

Barony of the Cleftlands; Middle Kingdom; March/April 2024

Cleftlands Event Sets a New Standard

by *THL Jolicia atte Northclyfe*

Cleftlands' 30th Standard Bearers event, coupled with the North Oaken Regional A&S Faire, attracted about 75 gentles. While the event used to attract primarily Cleftlanders, this year the hall was filled with gentles and peers from other parts of the Midrealm.

The day's goal — selecting new Baronial standard bearers — was accomplished when Baron Pietro and Baroness Aurelia released the previous Standard Bearers from their duty, and welcomed the new honorees.



Duchess Runa and Baroness Gianna making bycockets. Photo by THL Jolicia atte Northclyfe.

They are:

- A&S champion THL Lyonnete Vibert
- Rapier champion Lady Léonne de Frense
- Armored combat champion Lord Edrik Eiksson

The archery champion will be chosen at Fletchings of Spring in May.

Their Royal Highnesses Tsarevich Ivan Shishov and Tsarvena Katale-na Ivaniaia graced us with Their Presence, and bestowed many awards on Cleftlanders during court. [See Cleftlands news on page X]. There was an international flair when Mistress Milesent read Lady Jocelin's Order of the Willow award in French.

There were nine entries in the Northern Oaken Regional A&S Faire, ranging from a 14th century German illumination, to an Iron Age Finnish tablet woven band and European sausages. Many more gentles gave their time as judges. All entrants were recognized in court. Let's hope all of these excellent projects go on to represent the Cleftlands at the Kingdom A&S Faire.

Several interesting projects were entered into the baronial A&S display, including a sheep-to-shawl (actually a mitt) project, Chinese embroidery and glass enameling.

Baroness Gianna, with assistance from Sir Crispin, conducted an impromptu bycocket (felt hat) demonstration at the A&S faire. Several people - including Her Royal Highness - were spotted sporting the jaunty hats.

Lady Dorothea and the Cooks Guild presented a creative and tasty feast of Russian foods. Lady Nadyezha introduced each course in Russian.

Huzzah for another successful event in the Cleftlands!



The new standard bearers from left to right: Lord Edrik, Lady Léonne, and THL Lyonnete. Photo by THL Tarmach ben Yehuda al-Khazari.



THL Lyonnete's A&S entry that won her the champion's title - her outfit! Photo by THL Tarmach.

A History of May Day

by Lady Claricia de la Mere

People now associate May Day with the first of May and know it as a festival of flowers, maypoles, and romance. What are the known historical origins of this celebration?

To look at the history of the celebration, we find ourselves going back once again to the Roman Empire - in the SCA, we probably do think about the Roman Empire every day! The Romans celebrated Floralia, the festival of the Roman goddess of Flowers, Flora. The festival was held from April 27 to May 3. Theatrical performances opened the festivities. Other activities were the releasing of hares and goats, or pelting the crowds with beans. The celebration concluded with great spectacle, including competitive events, and a sacrifice to Flora.

At least as far back as the 2nd century CE, the Romans celebrated Maiouma during the same time period, but only every three years. Maiouma honored the mysteries of Dionysus and Aphrodite. The Roman government paid for 30 days worth of torches, lights, and other expenses during this month of revels that might last all night. It was so debauched, that Emperor Constantine suppressed the celebration during his reign (306-337).

Many associations we have come from Beltane, the Gaelic May Day festival that marks the beginning of summer. It would have been held half way between the spring equinox and the summer solstice. Beltane is mentioned in early Irish literature from pre-1000 CE, and in Scottish literature at least from the 15th century. This is the time when cattle would be driven to the summer pastures, and crops were beginning to sprout. Bonfires were very important, and the Beltane ritual bonfire was thought to have protective powers. People and their livestock would go around, or even over, the bonfires to gain the protection. Individuals would douse their hearths and re-light them with flame or embers from the Beltane bonfire. Decorations included yellow flowers, and in Ireland people would make a May Bush by decorating a thorny plant with flowers, ribbons, and other items. And of course, there were feasts!

