

# TRAPPINGS

## HOMAGE TO THE HORSE AND OTHER STEEDS

ON VIEW: May 26 – November 12, 2017

### EXHIBITION RESOURCE GUIDE



### **What are *Trappings*?**

The word *trappings* refers to decorative and functional coverings and adornment for a horse or other animal. This includes saddles, saddle blankets, saddle bags, bridles, stirrups, spurs, head coverings, leads, horn covers and bells. This exhibition features objects from around the globe that celebrate the speed, power and serviceability of the horse and other animals that are ridden and used by humans. Items include classic horse figures and accoutrement of Asia and Europe; clay and wood horses of India; artifacts of U.S., Native American and Mexican horse culture; trappings for bullocks in Asia; and, camel trappings of Asia and the Middle East.

## EXHIBITION THEMES

### Festival Adornment

Festivals, ceremonies, weddings and other celebrations often include special costumes and adornment particular to the event. These embellishments are reflective of cultural traditions, craftsmanship and societal aesthetics. Animals have a role to play as well, often leading processions or pulling ceremonial carts, while fully adorned in luxurious textiles, saddles, and other beautiful decor.

### Representative of Various Cultures

This exhibition comprises trappings from across the world, including China, India, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Tibet, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Mexico and Native American cultures. Many cultures have a longstanding cultural relationship with horses, oxen and camels. These animals have the power to bring people together, whether to buy or sell, bet on their speed, transport, or simply admire their beauty.

### Materials and Craftsmanship

The trappings in this exhibition were created using a variety of materials, including metals such as silver, bronze, copper and brass, as well as wool, cotton, hair, animal hide, clay and wood. Experienced and skilled craftsmen created each item using processes such as metalsmithing, bronze casting, weaving, embroidering, leathersmithing, sculpting and carving.

### Local Equine Community

San Diego has long been home to a significant horse culture of both Western and English saddle traditions—a culture that continues today, despite the loss of riding lands to residential and commercial developments. Multiple saddle and bridle makers still practice their craft in the county, and the Del Mar racetrack's summer and fall seasons are known across the country and around the world.

## STUDENTS WILL EXPLORE

- The different types of items, both functional and decorative, worn by horses or other *steeds* (animals that are ridden) from around the world
- Cultural festivals and traditions from around the world, and the unique role animals played in those festivities and the lives of people
- Materials, patterns and designs connected to specific cultural traditions and aesthetics



**Veeran Ritual Horse**, late 19th century  
Unidentified maker  
Tamil Nadu, India  
Painted wood



**Saddle**, late 19<sup>th</sup>, early 20<sup>th</sup> century  
Unidentified maker  
Tibet



**Saddlebag**, 20th century  
Unidentified maker  
Saudi Arabia  
Goat hair



**Pictorial Blanket "Oh, My Beautiful Horses,"** c. 1885 – 1900  
Unidentified Navajo Maker  
Arizona  
Wool, aniline dyes

## IN PREPARATION FOR YOUR VISIT

Schedule a Museum visit and Docent-led tour through the Education Department. Mingei offers free admission for all K-12<sup>th</sup> grade and college groups and transportation reimbursements for Title 1 schools.

**Email:** [sfoley@mingei.org](mailto:sfoley@mingei.org)

**Call:** 619-704-7495

**Complete an online tour request form:** [www.mingei.org/education/museum-tour-request](http://www.mingei.org/education/museum-tour-request)

- Review the information in this hand-out with your students; build their knowledge, excitement and confidence before they arrive.
- Discuss museum etiquette and review the Tour Guidelines document that will be sent to you when your tour is confirmed.
- Explain to students that a Museum Docent will guide them through the exhibition. Explain that a Docent is a knowledgeable Museum-trained volunteer who will share valuable information with them.
- Explain that Mingei International is a museum of folk art, craft and design that shows work from all over the world, and that “*mingei*” is a Japanese word that means “art of the people.”