

## SHAPE-SHIFTING

### METAMORPHOSES

Amsterdam and Rome  
Rijksmuseum and Galleria Borghese  
rijksmuseum.nl  
galleriaborghese/beniculturali.it/en  
through May 25 and then  
June 22–September 20

JEAN-LEON GÉRÔME (1824–1904), *Pygmalion and Galatea*, c. 1890, oil on canvas, 35 x 27 in., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Few texts from antiquity have inspired as much creativity as *Metamorphoses* by the Roman poet Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BCE–17 CE). In his epic, Ovid describes a world filled with transformations of gods and humans into animals, plants, or stones. It was with good reason in 1604 that the Flemish artist Karel van Mander



described it as a “Bible for artists.” Indeed, after the Bible, *Metamorphoses* remained for centuries one of the key sources for painters, sculptors, engravers, composers, writers and poets. Its influence persists to this day.

Now two of the world’s greatest museums, the Rijksmuseum and the Galleria Borghese, have partnered to mount the touring exhibition *Metamorphoses*, which features more than 80 masterpieces from collections worldwide. Ranging across the centuries, they were created in a variety of media including painting, sculpture, metalwork, and ceramics, as well as contemporary photography and video.

Among the highlights are Titian’s *Danaë*; Tintoretto’s *Minerva and Arachne*; Correggio’s *Jupiter and Io*, *Ganymede Abducted by the Eagle*, and *Danaë*; Caravaggio’s *Narcissus*; and Rodin’s marble *Pygmalion and Galatea*, presented alongside Gérôme’s painted treatment of the same subject. Also represented are three of Arcimboldo’s grotesque composite faces, and a life-size bronze of *Perseus with the Head of Medusa* by the Dutchman Hubert Gerhard, shown for the first time alongside its inspiration, Cellini’s prototype for the same subject.

The accompanying catalogue has been published in Dutch, English, and Italian.

## ALMOST HEAVEN

### OJAI MYSTIQUE

Ojai Valley Museum  
Ojai, California  
ojaivalleymuseum.org  
April 17–August 9

Every two years, the Ojai Valley Museum plays host to *Ojai Mystique*, an invitational show and sale of landscape paintings that celebrate this scenic region’s renowned natural beauty. For this edition, each invited artist has created a large painting (measuring up to 60 inches on an edge), as well as a miniature piece measuring 9 x 12 inches or smaller.

The 19 masters participating this year are John Cosby, Steven Curry, Carolyn Lord, Kim Lordier, Jennifer Moses, Charles Muench, John Nava, Michael Obermeyer, Jesse Powell, Ian Roberts, Ray Roberts, Dave Santillanes, Dan Schultz, Frank Serano, W. Jason Situ, Alexey Steele, Sarah Vedder, Anne Ward, and Wendy Wirth.

All of them are sustaining the legacy of depicting the Ojai area that began in the early 20th century with such legends as Edgar Payne, Elmer and Marion Wachtel, and Cornelis and Jessie Arms Botke.

A ticketed preview reception is scheduled for April 16, and then a free public reception the next day. A portion of the show’s proceeds will benefit the museum.

The Ojai Valley Museum highlights its region’s history, art, and culture. Founded in



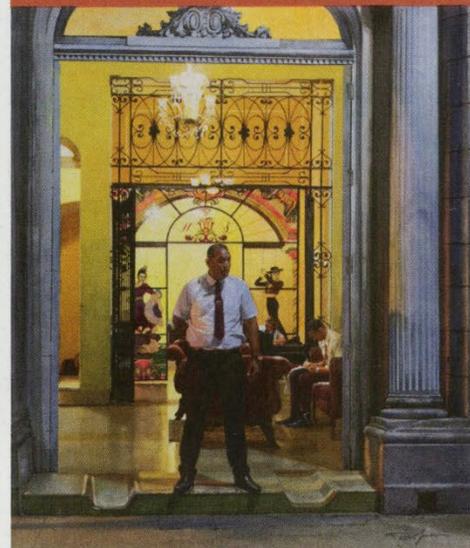
DAVE SANTILLANES (b. 1972), *The Ojai Valley — Study*, 2026, oil on panel, 12 x 9 in.

1966, it is a nonprofit organization that collects and exhibits art, artifacts, photographs, and paper ephemera. It operates not only a museum, but also a research library and visitor center.