In Scotland, ritual food was featured. A lamb would be sacrificed, although later it was simply featured in the Beltane feast. The Scots would make oatcakes that had 9 knobs. Everyone would take one, break off a knob, and throw it over their shoulder while asking spirits to protect each type of livestock (horse, sheep, etc.), and ward from each type of predator (wolf, fox, etc.). After, they would drink caudle, which was a sort of porridge made from eggs, butter, oatmeal, and milk.

Many Germanic countries began observing Walpurgis Night on April 30-May 1. Walpurga was a saint who was canonized on May 1, 870. Walpurga was said to have battled against pests, whooping cough, and witches. Still today in parts of Germany people will light bonfires to ward off witches, as well as wrapping the maypole (although young people see it more as an opportunity to party).

Some of the most associated traditions are dancing around the maypole, crowning the Queen of May, and sometimes giving May baskets. The origins of the maypole are unknown, but it was primarily Germanic and might have been used as far back as the Iron Age. While there is much speculation as to what the pole represents, by the late 14th century, they were seen by those in the British Isles as simple poles from which to hang seasonal decorations, not of lewd significance (or so they said).

The May Queen is a personification of summer, and some think that the figure is linked to ancient tree worship. May Queens were crowned at least as far back as the late 16th century. The oldest known unbroken tradition of May Queens can be found in Hayfield, Derbyshire, UK.

May basket traditions may have come from the sharing of food as communities came together to mark the end of the cold season. They may have brought together all their remaining stored food to share for the Beltane feast. In the 1800s and 1900s, people would hang small baskets of flowers or sweets on doors and then dash away before being discovered.

In the 18th century, Roman Catholics declared that May Day was devoted to Mary, often depicting her crowned with spring flowers. This is sometimes thought of as a way to unite ancient and Christian beliefs, by making Mary into the May Queen.



A printed textile from England about 1770, depicting a maypole celebration. Public domain, image from the Met Museum.

Sources: Wikipedia

<https://www.marthastewart.com/1538897/may-day-baskets-tradition>

5 Questions for Cleftlanders: Know Your Officers - Knights Marshal: Captain Kollin Rhos (modernly known as James Morison) (he/him)

1) How did you find your way to the SCA?

I was introduced to Dagorhir Battle Games by a childhood friend of mine, Duke Valharic, at age 14. I was instantly hooked on the mayhem and fun of sword fighting and I found a niche of people that fit my love for history, reading, and hitting people with sticks. I also was friends with Matthew Fleming, son of Countess Alys Katharine. With my passion for history and permission from my mom, she took Val, Matt, and myself to the Cleftlands meeting at Case in the early 90's where I learned how to play Go with Knute, how to period dance, and a bit of Latin from Gladius. As I grew older, I authorized and started fighting heavy in the SCA, doing demos at Baycrafters Ren Faire with the Barony, and hitting as many events as I could afford.

2) What are your two favorite things to do in the SCA so far?

I love to learn from people that are passionate about their art. It might sound silly but it warms my heart to see the love and devotion people put into it. And being a bit curious, I like to learn about almost everything. I also enjoy heavy combat and fencing. The skill, challenge, and camaraderie that is shared helps shed the stress of life and refreshes my mind of mundane worries.

3) You recently stepped up to be the Barony's Knights Marshal - what made you decide to become an officer?

So, there are a couple of reasons. First I was showing up for practice a lot and I noticed that there were folks doing this job that had been doing a lot of other jobs around the Barony. And I thought to myself, I can do this job and give folks a break so they aren't constantly having to work. Second reason, I wanted to give back to the Barony and become closer to the group and there is no better way to do that then to help out. Third reason, I can be lazy and I'm great at making excuses to be lazy. But if I have a responsibility, I will put that before my laziness (I'm even lazy at being lazy).

4) Tell us about your persona and/or period in history that most interests you.

My persona has gone through many changes over the decades. Kollin started out as an Irish warrior (Inspired by Cú Chulainn and Finn McCool - I was reading a lot of Morgan Llywelyn at the time); to Romano/Brit (my association with House Darkyard and my love for everything written by Bernard Cornwell, especially *The Winter King*); to finally settling on a 10th century Kievan Rus. I settled on Rus culture because of the diversity and the crossroads of different cultures that it encompassed.

