Welcome to Art Adventure

What is Art Adventure?

Art Adventure is a program that engages students with artworks from the Minneapolis Institute of Art's collection. Through the support of thousands of trained volunteers, Art Adventure brings visual arts into K–6 classrooms across Minnesota and beyond. The program encourages creativity, critical thinking, and global awareness through in-depth explorations of art across various cultures and time periods. Art Adventure is an opportunity for students to experience art up close and personal through reproductions, technology, and touch-and-feel props.

Who are Picture People?

Picture People bring Art Adventure into classrooms around Minnesota. They are volunteers from the school's community who facilitate discussions about selected artworks, forming a vital link between the museum and children in the schools. Before visiting a classroom, Picture People come to the museum for a training session on the theme and artworks their school will be experiencing that year. They also receive printed background material, learn engagement techniques, and—most importantly gain knowledge of the original objects they'll soon be introducing to students using reproductions.

What does the Art Adventure Program do for students?

An evaluation of Art Adventure showed that, in addition to fostering an interest in art, the program fosters five major critical thinking skills. The skills and experiences students gain through Art Adventure will benefit them the rest of their lives.

5 Critical Thinking Skills

- 1. Describe what you see.
- 2. Notice details.
- 3. Understand how the parts form a whole idea or artwork.
- 4. Support interpretations with sufficient reasons.
- 5. Support opinions or preferences with sound reasons.

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Art Adventure Program A program of the Minneapolis Institute of Art—Revised 2016

Once You're in the Classroom

Relax!

The information provided in this booklet is intended as background material to help you feel confident when you share artworks with children. Don't feel you have to cover everything. Rather, choose two or three key ideas you think will be compelling. Kids love stories—what stories might you tell? What parallels can you draw to their lives?

Be sure everyone can see you and the reproduction.

Talk with the teacher to understand routines the class follows when gathering for a visitor. Aim for a setup that will get the students as close to the reproduction as possible. Keep the students' eyes on you, too, by making regular eye contact with everyone in the group.

Set up the students for successful exploration.

- Have the children wear nametags so you can call them by name.
- Set your own preferences aside to allow students to form their own opinions.
- Encourage the students to take turns speaking.
- Paraphrase what the students have said to let them know that you have been listening and help clarify each student's statement for the class.

Begin each discussion with a moment of silent looking.

Begin by introducing the lesson, yourself, and the reproductions. Review with the class what a museum is and what you'll be doing with them. You might build suspense by keeping each image hidden. Start by having the students observe the artwork in total silence. Model your expectations by spending time quietly looking, too.

Give students time to talk about what they have observed.

Start with questions like "What's going on here?" and "What do you see that makes you say that?" Be sure to use your finger to point to the part of the picture the child is talking about. Paraphrase his or her words to clarify the observation for others. You'll be surprised how quickly students learn to justify their comments with evidence they can see in the picture! Asking "What else can you find?" or connecting historical content can help generate further comments.

Connect your key ideas to the students' observations.

When the students' observations begin to slow down, use what you've learned about their interests to steer the discussion toward your key ideas. Try to ask questions that will draw connections between what they have said and what you would like them to consider. If they pose questions you can't answer, admit it! Brainstorm ways you might find out together.

Keep the age of your class in mind.

Don't expect young children to be able to focus for longer than 20 minutes. Plan your presentations accordingly. Consider your grade level's ability to understand time—will students understand a date or phrase such as "colonial times" (fifth graders might) or should you stick with "a long time ago" or "about 100 years ago"? Keep in mind that younger children are more likely to accept the abstract than older students, who may want concrete content.

Talk to other Picture People.

Experienced Picture People have great ideas about how to capture the imagination of a class. Don't hesitate to borrow and adapt their suggestions, but remember to bring your own creativity along, too.

Talking about Art

These questions encourage students to look closely and find their own meaning and relevance in works of art. This process fosters the development of the five Critical Thinking Skills listed on page 1. Please keep in mind that not every question will work for every artwork.

What do you see in this artwork? What else can you find?

This is the best line of questioning to begin conversations with K–2 students. For students who seem ready to dive deeper ask, "What do you see that makes you say that?"

What's going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that?

You'll notice this question is different than "What do you see?" "What's going on?" invites a consideration of relationships and interactions and taps into children's natural interest to find stories. "What do you see that makes you say that?" focuses comments on the evidence in the artwork and helps kids explain their assumptions.

How would you feel if you were "in" this work of art?

What would you hear? How might this feel if you could touch it? What path would you take through the picture? What do you see that makes you say that?

What does this artwork remind you of?

What would you use this object for? What about this scene is familiar or unfamiliar to you? What do you see that makes you say that?

What person or object in this picture do you think was most important to the artist?

What are people in the picture looking at? Where are there bright colors? What is biggest?

How would the artwork be different if you could make a change?

What would happen if you changed a color? Moved an object or person? Left something out?

How is this work of art similar to or different from another one you've seen in this set?

"Compare and contrast" encourages close looking and reinforces the theme. Get together with your fellow volunteers to coordinate some provocative pairs.

How does this work of art relate to the theme of the set?

Let the students pull it all together! What connections do they see between the theme and what they've noticed and learned about the work of art?

What do you like most about this artwork? Why? What do you like least?

If you could keep one artwork from this set, what artwork would you pick? Why?

Using Touch-and-Feel Props

Why props?

Students normally first encounter the Art Adventure artworks in their classrooms as reproductions. The works of art appear to be two-dimensional and similar in size. Props accompany many of the reproductions to help overcome this limitation. Touching a material similar to the artwork, seeing the technique used to create it, or looking at a photograph in which the object is being used adds another dimension to the experience. The use of props reinforces the understanding of all learners through hands-on experiences.

How should you use props?

Without careful planning, props will do little but distract your group. Use these helpful tips to lead a successful exploration:

- Present the prop alongside information about an artwork or to help answer a question about the artwork.
- There are a number of ways to use the prop:
 - 1. Pass the prop around to each student. Give the students a question to consider while they are waiting for the prop and one to consider after they have held the prop.
 - 2. Ask a single student to come forward and describe how it feels to the whole group.
 - 3. Hold the prop yourself and walk it around the group for the students to touch or look at closely.
 - 4. Hold the prop yourself to illustrate relevant parts of the discussion.
 - 5. Give everyone a chance to examine it more closely at the end of your presentation.
- Clear communication of your expectations is essential to keep the students focused on the activity. Let the students know that they will need to take turns, what they should do if it's not their turn, and how they should treat the props.
- After the students have explored the prop, refer to the experience as you continue the discussion.
- Don't forget to plan how you'll get the props back from the students! Schools are charged significant fees for missing or badly damaged props and reproductions.

