look more closely - in a word or two, what do you observe about this vase?*

**To Recreate** - In 1904 Maria married her husband, Julian, and that very day they left for the 1904 Saint Louis World Fair, where they had demonstrated their pottery making technique. Pottery of the San Ildefonso Pueblo in the late 1800s and early 1900s was red when fired and painted in polychromatic or a many-color

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style. Sometime right after their return, they helped with an archeological dig on the site known today as Bandolier National Monument - home to their ancestors and just down the road. Julian and the archeologists found pottery shards of a style their people were no longer making - Biscuitware. This was unusual - the pottery was black with a slip of white on the outside. (A slip is a fine coat of clay mixed with water and other ingredients which is applied before firing and fills in the surface pores to give a uniform color). The archeologists, Kenneth Chapman and Edgar Hewitt, asked if local potters could **Recreate** this pottery.

Note - It's the same source of the clay on their land, harvested once a year and stored in an adobe structure that maintains a constant temperature, and is naturally a dull earthen red color. Blue sand, also dug on the Pueblo, is added in equal parts as a binding agent.

*So how did the ancestors of the San Ildefonso Pueblo use the same clay to make black pottery instead of red? How do you think they made this pottery?*

To **Rediscover** - Starting around 1909, it took 10 years for Maria and Julian to perfect a technique that would produce the black-on-black pottery. They were having no luck for quite some time. It's important to note that at this time there were very traditional gender roles in the making of pottery in the Pueblos - the women made the pottery, the men painted/decorated the pottery and they might have worked together to fire the pottery. Maria eventually spoke with a friend at the Santa Clara Pueblo about their struggles and that woman shared that they had been making blackware all along at Santa Clara. Maria and Julian **Rediscovered** how to make blackware with that assistance.

The process to turn the clay black had everything to do with how the pottery is fired - the last step after the pots were shaped (by hand in the coil method) and painted with a slip. The process is similar to how they had been firing their red pottery. The key difference is to starve the area surrounding the pots of oxygen. This is called Reduction Firing. Other factors contributing to the color include the fuel used, temperature of firing and time to cool.

(They use a traditional outdoor pit built into a mound in which the pottery is arranged on a metal grate and buried under large pottery shards (or pieces of sheet metal) surrounding the pots. They use very dry cow dung chips and (only)

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cedar wood initially to achieve the temperatures needed (1200 - 1400 degrees Fahrenheit ) and then they would smother the fire with powdered horse dung. After a few hours they shifted the horse dung to make sure the fire was completely out to allow the pots to cool slowly.)

To **Reinvent** - Maria and Julian took their newly rediscovered techniques and made it their own, they **Reinvented** it, by developing this highly burnished, polished pottery with matte decorations. The technique to achieve what is often called a gunmetal finish involved Maria hand-shaping the pottery and polishing the pot horizontally with a smooth river stone. Julian then used a proprietary slip of clay mixed with plant juice to paint the matte designs on the pot with a brush made of a yucca leaf. Many of these designs are sacred and Julian found some of them in rock art and pottery shards while on the archaeological dig. Our vase has mountains, clouds, wind and rain symbols.

*Final question - What typically happens when an artist develops a new technique or style? Do they want other people to copy their style?*

Maria did not hold their techniques close to the vest - rather they shared it with their entire Pueblo. In doing so, their Pueblo - now numbering maybe 88 people after the Spanish Flu epidemic - embraced this style. After 1918, this style of pottery became very collectible in large part because it dovetailed nicely with the aesthetics of the Art Deco period. This pottery became a major source of income for the entire Pueblo.

A few more details:

Although Julian died in 1943, Maria continued to make pottery with family - initially her son, Adam and his wife Santana - and then her son Popovi Da.

Signatures on the bottom of the pots help to identify the timeframe when the pots were made - note the following two details. Maria did not initially sign her pots in the early 1920s - she didn't think they were that special. When she did begin to sign, she was advised to use her anglicized name (Marie). It was not until much later that she reclaimed her name Maria and began signing as such.

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Maria met four U.S. Presidents and went to four World Fairs. She had a solo Smithsonian Renwick exhibit.

**Note the theme of water.** Ancient ancestors, the Anasazi, left Mesa Verde (Four Corners area) and dispersed in the Southwest after prolonged drought. A group arrived at Bandelier National Monument around 1150 CE and lived there until around 1550 CE, overlapping with the founding of San Ildefonso around 1300 CE. The Rio Grande River runs through this area.

**Poveka** - Maria's Tewa name - means "Water Lily"

**P'o-Woe-Geh Owing** - Tewa name for San Ildefonso Pueblo - means "Where the water cuts through"

**Olla Jar** - Signature style of pot - means "Water Jar". Our Chrysler vase looks like an Olla Jar with an elongated neck.

**Avanyu** - (Also Awanyu) Tewa deity - guardian of water. Zig-zag horned or plumed serpent (zig-zag suggesting lightening, curves suggesting flowing water). Other symbols include feathers, corn, lightning and leaves.

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This map was modified by Nate Francis (Tewa), School for Advanced Research, for the Pueblo Pottery Collective, based on a map developed at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture/Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Source: <https://groundedinclay.org/> Grounded In Clay - The Spirit of Pueblo Pottery Jill

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This is the third signature style of the Marie & Julian period, 1925-1943 ... the "M" without the slash and the circle over the "i". This signature is attributed to Maria's sister Clara who was "helping Maria" by signing for her.

Source: <https://www.mariamartinezpottery.com/signatures.html>

Note - this would be the timeframe attributed to the Chrysler vase.

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