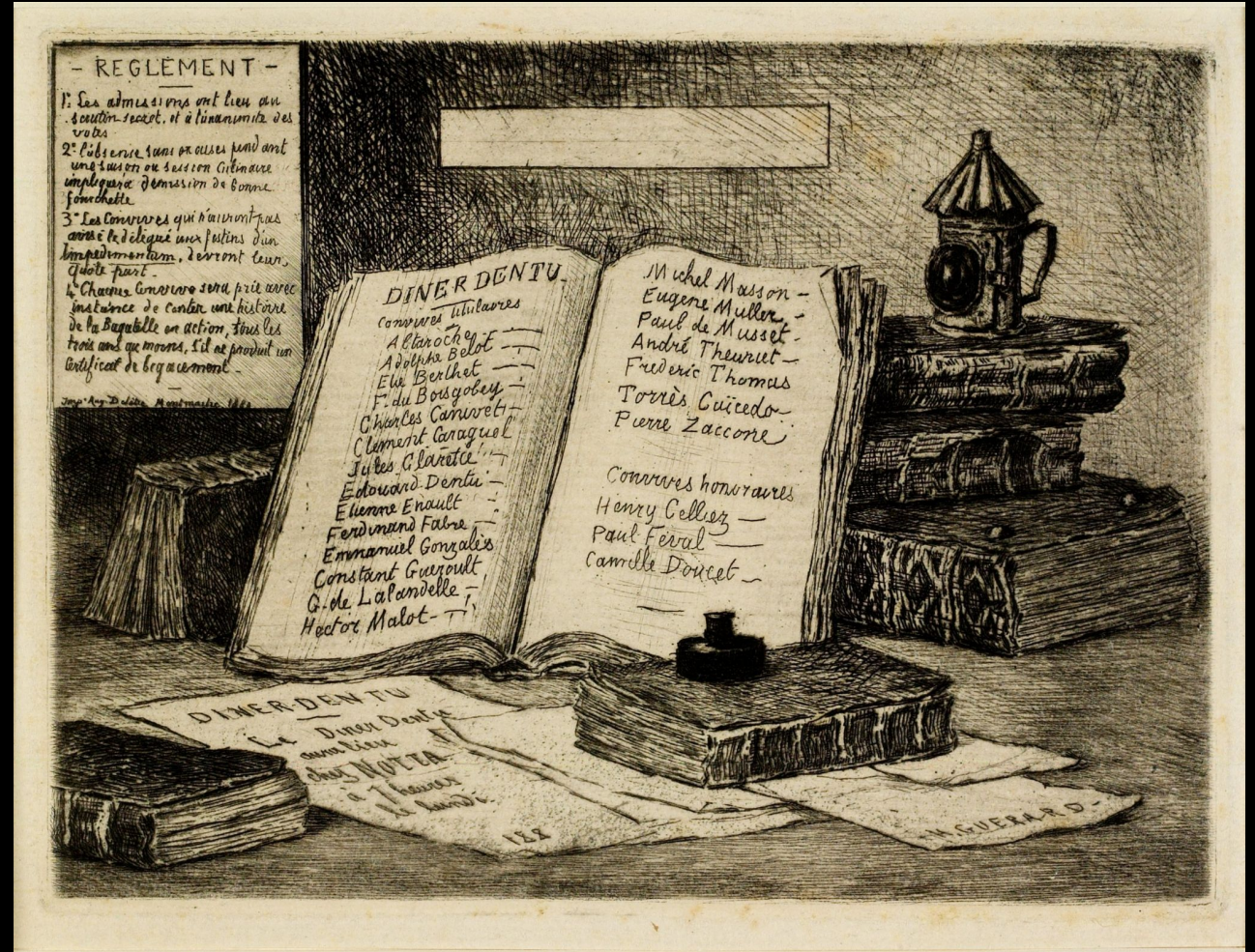


Minneapolis Institute of Art

# Mia Adult Guides

## Book Tours

November 4, 2021



Henri-Charles Guérard, *Books and Lantern*, 1880,  
Etching and drypoint, 1916, P.2,216