American Art Sampler

What is American art? This question has no single answer; nevertheless, we can examine many of the threads that contribute to the rich tapestry of American art. Diversity is certainly a characteristic of this tapestry. Throughout the land that now constitutes the United States, Native people lived for millennia before the arrival of Europeans. Over the last three centuries, immigrants have come from many nations. Each group has contributed its own unique artistic heritage to what we now call American art.

The art objects chosen for this Art Adventure set, *American Art Sampler*, span three centuries. All of these works reveal the important role that artists have played in recording America's artistic and historical development. By studying this sampling of art made in America, we can learn something about the history, traditions, and experiences of this diverse nation.

Prop Kit Contents

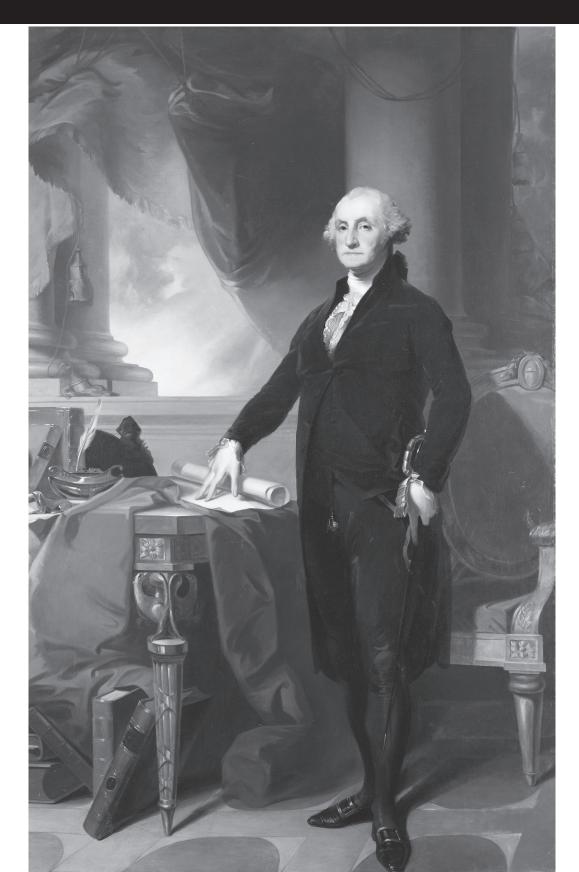
Work of Art	Ргор	Replacement Cost
Thomas Sully, Portrait of George Washington	Reproduction of Gilbert Stuart's portraits of George Washington	\$10
Lakota, Winter count	No prop	
Alexis Jean Fournier, Mill Pond at Minneapolis	Photograph of Mill Pond Photograph of Fournier	\$10
Grace Hartigan, Billboard	Sample of painted canvas	\$30
Elizabeth Catlett, Sharecropper	Sample of linocut Photograph of Catlett's <i>In the Fields</i> Photograph of Catlett	\$30 \$10 \$10
Attributed to William Howard, Writing desk	Photographs of: Desk open Desk underside Wadsworth desk	\$10 \$10 \$10
Artwork Reproductions (6)		\$50

Please make sure that you have enclosed all of the items on this list when you return the prop kit. You will be responsible for the cost of replacing any missing or damaged items. Thank you!

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Grace Hartigan, <i>Billboard</i> , 1957 21
Elizabeth Catlett, Sharecropper, 1957–68
Attributed to William Howard, Writing desk, about 1870
American Art Sampler: Self-Guided Tour

Thomas Sully, United States, 1783–1872 *Portrait of George Washington*, 1820, oil on canvas The William Hood Dunwoody Fund, 32.12 94 x 60 in. (238.76 x 152.4 cm) (canvas) 101 x 67 in. (256.54 x 170.18 cm) (outer frame)



Key Ideas

This heroic image of George Washington shows the first president as a statesman and a military leader. It reflects a period when America was seeking national heroes and identity.

Background

Following the American Revolution (1775–83), America's radical ideas of federalism and individual statehood marked a startling separation from 1700s European political practices. Because no models of democracy existed in Europe at this time, the new nation was eager to associate itself with the virtues and values of ancient Greece and Rome.

This revival of ancient classical cultures, called neoclassicism, was expressed in 1800s painting, sculpture, and architecture. It was particularly evident in the new government buildings that were rising in cities across the country. These public buildings not only satisfied the practical need for government offices, but they also served as symbols recalling the classical past. By imitating classical cultures, the new nation hoped to associate itself with those great civilizations.

By imitating classical cultures, the new nation hoped to associate itself with the great civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome.

In the years following the Revolution, America was in need of American heroes. George Washington, the most revered of revolutionary leaders and the first U.S. president, was an ideal role model. After his death in 1799, he became the symbol of the new republic. Washington's image proliferated across America, meeting the great demand for presidential portraits to decorate the many new government buildings. The painter Gilbert Stuart painted numerous portraits of Washington, three of which became models for countless reproductions, copies, and imitations. While uniqueness and originality are highly valued in artwork today, during the 1800s, the subject's identity and importance gave meaning and value to the work. The many artists who painted images of George Washington after his death were happy to copy works by artists like Stuart, who had painted the president from life.

Portrait of George Washington

This painting by Thomas Sully is a copy of one of Gilbert Stuart's best-known portraits of George Washington, the one often referred to as the *Munro-Lenox Portrait*. Finished in 1800, the *Munro-Lenox Portrait*, named for its two original owners, was the first of four identical full-length paintings by Stuart. The *Munro-Lenox Portrait* hung in the New York Public Library for many years. To meet the overwhelming demand for pictures of the first American president, Sully made numerous copies of Stuart's portraits for various government buildings and historical societies.

A formal full-length portrait, it is a heroic image of George Washington, presented with symbols and theatrical effects.

Sully's picture is painted in the European tradition of aristocratic portraiture. A formal full-length portrait, it is a heroic image of George Washington, presented with symbols and theatrical effects. A noble figure, Washington appears stately and proud in his stiff three-quarter pose, which displays his fine clothing and accessories. He is depicted from a low point of view, enhancing his air of importance. He wears a dark vest and jacket set off by a white ruffled jabot (lace or cloth attached to the front of a neckband) and cuffs, black knee-length pants, and black shoes with silver buckles-footwear commonly associated with Washington. The president stands in a dramatic pose, as if he were about to give a speech. His face reveals little of his true personality. Washington's status is enhanced by the grand setting and the symbolic objects that surround him. His right hand rests on a copy of the Constitution, emphasizing his role as a statesman. He holds a sword in his left hand, a reference to his military achievements. Behind him, a windblown curtain lets in the light of dawn and reveals a rainbow. The rainbow is a common symbol of hope or beginning, and the dawn may symbolize a new era under Washington's leadership. The inkwell and guill on the table refer to lawmaking, and the many books suggest Washington's authority based on the written law. The gilded (decorated with gold) furniture, rich red upholstery, and decorative red table covering reinforce the president's importance. The paperweight shaped like a dog may refer to his love of the outdoors.

