



Press Release

Arches and Angels

High Gothic: Christian Art and Iconography of the 13th–14th Century

August 10, 2021

An upcoming exhibition at the University Museum and Art Gallery (UMAG) of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) will showcase classic examples of statuary, stained glass, diptychs, textiles and caskets that were used in the expression of Christian devotion in Western Europe. *High Gothic: Christian Art and Iconography of the 13th–14th Century*, which opens on August 11, 2021, will highlight selected objects from the McCarthy Collection. The exhibition aims to display the richness of Gothic artforms in both private and public spaces, while encouraging visitors to challenge the common perception that historical objects of art were monochromatic.

‘Gothic’ was originally a derogatory term coined by Renaissance scholars to describe the ‘barbaric’ medieval architecture that arose with the decline of the classical forms of the Roman Empire. The word is now understood to describe a style of buildings and objects created between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, which incorporated novel advances in stained glass production and architectural features such as the ogival arch.

The Gothic period saw an increased emphasis on the power of images, where vision became an active force for activating emotion and inspiring contemplation. The exquisite Gothic objects featured in the McCarthy Collection represent a broad spectrum of workshops and styles across Western Europe, dating between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, all of which contributed to the splendour we now associate with the aesthetic of the High Gothic.

Dr Florian Knothe, Director of UMAG, HKU, said, ‘Gothic art is extremely precious and rarely seen outside of Europe. We are thrilled to have this opportunity to work with the McCarthy Collection on this special exhibition that is entirely curated by UMAG for Hong Kong to introduce and highlight this colourful and narrative-rich pictorial art of Gothic Europe.’

Mr Robert McCarthy began assembling the McCarthy Collection over two decades ago, which now boasts an array of medieval artforms from Eastern and Western Europe.

There are a number of exciting highlight objects in this exhibition, one being a series of three relief panels. Attributed to the Circle of the Master of Viboldone and spanning an impressive two meters, the fourteenth-century panels are carved from a single slab of marble and vividly depict episodes from the Life of Mary. Also featured are a dozen Gothic ivory diptychs, as well as a selection of stained glass panels. Many of the objects retain swathes of original pigments, which offer precious insight into the production and perception of art in the Gothic age.

For images and captions of the exhibits, please [click here](#).





Details of the Exhibition

Period: August 11, 2021 (Wednesday) to January 2, 2022 (Sunday)

Opening Hours:

9:30 am–6:00 pm (Tuesday to Saturday)

1:00 pm–6:00 pm (Sunday)

Closed on Mondays, University and Public Holidays

Venue: 1–2/F Fung Ping Shan Building, UMAG, HKU, 90 Bonham Road, Pokfulam, Hong Kong

Tel/Email: (852) 2241 5500 (General Enquiry) / museum@hku.hk

Admission: Free

Website: <http://www.umag.hku.hk/en/>

In the Interest of Public Health, UMAG will Adopt the Following Measures

- All museum visitors are required to register their name, contact number and the date and time of the visit or scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" QR code before entering UMAG via the G/F Fung Ping Shan Building entrance.
- A temperature check will be conducted upon entry.
- Visitors are required to properly wear their face mask at all times. They are advised to wash their hands and use the hand sanitizer and sink available at the entrance.
- Crowd control measures will be in place; UMAG reserves the right to limit the number of visitors.
- Children under 12 can only enter the museum when accompanied by an adult.
- Disability access is available upon request. Please contact the museum at (852) 2241 5500 three working days prior to your visit.

UMAG will continue to assess the situation and adjust the relevant preventive measures as necessary.

Connect with UMAG on Social Media:

Facebook: http://bit.ly/umag_facebook

Instagram: @umag_hku, #UMAG

Weibo: @香港大學美術博物館 UMAG

YouTube: http://bit.ly/umag_youtube

LinkedIn: http://bit.ly/umag_linkedin

About UMAG

UMAG was founded in 1953 as the Fung Ping Shan Museum. It was originally established as the Fung Ping Shan Library in 1932 in honour of its benefactor. For more information on UMAG, please [click here](#).

Media Enquiries

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