Kollin Rhos (Rus) was born in 1034 south of Kiev to a Slavic mother and a Varangian father. He was raised in a small village where he learned the basics of life from his father. As a child he learned to fight, farm, and trade just like his dad.. At age 14 he went on his first raid, scraping by with a minor injury but killing his first enemy. By age 20 he was raiding with a unit of Varangians out of Constantinople. Kollin traveled throughout the Mediterranean and saw many ancient and wonderful places. Now at age 49, battle scarred and still restless, he continues to travel to see new civilizations and learn new skills.

As to the most interesting period in history, well that changes like the seasons. My current fascination is with the Bronze Age Collapse and the Sea People.

5) What is your favorite SCA event that you've been to (Pennsic doesn't count!)?

So, this is a tough one to answer. I've been to Gulf Wars and that was a great time fighting. There are coronations that have had awe-inspiring pageantry, feasts that have food so divine, and campfires where my sides hurt by laughing for so long. I have countless moments with friends new and old throughout the years. It is hard to choose.

I think I will bring up a new favorite, 100 Min War. It's a solid six hour drive out to the event and it takes place at an old Boy Scout camp that used to have a Ren fair that went bankrupt and just left everything sitting around. It's in November and a fun event. Our hosts in the East allow us folks from out of town to stay in the cabins on site. The event is fun and it's always interesting to see the court from a different Kingdom. Afterwards though is when I felt the real magic began.

In the main hall where we hang out after court, having a few beers and talking about whatever. The fine folks from Quebec, which I believe is the Crown Principality of Tir Mara, start gathering chairs and benches to create a circle. Then something akin to a hockey fight/sharing circle begins. It's hard to explain so please bear with me. *-Find out more on the next page!*



Photo by THL Tarmach.

Questions for Kollin Rhos - continued

These fine Quebecois, well into their cups, begin to boast about the day's event, one boast per person and you don't boast about yourself. If you try to break these simple rules, or if you boast for too long or just for any reason at all it seems, people will start pounding fists on tables and someone will interject by either shouting something in French (at least I think it was French) or standing up and shouting at the speaker while waving their hands around while crowding around the speaker. There tends to be a lot of shouting of "HEY" from the speaker and now ½ the people in the circle who are now standing up shouting, all in good fun. Eventually it gets resolved, or people get tired of shouting and people slowly sit back down grumbling to themselves and another speaker steps forward. This continues until everyone has said their peace. It was chaos, loud and funny and touching all at once. And our kind cousins from the East invited us into their circle to tell our tales and share the brotherhood.

Moments like this is what makes the SCA great, this is what builds communities and friends.

News of the Barony

- The current meeting site will be unavailable for regular meeting and activities on May 8. Arrangements are being attempted to use our regular site (St John of the Cross) on that date - please watch for confirmation to come.
- As you probably know, our new temporary meeting site is Ss. Robert and William Catholic Parish, at 367 E. 260th St., Euclid. Go to the school, not the church - use the door at the far end of the school, not the center school door. A brief business meeting is held at 8:15 p.m. We need to vacate the site between 9:30 and 10 p.m. The Barony will meet here until fall.
- Congratulations to Master Baron Edward Brackenburye who was elevated to the Order of the Laurel.
- Congratulations also to the following Cleftlanders who received awards at the Standard Bearer's event: Order of the Willow: Jocelin D'Eyncourt, Order of the Red Company: TryggR Gillason, Order of the Dragon's Heart: Tarmach ben Yehuda al-Khazari.
- **NEW OFFICERS NEEDED: Rapier Marshal, Youth Marshal, and Chronicler. Contact them to learn more (emails are available on the last page of this newsletter), or apply on the Baronial website: <https://www.cleftlands.org/officer-application/>**
- May 19 brings another tradition, the Fletchings of Spring archery event, hosted by Lord Tarmach. This will also be the Baronial archery championship.
- Demo - on Saturday, June 1, the E. 200th St. Stroll is happening in Euclid. Speak to Lady Shahzada for more information.
- NOWM comes again on June 8. There will be armored combat, ranged, rapier, and A&S. Learn more: <https://events.cleftlands.org/nowm/>
- Demo - The Ohio Scottish Games is on Saturday, June 22 at the Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds. Set-up help will be needed on Friday, June 21. Speak to Lady Shahzada for more information.
- September 28 Cleftlands hosts another Kingdom event, Midrealm Fall Coronation. THL Jolicia, Lady Jaqueline, and Armiger Lupa are the event stewards. Learn more: <https://events.cleftlands.org/coronation/>



