

LIST OF WORKS

After Giovanni Jacopo Caraglio
(Italian, c. 1500/1505–1565)

After Rosso Fiorentino
(Italian, 1494–1540)

Mercury, 16th century (after 1526)

Pen and ink wash on paper, 10 1/8 x 8"

Gift of the Washington University

Department of Art and Archaeology, 1969

After Gustave Moreau
(French, 1826–1898)

Jeune fille de Thrace portant la tête d'Orphée (Thracian Girl Carrying the Head of Orpheus), c. 1865

Oil on canvas, 39 1/2 x 25 1/2"

University purchase, Parsons Fund, 1965

After Marcantonio Raimondi
(Italian, c. 1480–c. 1530)

Apollo Belvedere, from *Speculum*

Romanae Magnificentiae (Mirror of Roman Magnificence), 1552

Engraving, 11 3/8 x 16 15/16"

Published by Antonio Lafreri (French,

c. 1512–1577)

Gift of the Art and Archaeology Department,

Washington University, 1980

Jiří Anderle

(Czech, b. 1936)

After Michelangelo Merisi da

Caravaggio

(Italian, 1571–1610)

Bacco (Bacchus), 1982

Soft-ground etching and drypoint, 53/70,

26 x 19 1/2"

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Tucker, 1986

Athena Painter

(Greek, Attic, active c. 500–475 BC)

Lekythos, 525–500 BC

Terracotta, 12 x 4 1/8"

Gift of Robert Brookings and Charles

Parsons, 1904

Romare Bearden

(American, 1911–1988)

Black Venus, 1968

Collage of printed, colored, and painted

papers pasted on paper, 29 3/4 x 40 3/16"

University purchase, Charles H. Yalem Art

Fund, 1994

C Painter

(Greek, Attic, active c. 575–555 BC)

Siana Cup, 560–550 BC

Terracotta, 5 3/8 x 12 5/8"

Gift of Robert Brookings and Charles

Parsons, 1904

CA Painter

(Greek, South Italian, Campanian)

Bell Krater, mid-4th century BC

Terracotta, 17 1/2 x 16 5/8"

Gift of Robert Brookings and Charles

Parsons, 1904

Alan Davie

(Scottish, 1920–2014)

Transformation of the Wooden Horse I, 1960

Oil on canvas, 60 1/8 x 72 1/4"

Gift of Mr. and Mrs Richard K. Weil, 1963

Diosphos Painter

(Greek, Attic, active c. 500–475 BC)

Lekythos, 500–490 BC

Terracotta, 7 1/2 x 2 1/8"

Gift of Robert Brookings and Charles

Parsons, 1904

Raoul Dufy

(French, 1887–1953)

Aphrodite aux papillons (Aphrodite with Butterflies), c. 1938

Watercolor on paper, 19 x 25 1/8"

Gift of Charles H. Yalem, 1963

Eleusinian Painter (?)

(Greek, Attic, active 4th century BC)

Vase Fragment, mid-4th century BC

Terracotta, 8 x 7 1/2 x 1 3/4"

Gift of Robert Brookings and Charles

Parsons, 1904

Long-Nose Painter

(Greek, Attic)

Neck Amphora, 540–525 BC

Terracotta, 20 1/8 x 10 3/4"

Gift of Robert Brookings and Charles

Parsons, 1904

Pablo Picasso

(Spanish, 1881–1973)

Satyr's Head, 1949

Painted and glazed terracotta,

15 1/4 x 12 3/4 x 1 7/16"

University purchase, Elizabeth Northrup

McMillan Fund, 1954

André Racz

(American, b. Romania, 1916–1994)

Perseus Beheading Medusa, VIII, 1945

Engraving with aquatint, 7/25, 26 1/8 x 18 1/4"

University purchase, Kende Sale Fund, 1946

Marcantonio Raimondi

(Italian, c. 1480–c. 1530)

After Raphael

(Italian, 1483–1520)

Judgment of Paris, c. 1517–20

Engraving, 11 3/8 x 16 15/16"

Gift of J. Lionberger Davis, 1966

School of Orazio Fontana

(Italian, 1510–1571)

How Cadmus Killed the Serpent, c. 1540

Maiolica, 1 7/8 x 10 5/8"

University purchase, Elizabeth Northrup

McMillan Fund, 1967

Terpaulos Painter

(Greek, Attic, active c. 530–320 BC)

Trefoil Oinochoe, 500–490 BC

Terracotta, 9 1/2 x 5 3/4"

Gift of Robert Brookings and Charles

Parsons, 1904

Unknown

(Greek, Attic)

Squat Lekythos, early 4th century BC

Terracotta, 5 3/8 x 2 1/2"

Gift of Robert Brookings and Charles

Parsons, 1904

COINS

Minted in Damascus (Macedon)

