

As Time Wears On

To keep what matters most to us safe and lasting, we must preserve those things in the most suitable way. Preserving our valuables has not changed much over the centuries. Whether preserving our life, beauty or fortune, the same objects, such as the ones in this exhibit, are used to achieve preservation today. As a viewer of these artifacts the meaning behind the piece will change along with us. As time wears on we grow and evolve in life. Our experiences are different from one another and change with every passing day. With these experiences we too can see beyond the surface of an artifact and see the story persevered in each piece. As time wears on and you become anew, what do you see in the objects persevered in time?

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[Czechoslovakian Beaded Purse]

This fringed purse with intricate beadwork was created in Czechoslovakia in an estimated time frame between the years 1920 and 1940 it is now displayed in the National Czech and Slovak Museum & Library located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Designed with zig-zagged strips of blue, white, pink, red and yellow, this Czechoslovakian purse is lined with blue silk on the inside and has a silver clasp to keep the purse shut. A silver metal chain is used as a handle. For me, this purse is a memory of my great-grandmother traveling from Czechoslovakia to the United States as a young girl with not much more than her favorite beaded purse. For women all over the world, this purse is a relatable object that houses favorite everyday items that are needed on-hand. For centuries, purses have acted as a preserve or form of protection for valuable items and money. Symbolically, the purse could also represent preservation of beauty, as purses are typically carried by women and used to hold items such as makeup and accessories.



[Bronze mirror, Etruscan] ca. 350 B.C.

This object, dated ca. 350 B.C., was found in Italy between Orvieto and Bolsena in 1877 and is now exposed at the Met Fifth Avenue in Gallery 170. This precious mirror is made of bronze and decorated according to the Etruscan engraving technique. In the Etruscan society, those kinds of engraved mirrors were commonly donated to young women. On the one hand, the mirrors could preserve the beauty of their owners, on the other hand, they were for historians the evidence that Etruscan women enjoyed a relative equality to men. The engravings often represent scenes of public ceremonies like banquets and dances, which reveal that Etruscan women had a quite full participation in society, they suffered few restrictions and were more emancipated than the women in the Roman and in the Greek society. Another present topic in the Etruscan mirrors' decorations are representations from the Greek mythology. The interesting fact is that, beside the sophisticated illustration of the narrated stories, we can see Etruscan writings engraved on the surface of the mirror: commentaries about the story, direct dialogues between the figures of the story, or dedications for the person that received the mirror as a present. The writings on the mirrors are the acknowledgment that Etruscan women were educated because, not only they were confident to Greek mythology, but they also could read.

This fragile bronze mirror has remained intact to date and has preserved, through the years, the beauty of its feminine owners and has protected their story. This story can today still be read today between its timeless manufactory.



[Flower Study, Rose of Sharon] By Adolphe Braun, 1854

The soft and delicate roses of Sharon were placed in a vase and photographed on a glass negative to make beautiful prints of this quiet scene. Adolphe Braun intended for the image to be used as a perpetual reference for artists; little did he know the story this image would tell. Photographs preserve a moment in time. These moments can be remembered or forgotten but they will always live on within the photo. As time wears on so do our memories; as we look back on photographs new feelings and moments flood into our mind. A moment preserved in time becomes anew. What do you see? To the young girl, she saw inspiration to become a photographer. To the man, he finally understood how timeless flowers could be. To the women, she saw her eternal beauty captured in time. As time wears on what do you see behind "The Flower Study"?



[Armor] By Odilon Redon, 1800-1900

When many think of Armor, they think of the physical plated pieces that adorn soldiers of a past era. However, how does one portray the preservation of oneself and mental health? Odilon Redon's charcoal's works tend to view self-preservation and well being through and abstract and borderline nightmarish lens. Redon's Armor is no exception. It has been interpreted and reinterpreted as a symbol of feminism and sexuality. That the idea is that women will build metaphorical armor as a form of perseverance. However, this seems to be a different interpret from Redon himself, as he has said of his work that people tend to "look for an explicative side to my pictures which is not there." (Goldwater & Treves, 1945, p. 391)

[Leather Cuirass] By Ancient Yi people. ca 1800-1900

Cuirass, body armor, made of leather, lacquer, consisting of a number of plates sewn together, with loose flexible lower border in 6 overlapping layers; lacquer ornament, red, yellow and black. It was found in Sichuan province of China and was made in around 1800-1900.

Cuirass is a kind of typical body defense equipment in ancient China and this cuirass was more special which belongs to one of Chinese minorities Yi people. Throughout their long history, Yi people mostly inhabited southwestern China, which were a warlike nationality. According to the ancient culture of Yi people, the three main colors— black red and yellow on the cuirass have different symbols: black represents nobility, red represents courage and yellow represents victory, beauty and the bright future. Normally the cuirass only belongs to the noble soldiers and it was mentioned in some famous translational Chinese historical novels such as the Romance of Three Kingdoms(written in the period of late Yuan and early Ming dynasty). In this novel, in which a chapter named "Capturing and Releasing Meng Huo Seven Times", soldiers wearing in cuirasses were mentioned. In order to conquer the Nan Zhong area and strengthened the authority of Shu Han, the intelligent counselor Zeuge Liang(181-234) attended to captured and released the leader of Yi people named Meng Huo seven times, which let him surrender Shu Han from the bottom of his heart. During the battle, Zhuge Liang used fire to beat the soldiers wearing cuirasses because these armors were waterproof and could also defend the attack of iron swords or arrows, but the only weakness of cuirass is fire because of the leather materials.

This Cuirass in our brochure also belonged to ancient noble Yi soldiers and was used to preserve from the injuries from the attack of enemies. The pattern on it is flowers and plants, which in Yi culture means Luck and flourish.