The classical columns in the background and some of the motifs on the furniture suggest grandeur and the ideals of the ancient Roman republic, with which the new U.S. government hoped to associate itself. On top of the table leg are two eagles, raptors that were victory symbols in ancient Rome. Eagles were associated with the god Jupiter, represented the standards of the Roman legions, and stood for power and victory. The wrapped bundle of rods that form the leg itself once signified the authority of Roman leaders and the ideals of justice. The medallion design on the arm and crest of the chair symbolically refers to a Roman crown of victory. Sully uses dramatic contrast in the painting to enhance Washington's heroism. The president's striking figure in black and white stands out against the surroundings of red and yellow tones. Various tones of red, seen on the tablecloth, curtain, chair, ribbon around the sword, sky, and even on Washington's cheeks, dominate and enliven the painting. The composition reinforces a sense of solidity and stability by incorporating vertical and horizontal lines and geometric shapes in the architecture and furnishings. For example, the oval back of the chair is repeated in the circles of the floor design. The stable vertical columns are echoed by the erect figure of Washington standing before them. Against these structural elements, the irregular shapes of the billowing drapery and tablecloth give drama and richness to the composition.

Sully closely copied Stuart's original, but his own style is evident.

Sully closely copied Stuart's original, but his own style is evident. The color is brighter, surfaces are more opaque (solid) and glossy, forms are cast in sharper shadows, and the head is more clearly formed and heroic than in the original portrait.

Technique

When he painted a subject from life, Sully began by sketching a series of drawings on paper and canvas before arriving at his completed portrait. In his book, *Hints to Young Painters* (1851), he explained his technique, stating that he expected his subjects to have six sittings of two hours each. Though he used Stuart's painting as the basis for this portrait rather than painting from life, Sully most likely made some preliminary drawings as part of his working process.

Sully is known for his fluid brushwork, which achieves a rich, lustrous effect. The use of oil paint offered the artist great versatility in painting brilliant colors and convincing textures, since the medium of oil lends itself both to minute detail and to the subtle blending of tones. By applying layers of transparent paint over opaque ones, Sully created the illusion of actual skin and fabric and achieved a subtle play of light off the rich reds, yellows, and blacks.

About the Artist

Thomas Sully was born in England to parents who were actors. The family immigrated to the United States when Thomas was 9, and settled in Charleston, South Carolina. Sully began his career as a painter of miniatures but turned to easel painting in 1805, when he lived in New York City. Some of his earliest patrons were people in the theater. After serving as an apprentice to John Wesley Jarvis, he met Gilbert Stuart in Boston and studied briefly with him. The professional encouragement he received from the elder portrait painter confirmed Sully's ambition to become a leading American portraitist. He eventually settled in Philadelphia.

In his 70-year professional career, he painted over 2,000 portraits.

In 1809, Sully traveled to England, where he, like many other American artists, went to see Benjamin West, who sent him to Thomas Lawrence, the leading English portraitist of the time. Sully returned to America, where he became one of the nation's outstanding portrait painters during the 1830s and 1840s. In his 70-year professional career, he painted over 2,000 portraits. Sully was also a teacher, guiding the careers of many students, including members of his own family. All six of his surviving children became professional or amateur painters.

Suggested Questions

- 1. This is President George Washington. How has the artist shown that this man is important? Parts of this painting were included to help identify Washington's abilities, talents, and personality. What objects tell you that Washington was a military man? A smart man? Wealthy?
- 2. What time of day do you think it is? How can you tell? What is the weather like? Do you think it is warm or cool? What makes you say that? Where do you think the sun is coming from? What do you see in the sky?
- 3. Stand in Washington's pose. How does it make you feel to stand in this position? Do you feel important? Why? Try sitting down and slouching. How does this position make you feel? Would Washington look as important if he were sitting down and slouching? Why do you say that?

Lakota, United States, North America Winter count, 20th century, pigment on canvas Gift of the Weiser Family Foundation, w 26 ¼ x 67 ⅛ in. (66.68 x 170.5 cm)

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Key Ideas

Like many other Plains Indians, the Lakota created winter counts to record significant events that happened during each year. These pictographic calendars (calendars that use images to represent an event) serve as important reminders to the Lakota of their history and their ancestors.

Background

When the first European explorers arrived on the shores of North America over 500 years ago, several million culturally diverse people, speaking hundreds of languages, already lived here. Many of these people lived in similar ways, depending on the geographical region where they were located.

Plains Indians once freely occupied a large, central area of North America. Their territories reached from the Mississippi River in the east to the Rocky Mountains in the west and throughout Canada to the north and down into Texas in the south. The Lakota are one of many groups of Plains Indians who lived (and continue to live) in this vast region, mainly in what is known today as North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska.

At one time, the Lakota were closer to their Dakota relatives in present-day Minnesota, living a more settled lifestyle, which included fishing and cultivating wild rice. However, after 1640, conflicts with neighboring tribes, westward expansion of European settlers, and the interest in hunting of bison herds led the Lakota to relocate further west and to adopt a nomadic lifestyle. As the Lakota lifestyle changed, their artwork also evolved, becoming more portable. To show honor and respect for the everyday objects they relied upon, utilitarian items were richly decorated with pigments, quills, beads, and other ornamentation, making each object both useful and beautiful.

As the Lakota lifestyle changed, their artwork also evolved, becoming more portable.

The use and decoration of bison, elk, and deer hides has a long history with Plains Indians. The hides, a primary source for protection against the elements, were used as material for clothing, tipis, and moccasins. Decorating the hides was a way of honoring the animal for giving up its life. Men also displayed pictorial records of their personal achievements—their coups (acts of bravery), accounts of battle, and numbers of horses they owned—on their robes and tipis. The first Lakota winter counts were also painted on animal hides.

Winter counts served two important functions in Lakota society: to record the passage of time and to relate the tribe's history to its members.

Winter Counts

Winter counts, called Waniyetu Wówapi (wah-NEE-yeh-tu WOE-wah-pee) by the Lakota, are paintings on animal hide or muslin that record one event to represent each year in the tribe's history. Waniyetu is the Lakota word for winter, measured from the first snowfall of one year to the first snowfall of the next. Wówapi means anything marked on a flat surface that can be read or counted. One pictograph represented one year. Because winters were incredibly harsh on the plains, it was a triumph and blessing to make it through each winter. Winter counts served two important functions in Lakota society: to record the passage of time and to relate the tribe's history to its members. Using a winter count, individuals calculated their age by counting back to the year they were born, and the pictographic images were used as memory triggers for the winter count Keepers to tell the stories of the past to the tribe.

Extended kin groups, or *thiyóšpaye* (tee-YOSH-páyeh), are found within the social structure of the Lakota. Each *thiyóšpaye* had a winter count keeper appointed to record an event to be remembered.