Silver Tetradrachm of Alexander III,

330–319 BC

John Max Wulffing Collection, Washington

University in St. Louis

Minted in Naxos (Sicily)

Silver Drachma, c. 461–430 BC

John Max Wulffing Collection, Washington

University in St. Louis

Minted in Rome (Roman Empire)

Bronze Dupondius, 145–161 AD

John Max Wulffing Collection, Washington

University in St. Louis

TEACHING GALLERY

Fall 2014

PICTURING NARRATIVE: GREEK MYTHOLOGY IN THE VISUAL ARTS

She found Helen in the hall, where she was weaving a great purple cloth of double width, showing the many battles the Trojans, tamers of horses, and the bronze-clad Greeks were suffering for her sake at the hands of Ares.

Homer, *Iliad* 3.125–128

The Greek word *mythos* means literally “story,” and Greek mythology is inherently a product of words, first handed down orally, then in written works. Yet some of our most interesting presentations of Greek myths, both in antiquity and in the modern world, are not words but images. Portrayals of myths on ancient Greek vases are often strikingly different from the myths in written

texts, and visual artists up to the present have continued to express a wide range of ideas and emotions through their versions of Greek myth. This exhibition examines how visual artists have captured individual moments in Greek myths, have drawn from mythology to create vivid scenes, and have presented widely varied views of Greek mythological characters.

This Teaching Gallery exhibition—on view September 12, 2014, to January 4, 2015—is curated by Timothy J. Moore, John and Penelope Biggs Distinguished Professor of Classics and chair, Department of Classics in Arts & Sciences at Washington University, in conjunction with his course “Greek Mythology,” offered in fall 2014.

MILDRED LANE KEMPER ART MUSEUM

Among the most influential Greek myths are those surrounding the Trojan War. Sixteenth-century Italian printmaker **Marcantonio Raimondi**, copying a painting by his contemporary Raphael, depicts the moment that set the war in motion. The Trojan prince Paris, bribed by Aphrodite with a promise of Helen, the world's most beautiful woman, gives the golden apple destined "for the most beautiful" to Aphrodite rather than to her rivals Hera and Athena. Raphael and Marcantonio emphasize the momentousness of Paris's decision by surrounding the central figures with numerous divine and semidivine observers, including Zeus, king of the gods. Twentieth-century Scottish painter **Alan Davie** looks to the war's end. Warriors emerge from a colorful Trojan horse to destroy Troy, emphasizing how disastrously deceptive the seemingly benign can be.

Homer's *Iliad*, which described many of the events of the Trojan War, includes scenes in which the gods themselves join mortals in combat. On a lekythos (a narrow jar used for holding oil) of the early fifth century BC the **Diosphos Painter** painted what may be a scene similar to those described by Homer. The goddess of war, Athena, rides a chariot amidst warriors on foot. Homer also includes a number of duels between individual warriors. A Siana cup (a shallow drinking cup) painted by the **C Painter** in the mid-sixth century BC shows two such warriors, portrayed identically on each side of the vase (the Chimera inside the cup, part lion and part goat, is a famous mythological monster).

Two of the exhibition's Greek vases show the first and last of Heracles's twelve labors, respectively. Both, intriguingly, show Heracles with Hermes, a god not often associated with the hero. By including Hermes, the god of cleverness, the artists may have wished to stress the need to combine brawn with brains. On a lekythos painted by the **Athena Painter** in the early fifth century BC, Heracles attacks the Nemean lion while Hermes seems to look away. On one side of an amphora (a large storage jar) painted by the **Long-Nose Painter** in the third quarter of the sixth century BC, Heracles is again with Hermes, but this time Hermes seems to have done all the work. The god appears to caress a remarkably docile Cerberus (the dog who guards the underworld, shown here with only two heads instead of his usual three), while Heracles stands behind and Hades and Persephone, king and queen of the underworld, look on. There may be some Athenian chauvinism here, for on the reverse side of the vase Theseus, the

national hero of Athens who was often compared to the non-Athenian Heracles, fights the half-bull, half-man Minotaur with his bare hands. The inscription over the Heracles scene reads *TIMOTHEOS KALOS* (Timothy Is Beautiful). We do not know who Timothy was or why the inscription is on the vase.

A maiolica bowl painted in the sixteenth century from the Italian **School of Orazio Fontana** shows how the hero Cadmus killed a dragon, then let warriors sown from the dragon's teeth fight amongst themselves before he founded the city of Thebes. The visual medium allows the artist to do what a storyteller or writer cannot, showing several moments in the story at once: we see the dragon still alive, the scattered teeth, the warriors, and in the distance the yet-to-be-founded city of Thebes.