An entry of multiple pieces of work into the Regional A&S Faire by Sir Crispin de la Rochefoucauld. Photo by THL Tarmach ben Yehuda al-Khazari.

News of the Kingdom

Upcoming Midrealm Events

May 3-5 - 2024 Spring Coronation; Camping event. Coronation, classes, armored, rapier, ranged, and more. \$17 for members, lunch \$10, feast \$15. Canton, OH
<https://springcoronation2024.weebly.com/>

May 10-12 - Mugmort Melees XVII; Armored, ranged, rapier, A&S, youth. \$20, lunch \$7, feast \$12. Granville, OH
<https://mugmort.midrealm.org/mugmort-melees/mugmort-melees-17/>

May 10-11 - Quest for the Golden Seamstress; Sewing competition. \$20, snacks and Saturday breakfast and lunch included. Bloomfield Hills, MI
<https://roaringwastes.org/events/event/roaring-wastes-goldenseamstress>

May 11 - Three Saints and the Baronies Strike Back; Armored, rapier, youth, merchangs, A&S. \$27; lunch \$7. West Lafayette, IN
<https://rivenstar.midrealm.org/events/2024/3%20Saints/>

May 17-19 - Norborough Faire; Shopping, craft faire, Pas de Armes, ranged, more shopping. Donation. Troy, OH
<https://marcheofnorborough.wordpress.com/norborough-faire/>

May 17-19 - Constellation Academy of Defense & Dance Symposium; Camping; rapier and dance classes and activities. \$20. Camp McCormick, IN
<https://sites.google.com/view/cadd-2024/home>

May 18 - Fletchings of Spring; Archery. \$18, lunch included. Streetsboro, OH
<https://events.cleftlands.org/fletchings/>

May 24-27 - Kingdom A&S Fair and Spring Crown Tournament; As the name says, plus camping and lunch food trucks. Findlay, OH
<https://marcheofthemarshes.midrealm.org/midrealm-spring-as-and-crown-tourneys/>

- Youth Rapier Armor Clarification: The Middle Kingdom EM has confirmed with the Society EM that the reduced armor experiment was conducted with adults, confirming that the results were adult rule changes, not youth rapier changes.

The armor standards for youth rapier have NOT changed. This means division 3 armor standards remain unchanged: punch tested torso protection, long sleeves, no bare feet, gloves, hood/back of the head protection, as stated in the current youth rule book. The youth rapier manual will have an amendment added to reflect the requirements.

- Applicants are sought for the position of Kingdom Youth Armored Combat Marshal. Send letters of interest/intent to marshal@midrealm.org and youthcombat@midrealm.org by June 1.

Position duties include reporting to the Kingdom Earl Marshal and Society Youth Combat marshal, issuing sanctions if needed, administering marshal tests and entering new marshals into any/all databases, working with Pennsic staff, and continuously helping the youth armored combat program grow. Position Requirements: must be a paid member of the Society, must be a currently warranted youth armored combat marshal, must have good communication skills. You will be receiving communications frequently and need to be able to respond to them in a timely manner. Attendance at Pennsic is preferred but not mandatory, however if you cannot attend you will need to delegate a trustworthy and competent proxy in your absence.



An entry of pottery work into the Regional A&S Faire by Lady Eleanore van Tyne. Photo by THL Tarmach ben Yehuda al-Khazari.

