

Audio Tour: Director's Choice

Narrated by: Andy Barrie

Host, Metro Morning, Radio One, CBC

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Stop #100

Introduction

WILLIAM THORSELL: Hello, I'm William Thorsell, Director of the Royal Ontario Museum. I'm delighted to welcome you to a tour of some of my favourite objects here in the ROM. I'm also very proud of our spectacular new addition, called the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal.

Great architecture has long been part of great museums – part of the arts that museums are intended to explore and define. Toronto is fortunate to have attracted Daniel Libeskind to this project, because he is both practical and brilliant – among the great visionary architects in the world today.

From the exterior, the Crystal reflects and refracts light in the manner of a crystal in nature. Inside, the Crystal is part of a new and more open design of the historic structures, which I hope you will enjoy as you follow this tour.

ANDY BARRIE: Thanks for joining us. I'm Andy Barrie, host of *Metro Morning* on CBC's Radio One, and I'll be your guide today as we journey through the ROM. As Canada's largest museum of world cultures and natural history, the ROM holds almost six million objects in its collection, and conducts research and conservation projects around the world.


As we walk through the Museum, look for numbered audio labels. Enter the number on your player, and your message begins automatically.

Our first stop is in Samuel Hall  Currelly Gallery.



Stop #101
Samuel Hall  **Currelly Gallery**

ANDY: Before I talk about this room, take a moment to look around. It's a beautiful space, isn't it? It was built at the height of the Art Deco period, during the ROM's first expansion. For many years this was the Arms and Armour court – can you see the murals that were part of that?

Today the space is called Samuel Hall  Currelly Gallery. That double title gives us a look into the Museum's history. Charles T. Currelly was a renowned archaeologist, a scholar, and an adventurer. Back in 1913 he became the first curator of what was then the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology. On his retirement he asked that this gallery be named after him. That name was expanded in the 1990s to honour the Samuel family of Toronto and their significant support of the Museum.

In the interactive digital exhibition on the east wall of this room, you can see the story of the many people who played a role in the growth of Canada's largest museum. The ROM is unique – it covers both human culture and the natural sciences. In this gallery you can see a sampling of what awaits you.



Stop #150
Chen Court

ANDY: You're now in the space where the new Crystal meets the original ROM building. It's called The Hyacinth Gloria Chen Crystal Court. In one direction, the high, sloping walls of the court are clad in white plaster. They enclose the galleries in the Lee-Chin Crystal and the Stair of Wonders. Facing them are the yellow brick walls that once formed the exterior of the ROM's 1931 addition.

Here in the Chen Court we most clearly sense the dialogue between old and new. The pure white of the Crystal brings to life the warm texture of the heritage building in all its detail and romance. In turn, the patterns of the brick emphasize the serenity of the Crystal's interior, with its elegant angles and forms.

The Chen Court creates a central reference for museum visitors. From here, you have glimpses into galleries on three levels. Later in your visit, you can look from those same galleries back into the atrium.

To achieve a smooth surface without steps, the entire floor of this new addition slopes very slightly up from the street curb, at an angle of two per cent.



Stop #102
Tournament Murals, Sylvia Hahn

ANDY: Did you notice these murals when you first entered the hall? They were painted back in the 1940s, when this entire room was filled with cases of armour – that armour is now on the 3rd floor.

But let's look at the murals. They show a jousting tournament that probably took place in France in the late 1400s. The costumes and other details are all historically accurate. So you'd never guess that you're looking at ... portraits of people from this Museum!

On the left side, find a small tapestry draped over the barricade. The man resting his hands on the pillow there is Charles Trick Currelly, the ROM's first director. The man at the far left, his elbow on another pillow, is Bishop White, one of the founders of the ROM's Far Eastern collections.

Now move to the mural on your right. The first woman you see is Dorothy Burnham, the ROM's renowned textile curator. At the end is the artist, Sylvia Hahn.

This was not some private joke by the painter. When you look at wall paintings from the Middle Ages, you often find portraits of the artist's patrons. So, Sylvia Hahn was simply following this grand tradition when she painted these important people on the Museum's walls.



Stop #103
Temple Bell, China

ANDY: It's a bit sad to think that this huge bell will never ring again. It came into the ROM's collections in 1920. By then it was already 400 years old. It was cracked at some time in its life, although no one knows exactly when. It may have rung for centuries, suspended by those dragons on top that make up the hanging loop. It must have sounded a powerful note when struck on the outside with a wooden beam.

The temple where it hung so long ago was famous for its garden. Poets particularly loved to go there.

POET: *Once, I had just donned my spring clothes;
With friends I asked the way to this hidden retreat.
The herbs smelled sweet...
In the deserted wood, we heard a bell at noon.
Ruffling the rippled water, a pair of birds flew up;
A solitary monk crossed our way, lost on the winding path.
About to bring our enjoyment of this famous garden to an end,
We had put our wine cups down, so heavy with emotion were we.*¹

ANDY: The bell they heard at noon was the very one you see here – when it was still undamaged.




Stop #104 Hadrosaur

ANDY: These are the real fossil bones of a hadrosaur, or duck-billed dinosaur. Museums often display casts of fossil skeletons. Doing so protects the original fossils from potential damage of mounting them, and it makes it possible to keep studying the originals.

This specimen was discovered and mounted in the early 1920s. It's unusual to find a skeleton this complete. In fact, you're looking at the best specimen of *Prosaurolophus maximus*. All that's missing is the tip of its tail, its front feet, and a bit of its lower jaw.