The winter count allows us to think and talk about Lakota history through their own accounts, rather than through a history book. They provide a unique understanding of the Lakota perspective because they allow us to see and understand how and why the Lakota prioritized notable events. The keeper depicted images that would have affected the tribe, such as battles, trade events, and deaths. They also show significant "outside" events, such as disease epidemics, ceremonial events, and the conflicts over U.S. expansion into Lakota territory.

This winter count, like many Lakota winter counts, depicts the importance of cycles to the Lakota people. It starts with an image of a calumet (ornamented ceremonial pipe) decorated with feathers, which symbolizes a ceremony that blesses the elderly (the past), expectant mothers (the creators of the future), and children (the future). They exhibit finely drawn images depicting important themes in 1800s Plains Indian art, such as horse imagery and battle exploits. Winter counts also demonstrate continuities between earlier pictographic representation and the late-1800s boom of ledger art.

Winter Count Keepers

Traditionally, older, prominent men in a Lakota *thiyóšpaye* held the role of the winter count keeper. It was vital that these men be excellent artists and storytellers, as keepers were responsible for not only drawing the depictions, but also for relaying to the people the community's history as depicted on the winter count. The keeper, along with the community elders, would decide on the most memorable event of that year and an image representing that event would be added to the winter count.

During the dark days of winter, the winter count keeper would show the winter count to children and tell the stories of each pictograph, giving the children a sense of their people's history.

During the dark days of winter, the winter count keeper would show the winter count to children and tell the stories of each pictograph, giving the children a sense of their people's history. Usually, the role of winter count keeper was passed down from one family member to the next, as typical winter counts span over 100 years. When a new keeper would take over, a new copy of the winter count would be created.

Winter counts are often named for their keepers. By comparing this winter count to others in existence, it is believed that the creator was a man named Long Soldier. Long Soldier was a well-respected Lakota man who signed the Ft. Laramie Treaty of 1868 and, along with many others, participated in the last bison hunt held at Standing Rock in 1882. The Long Soldier count comes from a Hunkpapa *thiyóšpaye*. The Hunkpapa were the western-most division of the Lakota, renowned for producing warriors like Sitting Bull and Gall. Later this band was forced to move to Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota.

Materials

Initially, winter count pictographs were painted on animal hides using natural pigments. When the hide became too worn and/or as new materials became available, the images were transferred to new surfaces, such as muslin or paper, using paint and colored pencils. Winter counts were also copied when a new keeper was appointed or if the keeper simply ran out of room. An outside market for winter counts eventually developed, after scholars and other interested parties began studying the Lakota people and requesting copies. Because the Lakota's history was mostly passed on orally between generations, the earliest winter counts were strictly pictographic. With the advancement of white settlers, literacy and the use of written language grew throughout the Lakota community. As the use of pictographs waned and written language grew, some winter count keepers used both as a way to communicate a year's event. Eventually, the custom of pictographs declined altogether as a way to record Lakota history.

Enduring Traditions

With the introduction of written language in 1880, the Lakota moved away from pictorial winter counts in favor of written words to document the events of a year. Also around this time, the Lakota were forced to give up their land and move onto reservations. This process forced the Lakota to give up or change many of their ways of life. By recalling the stories shown on the winter counts, the Lakota keep their connection to the history of their people and their past through the eyes of their ancestors. Though the Lakota way of life was changed dramatically through colonization, they have survived and remain a great people with a vibrant and contemporary culture.

Suggested Questions

- 1. Look closely. Where do you think the winter count begins and ends? What do you see that makes you say that?
- 2. Take a moment to notice how many horses are drawn in this winter count. Compare and contrast some of them. Why do you suppose so many horses were included?
- 3. Winter counts were a community collaboration to determine a significant event of each year. As a group, come up with what you believe to be the year's most important or significant event so far. How would you depict that in a pictograph? What image would you choose and why?

Details of Winter Count Explained



1799: The first white trader visits the Lakota.





1833: Large meteor shower on the night of November 12, 1833.

1837: The second wave of smallpox comes across the plains. Within 3 weeks, over 10,000 Plain Indians were killed by this disease.

181 Jose eve Lak

1819: A well-known trader named Joseph built a wooden house. The event is widely recorded by many Lakota winter counts.



1821: A comet fell to the ground and made a loud noise.



1827: This was a winter of deep snow, and snowshoes were used on the plains to hunt bison.



1890: Sitting Bull, a famous Lakota warrior and holy man, was killed during his arrest on December 15, 1890. Alexis Jean Fournier, United States, 1865–1948 *Mill Pond at Minneapolis*, 1888, oil on canvas The John R. Van Derlip Fund, 46.8 17 x 26 in. (43.18 x 66.04 cm) (outer frame)



Key Ideas

In this painting, Alexis Fournier (FORN-yay) depicts the city of Minneapolis in the late 1800s, showing how industrial development dominates the urban landscape. The painting also reflects the era's belief in "progress" and humankind's ability to control nature.

Background

St. Anthony Falls and the Mississippi River played an essential role in the exploration and settlement of the Minnesota Territory and the development of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The falls and surrounding area, including both sides of the river, were part of a large expanse of land taken over by the U.S. government from the Dakota at the beginning of the 1800s. The Dakota people had called the falls "Minirara," meaning "curling water." In 1680, Father Louis Hennepin, the first white person to see the falls, named them for his patron saint.

The federal government, recognizing the falls' potential to supply power, constructed Fort Snelling in the 1820s. Later, enterprising settlers harnessed the water's power to run sawmills, flourmills, foundries, factories, and a host of other industries. Minnesota secured statehood in 1858, and by 1888 (the time of this painting) it was one of several young states experiencing the first flush of economic growth and industrial expansion. The city of Minneapolis, already known as the world's leading lumber market, was now becoming the foremost flour-milling center in America.

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Much of this technological development took place along the river, the city's primary source of power and transportation. Such development brought drastic change to the environment, and, gradually, the natural beauty of St. Anthony Falls was diminished. Today we are more aware of the impact of industrialization on nature and its adverse effects on humanity. In the 1800s, however, many people considered the earth and its resources limitless and available for any enterprising person to use and exploit.

Mill Pond at Minneapolis

This painting is an accurate record of Minneapolis in 1888, showing many landmarks of the time. The urban landscape documents the rows of mills and industrial buildings that had developed along the banks of the Mississippi, some of which can be identified. Directly to the left of the arched bridge is Farnham's Mill, one of the last active sawmills at the falls. On the far left edge is the Pillsbury "A" mill, built by the artist's father; when completed in 1883, it was the largest flourmill in the world. Both mills derived their power from the millpond, a reservoir constructed to channel the flow of the river. The millpond is seen in the painting's middle distance, a band of water that appears calm next to the rushing water behind it from the falls. To the right of Farnham's Mill is the Stone Arch Bridge of the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railroad, completed in 1883. The bridge became a national symbol of the city's prosperity and progress; it was the first and only curved masonry bridge in the world and also the first masonry bridge to span the Mississippi. The Stone Arch Bridge provided railroad access to the heart of the city's business district for the first time, connecting Minneapolis to both the eastern and western parts of the nation.

