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2014 Common Work of Art

Bernard Palissy, *Rustic Basin*



SPENCER MUSEUM of ART

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In conjunction with KU's selection of *The Center of Everything* by Laura Moriarty as its [Common Book](#) for the 2014–2015 academic year, the Spencer Museum of Art has selected Bernard Palissy's ceramic platter *Rustic Basin* (circa 1570–1590) as the Common Work of Art.

A sixteenth-century French ceramicist interested in the natural sciences, Palissy created works that take an intimate look at the botanical world of frogs, snakes, crayfish, and shells of the Atlantic, among other species. The figures on the basin appear life-like because they were cast from molds of specimens collected near habitats surrounding his home. Palissy adhered the forms to an irregular surface that simulates the densely covered floor of the forest. The shells, partially embedded into the surface, reflect an interest in fossils. *Rustic Basin* exemplifies Renaissance scientific interests and the concern with observing, recording, and understanding the natural world.

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MONDAY,

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HOURS

APRIL 1

Monday

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10:00am–

5:00pm

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5:00pm
Monday–
Friday
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