Like all the other types of hadrosaur, these were the big animals. They roamed the west in huge herds during the Late Cretaceous Period, about 75 million years ago. Alberta was a lot warmer then, and the Rocky Mountains were only just starting to form. Grasses had yet to come on the scene, but there was still plenty to eat. Our hadrosaur browsed on small conifers and deciduous trees and shrubs, as well as ferns, palms, and cycads.



¹ “Wei Bin’s Bell”. Translation by ROM curator Klaas Ruitenbeek.

Stop # 105
Ming Tomb, China

ANDY: For generations of ROM visitors, the Ming Tomb has been a favourite treasure. The parts making up the tomb were acquired for the ROM in 1919. It must have been quite an undertaking to ship them from their home outside of Beijing to Toronto. At first they were installed inside the ROM, then moved to the Museum's courtyard garden before coming indoors again, away from the damaging pollution of the city.

The large octagonal structure with the dome-shaped top is the burial mound. A visitor would have approached the burial mound along a Spirit Path guarded by other figures. First they passed through the massive stone gateway that led to the altar and the burial mound. Look to the left of the gateway. The tall warrior in helmet and chain mail stands guard with his sword, as does an official with his tablet of office. The two camels, usually symbols of royalty, may be there in recognition of the service the general made to his emperor.

It is generally believed to be the tomb of the famous general Zu Dashou who, almost 400 years ago, fought to defend the Ming Dynasty against the Manchus. The splendour of his tomb reflects the esteem in which he was held.



Stop #106
Gallery of Chinese Architecture

ANDY: In this case are models of many different kinds of buildings. They're not toys. They were placed in tombs to serve the owner in the next life. They help us, too. Looking at them, one can trace the way building styles changed over the centuries.

This case also contains parts from real buildings. Many of these are roof tiles – and this is important, because the roof is the most spectacular part of any Chinese building. Now turn and look at the colourful structure behind you. When you look at the palace with its brilliant colours, your eye certainly goes up to that massive roof and all its ornaments.

The time has passed when a western museum could import an entire old building from China, but this one is as close as it gets. It's a full-size reconstruction of a corner of a palace hall from 300 years ago. Using authentic materials and techniques, artisans from China created part of the Forbidden City of Beijing, right here in the ROM.



Stop #107
Moveable Printing Types, Korea

ANDY: It's funny how sometimes the most insignificant-looking objects can say so much. At the front of this case is a tray of what looks like little square lumps of metal or wood. They're so blackened, it's hard to tell which. What made them black is not just age, but repeated applications of ink. They are pieces of printing type that are about 250 years old.

Now take a look at the larger blocks of wood to the left of the tray. These are carved to reproduce an entire page of a book. You rubbed ink over the surface, laid a piece of paper on top, pressed down gently, and then lifted it off. You could do this as many times as you needed. But every new page required a new block to be carved.

The advantage of the small pieces is that each one is a single character, so they could be arranged and re-arranged to form any page at all. They would continue to be in use long after a carefully carved entire page was no longer needed.

This principle of moveable and reusable type was a turning point in communications technology. It was perfected in Korea in 1234 – more than two centuries before Johann Gutenberg came up with the same idea in Europe.



Stop #108
Polo-player Figure, China

ANDY: Looking at this figure it's not hard to imagine a vigorous game of polo. The rider leans back, one arm raised to swing a mallet down on the ball, while the horse is already veering off in the other direction.

The game came to China from the horse-riding cultures of central and inner Asia. It was very popular during the Tang Dynasty. Men and women, aristocrats, soldiers, scholars – they all played polo.

Here's the ROM's Patty Proctor.

PATTY: *You can see that the rider is wearing a man's knee-length coat and trousers, but the hair is pulled up into a double chignon on the top of the head.*

This tells me that this polo-playing figure is a woman and not a man. Her outfit is practical, and not at all not unusual for the time. Coat and trousers were far better suited to horse-back riding than the long skirt and stole worn by fashionable women in the early 8th century in China.

ANDY: Now look in the long case. On the top shelf, find figure 21 – it's a man wearing an identical long coat and trousers, and to his left is a woman, figure 19, with the same hairstyle as our polo player. Now walk further down the case and find figure # 55. It's a woman in green, dressed in men's clothing similar to that of the polo player.



Stop #109
Animal Tiles, China

ANDY: Sometimes we know everything about an object in our collection: who made it, how it was used, where it came from, so on. But sometimes, we have the opposite situation. And that's what you're looking at here.

In the year 2000 the Royal Ontario Museum was given a number of unusual Chinese tiles decorated with raised figures of fantastic animals. Six of these tiles are mounted on one side of the panel in front of you, and six are on the other side.

The tiles are almost a complete mystery. As far as anyone knows, fewer than two dozen are known to exist. They're very old: the ROM's curators have determined that they were made sometime between the years 550 and 600 AD.

If you take a moment to look at them, you can see that many of the animals have wings, even the rabbit and the horse. A few of them seem to be entirely mythical creations. It's been suggested that some of the tiles may have been made in pairs, but we don't know.



Stop #110
Vessel, China

ANDY: Why did we select this object from all the others in the display? Well, for one thing, it's very curious looking. But it's also very old.

Chinese history goes back a long way. One of the earliest known dynasties is called the Shang. Objects from this period are not very common, and some more than 3000 years old.