May 2024 Cleftlands Events

- Wed. May 1 6:30-9:45 pm - **Baronial Meeting** - Ss Robert and William School, 351 E 260th St, Euclid OH
- Wed. May 1 8:15 pm - **Making Wire Rings Class at Baronial Meeting** - Ss Robert and William School, 351 E 260th St, Euclid OH
- Thurs. May 2 7:00 pm - **Armorers' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Fri. May 3 10 am - **Garb-a-Thon** - Richmond Heights Branch Library; 449 Richmond Rd. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1643078633152210>
- Wed. May 8 6:30-9:45 pm - **Baronial Meeting - LOCATION CHANGE - St John of the Cross School, outside, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.**
- Wed. May 8 8:15 pm - **Class: The Art of Improv & Practical Application (at Baronial Meeting) - LOCATION CHANGE - St John of the Cross School, outside, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.**
- Thurs. May 9 7:00 pm - **Armorers' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Fri. May 10 10 am - **Garb-a-Thon** - South Euclid Lyndhurst Public Library. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1419120392324505>
- Wed. May 15 6:30-9:45 pm - **Baronial Meeting** - Ss Robert and William School, 351 E 260th St, Euclid OH
- Wed. May 15 8:15 pm - **Class: Creating Knotwork Patterns for Any Surface or Medium (at Baronial Meeting)** - Ss Robert and William School, 351 E 260th St, Euclid OH
- Thurs. May 16 7:00 pm - **Armorers' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Fri. May 17 10 am - **Garb-a-Thon** - Friends of the Bedford Branch Library. <https://www.facebook.com/events/398426009801057>
- Sun. May 19 12 pm - **Cleveland Museum of Art Field Trip: Africa & Byzantium Exhibit** - Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Blvd, Cleveland. Please obtain your own ticket. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1636875697116530>
- Wed. May 22 6:30-9:45 pm - **Baronial Meeting** - Ss Robert and William School, 351 E 260th St, Euclid OH
- Thurs. May 23 7:00 pm - **Armorers' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Wed. May 29 6:30-9:45 pm - **Baronial Swap Meet & Cookout** - Ss Robert and William School, 351 E 260th St, Euclid OH
- Thurs. May 30 7:00 pm - **Armorers' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Fri. May 31 10 am - **Garb-a-Thon** - Parma Snow Library. <https://www.facebook.com/events/436547645553554>

What Happened in April in History?

- April 1 1204 - [Eleanor of Aquitaine](#), Queen of France and then of England, dies at the age of 80. One of the wealthiest and most powerful women of the High Middle Ages, she was also active in promoting military actions and as a patron of the arts.
- April 2 1513 - Juan Ponce de León makes landfall in Florida.
- April 3 686 - Maya king Yuknoom Yich'aak K'ahk' assumes leadership of the Kaan kingdom.
- April 4 190 - Chinese general and warlord Dong Zhuo evacuates his army from the capital city of Luoyang - but not before looting the tombs of the Han emperors and burning most of the city to the ground.
- April 5 919 - al-Qā'im bi-Amr Allāh begins the second Fatimid invasion of Egypt, although it fails 2 years later.
- April 6 1453 - Mehmed II's siege of Constantinople begins and lasts until the city falls on May 29. It is renamed as "Istanbul".

Random Period Object - From the Cleveland Museum of Art



Cap with striped inscribed silk, Egypt or Syria, 1300s

<https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1985.5>

Size: ~4.5 x 6.5 x 6.5 inches

Woven silk

The alternating woven panels on this cap show animals, crescent moons, and the words “Glory to our lord Sultan al-Malik al-Nasir” in Arabic. The trim on the cap may have once been a vibrant red.

At time, Egypt had a robust textile industry. Items like this would have been made in workshops that were highly regulated, using complicated weaving techniques.

This piece was made during the Mamluk dynasty (1250-1517). The Mamluks were Muslim and known for their lavish garments worn at court. They often gave clothing as gifts to praise and honor the recipient.

Due to the inscription on the cap, it seems likely this piece was made during the Sultanate of Nasir al-Din Muhammad. However, he ruled Egypt three separate times: from 1293-1294, from 1299-1309, and from 1310 until his death in 1341.

You can see this piece on display as part of the *Africa & Byzantium* exhibit at the Cleveland Museum of Art, open until July 21, 2024.