# Mia

# Record

# Agenda

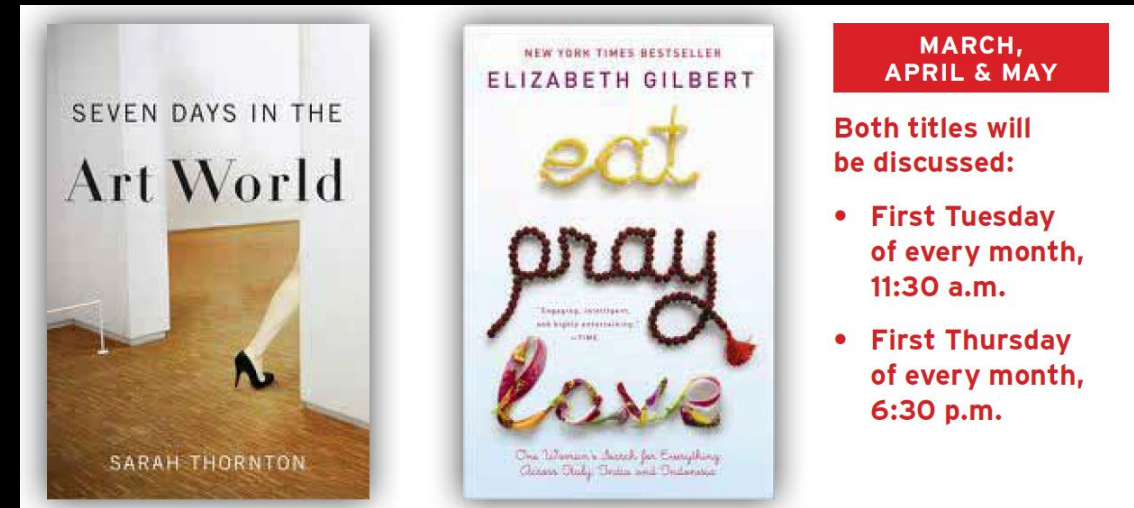
- Book tours: history and development, selecting titles
- Book tour assignments
- Book tour sampler: presentations by 3 Mia Guides
- Small group discussion: 3 artworks and how they relate to the book you chose
- Questions from feedback forms
- Homework and upcoming peer learning opportunities
- Q&A

# Inspired by Books: History and development

*Join lively discussions of artworks related to popular books*

Evolution of an idea:

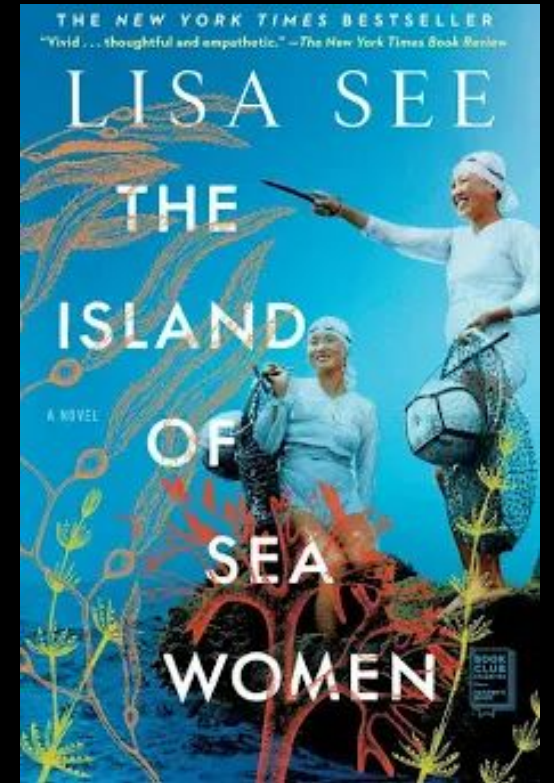
- Originated with book clubs
- Started in 2011-12 with 2 titles for 3 months, 4 tours per month
- As audience grew, changed to 1 title with 16+ tours per month
- Added additional guides to each tour time to meet the demand
- Cultivated many repeat visits!



# Inspired by Books: Selecting titles

Connect to artworks and engage our audience by:

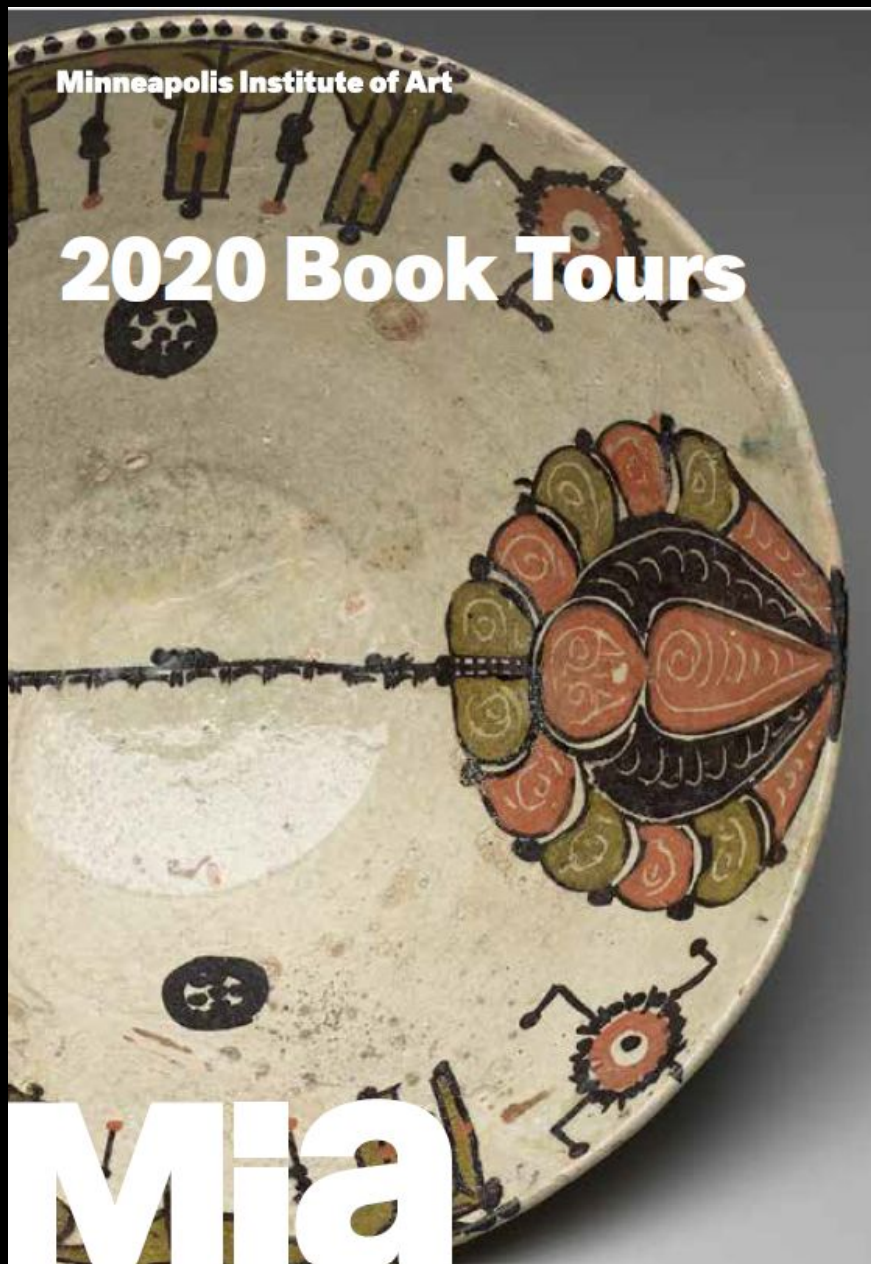
- Selecting popular reads
- Prioritizing availability at local libraries
- Representing a variety of cultures that connect with Mia's collections: *Spirit Car*, *The Island of Sea Women*, *The Latehomecomer*, *Exit West*
- Reviving classics: *Fahrenheit 451*, *Rebecca*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Things Fall Apart*, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*



[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

**Let us know if you'd like to serve on the selection committee**

# Book tour promotion card



Minneapolis Institute of Art

## 2020 Book Tours

# Mia

## Join lively discussions of artworks related to popular books.

### FREE book tours

Tuesdays at 11:30AM and 1:30PM, Thursdays and Fridays at 6:30PM, and third Sundays of every month at 3PM. No reservations necessary.

### January

*A Great Reckoning*,  
by Louise Penny

### February

*The Story of Arthur Truluv*,  
by Elizabeth Berg

### March

*Exit West*, by Mohsin Hamid

### April

*Logical Family: A Memoir*,  
by Armistead Maupin

### May

*Washington Black*,  
by Esi Edugyan

### June

*Virgil Wander*, by Leif Enger

Unknown artist, Iran (Nishapur) or Uzbekistan (Samarkand), Large bowl (detail), 10th century, earthenware with a white slip ground under a clear glaze with reddish, dark brown, and gold slip-painted decor, The Margaret McMillan Webber Fund 2003.98.2

### Book Lovers Private Tours

You choose the book, day, and time. We customize a tour especially for you. Fee: \$75 for up to 20 people. To reserve, call 612.870.3140.

### Looking for other good reads?

Go to [new.artsmia.org/book-tours](https://new.artsmia.org/book-tours) and scroll down to find "Adult Book Tours."

My Mia members receive 20% off available book tour titles at The Store at Mia.



Find updates about Mia book & public tours on Facebook and Twitter.

**Minneapolis Institute of Art**  
2400 Third Avenue South  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

# Inspired by Books: Private tours (on hiatus)

## **Virtual Private Book Club Tours**

Private Book Tours are unavailable through December 2021. To learn more about Mia's public Inspired By Books tour, [click here](#).

