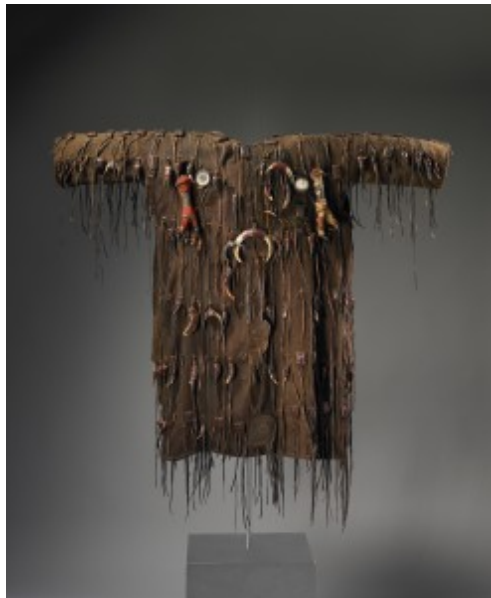


Art & Urban Design

Review: Carlos permanent collection in “Divine Intervention,” “Monsters, Demons & Winged Beasts”

BY CATHERINE FOX | Apr 3, 2011



Related events at the Carlos Museum

April 5. 7:30 p.m. Dr. Bonna Wescoat will discuss Polyphemus and other one-eyed mythic creatures.

April 29 7:30-9:30 p.m. Bronze pour. A good family event; participants create a design and watch it cast.

April 12 7:30 p.m. Guided tour of “Divine Intervention” by curator Jessica Stephenson. (Hunter’s Shirt from Mali, at left.)

April 22 7:30 p.m. Friday. Keynote address by Princeton professor Chika Okeke-Agulu, which kicks off “Critical Encounters: A Graduate Student Symposium in Honor Sidney Littlefield Kasfir.”

When funding declines, museum curators look elsewhere for resources, often their own storerooms. Museums typically show about 10% of their holdings, so the problem becomes the proverbial opportunity: not only to share seldom-seen works with the public but also to think about them in different ways.



The [Michael C. Carlos Museum](#) has done this very thing. The galleries that would otherwise have housed traveling exhibits now contain two engaging exhibitions. “Divine Intervention: African Art & Religion” (through December 4) and “Monsters, Demons & Winged Beasts: Composite Creatures in the Ancient World.” (Through June 19.). In addition, an exhibition of new acquisitions from the works on paper collection is featured in the first floor gallery. For the AJC review, [click here](#). (Griffin Protome, at right, and Centaur Cheiron on home page © Michael C. Carlos Museum. Photos: Bruce M. White.)

It’s notable that “Monsters, Demons & Winged Beasts” has a counterpart at the Fernbank Museum of Natural History. “[Mythic Creatures: Dragons, Unicorns and Mermaids](#)” also addresses the sources for the imaginary creatures that have claimed their places in our cultural memory, but, as you’d expect, it finds the DNA for creatures in the natural world. (Chinese paper dragon, below).



The exhibit suggests that the discovery of huge dinosaur bones and fossils excited ancient imaginations, as did the misapprehension of actual creatures of the deep or from foreign lands. Its scope includes South America and Asia; apparently, the will to make monsters as a way to cope with the unexplainable is a universal trait. The thrill of fearing, conquering and reimagining them persists, evident in the popularity of horror films and, of course, in art, a proclivity exemplified in Kibbee Gallery's 2010 "[Feral Flirtations.](#)"

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