This unusual little jug belongs to a group that Bishop White bought in China in the 1930s for the ROM. The Bishop was not an archaeologist but he had a great respect for scholarship, and he always tried to discover as much as possible about the material he purchased. That's how we know that this vessel probably came from a cemetery near the last capital of the Shang Dynasty.

It's made of bronze that has turned green with age. The lid has the head of a deer with stubby horns. The handle has another animal face. Perhaps you can find the two elephants on the side making the design of a mask. The elephant decorations are very rare, and hint at a story we may not know. Before you move on, see how many more animals you can find.



Stop #111
Louhan Figure, China

ANDY: The shaved head of this figure tells us it's a Buddhist monk called a *Louhan*. He is wearing a simple garment and is sitting on a rock. The elongated ears are a sign of holiness. For centuries the statue sat in a cave in the hills southwest of Beijing. It came to the ROM in 1914, after a wealthy patron of the Museum bought it from a London art dealer.

This *Louhan* statue was responsible for a fateful meeting between the ROM's first director and one of its greatest collectors. To hear the story of how this came about, press play.



Stop #1112
Louhan Figure, China
Level 2

ANDY: When the *Louhan* was purchased in London, a colour photograph of it was made into a postcard.

The ROM's Sara Irwin tells what happened.

SARA: *Four years later one of these postcards was placed at the cigar counter of a Toronto hotel by a chambermaid hoping to make a nickel. George Crofts, a fur merchant-cum-art dealer, saw the postcard, was immediately curious as he had sold the Luohan to the London dealer. He decided to make a quick trip to the ROM.*

ANDY: The Museum's director, Charles Currelly, was preoccupied that day and brushed Mr. Crofts aside. He almost missed the chance of a lifetime.

SARA: *Currelly realized from a remark made by Crofts that he was the Mystery Man, the source of the best Chinese material on the London market. A frantic search tracked Crofts down to his hotel. Crofts showed Currelly photographs of things he had for sale, and Currelly replied that he was not allowed to run the Museum into debt, but that he would tear money out of Toronto in ten-cent pieces before he would let such a chance slip. Over the next few years, George Crofts sold thousands of objects to the Museum at very little profit for himself.*

ANDY: That encounter was one of the most important events to happen to the ROM, and all because of a postcard.



Stop #112
The Paradise of Maitreya, China

ANDY: Buddhism, as a philosophy and a religion, had its roots in India, but spread to China in the 1st century AD. This splendid mural was painted over 700 years ago, and was part of a now-destroyed temple in Shanxi Province.

The mural is based on a prophesy that in the future a Buddha will come to save the world from suffering. The name of this Buddha is *Maitreya*. According to the prophecy, *Maitreya* will be reborn as a human in a beautiful kingdom here on earth. When he grows up, he will attain enlightenment under the dragon-flower tree, and many people will heed his calling. The scene here shows him as an adult.

Here's the ROM's Ka Bo Tsang.

KA BO: *In this painting Maitreya sits at the centre. His right hand is held in the gesture of fearlessness. His left hand signifies generosity. At the far right and left of the painting are the small figures of the king and queen. They are having their heads shaved to become the first of Maitreya's many converts.*

ANDY: The other two wall paintings in this space date from the same time period, but they show scenes from Daoism, a religion of Chinese origin.

Stop #113 **Palanquin, Japan**

ANDY: When we think of the Samurai of Japan, we might think of warriors with their fantastic armour, beautiful swords, and complex codes of honour. But there were other aspects of Samurai culture. This palanquin, or sedan chair, is an example.

Here's the ROM's Jack Howard.

JACK: *The sedan chair is called kago in Japanese. This particular one is quite ornate. It has the long pole designed for two men, one at the front and one at the back, to carry the sedan chair.*

ANDY: The sedan chair is exquisitely made, but it looks rather small inside.

JACK: *It was designed for a woman, and the women at that time were smaller. And the woman would have sat on her legs, as is the custom of that time. This particular sedan chair has the name of "norimono", which means "riding thing." It's really a limousine, in the sense that it was made to carry people from the ruling class. There were also other kinds of sedan chairs called "tsujikago". They were like the taxis of the time. By the late 18th century there were literally thousands of them in Edo, which was the capitol of Japan, now called Tokyo.*

Stop #114

The Migration, Norval Morrisseau, First Peoples

ANDY: In this painting Norval Morrisseau, an artist from the Anishnaabe nation, illustrates the notion of ancestral movement across the continent. He shows six humans, a bird, and a bear, sharing a canoe, accompanied by two fish who swim beneath.

Morrisseau is a pioneer of contemporary Woodlands art, and he is not concerned with illustrating outer appearances. The people and animals in Morrisseau's works often have a deliberately 'x-ray' look. This interior view is more spiritual than anatomical. Look for the lines of 'spirit' or 'power' that join the people and animals. In the Anishnaabe world view, animals as well as humans are considered to be 'persons', and power may be shared between them.

Beside the painting is the artist's statement about migration across the Bering Strait. Scientific research suggests that North America was first populated thousands of years ago, when migrants crossed over from Asia during the Ice Age.

But there are other points of view. In the Anishnaabe tradition in which Norval Morrisseau was raised, there are stories of a migration long ago, from the east coast to the Great Lakes area, which took hundreds of years to complete.

Is he depicting either of these migrations here? His painting, and his statement about it, are wonderfully enigmatic.