Choose from the following list:

*Virgil Wander* by Leif Enger

*The Grace of Silence* by Michele Norris

*The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton

*The Housekeeper and the Professor* by Yoko Ogawa

*Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens

*The Island of Sea Women* by Lisa See

*Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid

*Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague* by Geraldine Brooks

*Sacre Bleu: A Comedy d'Art* by Christopher Moore

# Inspired by Books: Tour assignments

- Book tours are optional
- Request to tour goes out twice a year for 6 titles (6 months at a time)
- Chart of interest is drawn up - you will be contacted about 6 weeks in advance to see if still interested
- Guides experienced in giving book tours are happy to help with themes and artwork choices

George Louis Du Maurier,  
*Beauty and the Beast* (detail),  
19th century, Watercolor,  
54.33.6





# Inspired by Books: January - June titles

January (virtual) - *Dear America, Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* by Jose Antonio Vargas

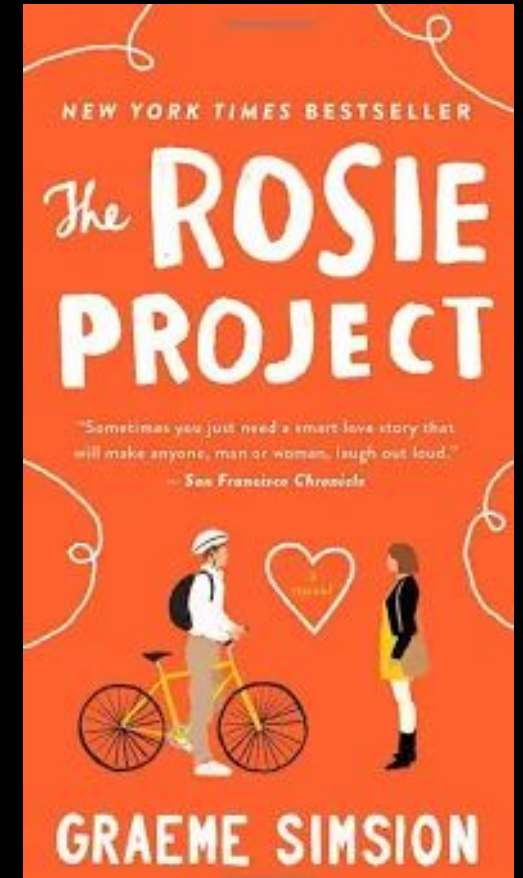
February (virtual) - *The Rosie Project* by Graeme Simsion

March (virtual) - *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig

April (in person) - *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak

May (in person) - *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett

June (in person) - *The King at the Edge of the World* by Arthur Phillips



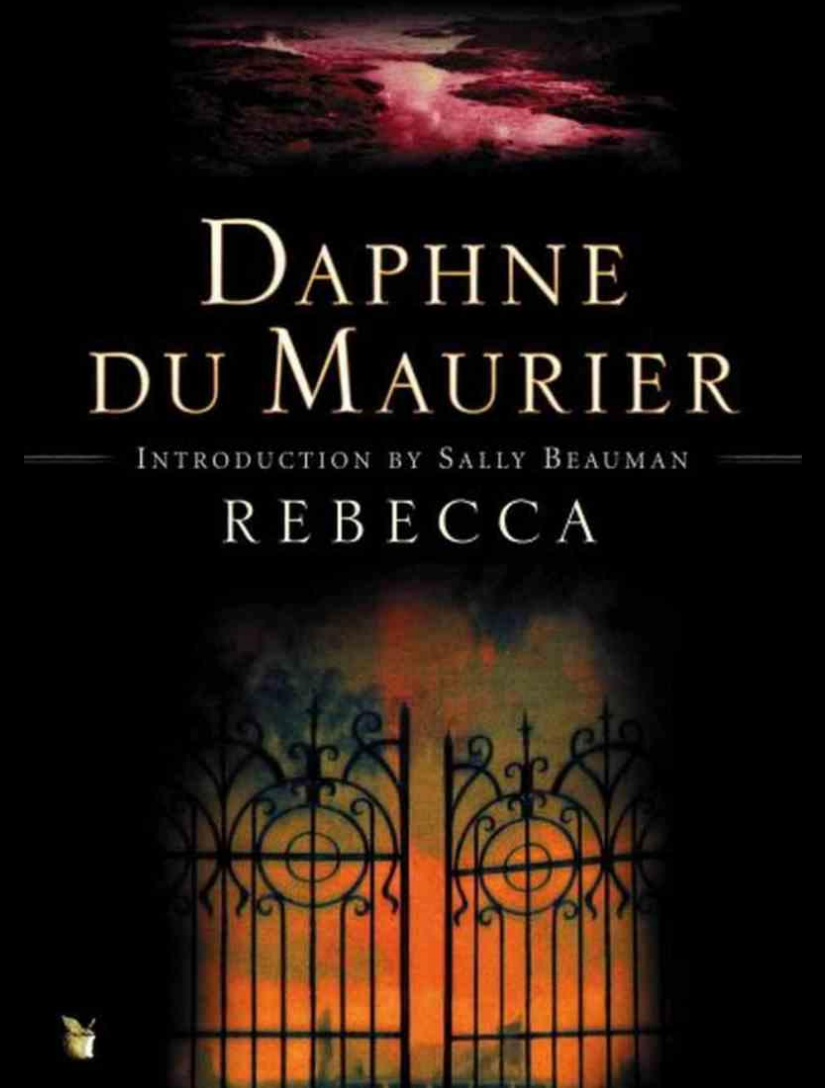
[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

