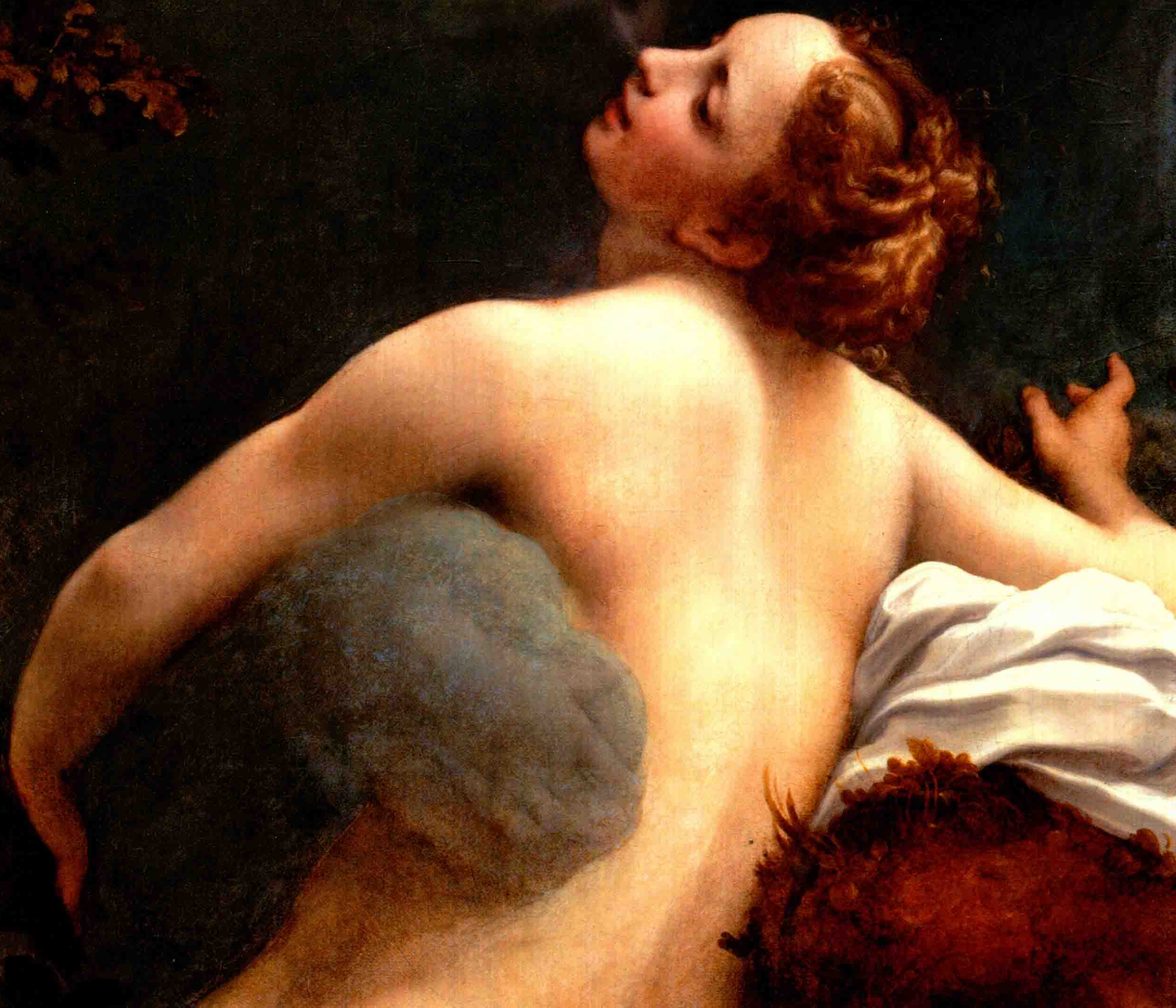


HABSBURG SPLENDOR

Masterpieces from Vienna's Imperial Collections
at the Kunsthistorisches Museum



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Edited by Monica Kurzelt-Runtscheiner

with essays by Monica Kurzelt-Runtscheiner,
Franz Pichorner, and Stefan Krause

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
in association with
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts
High Museum of Art, Atlanta
The Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

Distributed by Yale University Press
New Haven and London

The exhibition was organized by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; and the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



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Special thanks to the Rich Foundation, Mrs. Frances B. Bunzl, Barbara and Michael Kaufmann, Sharon and Chip Shirley, Joan and Richard Whitcomb, and Loraine Williams.