Stop #115

Encampment on River Winnipeg, Paul Kane, First Peoples

ANDY: The scene in this painting took place in June of 1846, on the banks of the Winnipeg River. The artist, Paul Kane, depicted an ordinary encounter between Native traders and voyageurs from the Hudson's Bay Company. In it, we see signs of cultures adapting to each other. In particular, notice the use of the canoe.

Here's the ROM's Ken Lister.

KEN: *In the painting there's essentially two sizes of canoes. One is the 26-foot North canoe, which was used by the Hudson's Bay Company. And it's the one that you see on the right side of the painting with the painted ends. And in the foreground you see the smaller hunting canoes with the Saulteaux Indians coming in – they're carrying the Indians to trade.*

The voyageurs are repairing the larger freight canoes and even on the foreground as well, there's a small Indian canoe that's being placed up on the rocks. And if you look closely at the painting you can see the Indians mingling with the voyageurs and talking and presumably trading with them.

And this painting is iconic because it shows that relationship between Native people and the Hudson's Bay Company fur brigade. And it's that relationship that changed Indian culture.

Stop # 116
Freight Canoe, César Newashish, First Peoples

ANDY: When you first see this object, you may wonder – why would anyone build a canoe this enormous?

The answer is in the name. It's a freight canoe, and at one time these were the long-distance trucks of our country. Canada is laced with a highway system made of water, and these canoes were custom made for it.

Travelling to the interior, their cargo was European trade goods of all sorts. On the return trip east, they carried fur: huge packed bales of fur. The canoe would be loaded with three or more tons of cargo and crew. If the wind and the portages were in their favour, the paddlers could cover 50 km a day. If not, the work was even harder.

From that time, only two full-size freight canoes survive. This one is newer. It was constructed entirely by hand in 1971 by the master builder César Newashish of northern Quebec.

Now I'd like you to try something. Count how many steps it takes you to walk from one end of this canoe to the other. When you get home, count out those steps again. It may help you to imagine these great canoes in use.

Stop #117
Caribou-skin Coat, First Peoples

ANDY: What you see here depends on your point of view. To people raised in the western tradition, this coat is a beautiful and stylish garment, made with amazing skill. It was worn around the year 1800 by a man in the northern Quebec-Labrador peninsula.

Notice how precisely the skin is pieced together. The hand stitching is almost invisible. Look at the flared shape below the waist at the back. It's a faithful replica of a coat fashionable in Europe in the late 1700s.

But now, think about it differently.

Try to enter the world view of the Innu culture that produced this garment.

These people were caribou hunters, and a coat like this was made out of respect for the caribou. Everything about it – the skin, the paint, the motifs themselves – all were sacred to the deeply felt relationship between human and animal. Embellished with designs acquired through dreams, the coat was pleasing to the caribou spirit. At the same time, the hunter who wore it received the power of the caribou. So the coat expressed the bond, the mystical contract, between the hunter and the animal who gave itself up to him.

Stop #118 **Bear House Post, First Peoples**

ANDY: The people who live on the Northwest Coast of our country built spectacular large houses from the red cedar trees that grow there. This post gives you a sense of the scale of these buildings. The bear is more than decorative. Look up to the top of his head at the flat area between his ears. This is where a horizontal roof beam rested.

There were four of these large posts inside the house, each supporting one end of a heavy rafter. The builders used an adze to carve it – you can still see the marks along the sides.

The red cedars of the Northwest Coast are renowned for their huge size. The wood is easy to carve, sweet smelling, straight grained, and resistant to rot and insect damage. Its bark and its roots could be fashioned into ropes, baskets, and even clothing. The tree provided for so much of their daily needs that the people of the coast are sometimes referred to as the "People of the Cedar".

Stop #200
Mosaic Ceiling, The Rotunda

ANDY: Are you ready to stop for a moment? This is a perfect spot to contemplate the ROM's mosaic ceiling. It dates back to the early 1930s, when The Rotunda – the space below you – was the main entrance to the Museum. Look back up at the ceiling. From where you're standing you can see over a million tiny glittering tiles, each one a sandwich of thin Venetian glass and real gold leaf.

The designs are picked out in small glass cubes called *tesserae*. These cubes sparkle like small mirrors because they're set into the plaster at varying angles. Let's look for them.

At the centre is a quotation from the Old Testament. Fanning out from it are four decorated bands, one for each of the world's great cultural regions. Can you see a bison, an eagle totem pole, and an Incan god with two snakes? That's the Americas. The Mediterranean has an Egyptian vulture, a Greek sea horse, and a mother wolf suckling the twin founders of Rome. Asia is represented by the winged bull of Assyria, the sacred white elephant of India, and the three-clawed dragon of China; Europe, by the winged lion of St. Mark, the Fountain of Lions from the Alhambra, and the heraldic griffin.

Before you move on, look near the tops of the arches and find four symbols of ancient architecture. You'll see an Egyptian pylon; it looks like a temple entrance. Near it is a Mesopotamian ziggurat, a Mayan temple and, a Classical Greek temple.



Stop #201
Barosaurus

ANDY: The name *Barosaurus* means "heavy reptile". [deadpan] No kidding. The skeleton towering above you and stretching both ways across the gallery is an almost incredible size. A third of its body is neck, and some of its vertebrae are a metre long. When alive it would have weighed about 15 tonnes.

Barosaurus belonged to a larger group called sauropods, and one of its closer relatives was *Diplodocus*. However, the neck of *Barosaurus* was thicker and considerably longer. *Barosaurus* is also much more rare. The specimen you see here is the only original sauropod skeleton mounted in Canada, certainly the

largest dinosaur skeleton on display in the country, and it's the only 'real' fossil of *Barosaurus* mounted in the world.

