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## TEXAS ROOM

### *Pitcher with Zachary Taylor*

*Pitcher with Zachary Taylor*, c. 1848–52, porcelain with enamel and gilding, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Bayou Bend Collection, gift of Miss Ima Hogg, B.54.16.



## MISSION

In the 1800s, people asked what freedom, a cornerstone of American identity, meant in a country made up of people with many different rights, desires, and opportunities. The question was especially complicated to answer when rights and opportunities conflicted. With this in mind, what do these historic objects tell us about American identity—what it meant to be an American—during this time period?

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## *Pitcher with Zachary Taylor*

This vase shows a portrait of Zachary Taylor, an American general during the Mexican War who later became president of the United States. He was celebrated at least partly because of the huge amount of territory acquired for the country in the war.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS



Why would an American admire Zachary Taylor enough to own an expensive vase with his picture on it?

*Many Americans celebrated the quick victory of the United States in the Mexican War and the huge amounts of new territory that the post-war treaty brought into the United States.*



Why would a vase with an American hero on it be made in France?

*Making fancy ceramics is technologically complicated and requires large investments by the factory owner. Well into the 1800s, elegant ceramics and glass for the American market were made in Europe because Americans had not yet developed the capital and skill to build the factories needed. With its growing population, America provided more than enough customers to be a worthwhile market.*



What's on the side of the vase we can't see?

*The other side depicts a view of one of the battles of the Mexican War.*

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## TEXAS ROOM

### *Rocking Chair*

Wenzel Friedrich, *Rocking Chair*, 1880–90, steer horn, horn veneer, jaguar hide, iron, chrome plated iron, and wood, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, gift of William J. Hill, 83.138.



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## *Rocking Chair*

This chair was made by a craftsman named Wenzel Friedrich from cattle longhorns, a product unique to Texas and the United States. Although the chair looks like something for a ranch or a farm, furniture like this was an expensive luxury good that was sold to wealthy people all over the world.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS



Why would someone want something like this in their house?

*Many people, especially Europeans, thought of Texas as exotic and fascinating. Having a chair made out of longhorns was a way to capture those feelings. The furniture was often placed in hunting lodges.*



How do we know about the craftsman?

*Wenzel Friedrich was a great marketer! He produced catalogues and advertisements to help sell his furniture to customers.*



Is it comfortable?

*We can only speculate, since we can't try out the chair, but many of the chairs have spring upholstery and even rock on springs.*

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## TEXAS ROOM

### *Lone Star Desk*

Adolph Kempen, *Desk*, c. 1870–80, walnut and maple; pine, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Bayou Bend Collection, gift of William J. Hill, B.2012.38.



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## *Lone Star Desk*

This desk was made by a cabinetmaker in Austin, Texas. The cabinetmaker, Adolph Kempen, was a German immigrant who borrowed ideas from the style of furniture he was used to in Europe.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS



How does this desk demonstrate a Texas identity?

*Kempen acknowledged his home state with the Lone Star inlaid on the desk surface.*



Why did Kempen make this desk?

*It was a demonstration piece to show his skill and was donated to a charity raffle where many people would see it on display. Kempen added many fine details to the desk, including hand-carved drawer pulls and knobs.*



How do we know who made it?

*Kempen glued one of his labels inside the top compartment of the desk. Advertising became more important in the 1800s as craftsmen competed with each other and with goods shipped from big cities. They could not assume that their customers would just find them.*

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## TEXAS ROOM

### *Austin Silver Service*



Made by Wood & Hughes; for Hyde & Goodrich, *Coffee and Tea Service made for Emily Margaret Austin Perry (1795–1851)*, 1848, silver and ivory, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Bayou Bend Collection, gift of the family of Guy Morrison Bryan, Jr. in memory of Hally Bryan Clements, Florence Bryan Cook, and Carolyn Bryan Thompson, B.2011.171 -5.

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## *Austin Silver Service*

This silver tea service, made in New York and shipped to Texas, was owned by the sister of Stephen F. Austin, one of the leaders of Anglo settlers in Texas. Emily Austin Bryan Perry was also important to Texas history in her own right.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS



Why is the owner of this set, Emily Austin Bryan Perry, important to Texas history?

*She was her brother's only heir. She invested the money and property that he left her in building up the new state of Texas with railroads, industry, and agriculture. As a married woman, she was unusual in managing this inheritance herself. At the time, women rarely engaged in business.*



Why wouldn't the Austins have bought their silver in Texas?

*Texas was a frontier at the time and had very few craftsmen capable of this kind of fancy work. In addition, the family may have wanted the prestige of owning something from New York, which was thought to be the center of fashion and elegance.*



Why would someone need a fancy tea set on the frontier?

*It was important to the new settlers to bring aspects of their lives with them from their former homes. Drinking tea was an important custom for many Americans; tea was as popular as coffee in the early 1800s.*



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## TEXAS ROOM

### *Texian Campaignware*



Manufactured by James Beech, *Group of Texian Campaignware Dishes and Service Pieces*, c. 1850–75, lead-glaze earthenware, transfer printed, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Bayou Bend Collection, gift of the family of James G. and Mary Elizabeth Hopkins, in their memory, B.69.172.1A,B,2; B.69.345A,B.; B.69.337A,B; B.2009.22, 26, 28, 32, 34-35, 38, 41-43.

