

## OBJECT IN FOCUS: VISHNU AND RAVANA



The deity Vishnu on his animal mount, Garuda, approx. 1850–1900. Northern Bali. Wood and pigments.  
*Acquisition made possible by the Connoisseurs' Council and the estate of K. Hart Smith, 2010.18.1.*

### **Vishnu**

When the world is beset with difficulties, Vishnu assumes various forms, or avatars, to overcome them and reestablish order. In the Ramayana, Vishnu descends to earth in the form of Rama to overcome a mighty ten-headed demon king, and to restore order.

Describe what you see.

What about Vishnu gives you a clue that he is a hero?

What more do you want to know about Vishnu?



The demon king Ravana riding a mythical bird, 1850–1900. Northern Bali. Wood and pigments.  
*Acquisition made possible by the Connoisseurs' Council and the estate of K. Hart Smith, 2010.18.2.*

### **Ravana**

The Story of Rama tells the trials of Rama as he tries to rescue his wife. This statue depicts the demon-king Ravana from the epic Story of Rama. Ravana is a demon king who kidnaps Sita, the wife of Prince Rama, and takes her back to his island kingdom of Lanka. Ravana rides his birdlike animal, Wilmana. This image of Ravana probably decorated the palace of a king in Bali.

Describe what you see.

What about Ravana gives you a clue that he is a demon-king?

What more do you want to know about Ravana?