Can you see the skeleton of a much smaller version of this giant? It's a baby of a barosaur – or one of its relatives; it's hard exactly to say– but it gives you some idea of the extreme growth of these animals, from the size of an ostrich egg to an adult of 25 metres or more.

Stop #202 **Maiasaur**

ANDY: Try to picture this dinosaur, not alone, but as part of a huge herd. Its name, *Maiasaura*, [my-a-SOHR-a] means "Good Mother Lizard" because of how they were discovered in Montana. There were several nesting colonies containing many nests, each with a dozen or more eggs. The newly hatched *Maiasaura* babies were less than a metre long. You can see two of them in front of the adult here. The youngsters may have stayed in the nests for some time, perhaps for several months. During that time they would have certainly depended on their parents for food and protection.

This skeleton was extracted from its surrounding rock at the ROM in full view of the public from 1995 to 97. It's one of the most complete specimens of *Maiasaura* in existence, and one of only a few 'fully articulated' skeletons – which means the bones were not scattered, but buried intact. The surrounding rock also included impressions of the animal's skin, parts of a juvenile, and an *Albertosaurus* tooth.

The bones were molded one at a time, then cast, and finally mounted into this skeleton. The real bones remain in the ROM's vertebrate palaeontology collections and continue to be studied.

Stop #203 **Triceratops skull**

ANDY: *Triceratops* [try-SEHR-a-tops] is one of the best known of all the dinosaurs, and one of the most recognizable. There are many well-preserved skulls, but this is one of the nicest. Even the brain case inside the skull was intact.

By its size we know that this specimen was not fully grown. If you can believe it, for a *Triceratops* it's not a particularly large skull! Another clue to its age are the upper horns. When fully grown, these would have been a metre long, with a

distinct forward curve. Also, look at the triangular points around the edge of the frill. As the animal matured, these would have become progressively wider and less distinct, until as an adult they would have formed a completely smooth edge.

There are other horned dinosaurs on display here. Take a look at them. You'll notice that only *Triceratops* had a frill of solid bone. Those frills were no use as armour – it's more likely that they worked as a social display. But if attacked by a *Tyrannosaurus*, like the one towering over you right now, *Triceratops* could use its long horns for defense.



Stop #204 **Giant Ground Sloth**

ANDY: Take a look at the sturdy bones of this giant ground sloth, and you can almost imagine the animal's great mass and strength. You probably think of a sloth as slow-moving, and indeed the scientific name *Eremotherium* [eh-reem-o-THEER-ee-yum] means "slow mammal". But unlike the tree sloth that's displayed nearby, this one did not hang upside down in a tree – not when it weighed four or five tonnes! It walked – or maybe ambled – along the ground, with its weight not on the flat of its feet but more on the sides. It could stand on its back legs to get at high branches and leaves, pulling them down with those curved front claws. You'll notice *Eremotherium* has a set of strong molars set back in its jaw, but no teeth at the front. Instead, it probably had a long tongue for dragging greenery into its mouth.

Eremotherium lived at the same time as humans. The giant ground sloth left its fossils throughout South America, Central America and into the southern-most parts of North America. The bones making up this mount were cast from ROM specimens found at Daytona Beach, Florida.



Stop #300 **Madonna and Child, Pietro Lamberti, Europe**

ANDY: Without knowing anything about it, we can appreciate the charm of this Madonna and Child. It's a familiar subject in the art of Western Europe. Statues like this were usually unsigned, but for this one, scholars have been able to identify the artist.

Here's ROM curator Corey Keeble.

COREY: If you go into our galleries, all of the medieval sculpture in stone is anonymous. We don't know who carved the pieces. But with this particular Madonna and Child we know it was made by Pietro Lamberti. It was probably made in Padua, sometime around 1427, 1429.

ANDY: The statue was made at a time when art in northern Italy was shifting in style. The rigid poses and formalized gestures of the Gothic era were softening into the beginnings of the Renaissance. You can see that change in this Madonna.

COREY: It is an Italian Madonna, relatively compact in proportions, which has a wonderful sense of naturalism. It shows a shift from the decorative draperies, from the sense of ornamental surface of late gothic Madonnas to something which is much more substantial, much more earthy, much more fleshy and fleshy, something which really conveys a sense of the world of nature.

Stop #301 **English Room, 1500s, Europe**

ANDY: Anyone looking at this room would agree that it's elegant and comfortable looking, but a bit bare. This was normal in the 1500s, when English homes did not contain a lot of furniture.

Did you notice the curtains around the bed? They helped you stay warm in the winter. People also believed that they protected you from diseases carried by the night air. Formal beds were some of the most expensive pieces of furniture in this period, and textiles were hand-made and very costly. So it was acceptable to place an important bed in a room where social activities might take place, and visitors could see how rich you were.

Another splendid piece is this harpsichord – it looks like a small piano. Upper-class girls and women were usually not well educated — even though a woman was ruling the country! — but they were expected to know the Bible, to lead a pleasant conversation, to draw, and to sing or to play a musical instrument.

This room was purchased from a dealer in London some time around 1912, which makes it the first period room bought by a North American museum. Before you move on, take a moment to look closely and imagine the life of the people who lived here.

Stop #302

Charles Rennie Mackintosh Room, Europe

ANDY: Before we talk about this furniture, have a quick look at the case behind you to see the latest thing in home furnishings around the end of the 1800s.