News of the Society

- Society is looking for commentary about adding a “Patron” tier to SCA memberships. Learn more and submit your feedback by May 3: <https://www.sca.org/news/patron-membership-corpora-commentary-request/>
- The January 2024 President’s report is available: <https://www.sca.org/news/january-2024-presidents-report-now-available/>
- Society requested commentary on changes to newsletter language in law, now that newsletters are no longer behind a paywall nor require membership to access. <https://www.sca.org/news/commentary-request-newsletter-references-governing-documents/>
- Commentary is requested by June 10 regarding updates to the Governing Documents related to the Marshallate. <https://www.sca.org/news/commentary-request-governing-documents-marshallate-content/>
- More commentary requested by June 10 on Rules of the List updates: <https://www.sca.org/news/commentary-request-rules-of-the-list-corpora-update/>
- A new Society President has been selected: Bao Pham (Baron Baudoyne de Lafayette, WSA, OD) is the SCA Inc. President Elect. <https://www.sca.org/news/people-on-the-move-sca-inc-president-elect/>
- Following the announced feedback and commentary period, there will be two new greater offices within the Society: the Society Chatelaine will be elevated to a greater officer role, and the Society Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Office is structurally changed to a greater office. <https://www.sca.org/news/diversity-equity-inclusion-and-belonging-april-2024-board-meeting-highlights/>
- Results were discussed from the commentary on the new “omnibus Peerage”: positive but inconclusive. <https://www.sca.org/news/from-the-board-of-directors-sca-inc-omnibus-peerage-discussions/>
- And even more commentary is requested, this time by June 30 on the selection of Royalty, specifically in refusing entry to Royal lists: <https://www.sca.org/news/commentary-request-corpora-addition-royalty-selection-refusals/>

Cleftlands Officers' Contact Information

- Baron: Barone Pietro Nicolo da San Tebaldo; baron@cleftlands.org
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- Seneschal: Mistress Angharad ferch Tangwystl; seneschal@cleftlands.org
- Exchequer: The Honorable Robert atte Northclyfe; exchequer@cleftlands.org
- Castellan (Chatelaine): Rav Ezra de Barcelona; chatelaine@cleftlands.org
- Herald: Sergeant Njall Orkneyjarson; herald@cleftlands.org
- Minister Arts & Sciences: Dame Elizabethhe Alles; moas@cleftlands.org
- Social Media Officer: Lord Hrafnkell inn Raudi Eykelsson; social@cleftlands.org
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- Rapier Marshal: Lord Reinhardt mit dem Bart; rapiermarshal@cleftlands.org
- Archery Marshal: Forester Gwyneth Cole; archery@cleftlands.org
- Web Minister: Baroness Gianna Vettori; webminister@cleftlands.org
- Chronicler: The Honorable Lady Jolicia atte Northclyfe; chronicler@cleftlands.org
- Youth Officer: Lady Chaiya Leah bat Dovid; youth@cleftlands.org
- Demo Coordinator: Lady Shahzada al-Zahra; demo@cleftlands.org
- Iron Key: Eofor of Cleftlands; ironkey@cleftlands.org
- Youth Marshal: Sergeant Bastian Eychener; youthmarshal@cleftlands.org
- Quartermaster: The Honorable Lady Sarra Bossard; quartermaster@cleftlands.org
- Gold Key: Lady Leonne de Fresne; goldkey@cleftlands.org

Newsletter Content

Did you miss an issue? Want to review an old favorite? All copies of the newsletter are stored on the Cleftlands website. Find them here: <http://wiki.cleftlands.org/Publications>

For suggestions and comments, please contact the editor at clariciadm@gmail.com.

The image of the woven silk cap is courtesy of the Cleveland Museum of Art. As of January 23, 2019, the Cleveland Museum of Art is an Open Access institution, using the Creative Commons Zero (CC0) designation for high-resolution images and data related to its collection. This means the public now has the ability to share, collaborate, remix, and reuse images of many as 30,000 public-domain artworks from the CMA's world-renowned collection—all without asking permission. In addition, portions of collections information (metadata) for more than 61,000 artworks, both in the public domain and those works with copyright or other restrictions, are now available.

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