## EXPLORING THE WORLD

### RANCE JONES: WATERCOLORS

Forum Gallery  
Manhattan  
forumgallery.com  
March 5–April 18



RANCE JONES (b. 1965), *Night Shift*, 2020, watercolor on paper, 21 x 18 in.

Forum Gallery is about to open a show of recent watercolors painted by Rance Jones that capture daily life in Cuba (which he first visited in 2018) and in Israel

and Palestine, which he toured in April 2023.

Equipped not only with superb technical skills but also abundant sensitivity and empathy, Jones got to know the inhabitants of these troubled places and learned about the hardships they face. Gallery principal Robert Fishko notes, "This is apolitical,

humanist art that treats each subject fully and without judgment," something dishearteningly rare these days.

Born in Lubbock, Texas, Jones moved to New York City in 1991 to earn an M.F.A. in illustration at the School of Visual Arts there. After a decade working for publications including *The New York Times* and *National*

*Review*, he returned to Texas to concentrate on his own endeavors.

On March 7, Forum will help launch the new monograph *Rance Jones: Watercolors of Cuba*, which runs to 156 pages and features essays by art historian Nathalie M. Sánchez and Andrew Walker, director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art (Fort Worth).

## THE WORLD IN ONE HALL

### EAST INDIA MARINE HALL

Peabody Essex Museum  
Salem, Massachusetts  
pem.org  
from March 14

Founded in 1799, the Peabody Essex Museum (PEM) is the oldest continuously operating museum in the U.S. This March it will celebrate the bicentenary of its first permanent gathering and exhibition space, East India Marine Hall, designed in 1824–25 by architect Thomas Waldron Sumner in the Greek Revival style. Distinguished by its tall arched windows and the 19th-century ship figureheads that line its walls, this space is both a National Historic Landmark and the heart of the museum.

Now, after a thorough renovation of the structure, PEM is ready to unveil its multimedia-enhanced installation featuring several hundred objects that offer a fascinating cross section of PEM's global collections and represent its earliest years. These collections were



MICHELE FELICE CORNÉ (1752–1845) with lettering by Samuel Bartoll (1786–1837), Sign commissioned by the East India Marine Society, 1803, oil on canvas, 15 1/4 x 41 3/4 in., Peabody Essex Museum, M235; photo: Mark Sexton

acquired between 1799 and 1867 by the East India Marine Society, a group of sea captains and traders who sailed from Salem all over the world, far beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn.

The Society's founding call was "to form a museum of natural and artificial curiosities," and so its members collected flora and fauna, including ostrich eggs and a taxidermied King penguin. The objects they brought home include spears from Fiji, ship models

from China, a Māori nose flute, ceremonial kava bowls, the lower jaw of a very large sperm whale, and part of the museum's first donation: a pipe with two stems that came from the northern coast of Sumatra.

These disparate items are now brought to life through audio and video storytelling that gives voice to the words of early collectors, trading partners, visiting historians, journalists, and museum visitors.

## ONCE IN A LIFETIME

### RAPHAEL

Metropolitan Museum of Art  
New York City  
metmuseum.org  
March 29–June 28

The Metropolitan Museum of Art is preparing to open America's first comprehensive, international loan exhibition devoted to the Italian Renaissance master Raffaello di Giovanni Santi (1483–1520).

It explores the breadth of Raphael's life and career, from his origins in Urbino to his prolific years in Florence, where he emerged as a peer to Leonardo and Michelangelo, to his final decade at the papal court in Rome. Gathering more than 200 important drawings, paintings, tapestries, and decorative arts from collections worldwide, this project will offer a fresh perspective on one of art history's greatest figures, presenting



RAPHAEL (1483–1520), *The Virgin and Child with Infant Saint John the Baptist in a Landscape (The Alba Madonna)*, c. 1509–11, oil on panel transferred to canvas, 37 3/16 in. (diameter), National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.24

renowned masterpieces alongside rarely seen treasures.

"The seven-year journey of putting together this exhibition has been an extraordinary chance to reframe my understanding

of this monumental artist," says Met curator Carmen Bambach

Though he lived only 37 years, Raphael achieved such profound success as a painter, designer, and architect that he was regarded as the pinnacle of artistic perfection for centuries after his death. The son of a painter and poet, he engaged with the foremost writers and thinkers of his age in Rome, displaying a poetic sensibility that captivated his peers and generations that followed.

Illustrated here is one of the show's key pieces, *The Virgin and Child with Infant Saint John the Baptist in a Landscape*, an emblematic example of Raphael's mastery of High Renaissance ideals of harmony and classical beauty.