

LESS THAN AN HOUR?

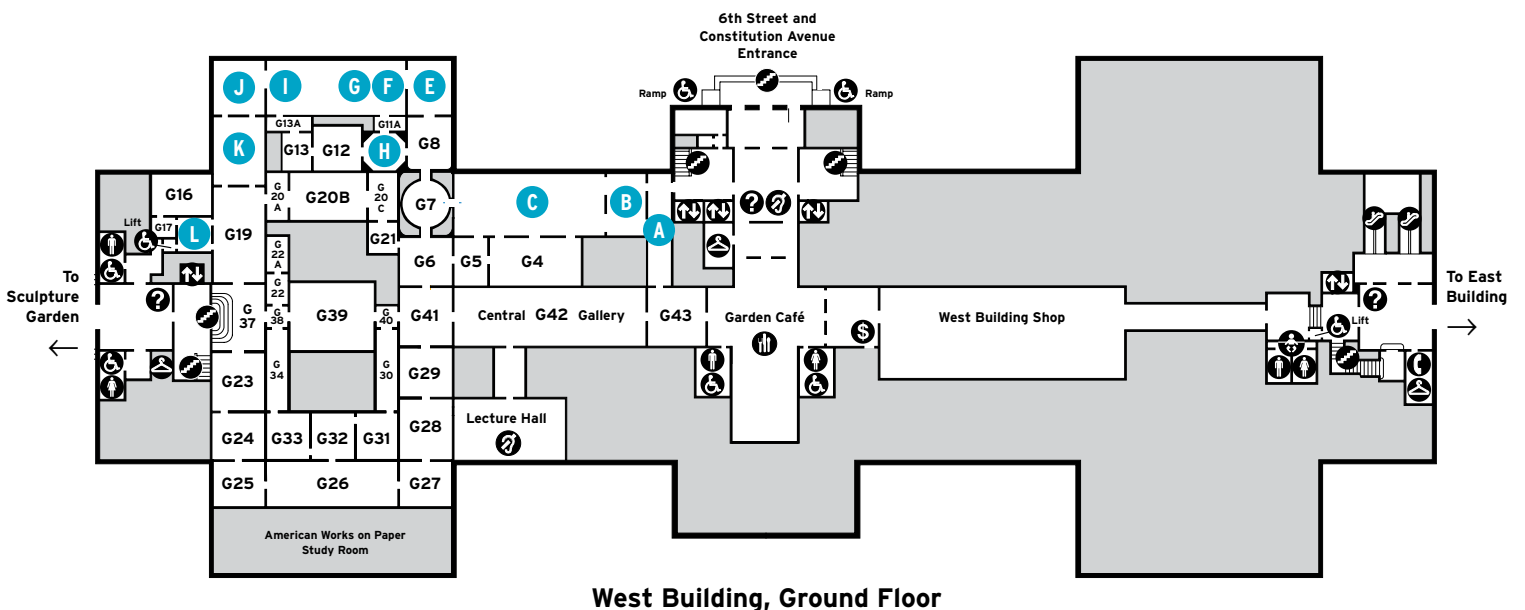
West Building Sculpture Highlights



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A brief overview of some of the not-to-be-missed works in the National Gallery of Art sculpture collection in the West Building Ground Floor galleries. Please do not touch works of art; maintain a one-foot distance. Some objects may be temporarily off view or moved to a different gallery.

- A** Augustus Saint-Gaudens, *Diana of the Tower*, conceived 1892/1893, cast 1899 **Gallery 1**
- B** Auguste Rodin, *Katherine Seney Simpson (Mrs. John W. Simpson)*, 1902–1903 **Gallery 2**
- C** Edgar Degas, *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen* (wax statue), 1878–1881 **Gallery 3**
- D** Paul Gauguin, *Eve*, 1890 **On view in East Building, Upper Level**
- E** Pietro Magni, *The Reading Girl (La Leggitrice)*, model 1856, carved 1861 **Gallery 9**
- F** Angelo de Rossi, *The Agony in the Garden*, c. 1700 **Gallery 10**
- G** Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Monsignor Francesco Barberini*, c. 1623 **Gallery 10**
- H** Philippe-Laurent Roland, *Thérèse-Françoise Potain Roland, Wife of the Sculptor*, c. 1782/1783 **Gallery 11**
- I** Attributed to François Duquesnoy, *Christ Bound*, 1620s **Gallery 10**
- J** Andrea Briosco, called Riccio, *The Entombment*, 1500/1530 **Gallery 14**
- K** Andrea del Verrocchio, *Putto Poised on a Globe*, probably 1480 **Gallery 15**
- L** French 13th Century, *Pyx in the Form of a Dove*, c. 1220/1230 **Gallery 18**