Twentieth-century American artist **André Racz** (born in Romania) portrays the hero Perseus when he has just beheaded the Gorgon Medusa. The 1945 engraving has been seen as an allegory for the allied victory in World War II. If so, the image is surprisingly ambiguous: Perseus seems the more sinister of the two figures, Medusa's hair looks more like foliage than her trademark snakes, and Perseus looks directly at the severed head, in contrast to the written tradition that claims anyone looking at Medusa would turn to stone.

A print from Antonio Lafreri's *Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae* (1552) shows one of the most famous sculptures from antiquity, the **Apollo Belvedere**, a Roman copy in marble of a Greek bronze statue. The god Apollo is in a moment of triumph. The snake on the tree trunk hints that he has just slain the dragon Python at Delphi, which would become the god's most important sanctuary.

A sixteenth-century drawing after a print by the Italian engraver and goldsmith Giovanni Jacopo Caraglio shows Hermes (Roman **Mercury**) after he has killed the monster Argus. In written versions of the myth Argus has one hundred eyes, and Hermes puts him to sleep either by telling a long story or playing the panpipes. Here Argus has just two eyes, and Hermes plays the double-piped aulos, an instrument known more for its ability to excite than for its sleep-inducing qualities.

Two of the exhibition's vases, a bell krater (a large vessel used for mixing wine), painted by the **CA Painter** in the fourth century BC, and a fragment of another fourth-century-BC vase, probably by an **Eleusinian painter**, reveal the degree to which

mythological imagery pervaded Greek life. Each includes a nude male figure in what appears to be a scene of departure. Male nudity in ancient Greek art suggested heroic or divine status. One is left to wonder whether these figures are heroes from mythology or contemporary men, made heroic in appearance to match their mythological models.

Few Greek myths have been more popular among visual artists than the story of Orpheus, the musician who could charm wild beasts and even stones but could not bring his wife Eurydice back from the underworld, and who eventually was murdered by frenzied women in Thrace. A painting after the nineteenth-century French artist **Gustave Moreau** adds a moment not found in any written version of the myth: a Thracian girl holds Orpheus's severed head and lyre after the murder. The female figure recalls both the tragic Eurydice and, ironically, the other Thracian women who killed the musician.

Aphrodite (Roman Venus), the goddess of love, has fascinated artists since antiquity as a symbol of love, sexuality, and feminine beauty. A rather crudely painted **lekythos from an unknown artist** in the early fourth century BC, like many portrayals of the goddess, places the viewer in the position of a voyeur, observing the nude Aphrodite washing her hair. Across from her on the vase is her son Eros, the god of desire. French painter **Raoul Dufy** follows yet another tradition in portraying Aphrodite at her most ethereal. Like the butterflies above her, Dufy's twentieth-century Aphrodite seems to transcend the mundane. African American artist **Romare Bearden**, on the other hand, brings Aphrodite down to earth, in a scene reminiscent of the music-filled world of New Orleans.

The god Dionysus (Roman Bacchus) is another powerful mythological archetype, symbolizing the simultaneous freedom and danger that comes from the removal of everyday restraints. Twentieth-century Czech artist **Jiří Anderle**, appropriating a famous painting by Caravaggio, shows Dionysus as a sensuous youth, enticing the viewer but with an impish look that seems to spell trouble. Dionysus's standard followers, goat-like satyrs and female maenads, have been equally popular in art. **Pablo Picasso** produced a number of images of satyrs, one of which is included here. The rule-breaking satyr, with its large ears, red beard, and intent expression, expresses well the artist's own joy in flouting the conventional. Maenads are even more potent symbols of release: in contrast to the usually

restrained lives of many Greek women, they took part in wild revelries in honor of Dionysus. The maenad on an early fifth-century-BC oinochoe (a wine jug) painted by the **Terpaoulos Painter** is in the midst of such revelry. Dressed in a cloak made from a deer's hide (complete with legs) and carrying an ivy-topped wand called a thyrsus, she appears to be leading a dance.

The exhibition also includes three coins from Washington University's John Max Wulff Collection. A **fifth-century BC coin from the town of Naxos in Sicily** shows an ivy-wreathed Dionysus on the obverse, an awkwardly squatting satyr on the reverse. A **coin of Alexander the Great** minted between 330 and 319 BC includes Heracles, wearing the skin of the lion he killed, on the obverse and Zeus on the reverse, associating the Greek world's greatest warrior with its greatest mythological hero and its greatest god. A **Roman coin minted between 145 and 161 AD** reveals that the connection of Aphrodite with fertility goes well beyond just sexuality. On the obverse is Faustina, wife of the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius. She is the mortal representation of the very dignified Venus Genetrix, or Venus the life-giver, portrayed on the reverse.

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For a summary of the myths discussed here, visit
<http://bit.ly/1xrQmEB>