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AK: Annette Kranz
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FK: Franz Kirchweiger
GG: Gerlinde Gruber
GM: Guido Messling
GP: Georg Plattner
GS: Gudrun Swoboda
HW: Heinz Winter
KL: Katharina Leitner
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HABSBURG SPLENDOR





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DIRECTORS' FOREWORD

Habsburg Splendor: Masterpieces from Vienna's Imperial Collections at the Kunsthistorisches Museum tells the multigenerational story of the Habsburg Dynasty, which ruled most of central Europe, Spain, Belgium, and parts of Italy for nearly six hundred years, from the fifteenth through the twentieth centuries. Charles V (1500–1558), whose predecessors had expanded and consolidated the largest European empire since the Romans, once remarked that the sun never set on the Habsburg empire. For most of the fascinating history of this global dynasty—from its dramatic rise to its fall—, Vienna served as the capital.

The Habsburgs were passionate collectors, as well as generous patrons of the arts. Franz Joseph I (1830–1916), the penultimate emperor of the dynasty, created the Kunsthistorisches Museum (KHM) in Vienna as a repository for the imperial art collections. The KHM possesses one of the most renowned collections in the world of Western art, and many of its objects are housed in the famed *Kunstammer Wien*. Now, for the first time, audiences in the United States have an opportunity to view exceptional and rare artworks assembled by some of the most powerful European rulers to have shaped world history.

The unprecedented exhibition, and its accompanying catalogue, present an extraordinarily wide-ranging survey of the Habsburgs' acclaimed collections, including classical Greek and Roman works, medieval arms and armor, tapestries, Old Master paintings, exquisite works of decorative art, ceremonial gilded carriages and sleighs, opulent costumes, and official court uniforms. Seen together, the collections reveal the pomp and splendor, the regalia and rituals, the prestige and spectacle associated with the Habsburg rulers. Many of the nearly one hundred works lent by the Kunsthistorisches Museum are drawn from the prized collections of Maximilian I (1459–1519), Rudolf II (1552–1612), and Maria Theresa (1717–1780). Most of these treasures have never before been in the United States, and many have not left Austria since they arrived.

For this major exhibition, we have had the unique privilege of collaborating with Franz Pichorner, deputy director general, and Christian Hölzl, head of exhibition management, of the Kunsthistorisches Museum. We owe the concept of the exhibition to Monica Kurzel-Runtscheiner, director of the Imperial Carriage Museum Vienna. Her expertise on the Habsburg monarchs was invaluable to this project. We are also grateful to Sylvia Ferino-Pagden, director, collection of paintings, and Stefan Krause, curator of arms and armor, both at the Kunsthistorisches Museum. We warmly thank them and the dedicated curatorial team at the KHM for lending their treasures.

In closing, we wish to express our deepest gratitude to Bank of America, the national sponsor of *Habsburg Splendor*.

Kaywin Feldman

The Duncan and Nivin MacMillan Director and President
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Gary Tinterow

Director
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

Michael E. Shapiro

The Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr. Director
High Museum of Art, Atlanta

Sabine Haag

General Director
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



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As a company serving clients in more than one hundred countries around the world, Bank of America believes the arts have a unique capability to connect individuals and create opportunities for cultural understanding. We support a wide range of organizations, from local, community-based arts education programs to leading, world-class arts institutions.

Bank of America is pleased to be the National Tour Sponsor of *Habsburg Splendor: Masterpieces from Vienna's Imperial Collections at the Kunsthistorisches Museum* in Minneapolis, Houston, and Atlanta. We look forward to working once again with three leading art institutions: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and High Museum of Art, Atlanta, to highlight one hundred works that are housed in Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum (KHM) and to bringing these artistic treasures to the United States for the very first time.

We hope you enjoy *Habsburg Splendor: Masterpieces from Vienna's Imperial Collections* and are able to share it with your family and friends.

Brian T. Moynihan

Chief Executive Officer

Bank of America