Beyond the arched bridge is the steel truss that formerly carried Tenth Avenue traffic across the river. Above the bridge to the left, just breaking the horizon line, are the first buildings of the fledgling University of Minnesota. They are dominated by the tower of the university's landmark, Old Main. On the hill to the right are the polygonal storage tanks of the Minneapolis Gas Company. In the foreground railroad tracks and cars can be seen.

The artist included in his panoramic view signs of human progress that would have appealed to his business patrons. He presented such industrialization as surprisingly compatible with nature.

Fournier painted the scene from the west bank of the river, and it can be seen today from the Third Avenue bridge. The artist included in his panoramic view signs of human progress that would have appealed to his business patrons. He presented such industrialization as surprisingly compatible with nature. The rolling wooded hills rise in the background to meet a partly cloudy blue sky; in the foreground the railroad tracks juxtapose with the soft grasses and foliage of the land around them. To Fournier and his patrons, these elements were apparently not in conflict.

Fournier's use of line, shape, and color contributes to the harmonious effect.

Fournier's use of line, shape, and color contributes to the harmonious effect. The composition is organized into distinct areas of foreground, middle ground (or middle distance), and background. The horizontal lines of the horizon, band of clouds, riverbank, and water current gently sweep across the painting and contribute to a restful, tranquil mood. The use of soft, cool colors—blues, greens, and whites—reinforces the mood. At the same time, the diagonal lines of the bridges, rushing waters by the pond, and train create movement and give the scene a dynamic quality that suggests notions of progress and moving ahead.

Technique

Fournier worked directly from nature, painting outdoors and perhaps putting on the finishing touches in his studio. His use of oil paint enabled him to render his subject naturalistically, with attention to accurate details and local setting. While he shows the actual shapes and colors of objects, his technique is not meticulously detailed. Fournier has a looser, more spontaneous style that captures the effects of light and movement, as seen in the flowing water, floating clouds, and windblown hillside. His fluid brushstrokes are visible.

About the Artist

Alexis Jean Fournier, the son of a millwright, was born in St. Paul in 1865. He spent his early youth in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, but returned to Minnesota in 1883, where he supported himself as a sign and scenery painter. While living in Minneapolis, he acquired patrons who sponsored his enrollment in the newly established Minneapolis School of Art (now the Minneapolis College of Art and Design). In 1887 Fournier established his own studio above a tailor shop at 412 Nicollet Avenue. He specialized in landscape paintings, working in oil and watercolor, and attracted many local patrons.

In 1893 several patrons, including the St. Paul lumber baron James J. Hill, paid for the artist to study in France. He attended the Académie Julian in Paris and was greatly influenced by the landscapes of the Barbizon School of painters. This group of artists was interested in landscape painting and advocated painting directly from nature. Fournier returned to Minneapolis, where he continued to live for many years while traveling widely. In 1908 he went to the village of Barbizon, in France, where he completed a major project consisting of 20 canvases titled Haunts and Homes of the Barbizon Masters. These works were critically acclaimed when exhibited in New York, Boston, and Minneapolis in 1915-16. He spent his later years in East Aurora, New York, and continued to produce carefully executed, realistic landscapes until his death in 1948.

Suggested Questions

- 1. What kind of sounds would you hear if you were at this place? What kind of sound would the water make?
- 2. How would you feel if you could walk in this landscape? What about the painting makes you say that? What would you do there?
- 3. What do you think the artist is paying most attention to in this scene—nature, industry, or both? What signs of industry or technology do you see in this painting? How is human activity changing the landscape? What do you see that makes you say that?

Grace Hartigan, United States, 1922-2008 *Billboard*, 1957, oil on canvas The Julia B. Bigelow Fund, 57.35, © Estate of Grace Hartigan 78 ½ x 87 in. (199.4 x 221.0 cm)



Key Ideas

Drawing on her experiences in New York during the 1950s, Grace Hartigan incorporated familiar elements of urban America into her work. In this celebration of personal expression, fragments of figures and abstract forms recall billboard images seen fleetingly from a highway.

Background

After World War II, America emerged as a great world leader. The arts flourished, and New York City replaced Paris as the art center of the Western world. Inspired by European artists who had immigrated to New York during the war, one group of New York artists captured the speed, energy, and power of American life with a new way of painting. Drawing on the power of European styles, these artists developed the revolutionary art style called Abstract Expressionism.

Abstract Expressionists placed a high value on personal expression, rejected realistic subject matter, and infused human emotion into abstract form. Their spontaneous gestural style, known as action painting, often revealed the physical act of painting. The artists relied heavily on improvisation and chance effects and placed great emphasis on the process of painting. Accidental shapes, dribbles, splashes, and strokes of paint revealed the creative process.

During the late 1940s and into the 1950s, Abstract Expressionism became an international phenomenon. Soon younger artists flocked to New York to become part of the group, known as the New York School. They adopted the energetic gestural style of the older Abstract Expressionists, but turned from purely abstract art to recognizable subjects landscapes, still-lifes, and figures. Grace Hartigan belongs to this "second generation" of Abstract Expressionists.

From the late 1950s to the early 1960s, the Pop Art movement also flourished in New York City. It was inspired by the consumer culture and commercialism that had become an important part of American life following World War II. Several factors had led to a boom in product advertising and consumerism in the United States. After years of scarcity during the war, the American public was eager to buy new products, particularly cars. With increased production and ownership of automobiles, America soon became a car culture. Commerce spread out from the inner city to the highway, and billboard advertisements reached the newly mobilized audience.

Pop artists represented and often satirized images from American popular culture, drawing from sources such as television, comic strips, billboards, advertising, and the commerce of contemporary life. Some artists also used the techniques as well as the imagery of commercial art. Though Hartigan does not consider herself a Pop artist, her early paintings can be seen as a bridge between Abstract Expressionism and Pop Art.

Billboard

In *Billboard* Grace Hartigan uses images from everyday life, drawing upon her experiences in New York City during the 1950s. The fragments of figures and forms recall billboard images seen fleetingly from the highway. Combining abstract and representational forms, Hartigan considered her art "real" but not "realistic."

Hartigan was fascinated by the accessible and boldly simplified style of American advertising. In this painting, she draws upon advertisements she saw in *Life* magazine. The artist shows us a variety of fragmentary images, such as a smiling face above a tube of Ipana toothpaste, the neck of a wine bottle over a glass, molded lime Jell-O surrounded by fruit, and the keys of a piano. These seemingly chaotic images are unified by Hartigan's bold, expressive brushwork and balanced by her placement of colors on the canvas. The bold, gestural brushstrokes in *Billboard* clearly demonstrate Hartigan's relationship to the Abstract Expressionist style. Through her large gestures and thickly applied paint, the spectator is invited to feel the "presence" of the artist and to experience the very process of painting. Hartigan has said that Billboard took her about one month to complete, but that she wanted it to look as if it had taken about an hour, because above all she wanted its spontaneity to shine through.