It was into this world of dark and heavily decorated furniture that Charles Rennie Mackintosh presented his dazzling designs. As a young man the Glasgow architect was influenced by the British Arts and Crafts movement. He was also inspired by the restrained opulence of Japanese art.

Look at the cabinet to the left. In Mackintosh's work, straight lines – elongated and almost severe – meet with graceful ovals and the barest hint of curves. His creations are a mix of simplicity and refined luxury. Look how he has used mother of pearl, ebony, stained glass, and silver leaf, to set off the cool expanses of painted or stained wood.

Mackintosh published his new designs, and showed his furniture at important exhibitions in Vienna, Darmstadt, Moscow, Turin, and Dresden. Their reception placed him at the forefront of modern architecture and design. He also designed buildings, metalwork, and textiles, often in collaboration with his wife, the artist Margaret Macdonald.

You cannot visit Glasgow, even today, without being aware of the importance of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. These works at the ROM comprise the finest grouping of his furniture outside of his native city.



Stop #303

Anime, Europe

ANDY: To introduce this armour we call upon the ROM's expert, Corey Keeble.

COREY: What we're looking at is what is known as an anime, which is a very light form of armour. It's essentially a breastplate and a backplate made of horizontal strips of steel, which are held together by internal leathers. It is part of what's known as a small garniture, which means that it came with extra pieces that you could add or subtract to make up different armours in different styles.

ANDY: This was probably made around 1550, in the royal workshops at Greenwich. Like all armour, it was tailored to fit its owner, in this case the first Earl of Pembroke.

COREY: *There is a tendency to think that the people who wore armour were smaller than we are. This, of course, is not the case. This armour could very easily have been worn by someone who was 5'8", 5'9", probably even 5'10". Armour is a truer portrait than any painting or any sculpture. When we look at this armour we have the three-dimensional essence of the wearer, the actual physical reality of William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke, right here in our own gallery.*



Stop #304
Pocket Pistols, Europe

ANDY: Here we have a small ebony box which contains two absolutely exquisite pocket pistols. What's unusual about them is that we believe they were commissioned by the Emperor Napoleon the first for his sister, Marianna Aliza Bonaparte.

The ROM's Corey Keeble tells us more.

COREY: *They were made at Versailles around 1805 and they are characterized by the most exquisite delicate engraving in miniature – little miniature scenes which are the equivalents in engraved or etched steel of the miniatures that you would find on porcelain or ivory or glass in the same period.*

The smallness of the pistols testifies to the challenge to the gunsmith to make something which actually has moving parts, which is completely functional in terms of its mechanism – it's like a Swiss watch in that sense. It has the fineness, the delicacy, of goldsmiths' work, of a pocket watch, and yet it is a pistol.

ANDY: In the early 1800s it was common to give virtuoso gunsmithing, like this little pair of pistols, as a diplomatic gift. These pistols have never been fired, although they would have worked perfectly. Their only purpose was to impress everyone who saw them.



Stop #305
Reta Lila Weston Room, Europe

ANDY: If you entered this British room in the 1750s, you were an important guest, in an important room. This is where you would drink tea, shipped at great expense from the Far East. It was served in fine porcelain, made in Europe but invented in China. Even the Chippendale tea table – over there to your right – was made to look Chinese. The mahogany came from the Caribbean colonies, as did the sugar offered with the tea.

Beyond the formal restraint of the setting there was a mood sweeping the country, of optimism and great curiosity about the larger world. Educated British gentlemen studied the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome, and developed a taste for well-proportioned furniture and interiors. Meanwhile, British ships returned from distant

ports with wonderful and strange new goods. Paintings of the time showed people holding exotic tulips and camellias, and of course taking tea.

The importance of the tea ritual is told in this room, with its opulent gilded furniture, its show of marble and fine fabrics, and the expertly carved panelling on the walls. In the words of an English writer, *"All this... is meant as a preparative to the greatest happiness in life, that of seeing company."*¹




Stop #306
Cabinet, Paul Theodore Frankl, Europe

ANDY: When you look at this cabinet you see the purest expression of Art Deco design. The bakelite handles, the aluminum and brass panels, and the mirrored-glass top have the slickness of modern machined surfaces. But its gold leaf and lacquered decoration allude to luxurious hand-made products of the past. Together, the blend of elements draws from the East and the West, the functional and the decorative, past and the present.

The designer is Paul Frankl, who was born in Vienna and educated in the capitals of Europe. He came to North America in 1914, one of the several European designers bringing a modernist point of view to the United States. He established a gallery of decorative arts on East 48th Street in New York City and promoted the modern movement in his many books and publications.

Frankl was inspired by New York skyscrapers, airplanes, and automobiles. He felt that their directness, speed, and dynamism epitomized the spirit of the Modern age. By 1930 Frankl was producing simpler, more functional designs, like this cabinet whose rectilinear shape and lacquered surfaces were influenced by traditional Chinese furniture.



Stop #307
Votive Statues, Cyprus

ANDY: The island of Cyprus has been called a crossroads in the Mediterranean Sea. In the courtyard of this ancient shrine are offerings left by settlers from different regions. The figures served as stand-ins, so the donor would always be praying in the presence of the local divinity. Their arrangement reflects the way they may have stood before they were found by archaeologists in 1885.

¹ William Parrat, 1753.

Here's the ROM's Paul Denis.

