The Art Institute's rich collection of works by Claude Monet has long included examples of the paintings he began in 1895 after he purchased land south of his Giverny home, redirected the river, enlarged the pond, and planted his celebrated *nymphaes*, or water lilies. While several of those canvases sprang from Monet’s lifelong obsession with painting out-of-doors, *Water Lily Pond* emerged out of his competing desire to make mural-like pictures that would create an all-over decorative environment. This objective was given official sanction in 1914, when the French state agreed to fund a monumental decorative cycle that was ultimately installed in the Orangerie of the Tuileries Gardens in 1926, four years after the artist’s death.

*Water Lily Pond* belongs to a series of nineteen paintings created between 1917 and 1922. Although Monet worked on these at the same time as similar subjects on canvases double and quadruple the size, the smaller works are not as directly preparatory to the Orangerie cycle. In these pieces, including *Water Lily Pond*, the artist moved from depicting a single motif—water lilies and the reflections of surrounding trees and plants—to a more personal, decorative conception. In this painting, for example, he interrupted the fluid surface with broad swirls of scumbled pigments. Indeed, Monet used the series as a whole to experiment with ways of transforming a carefully studied fragment of nature into a larger artistic statement—a process that he explored to its fullest extent in the monumental canvases of the Orangerie ensemble. So important was this group to his evolving project that he allowed only five of the nineteen works to leave his studio.

The remaining canvases, including *Water Lily Pond*, stayed in the Monet estate until the 1950s, when they were eagerly purchased by collectors and institutions that perhaps saw in their large scale and gestural brushwork an affinity with the works of the Abstract Expressionists, then much in vogue. Over three decades earlier, however, in 1920, the great Chicago collector Martin A. Ryerson visited Monet at Giverny along with other Art Institute patrons and contemplated the purchase of thirty large water lily paintings. Although it is not known exactly which pictures were part of that selection, the museum was clearly interested in Monet’s late decorative works, which are now, with the acquisition of *Water Lily Pond*, fully represented in our collection.

GLORIA GROOM
Food Vessel (Fangding), pp. 28-29.

Shi Wang Ding, pp. 30-31.
1. This ding has appeared in important catalogues including Rentao Chen, Jinkui langu chu [Essays on Chinese Antiquities] (Hong Kong: Yathou shi yin pu, 1952), cat. 6; and Jessica Rawson, Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections (Harvard University Press, 1998), vol. 1, p. 197, fig. 21.6.

Group Pilgrimage to the Jizo Nun, pp. 32-33.
1. The painting was published in its current formation in Onshi Kyôto Hakubutsukan, Ike no Taiga meigafu [Master Works by Ike Taiga] (Kyoto: Benrido, 1933).

Big Boy, pp. 42-43.
2. For illustrations of these, see oranges (note 1), cats. 304-304i.
3. This is mentioned as “un Crocifisso di bronzo, d’Alessandro Algardi Bolognese,” in Francesco Bartolomeo dal Pozzo, Le vite de’ pittori, degli scultori, et architetti veronesi (Verona, 1718), p. 309.
4. This drawing, now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., represents a variant on the bronze Christ and may be a preliminary study for it. See Catherine Johnston, “Cristo sulla croce,” in Montagu (note 2), cat. 95.

Wine Jug, pp. 42-43.
1. Two identical wine jugs were sold in 1977; see Christie’s, London, Catalogue of Fine Old English Silver, sale cat. (June 13-14, 1977), lot 45. In 1968 one was purchased by the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, where it remains to this day; the other was bought by the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Cologne. For more on silver by the Kandlers, see Peter Cameron, “Henry Jernegan, the Kandlers, and the Client Who Changed His Mind,” Silver Society Journal 8 (Autumn 1996), pp. 487-501.
2. For more on this relationship, see Cameron (note 1).

Sideboard, pp. 44-45.
2. For illustrations of these, see Soros (note 1), cats. 304-304i.

The Nativity, pp. 46-47.
1. For an illustration of the Mystical Nativity, see Richard Lightbourn, Sandro Botticelli (London: Elek, 1978), vol. 1, pl. 9.

Water Lily Pond, pp. 60-61.
1. For more on the Art Institute’s water lily canvases, see Daniel Wüldenstein, Monet (Taschen, 1996), vol. 5, cats. 516, 625.
2. For more on the Orangerie cycle, see Paul Hayes Tucker, Monet in the Twentieth Century, exh. cat. (Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 252-79.

Interrelation of Volumes from the Elhoff, pp. 62-63.
1. For the series, which probably comprised seven works, the artist drew on conventional and ancient mathematical systems; for his sources, see Georges Vantongerloo, “Principe d’unizit,” 120 internationale review 1, 3 (1937), pp. 94-96.

Venus de Milo with Drawers, pp. 64-65.
5. I am grateful to Robert Descharnes and Patrick Derom for helping me clarify the history of the plaster Venus. The ten bronzes, painted white to look like plas-