Color is the primary visual element in *Billboard*. In fact, Hartigan thought of the work as a formal exercise in color manipulation. Using vivid colors and bold, dynamic brushstrokes, she infused the forms with energy and life, arranging them by size and intensity of color to balance the composition. No part of this painting seems to hold the viewer's attention longer than another. Our eyes wander from one bright color and interesting shape to the next. Hartigan achieved this effect mainly through the careful use of complementary colors: red and green, blue and orange, yellow and purple. This balance of color demonstrates Hartigan's belief that "you should be able to enter a painting like a promenade—that you should be able to walk in anywhere and walk out anywhere."

Following as it did the total abstraction of many Abstract Expressionists, Hartigan's painting signaled a reintroduction of recognizable subjects into art. This work coincides with the beginning of the Pop movement in the late 1950s. The artist said, however, that she intended no social commentary with her painting. Instead, *Billboard* celebrates the exuberance of her bustling New York environment. She considered this a joyous painting filled with light and energy. She hoped the viewer would observe all her paintings with the innocence of a child, without being too analytical. Using bright, vivid colors and the slapdash brushstrokes of action painting, she presents a jazzy, dynamic image of American life.

Images in Billboard

- 1. Ipana toothpaste smile and tube of toothpaste
- 2. Wine bottle and glass (only the neck of the bottle is visible)
- 3. Dole pineapple
- 4. Peaches and whipped cream from a food ad
- Area of violet color: Windsor violet was the color of the background on which Hartigan arranged her collage. It seemed to fit into the plan, so she kept it.
- 6. Piano keys
- 7. Apple with a bite taken out
- 8. Lime Jell-O and fruit
- 9. Oranges
- 10. Figure from a Campbell soup ad



Technique

During a 1983 lecture at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Hartigan described the process by which Billboard was created. Inspired by American advertising, she began this work by selecting images from Life magazine that appealed to her because of their colors. She preferred to use objects she felt had "no energy or life of their own" so that she could infuse them with her own energy and joy of living. Next she cut the images out and pinned them up on a wall in the form of a collage on a background of purple paper. Using this collage as a model, she began to paint on the canvas, rearranging elements and adjusting the color as the work progressed. As Hartigan painted these images, she continued to invent, improvise, and expand upon her initial idea, not knowing what the final product would be.

About the Artist

Grace Hartigan was born in Newark, New Jersey, in 1922. She attended night school at the Newark College of Engineering, where she studied mechanical drafting. During World War II, she worked in an airplane factory, painting watercolor still-lifes in her spare time. While her husband was in the army, she also raised a son and took painting classes at night.

In 1945 Hartigan moved to New York to be in the center of the art world. Greatly influenced by the Abstract Expressionists, she quickly absorbed their spontaneous, abstract style. But she also became interested in the works of old European masters, such as Raphael, Rubens, and Caravaggio. She became active in the New York School, and lived in New York's colorful Lower East Side, which provided subject matter for many of her paintings.

Hartigan's first break occurred in 1950 when her work was exhibited in a New Talent exhibition juried by the critic Clement Greenberg and the art historian Meyer Shapiro. In 1951 she had her first solo show. In 1959 the Museum of Modern Art in New York sent an exhibition called "The New American Painting" to eight European countries; Grace Hartigan was the only woman included.

Suggested Questions

- What objects do you see in this painting? Try to find the following things:
 - Ipana toothpaste smile
 - Apple with a bite taken out
 - A wine bottle and glass
 - Lime Jell-O mold with fruit
 - Oranges
 - Figure from a soup ad
 - Dole pineapples
 Peaches and whipped cream
 - Piano keys
- 2. Hartigan uses many kinds of lines in this painting. Find at least one each of the following lines: straight, curved, vertical, horizontal, diagonal, thick, thin, jagged. Where do you see lines formed by the edges of two colors meeting?
- 3. Imagine that you could hear this painting. What sounds would it make? What about the painting makes you say that?
- 4. Compare and contrast Hartigan's modern image with *Mill Pond at Minneapolis*. How the paintings look the same? How do they look different?

Elizabeth Catlett, United States, 1915-2012

Publisher: Published by the artist and Taller de Grafica Popular, Mexico City;

Printer: Printed by the artist and Jose Sanchez, *Sharecropper*, 1952 (printed c. 1952-57), color linocut The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund, P.97.1

Art ©Elizabeth Catlett/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY

17 5/8 x 16 5/8 in. (44.77 x 42.23 cm) (image); 22 x 19 5/8 in. (55.88 x 49.85 cm) (sheet, irregular)



Key Ideas

Elizabeth Catlett portrayed a Black American sharecropper whose inner fortitude and life of hard work are boldly conveyed in this linocut. Her ideas and vision of the role of the Black American artist have earned her a unique place in the history of American art.

Background

By the 1950s, when Elizabeth Catlett created *Sharecropper* and many other prints and sculptures, Black American artists had made great strides in terms of breaking through barriers that had existed in the art world for centuries, but still largely worked outside the mainstream. After World War II, art in the United States was dominated by the Abstract Expressionist movement, which placed great emphasis on large-scale, physical gesture and nonrepresentational subjects. Artists interested in representation and social messages, including many Black American artists, sought opportunities to work outside this mainstream movement, dominated by white men.

Diverse Black American artists were united by a strong desire to express their experiences and to celebrate Black American history and culture.

During the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s, the Harlem district of New York City became a hub for Black American celebrities and artists. At this time, Black visual artists, writers, and musicians were officially recognized as a vital part of American culture. Diverse Black American artists were united by a strong desire to express their experiences and to celebrate Black American history and culture. Gradually the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance extended through the country.

Another important period for Black American artists was the Depression of the 1930s, during which President Franklin Roosevelt initiated the Federal Arts Project of the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.). This project employed more than 5,000 artists, whose work was commissioned to adorn public buildings across the nation. For the first time, significant numbers of Black American artists were able to work full-time in their profession. Such patronage supported their participation in cultural life, ending the isolation that many had previously experienced.

The post-World War II period of the 1940s and 1950s was one of heightened activity for Black American artists, who were increasingly awarded fellowships and opportunities for exhibitions and travel abroad. From the 1960s on, the civil rights movement was another force that contributed to a growing interest in Black American art and to the burgeoning of such institutions as Black American museums, galleries, and cultural centers. Black Studies programs were established on college and university campuses across the United States. Black educational institutions, such as Howard University, Fisk University, and Hampton University, also built art collections and trained artists. Among the many Black teacher-artists who influenced a generation of students was Elizabeth Catlett. Her social activism and vision of the role of the Black artist have earned her a unique place in the history of American art.