PAUL: This type of outdoor sanctuary in Ancient Cyprus would have been used as a place of worship for the local population to leave these votive sculptures. Depending on how wealthy you were, you could leave one of the larger limestone statues that are standing at the back, or if you were of limited means you'd end up with a small terracotta figurine that are standing mostly in the front row.

It was never very well-organized. I mean, people would just leave these sculptures there. It wasn't meant to be an organized display. As the sculpture accumulated it became more and more sort of cluttered-looking. So then the priests of the sanctuary would then remove some of the clutter, some of the statues, and bury them in a votive pit to make space for more statues.

Stop #308 **Cycladic Figure, Bronze Age Aegean**

ANDY: Chances are, this little figure looks familiar. Perhaps it reminds you of modern sculpture from the 20th century. There's no denying the appeal of its simple elegance, yet it was actually made 4,700 years ago.

Where did it come from? It's one of many similar figures found on the Cyclades, a cluster of about 30 small islands in the Aegean Sea north of Crete. Archaeologists first discovered the little sculptures during the late 1890s while excavating ancient burial sites on the islands. The figures were classified and studied, but people could learn little about their meaning.

But then, in the mid-1900s, the statues became fashionable. Their resemblance to the works of modern western artists such as Brancusi and Picasso made them highly desirable among collectors. But we are no closer to understanding their meaning.

We are left to admire a haunting artistic achievement, carved — with only a few simple tools — from pure white marble. Notice the distinctive shape of the head, the folded arms, and the legs slightly bent. Her function remains elusive. Perhaps she was left in a tomb as grave offering, but we don't know. That mystery surrounds her with silence.

Stop #309
Louterion, Bronze Age Aegean

ANDY: Take a look at the decoration on this bowl. It is one of the earliest known depictions of an oared ship in Greek art. Despite its simplicity, it holds a wealth of detail that helps to increase our knowledge of ancient Greek ships.

It's also a lively example of what's known as the Geometric style, as the ROM's Paul Denis explains.

PAUL: What you're looking at is a louterion, or a krater, which is a mixing bowl. The Greeks never drank their wine straight. They always mixed it with water, and so this is the exact type of bowl during the Geometric Period that they would have mixed their water and wine in. And it's called the Geometric Period mainly because of the very rigid and linear decoration on this vase. Not only on this vase, but if you look up and down the case you can also see the rigid geometric designs, whether it's compass-drawn circles, ruler-drawn lines, and the human figures and animals are treated in a geometric way. The human figures look like ... they're very triangular. And the animals are treated in the same way.



Stop #310
Bust of Dionysus, Greece

ANDY: Meet Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, also the god of the theatre, of crop fertility, and of the underworld, in the window alcove.

In ancient Rome, Greek sculptures were very popular, and since there were not enough Greek originals available, Roman sculptors began copying these originals in marble to meet the demand. Praxiteles, a Greek sculptor from the 4th century BC, was greatly admired by the Romans. They made many copies of his sculptures. Praxiteles was noted for the languid poses and tranquil beauty of his sculptures, and our Roman copy has captured those qualities.

In Greek mythology, Dionysus was sometimes helpful, and sometimes dangerous. At first the Greeks portrayed him as a dignified elderly man. A century later he appeared as an ideal young man. He later appeared as an effeminate boy and even as an infant.

There's no question which version is presented here in this Roman copy, judging by the dreamy expression of Dionysus's face and the soft modelling of his torso. It dates

from the 2nd century AD and is said to be a disguised portrait of Antinous, the companion of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. If so, it's very likely an idealized portrait, but a beautiful work of art nonetheless.

Stop #311
Grave Stele, Greece

ANDY: This elegant and peaceful grave stone was made for a woman who died in Athens two and a half thousand years ago. Greek tomb sculptures were both markers for the deceased, and memorials. They often featured an image of the dead person. In the ROM's example here, you see a seated woman and a standing servant girl who is offering her a small jewellery case.

The scene takes place within a stylized temple structure. At the top, the artist has carved a siren — a female figure with wings — although it's hard now to see her clearly. She's there to ward off any potential desecrators, and to guard the name of the deceased. Look across the top and you can see her name: IOSTRATE .

Stop #312
Pelike & Kylix, Greece

ANDY: In this case are two red-figure vases. The one like a dish is called a *kylix*. It was what the Greeks used for drinking wine. The tall one, called a *pelike*, was more of a storage vessel. Less than 50 years separates them, but their designs are distinctly different.

Here's the ROM's Paul Denis.

PAUL: *On the kylix, the reveler who's occupying the central medallion of the decoration – if you look at him closely you can see that his head is in profile but his eye is rendered frontally. His shoulders are shown full-frontal view, yet his thighs and legs are shown in profile. So this is a very typical archaic feature. You can also see it on archaic sculpture as well in marble relief friezes. But then when you look at the pelike, uh, this is from 40 to 50 years later. And you can see the style changes completely – you've got true profile torso and a true profile head. And if you look at the, uh, person's eyes on it you can see that they're in true profile as well.*

ANDY: In these vessels, only the black areas were glazed. The term 'red figure' comes from the color of the unglazed terracotta clay.



Stop #313
Model of Cow Giving Birth, Egypt

ANDY: This little figurine was found in a tomb from the time of Egypt's Middle Kingdom. Wooden models such as this represented the necessities for carrying on life in the Afterworld.

The most important requirement was food. So naturally, food-related models were abundant. These could act as back-up substitutes for offerings of real food, so that the spirit of the deceased person would never go hungry.