# Selecting a Theme

## *Rebecca*

by Daphne du Maurier

Ginny Wheeler





# Possible Themes

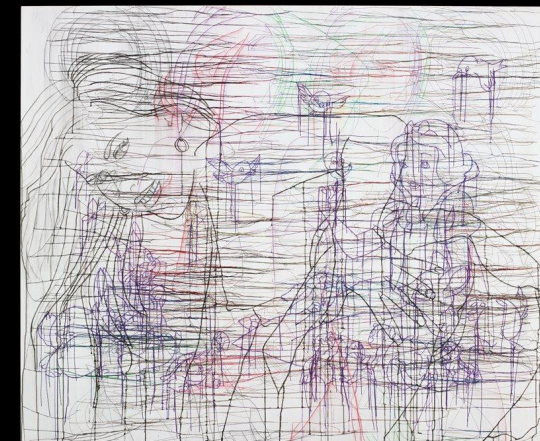


A Theme: Jealousy

Mysterious Settings



Symbolism

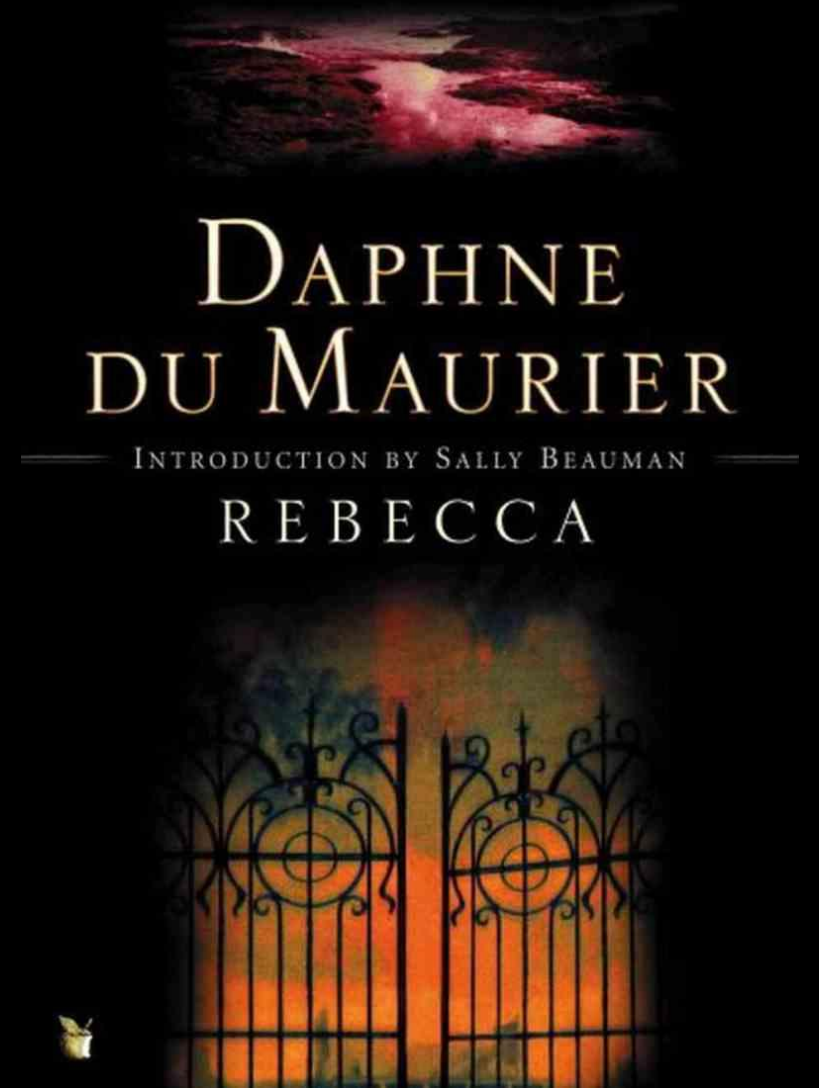


Gothic Characters

Freudian Influences

**Daphne du Maurier's most famous work *Rebecca* earned her a reputation as the greatest Gothic romance author of the 20th Century—one she didn't want. She believed she was writing a psychological study about jealousy, loosely based on her own personal experiences.**

**This book introduced the revival of the Gothic romance and became Alfred Hitchcock's first movie, earning him an Academy Award. We will take a look at the Gothic elements that so inspired other artists in the early 1900s.**





*Eros*, Igor Mitoraj, 1999, bronze, 2015.23

**Minneapolis Institute of Art**

Gothic  
Element:

A Mysterious  
Hero/Villain  
with a dark  
past



*Eros*, Igor Mitoraj, 1999, bronze, 2015.23

**Minneapolis Institute of Art**

The Greek myth about Eros and Psyche explores the psychological nature of jealousy. Psyche vows never to lay eyes on her beloved husband, who comes to her only at night. Driven by her jealous sisters, Psyche believes she may have married a monster and decides to break her oath and take a peek at him. When she does, she finds that he is a god, not a monster.



