DENVER ART MUSEUM

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Denver Art Museum to Unveil Exquisite New Japanese Lacquerware Collection

(Assemblage showcases 30 striking examples of Asia’s richest decorative art tradition)

(Denver, Colo.) – September 17, 2012– The Denver Art Museum (DAM) will present a selection of lavish lacquerware pieces in All that Glistens: A Century of Japanese Lacquer, an exhibition opening November 18 that explores the lacquer-making process. From trays to screens to braziers, the intricately decorated artworks reveal the versatility of this ancient medium and demonstrate the changing styles and tastes of successive generations of artists. All That Glistens is included in general museum admission.

“We are excited to showcase these newly acquired additions to the museum’s permanent collection,” said Ronald Otsuka, Dr. Joseph de Heer curator of Asian art at the DAM. “A sophisticated example of refined workmanship, this presentation provides a window into the creative process necessary to turn everyday objects into prized works of art.

Included in the display of 30 objects is a specially commissioned box that holds samples of raw lacquer as well as the tools and materials used by artists in its application. To demonstrate the intricacies of the lacquer-making process, the box conveys the extensive step-by-step procedure necessary to achieve the resulting extremely glossy finish. A dazzling cosmetic box featuring a floral scene of tiger lilies floating on a black lacquer backdrop and a pair of black hand-warmers adorned with rabbits are among the items in the exhibition, which was made possible by the generous support of the museum’s Volunteer Council and Asian Art Association.

Elegantly decorated and highly durable lacquerware has been a Japanese tradition for centuries, used as early as 7000 B.C. Lacquer is derived from the sap of the urushi tree native to Japan and other Asian countries. Though potentially poisonous to those who handle it, when purified and processed, lacquer becomes a clear, viscous liquid that becomes strong and durable when it hardens. Various pigments, commonly black, red and gold, are added to create rich colors. Mother-of-pearl, eggshell and precious metals can be laid on lacquer objects, creating stunning decorative details that complement the brilliant surface.
Exhibition Credit Line
*All that Glistens: A Century of Japanese Lacquer* is organized by the Denver Art Museum. Support for this exhibit is provided by the generous donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD).

Media Resources
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/denverartmuseum](http://www.facebook.com/denverartmuseum)
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The Denver Art Museum is located on 13th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock Streets in downtown Denver. Open Tuesday–Thursday and Saturday–Sunday 10 a.m.–5 p.m., Friday 10 a.m.–8 p.m.; closed Mondays, Thanksgiving and Christmas. General admission for Colorado residents: $10 adults, $8 seniors and students, $3 for visitors 6-18, free for children 5 and younger. Admission for non-Colorado residents: $13 for adults, $10 for seniors and students, $5 for visitors 6-18, free for children 5 and younger. For information in Spanish, call 720-913-0169. For more information, visit [www.denverartmuseum.org](http://www.denverartmuseum.org) or call 720-865-5000.

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