This model showing the birth of a calf is one of a kind. There are depictions painted on tomb walls, but this 3D version is unique. It has a double symbolic meaning. First, birth is a sign of entering a new existence in the Afterworld, and the carver has cleverly chosen the actual moment of birth to ensure eternal re-birth.

And secondly, on a more prosaic level, the continuous birth of a calf would guarantee an eternal supply of beef in the next life. Few living people could afford to actually eat beef. They kept cattle for milk, as draught animals, or for ceremonial sacrifices. A cow, rather than a sheep or goat, ensured that the tomb's owner would have the privilege of enjoying the most expensive meat in Ancient Egypt, for eternity.



Stop #314
Statue of Iby-ref, Egypt

ANDY: For those who think of Egyptian statues as towering giants made of stone, here's a delightful exception. It's a figure, not of a pharaoh, but of a district councillor from Egypt's 12th Dynasty. It was found in the chapel attached to a tomb, where its task had been to receive offerings for the deceased to use in the Afterworld.

The statue is unusual for a couple of reasons. It was carved entirely from a single piece of wood. Usually the arms would have been made separately and fitted onto the torso. The detailing is sensitive and understated. Perhaps you can see how finely even the finger and toe nails were carved. The eyes are inlaid with copper, alabaster, and black resin. The only other wood statues from this time — of this quality anyway — are royal. So we know the owner had to be important and wealthy.

The official's name was Iby-ref. He was in charge of his district, responsible for many other officials below him, and he reported directly to the prime minister of the country. Egyptian society expected high standards from its officials. The hieroglyphs at his feet say that Iby-ref was revered in his post.



Stop #315
Human Mummy, Egypt

ANDY: Inside this beautiful mummy-case is the body of Djed-maat-es-ankh, a musician in the temple of Amun. She died almost 3,000 years ago.

The ROM's Roberta Shaw tells us more.

ROBERTA: The coffin is standing up before you because at the funeral —and it was a great funeral in Ancient Egypt, very much like an Irish wake — the coffin stood in the presence of people at the party, probably just outside the tomb. When she went into the tomb she would be lying down for the rest of eternity. But for the party, for the funeral, she was indeed standing up, as you see before you.

ANDY: Most of the images on the mummy-case are concerned with resurrection. Look at the bottom of the mummy case. You can see a little scarab beetle pushing the sun disc into the sky.

ROBERTA: That's a very strong and powerful symbol of being born again. As the sun is born again each new day, so Djed-maat-es-ankh will be born again into the afterlife. Not only did she want to be resurrected but she must be protected throughout the afterlife. And all these lovely winged creatures are there to protect her, as well as these fat hippopotamus goddesses with their knives. They're there to protect her as well.

Stop #316
Head of Amenhotep III, Egypt

ANDY: The ages have not been kind to this royal sculpture. But we know it to be a portrait of the great pharaoh Amenhotep III. Even after the passage of 3,000 years you can clearly still see his ear. And if you look closely, you can see the shape of the royal headdress and the outline of his regal eye.

Amenhotep III gave himself the title: "Dazzling Sun Disk of all lands". In his day he was probably the richest man in his known world. His great grandfather, Thutmosis III, had pushed Egyptian rule as far east as the Euphrates River. This brought new technology and new ideas into Egypt. Bumper crops and control of Nubian gold made the country even wealthier. The royal court enjoyed a life of boundless luxury.

Amenhotep built temples and monuments on a vast scale. Their inscriptions seemed to run out of superlatives describing pavements of silver, doors of gold, fragrant gardens, fine cattle, and costly stones beyond number.

We have to use our imagination today to picture these places. We stand here looking up, and the battered image of the pharaoh looks downward, as is proper, on ordinary mortals like us.

Stop #317
Ingot Bearer

ANDY: This little figure can tell us a lot about its time and place. The time is over 3000 years ago, and the place is the island of Cyprus, in the Mediterranean Sea. In ancient times, Cyprus was a centre of copper mining, and its art, as you might expect, reflected this.

Take a close look at the man shown here. You can see that he's carrying something on his back. It's a large flat slab of cast copper, called an ingot. Its pebbly texture was the result of being cast in an open terracotta mould. The shape, which was once

thought to imitate a stretched oxhide, has extended corners to make it easier to lift and carry. An ingot like this was a standard object in the copper trade – elsewhere in this gallery you can read about a trading ship that sank, loaded with copper ingots just like the one carried by this man.

By the time this object was made, the people of Cyprus were skilled smelters of bronze, mixing their local copper with imported tin. So this little figure is made, not from pure copper, but from bronze.



Stop #318 Tomb of Kitines

ANDY: You're looking into the tomb of a man named Kitines [*KITT-in-ess*] who died almost 2000 years ago in northern Egypt. You're allowed to touch it because it's a reproduction. The cast was taken directly from the walls of the inner chapel. The copy is concrete; the original was sandstone and would have been brightly painted when it was new.

This part of the tomb is where family and friends could make offerings to the ka of Kitines – to his spirit. We might put flowers on a tomb, but they brought beer and bread to provide nourishment in the afterlife. When the ka of the departed had finished eating, the leftovers went to the priest.

Kitines is depicted many times in this room. Look at the back wall, on the left side. Kitines is wearing a long pleated skirt and a broad collar. He's shown as twin images facing each other, and once again directly below. On the side wall to your left, just below a broken brick, look for the mummified body of Kitines, lying as if floating in the air. The zigzag lines are water, showing that the gods are purifying his body.