What contradictions come to mind when you view this sculpture of Eros?

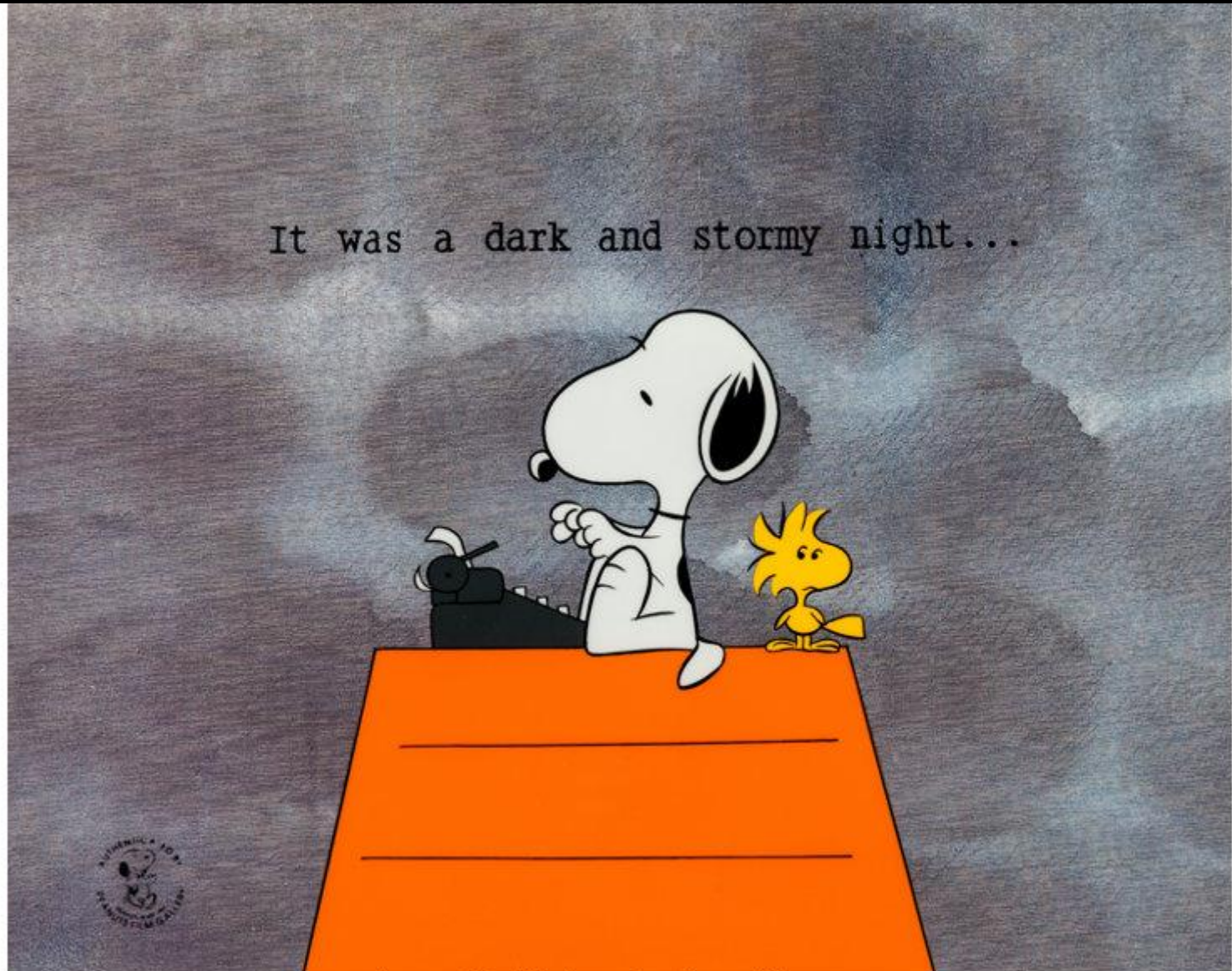
*Eros and the Squirrel*, Jim Pipkin, 2018, digital photography



We only see  
Maxim  
through the  
eyes of the  
narrator. How  
is he similar  
to our Eros?



