

# Secrets of the Lacquer Buddha

On view December 9, 2017–June 10, 2018, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

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*Secrets of the Lacquer Buddha* unites the only sixth- and seventh-century, life-size Chinese lacquer buddha sculptures known: one from the Walters Art Museum, one from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and one from the Freer Gallery of Art. They have never been exhibited together before.

The exhibition explores how the sculptures were made, giving new insights into these deceptively simple objects. It also highlights how science can contribute to understanding art. The Freer | Sackler Department of Conservation and Scientific Research's experts used specialized equipment and new methods to analyze the sculptures, exposing microscopic details. Find out what tree species the lacquer came from, what type of burnt bone was mixed in, and other unexpected discoveries.

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**Buddha**

China, Tang dynasty (618–907), early 7th century  
Hollow-core lacquer with pigment and gilding  
Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment  
Freer Gallery of Art F1944.46



**Buddha**

China, Tang dynasty (618–907), early 7th century  
Hollow-core lacquer with pigment and gilding  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1919 (19.186)

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**FREER | SACKLER**



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**Buddha**

China, Sui dynasty (581–617), ca. 580–90

Wood-core lacquer with pigment

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, Maryland, 25.9



Computed tomography scanning of the Freer Gallery of Art's lacquer buddha at the National Museum of Natural History. Image by Freer | Sackler staff