

Spring 2020

## Gifts of Gold: The Art of Japanese Lacquer Boxes Rack Card

Fairfield University Art Museum

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# Gifts of Gold

## The Art of Japanese Lacquer Boxes



January 17 - May 15, 2020



BELLARMINE HALL GALLERIES

# Gifts of Gold

## The Art of Japanese Lacquer Boxes



*Gifts of Gold: The Art of Japanese Lacquer Boxes* introduces viewers to the functions, decorative techniques, and symbolic associations of Japanese lacquer through select works from the 15th through 21st centuries. Featuring a recent acquisition by the museum (above), the exhibition will include loans from the Yale University Art Gallery, The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College, the collection of Erik Thomsen and other private collections.

While many lacquerwares are left plain to showcase a glossy black or red finish, achieved after many layers of lacquer application, the art reached heights of decorative potential in Japan with techniques of “sprinkled picture” (*maki-e*) decoration using small particles of gold and other metals in abstract and pictorial designs. Rich with seasonal, poetic, and literary allusions, lacquerwares stand in conversation with other arts, such as textile design, ceramics, and paintings. Ultimately functional, lacquer boxes were used in calligraphy practice and tea ceremonies, included in bridal trousseaus, and given as gifts on auspicious occasions.

[fairfield.edu/museum](http://fairfield.edu/museum)



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Image (front): *Trousseau Box*, Edo period (1615–1868), mid- to late 17th century, black lacquer ground on wood with decoration in gold. On loan from Yale University Art Gallery (Gift of Peggy and Richard M. Danziger, LL.B. 1963, 2001.80.1)

Image (back): *Gold Lacquer Writing Box with Cranes*, Edo period (1615–1868), early 19th century, lacquer, wood. Fairfield University Art Museum, 2016.23.1