It was a dark and stormy night...



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

Comics.ha.com



Gothic  
Element:

Dark and  
other-worldly  
imagery

Winslow Homer, *Cape Trinity, Saguenay River, Moonlight*,  
1904–09, Kunin collection loan



Mrs. Van Hopper like  
a large, complacent  
spider spun her wide  
net...

Trees were shrouded  
in a white mist...

...[her hair] twisted  
like a snake...

Winslow Homer, *Cape Trinity, Saguenay River, Moonlight*,  
1904–09, Kunin collection loan



What Gothic  
phrases  
would you  
use to  
describe  
Cape Trinity?



Raffaello Monti, *Veiled Lady*, 1860, Marble, 70.60

Gothic Element:

A vulnerable young woman infatuated with a patriarchal figure who has sexual power over her



What might be  
suggested by the veil?  
The morning glories?



**“There was a strange air of unreality about the luncheon. . . There was I, so much of a schoolgirl still, who only the day before had sat with Mrs. Van Hopper, prim, silent and subdued, and 24 hours afterwards my family history was mine no longer.”**

# *A Gentleman in Moscow*, by Amor Towles

## “The World According to the Count”



Left image: Grand Hall of the Restaurant, Hotel Metropol, Moscow



Right images: Atrium and Rotunda views, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis

Emily Shapiro

Minneapolis Institute of Art



Welcome to my book tour of *A Gentleman in Moscow*, by Amor Towles.

On this tour, we will explore the “tools” used by both literary and visual artists to create the worlds they seek to share with their readers/viewers. These “tools” include, among others:

- Setting
- Perspective/point of view
- Metaphor
- Composition
- Characters
- Symbolism
- Style

During our virtual mini-tour today, we will briefly discuss three of these devices: setting, metaphor, and point of view.

## Setting & Metaphor

Choose a few words to describe this cabinet. What do you notice about its shape? Its decorations?

What more would you like to know about it? What questions do you have?

Unknown artist, Germany, *Table Cabinet*, c. 1560-1570, Oak and pine veneered with partly stained and ebonized maple, plum, ash, with etched, blued, and parcel gilt iron fitting, 2018.15A-X, G340



## Setting & Metaphor

The dimensions of the cabinet are approximately:

27 inches wide  
39 inches tall  
17 inches wide,

Now that you know its size, are any of your questions answered? Are new ones raised?



## Setting & Metaphor

Here's a close-up view of the cabinet's front. What can you see more clearly now? Does this view answer some of your questions or raise new ones?



## Setting & Metaphor

When the cabinet is open, what more do you see? Does this view answer any of your questions? Raise new ones?

Thinking about our tour's theme, how might this cabinet serve as a symbol or metaphor for ideas expressed in Towles' book?



## Point of View

Take a few minutes to look at this painting.

Describe the overall scene. Based on what you see, any ideas about where it is? When? Time of year? How does it make you feel?

Camille Pissarro, *Place du Théâtre Français, Paris: Rain*, 1898, Oil on canvas, 18.19, G351



## Point of View

Now, let's look at the scene more closely.

Where are you (the viewer) located? How can you tell?

How does this perspective affect your understanding of the painting?

How does Towles use point of view in the novel to tell the Count's story?



# Stretch Break (5 minutes)

Paul Wolff, *Gymnastik auf dem Juvens-Hausboot im Wannsee*, 1934, Gelatin silver print, 98.195.45, © Paul Wolff





# *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens

**Theme options:** Moral dilemmas  
Justice  
Nature and human nature

**Art options:** Setting, locations  
Animal behavior  
Gifts and treasures  
Pivotal moments

Lynn Dunlap

# *Where the Crawdads Sing:* “An Appreciation for Nature”



Welcome to my tour of *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens.

I'll be sharing evocative art to spark conversations about the artwork and the artists. We will discuss ways the art connects with the novel.

My goal is to have a lively discussion about both the art and the book. I welcome your impressions and interpretations!

If you're not finished with the book:

*Where the Crawdads Sing* is the tale of a girl growing up in the 1950s and 60s on the North Carolina coast. When the family's troubled mother leaves, six-year-old Kya gradually learns to rely on herself alone. Soon her older siblings then her abusive father leave.

Kya matures and teaches herself to be an artist as well as a naturalist, with the help of her brother's friend, Tate. When Tate leaves for college, she dates Chase, who later dies falling from a tower.

The investigation and murder trial provide the novel's suspense.

Owens' imagery describing Kya's marsh and its creatures is so vivid, it showcases her *appreciation for nature*.

Claude Gellée, the “father of landscape painting,” made a career of showcasing nature. He, too, was an orphan, and he, too, created a book cataloging his art.



Claude Gellée (called Le Lorrain), *Pastoral Landscape*, 1638,  
Oil on canvas, 98.33

Look closely at  
Claude Gellée's  
1638 *Pastoral  
Landscape*.