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## *Texian Campaignware*

These ceramics were made in England and intended to show scenes from the Texian Revolution. The factory that made the dishes didn't know much about Texas, so they borrowed the pictures from scenes of warfare in Europe.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS



Were these dishes originally used in Texas?

*A few, maybe, were used in Texas but a larger part of the market was probably the East Coast of America and in Europe. Texas was exotic and interesting to many people. Texas collectors got very interested in them in later years, though!*



How expensive were these kinds of dishes?

*These were fairly expensive, especially for a large set of dishes. They would have been difficult for many people to afford.*



Are all of these dishes from the same manufacturer?

*No. There was much less protection for unique designs in the 1800s, and factories of all kinds often copied from their competitors.*

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## TEXAS ROOM

### Painting of *Hill Country Landscape*

Hermann Lungkwitz, *Hill Country Landscape*, 1862, oil on canvas, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Bayou Bend Collection, gift of Miss Ima Hogg, B.67.39.



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## Painting of *Hill Country Landscape*

This painting is by Hermann Lungkwitz, who was trained in Germany and moved to Texas in the 1850s. Lungkwitz painted the landscape he saw in Texas in the Romantic style he had learned in Germany. Dramatic landscapes were popular with many Americans who now mostly lived in cities far from untouched natural vistas.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS



What is meant when a style is called Romantic?

*Romanticism was a movement in the arts and literature that celebrated emotion. Notice that the landscape is depicted as being very dramatic, in a way that might make you feel scared or in awe.*



Was Romanticism unique to Germany?

*Not at all! Artists and writers who worked in the Romantic style could be found all over the world. Some American Romantic authors you might be familiar with are Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe, and Nathaniel Hawthorne.*



Where was this landscape painted?

*Lungkwitz didn't put a specific location on this painting, but we know he especially liked painting the landscape north of Fredericksburg.*

## TEXAS ROOM

### *Sheet Music on Stand*

William Hall & Son, *The Hero Who Dares, Is The Hero Who Wins*, 1850, lithograph on paper, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Bayou Bend Collection, museum purchase funded by Mr. and Mrs. Alan M. Craft, B.2006.15



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## *Sheet Music on Stand*

This sheet music is a song in honor of Zachary Taylor, who was an American general during the Mexican War, and who later became president of the United States.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS



Why would an American admire Zachary Taylor enough to own sheet music of a song about him?

*Many Americans celebrated the quick victory of the United States in the Mexican War and the new territory that the post-war treaty brought into the United States. By the time this music was published, Taylor had been elected president.*



Was it common to write music about someone like Zachary Taylor?

*Yes, it was. Popular music was a way to comment on events and people that were important to Americans. Even people who couldn't read or write English very well could listen to someone singing a song that related to the events of the day. In the 1840s and 1850s, sheet music was an inexpensive way to keep up with the popular music of the time, much like sharing an online video today.*



Was this music played in Texas?

*We don't know for sure, but it could have been. Texans were very interested in what was current and popular elsewhere in the country. Ships brought fashionable goods and new publications into New Orleans and Galveston to be transported into the Texas interior.*

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## TEXAS ROOM

### *Texas-Made Sofa*

Johann Michael Jahn, *Sofa*, c. 1855, black walnut; black walnut veneer, unidentified secondary woods, and modern upholstery, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Bayou Bend Collection, gift of William J. Hill in memory of Peter C. Marzio. B.2010.8.



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## *Texas-Made Sofa*

This sofa was made in Texas by immigrant German craftsman Johann Michael Jahn. It is made of Texas woods but is based on ideas about style that Jahn brought with him from Germany.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS



Why would a sofa like this be made in Texas?

*Texas had very few railroads until after the Civil War. Relatively few Texans lived in communities that were accessible by water. For many people, it made more sense to have heavy goods like furniture made locally than to have them shipped in from elsewhere.*



Why would someone want a sofa this fancy on the Texas frontier?

*Texans were well aware of fashion and style on the East Coast and wished to have homes that reflected current ideas of comfort and elegance.*



How did Jahn know how to make an elegant sofa like this one?

*He had trained as a cabinetmaker in Germany and brought that knowledge with him to Texas.*



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## TEXAS ROOM

### *Sinumbra Lamp*

Possibly New England Glass Company, *Sinumbra Lamp*, c. 1835–50, glass, brass, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Bayou Bend Collection, museum purchase funded by the Jack R. McGregor Endowment Fund, B.2009.1A-C.



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## *Sinumbra Lamp*

This whale-oil lamp, which cast light roughly equivalent to a 60-watt bulb, would have been placed on a table around which the whole family could gather to read, write, or do handwork. This new technology revolutionized the way people behaved in the evenings.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS



Why is this called a sinumbra lamp?

*The word "sinumbra" comes from the Latin, sine (without) and umbra (shadow). The wick and shade are designed to prevent shadows from falling on the table, which would make it difficult to read, write, or do work.*



How did lamps like this sinumbra lamp change people's lives?

*Before oil lamps providing bright, convenient light became widely available, the only source of light at night was messy, dim, expensive candles. Many people chose to go to bed with the sun because of the cost or inconvenience of staying up by candlelight. Being able to stay up later at night and work or relax with good light changed people's lives and homes permanently.*



Where did the fuel come from?

*This lamp burns whale oil, which was gathered by hunting sperm whales. America had a large whaling fleet, mostly based out of New England, which hunted whales all over the world and brought back the oil and other products. By the mid-1800s, whale oil was replaced by petroleum products like kerosene as the most popular lamp fuel.*