Sharecropper

Committed to creating socially conscious art, Elizabeth Catlett addresses issues of race and gender, especially the struggles of Black American and Native American women. Her primary subjects in her prints and sculptures are mothers, social activists, and working-class women, such as the sharecropper portrayed in this color linocut. Catlett believed that art can help achieve social change by provoking thought and by planting the seeds of inspiration. She believed that art "should be a voice for the people, especially for those whose voices are quelled by social and political injustices."

In *Sharecropper*, Catlett portrays an elderly Black woman whose face reflects a life of struggle and survival within a brutal social system.

In Sharecropper, Catlett portrays an elderly Black woman whose face reflects a life of struggle and survival within a brutal social system. Sharecropping, a system of tenant farming, flourished in the southern United States after the Civil War and the end of slavery. A sharecropper was one who agreed to farm the land of a landowner for a share of the crop. The landlord supplied seeds, tools, food, and clothing on credit, which the sharecropper was obligated to pay back after the crop was sold and the profits were split. Costs were usually so high that most sharecroppers could never repay their mounting debts. Though living conditions for sharecroppers were somewhat better than those of enslaved people, they were still tied to the land with no other options for their livelihood.

While we do not know the name of the woman portrayed in this print or the details of her life, Catlett conveys a sense of her subject's strength and dignity in the face of hardship and racial injustice. With her large straw hat and strong angular features, the woman has a compelling physical presence. Her age is suggested by her white hair and deeply lined skin, but her face, with its bold features, reveals an inner strength and vitality.

Catlett creates a heroic image with her unique style, which combines abstraction with naturalism. She is known for her treatment of the face as an image of racial identity and a record of human experience. Here she clearly articulates the subject's features with some degree of naturalism, as seen in the woman's brown skin, long neck, sad gazing eyes, full lips, and white curly hair. The artist also delineates carefully chosen details, such as the weave of the straw hat, the creases of the woman's clothing, and the lines of her skin. At the same time, she uses distortion with her stylized treatment of line and form. Catlett, who was also a sculptor, seems to have chiseled the sharp angles of the subject's face, creating a mask-like effect. The woman appears to be three-dimensional. She has a sense of mass and volume that seems related to the artist's sculptural work and gives the woman a weighty presence that reinforces her strength. The repetition of heavy, forceful lines in the work forms patterns that cover the entire surface, producing an intense feeling of rhythm and energy. The movement of the lines in various directions contributes to the power and dynamism of the image and charges it with emotional and psychological tension.

She portrays not so much a specific individual as a symbol of every sharecropper, or perhaps of any person who has endured adversity.

Catlett's expressive approach adds to the symbolic, universal quality of the image. She portrays not so much a specific individual as a symbol of every sharecropper, or perhaps of any person who has endured adversity. The viewer's low vantage point causes the subject to loom above us, with her upper torso, head, and hat filling the frame. The importance of her hat is emphasized by its large size, emphatic detail, and careful placement in the composition. It is slightly cropped at the edges, enhancing its presence and reminding us of the woman's difficult work in the hot sun.

The artist's limited use of color—brown, yellow-green, black, and white—creates dramatic contrast and impact, focusing our attention on specific areas. Catlett emphasizes the sharecropper's brown skin, which contrasts with the print's overall black-andwhite surface. Defining the woman's posture and demeanor, the bright yellow-green of her garment also shows off the black-and-white safety pin that clasps her jacket. Yet her pose, facial expression, and prominent placement within the composition evoke a spirit of determination, inner strength, and dignity.

Technique

Sharecropper is a linocut, or linoleum cut, a popular type of relief print made by a process similar to making a woodcut. Catlett achieved the tactile quality by cutting away linoleum with a carving tool. A linocut employs a block constructed of a layer of thick linoleum glued to a piece of wood. The soft linoleum surface is easily carved with tools similar to those used in woodcarving—chisels, gouges, and special knives. The parts that are to print white are cut away, leaving the black lines in relief. Separate blocks are made to create each color area. The block is inked with a brayer (hand roller) and printed either by hand or in a press.

In an interview, Catlett said:

I learned technique from traditional, establishment schools, and it took me a long time to realize that technique was the main thing to learn from them. But technique is so important! It's the difference between art and ineptitude... You can't make a statement if you can't speak the language; here it's the language of the people, the language of art.

About the Artist

Born in Washington, D.C., in 1915, Elizabeth Catlett was the daughter of parents who were both trained as teachers. Catlett was a precocious child, showing early signs of drawing skills in elementary school. In high school she decided to become an artist.

Catlett attended Howard University, where she studied painting. After graduating in 1937, she became an art teacher at a high school in Durham, North Carolina, but she earned wages lower than those of the white teachers and soon decided to leave the position. During this period, she became increasingly concerned about the plight of the poor and the oppressed, a theme that inspired most of her works. In 1946, Catlett went to Mexico City on a fellowship. There, she worked at Taller Grafica de Popular (TGP), a print collective established in 1937 by artists committed to addressing Mexican identiy and leftist political themes. At TGP, she created *Sharecropper* and many other prints. Catlett ultimately settled in Mexico, where she headed the Sculpture Department of the National University of Mexico and continued producing her own works. Though she was warmly accepted in her adopted country, her identity as a Black American continued to inspire her work. Receiving wide recognition, her art has been exhibited throughout the world.

Suggested Questions

- 1. What kinds of lines do you see in this print? Use your finger and trace each type of line you see in this painting.
- 2. What do you think the subject is feeling? What do you see that makes you say that?
- 3. Do you think she looks strong? Why? Do you think this woman is physically strong, mentally strong—or both? Which do you think is stronger—her muscles or her will? Why? How has the artist shown she is strong?
- 4. What viewpoint does the artist use to show the sharecropper? Why do you think she chose this viewpoint? Why do you think Catlett showed us such a close view of the woman?

Attributed to William Howard, United States, 1805, active until c. 1870 Writing desk, 1870, yellow pine, tobacco box and cotton crate wood The Driscoll Art Accessions Endowment Fund, the John and Ruth Huss Fund for Decorative Arts, the Fred R. Salisbury II Fund, and the Deborah Davenport and Stewart Stender Endowment for American Folk Art, 2012.11 60 ³/₄ x 29 ⁷/₈ x 23 ¹¹/₁₆ in. (154.31 x 75.88 x 60.17 cm)



Key Ideas

This writing desk expresses the ingenuity and technical skill of the artist, believed to be William Howard, and also helps illustrate the life of enslaved people in the United States. Born in Africa, Howard lived and worked at Kirkwood Plantation in Madison County, Mississippi, first as an enslaved man and then, after the Civil War, as a free man. Howard's desk is a unique combination of high-market and folk art styles crafted from rough, reclaimed materials, such as tobacco boxes and cotton shipping crates.

