

The New York Times

What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries in March



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By [Will Heinrich](#) and [Andrew Russeth](#)

Published March 6, 2025 Updated March 13, 2025

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This week in Newly Reviewed, Will Heinrich covers three group shows that delve into the rich traditions of Asian art.

During [Asia Week](#), which begins on Thursday, major auction houses sell Eastern antiquities, private dealers come to New York, and galleries and museums across the city stage exhibits drawn from the vast tradition of Asian art. If you move quickly, you can see a Mughal painting of a zebra (at [Francesca Galloway](#)), 40 Hiroshige prints ([Scholten Japanese Art](#)) and a major retrospective of the ceramist Wada Morihiro ([Joan B Mirviss](#)) in a single day, just to start with.

Below are three shows that caught my eye.

TRIBECA

'Light and Abundance: Gold in Japanese Art'

Through April 17. Ippodo Gallery, 35 North Moore Street, Manhattan. 212-967-4899; ippodogallery.com.



HirotoMi Maeda, "Clouded Skyscraper," 2025. HirotoMi Maeda, via Ippodo Gallery New York; Photo by Douglas Dubler

The inaugural exhibition at Ippodo Gallery's new TriBeCa location is devoted to gold in its many craft and aesthetic possibilities. Tea bowls by Noriyuki Furutani have golden "oil spot" glazes dripping down their sides like chocolate; an eight-sided black bronze vase by Koji Hatakeyama has a secretly gilded interior; and hand-hammered brass ginkgo leaves by Shota Suzuki are coated in powdered gold.

Of the many wooden boxes and containers that Jihei Murase has painted with urushi lacquer and covered in still more of this most beautiful of precious commodities, his "Gold Melon-Shaped Water Jar," with its pockmarked texture and homey bulges, is a particular delight. Only a reflective black lid, tucked away on top, is there to remind you just how glamorous an object it really is.

For my money, though, the most impressive metal in the show is copper, as it appears in a pair of hand-forged vases by HirotoMi Maeda. Called "Clouded Skyscraper" and "Skyscraper Gale," they're flat ovals that descend from broad, flat shoulders to narrow feet.

On the first, a pattern of primordial, bright-green spirals stands out against a slate-colored background that somehow looks both slippery and matte; the second is wrapped in wide turquoise lines. In each, the gold around the vase's neck is completely shown up, turning a yellowish-beige color that evokes millet porridge. *WILL HEINRICH*

UPPER EAST SIDE

'(Re)Generations'

Through Aug. 10. Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue, Manhattan; 212-288-6400, asiasociety.org.



Howardena Pindell, "Autobiography: India (Lakshmi)," 1984, mixed media collage on paper. Howardena Pindell, via Garth Greenan Gallery, New York

It can sometimes be too easy to see ancient artworks merely as historical relics. Read too much about what the peacock symbolizes in an Indian book illustration, or how Korean ceramics were made, and you may start to feel there's something illegitimate about your own present-day reactions to their simple colors and forms.

That's not how the artists Rina Banerjee, Byron Kim or Howardena Pindell want you to feel. In "[\(Re\)Generations](#)," the three have chosen some exceptionally beautiful pieces from the Asia Society's Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection to show alongside work of their own, and the result is a persuasive lesson in how to keep art vital even when it's from long ago and far away.

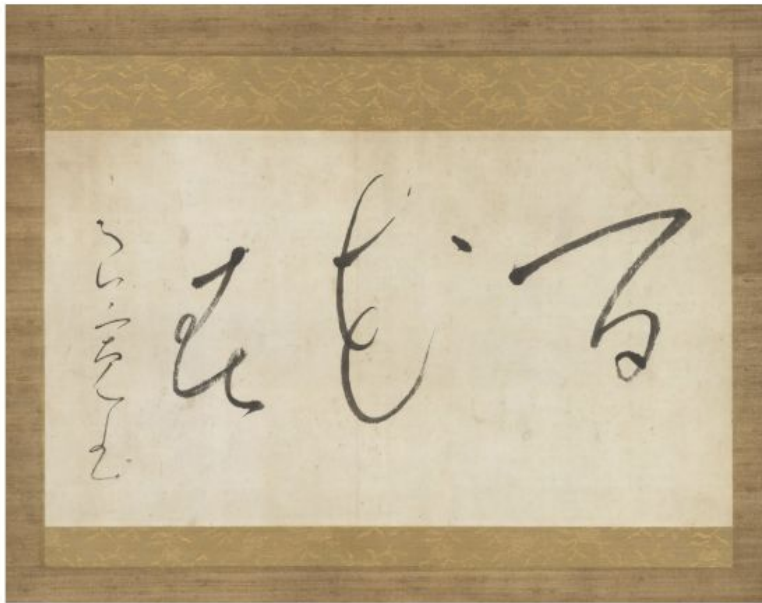
From [Banerjee](#), who was born in Kolkata and grew up in the world capital of everyday syncretism — that is, Queens, N.Y. — come Buddha heads, a rare seventh-century Haniwa figure from Japan and several dramatic assemblages that incorporate wedding saris, soaring epoxy buffalo horns and the steel trumpet from a 19th-century gramophone. And several memorable collages from [Pindell's](#) "Autobiography" series use picture postcards to recapture, in vivid, almost vibrating detail, memories of her formative travels in India and Japan. In one, Lakshmi, goddess of good fortune, emerges from a colorful ring of mosques and hotels.

But it may be [Kim](#), son of Korean immigrants, who has made the most striking synthesis of old and new by painting a large monochrome especially for this show, titled and modeled after one of several gorgeous pieces of celadon he chose for display. On canvas, in New York, it's a post-1960s artistic gesture; in Korea, appreciation for the ethereal beauty of monochrome goes back centuries. *WILL HEINRICH*

UPPER EAST SIDE

'Three Perfections'

Through Sept. 28. The Met Fifth Avenue, 1000 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan; 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org.



Ryogan Taigu (1758-1831), "Three Perfections: One Hundred Flowers of Spring," ink on paper. Ryogan Taigu, via The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The real star of the Met's Asia wing right now is the world's oldest extant writing system — Chinese characters.

The display starts in the Great Hall, where the Taiwanese calligrapher Tong Yang-Tze's oversize, thrillingly eclectic treatment of [two ancient Chinese poems](#) shows off those characters in all their formal extravagance and historical depth.

["Recasting the Past: The Art of Chinese Bronzes, 1100-1900,"](#) a major exhibition that includes many international loans, is chiefly concerned with the way that ancient ritual vessels and their distinctive shapes have reverberated through Chinese history. But it also includes treasures like a 19th-century ink rubbing of a 12th-century imperial stele inscribed in Emperor Huizong's own hand, an elegant, self-assured style known as "slender gold."

Japan has always made inventive use of the writing it adopted from the continent, and the gorgeous screens and ink paintings of [“The Three Perfections: Japanese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting From the Mary and Cheney Cowles Collection”](#) abound with unforgettable examples. Ryokan Taigu’s 19th-century rendition of the phrase [“hundred spring flowers,”](#) a fragment of a famous Zen koan, is loopy and fantastical, while the [cheerful aphorisms](#) of Yinyuan Longqi, or Ingen Ryuki, who carried the Obaku school of Zen across the Sea of Japan, look as if they were written last week, instead of the 17th century. And the alternating thick, black strokes and gray, spindly lines of [three poems by the monk Tonna](#), on a kind of 14th-century scratch pad, evoke the soothing, irregular pitter-patter of a summer rain. *WILL HEINRICH*

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