West Building, Ground Floor

Information →

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- A Augustus Saint-Gaudens**
Diana of the Tower,
conceived 1892/1893, cast 1899
Gallery 1
The strong outline of Saint-Gaudens' design for a weathervane for Madison Square Garden would have stood out atop New York City's then highest building. The sculptor's model (and mistress) posed as the Roman goddess of the hunt, an appropriate symbol for a sports venue. This is a smaller version of his popular sculpture, cast to sell.
- B Auguste Rodin**
Katherine Seney Simpson
(Mrs. John W. Simpson), 1902–1903
Gallery 2
Mrs. Simpson was the first American to commission her portrait from Rodin. She acquired many of his sculptures and later donated them to the National Gallery. Rodin portrayed her as an introspective, intelligent woman by carving her eyes with a distant gaze and her head and shoulders tilted off center. In 1914 Mrs. Simpson wrote to Rodin that the sculpture was "the most precious thing I own."
- C Edgar Degas**
Little Dancer Aged Fourteen
(wax statue), 1878–1881
Gallery 3
One of the many young, poor girls who danced for the Paris Opéra, Marie van Goethem stands with head high, arms tautly stretched behind her. Degas adorned her wax image, the only sculpture he ever exhibited publicly, in cloth garments and human hair. This and other mixed-media sculptures (many in galleries 3 and 4) were cast in bronze after his death.
- D Paul Gauguin**
Eve, 1890
On view in East Building, Upper Level
Gauguin translated biblical figures into exotic form, as seen in this stone-ware *Eve*, with her cascading tresses and voluptuous body. Balanced at the edge of a pool suggested by flowers and vegetation, she also appears to emerge from it, like a Polynesian Venus. Although Gauguin's sojourns in Tahiti brought him much notoriety, he had not yet visited that island paradise when he created this sculpture. Instead,
- he drew influences from the colonial exhibits at the 1889 Paris World's Fair and the French ethnographic museum.
- E Pietro Magni**
The Reading Girl (La Leggitrice),
model 1856, carved 1861
Gallery 9
A tear on her cheek, the girl is moved by the book balanced on the back of her woven cane chair. A poem once attached to the open pages foretold Italian independence, represented by the medallion of Giuseppe Garibaldi around her neck. Simple garments identify her as an ordinary girl rather than the classical heroine typical of sculptures created for formal exhibitions at the time.
- F Angelo de Rossi**
The Agony in the Garden, c. 1700
Gallery 10
In the background, amid delicate low-relief palms and clouds, Judas betrays Christ to Roman soldiers. The workmanship of this copper relief achieves a refinement that was more customary for objects made of precious metals. Much of the image was created by hammering from the back. Some high relief elements, like the projecting angels, were added separately.
- G Gian Lorenzo Bernini**
Monsignor Francesco Barberini,
c. 1623
Gallery 10
The subject of this bust, the uncle and mentor of Bernini's patron, Pope Urban VIII, had died long before the work was commissioned. Bernini studied a painting and brought the old man virtually to life in marble, subtly turning his shoulders and carving his pliant, bearded face above a crinkly linen surplice.
- H Philippe-Laurent Roland**
Thérèse-Françoise Potain Roland, Wife of the Sculptor, c. 1782/1783
Gallery 11
Because moist clay lends itself to subtle modeling before it is fired to become terracotta (baked clay), sculptors used it for finished works as well as preliminary models. Here Roland gave sensitive attention to his
- wife's features and heightened her grace by turning her face to the left and dipping her neckline on the right.
- I Attributed to François Duquesnoy**
Christ Bound, 1620s
Gallery 10
Downcast eyes and flinching body convey Christ's suffering before the Crucifixion. His precarious pose follows the curve of the single piece of elephant tusk from which this powerful ivory is carved. Details—of fingernails, veins, undercut hands, paper-thin loincloth, even teeth—are carved with astonishing delicacy.
- J Andrea Briosco, called Riccio**
The Entombment, 1500/1530
Gallery 14
Resembling Roman funerary sculpture, this bas-relief depicts a procession with several almost freestanding figures. Expressing the enormity of their grief, the mourners wail, collapse, or maintain a stoic silence while accompanying Christ to the tomb. The largest relief Riccio ever made, perhaps intended for his own tomb, it ranks among the most important Renaissance sculptures in this country.
- K Andrea del Verrocchio**
Putto Poised on a Globe, probably 1480
Gallery 15
With cheeks puffed out and hair blowing, Verrocchio's chubby infant balances on one foot in a pose that invites examination from multiple viewpoints. Modeled over a metal armature, the figure is fashioned of clay that was then allowed to dry instead of being fired in a kiln. This work may have been a study for a bronze fountain figure.
- L French 13th Century**
Pyx in the Form of a Dove,
c. 1220/1230
Gallery 18
Suspended above a church altar and intended to hold consecrated bread for the mass, this pyx, or ritual container, symbolized the dove of the Holy Spirit. Such vessels were made from only the most precious materials—gold, silver, or fine gilded and enameled copper, as in this example.