Life on Kirkwood Plantation

Established by William McWillie and his wife, Catherine, around 1845, Kirkwood Plantation was one of the largest cotton plantations in Mississippi, with nearly 200 enslaved Black Americans. McWillie served in the Mississippi Confederate Infantry, was later elected to Congress, then became governor of Mississippi (1857–59).

Surrounded by thousands of acres of pine forest, Kirkwood Plantation included homes for enslaved people, four mansions, and a church and rectory. The estate was completely self-sufficient, with workshops for blacksmithing and carpentry, a smokehouse, a washhouse, weaving and sewing houses, a winery, and an icehouse; enslaved people supplied the labor. Today, only a small cemetery remains; the buildings are gone, and a lumber company owns the property. After the Civil War ended in 1865, many once-enslaved people remained on the plantation. Plantation owners offered them a deal to work a portion of the land in return for a share of the crop, hence the label "sharecropper." Unsurprisingly, this life was not much better for the former enslaved laborers.

Records indicate that William Howard continued to live and work at Kirkwood Plantation after the war. It is believed that Howard made his writing desk around this time.

A Singular Style

William Howard's handmade writing desk is unlike commercially produced furniture of the time. Having drawn from his personal experiences of life on a plantation, Howard made the desk to reflect the American Federal furniture style while adding his own singular vision. Think about it: Howard, a master craftsman, was both perceptive and discerning in his choice to incorporate a popular furniture style for his desk—a style that he would likely never have enjoyed otherwise in his living quarters.

Federal furniture is neoclassical, or "new classical," in form, inspired by ancient Greek and Roman art. Neoclassicism reflected the patriotism of the early 1800s, when a young American democracy modeled itself on ideals of government from ancient Greece. The style is embodied in the structure of Howard's desk through balance, symmetry, and straight lines. Also characteristic of Federal style are the tapered legs and "dentals," the rectangular decorative teethlike molding set around the top, or cornice, of the desk. The writing desk, sometimes called a secretary, was both fashionable and useful. It combines a desk with a storage unit for books and writing materials. Here, the front folds down to create a writing surface. Howard likely became familiar with Federal furniture from his work in and around the plantation houses.

The most common wood for Federal furnishings was mahogany imported from the West Indies and Central and South America. Locally grown woods, such as maple, birch, or satinwood, might also be used. As a laborer working under poor economic conditions, Howard used materials at hand—yellow pine, tobacco boxes, and cotton shipping crates. Stamped on the desk's underside is "COTTON PIECE GOODS/FROM/THE GLENWOOD WO[RKS]/ MEDFORD. MASS" from a crate from the Glenwood Works textile company.

Howard ornamented the desk with carved symbols of objects seen and used in daily activity on the plantation, making it a deeply personal and individual expression of his life.

The desk's most striking and innovative feature is the more than 70 hand-carved and applied weapons, tools, eating utensils, vessels, and trade symbols that adorn its surface. Howard ornamented the desk with carved symbols of objects seen and used in daily activity on the plantation, making it a deeply personal and individual expression of his life. There are symbols for cooking and eating, working the land and forests, fishing and boating, and building with wood. Today, many objects represented on the desk are difficult to identify, and not everything carved was a tool. The two hands with pointed fingers may be trade symbols, signs that would have been displayed outside a glovemaker's store in the 1800s.

About the Artist

This desk was handed down through a Black American family, along with the story of William Howard as its maker. The U.S. Census of 1870 lists the artist a few entries above Catherine McWillie and her remaining household. The census indicates that Howard was a 65-year-old farm laborer born in Africa, and his household included 60-year-old Sally Howard, presumably his wife, and 16-year-old Henry Howard, presumably their son, a farm laborer born in Mississippi. Because landowners were the primary keepers of records for enslaved people, little else is known of William Howard's life.

This desk was handed down through a Black American family, along with the story of William Howard as its maker.

Despite his circumstances, Howard created a masterful work of art that represents his life on a southern plantation in the 1800s. He crafted a writing desk based on his observations of furnishings from a comfortable lifestyle he was not permitted to lead. To make this desk uniquely his own, he embellished it with highly personalized decorations and a clever use of reclaimed materials. Only one other furniture piece attributed to William Howard is known to exist; it is currently in the collection of the Wadsworth Athenaeum, and is similar in form and decoration to this desk.

Suggested Questions

- 1. Look closely at this desk. What words would you use to describe it? What do you see that makes you say that?
- 2. How is it similar to other desks you have seen at school, home, or a museum? How is it different?
- 3. William Howard covered the desk with images of tools he would have used in his work. Find five objects carved onto the front and sides of the desk. Many are familiar today, though some are not because they date to the late 1800s. Find five more objects you can name. Which objects do you wonder about?
- 4. If you were to decorate a desk with objects that represent your life, which objects would you choose? What would you keep inside your desk?

Minneapolis Institute of Art

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Winter count Lakota

Gallery _____

Sharecropper

Elizabeth Catlett

Gallery _____



Writing desk Attributed to William Howard

Gallery _____

5

6



Portrait of George Washington Thomas Sully

Gallery _____

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2



Ma

Mill Pond at Minneapolis Alexis Jean Fournier

Gallery _____

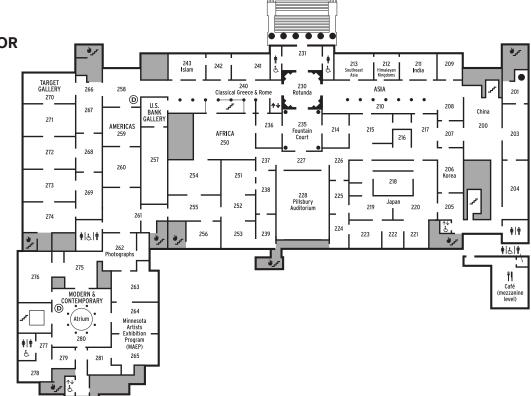


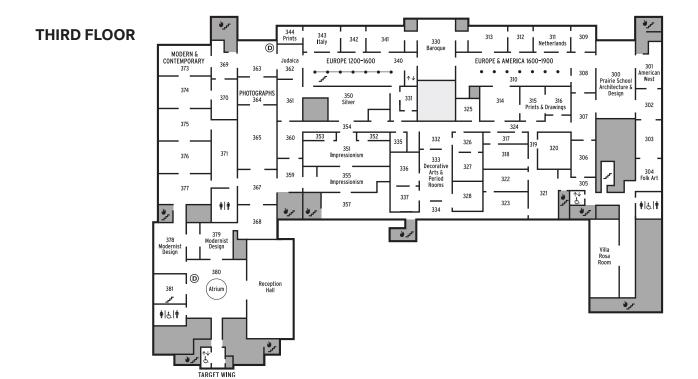
Billboard Grace Hartigan

Gallery _____

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