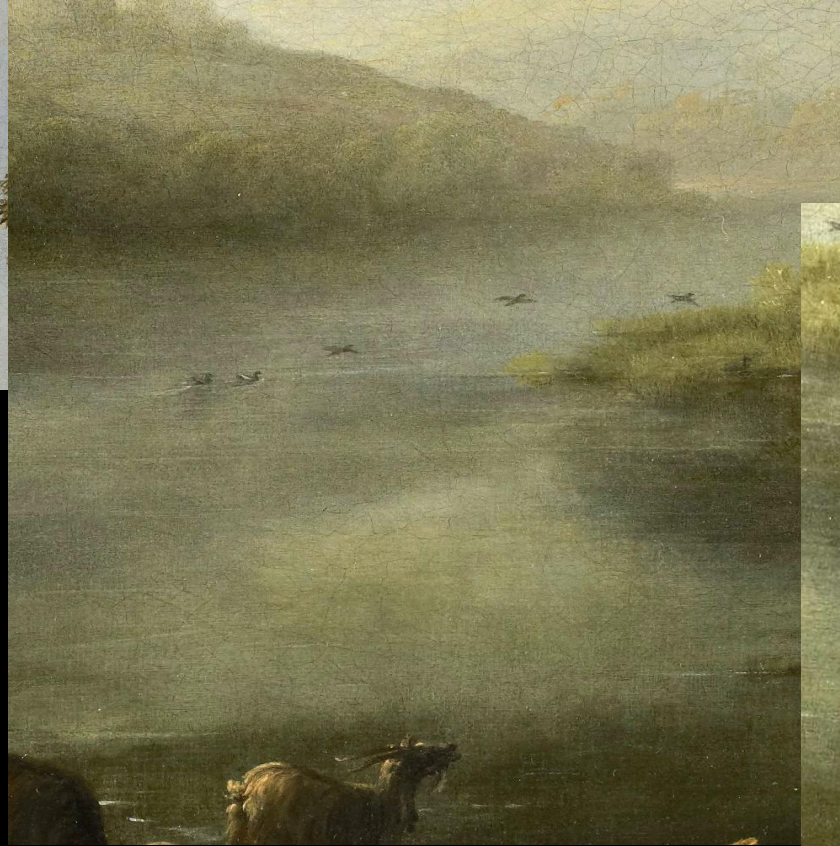
What do you  
see?



How might  
Claude showcase  
nature?



What animals might Kya see  
in her marsh?







These deer are nearly invisible in Claude's canvas, as in Kya's marsh.





“...the trees parted and she glided into a place of wide sky and reaching grasses, and the sound of cawing birds...a whitetail doe with last spring’s fawn stood lapping water. Their heads jerked up, slinging droplets through the air....”

Finally the estuary lay ahead, water stretching so far it captured the whole sky and all the clouds....”

By observing nature, Kya  
not only learned  
how animals survive,  
but also  
how animals prevail.



Describe what you see  
in this Japanese  
woodblock print.

This 44" x 7.5" print,  
known as a pillar print,  
was meant to be displayed  
on a pillar in a Japanese home.

What don't you see?

Does it matter?



(Beauty Holding a Firefly Cage)  
mid 18th century  
Ishikawa Toyonobu  
Hanging scroll  
ink, color and gofun on paper  
74.1.60  
Not on view

This print uses a notable  
Japanese framing effect --  
showing only part  
of a figure or scene.

How might this remind us  
of the novel?

of *Kya*?



What lessons  
does Kya learn  
from her close  
study of nature?

From fireflies?



“Female fireflies draw in  
strange males  
with dishonest signals  
and eat them...”

Female insects,  
Kya thought, know how  
to deal with their lovers.”



Why might Chase have never taken off the shell necklace?



“Oh, Shenandoah,  
I love your daughter,  
And hear your rolling river.  
For her I’d cross  
Your roaming waters,  
Way, we’re bound away  
Across the wide Missouri.”



Unknown artist, Solomon Islands,  
*Necklace with Half-Moon Pendant*,  
20th century, Shell, tortoise shell,  
string, 2001.130.2 Not on view



# Small group discussion in breakout rooms (15 minutes)

Share your book tour ideas:

- How did you decide on the book to use for the tour?
- Discuss an artwork you chose and how it relates to the book.

# Debrief and sharing your thoughts

For each small group, what were some of the books and artworks you chose?

How did the artworks connect to the book?

Question on feedback form: When will we resume in-person tours for the Purcell-Cutts House?

Our plan is to resume touring the House when we resume in-person tours. JKO is planning to do some training to add information about the neighborhood and racial housing covenants.

Question on feedback form: Could we give a Cross Currents tour based on our assignment?

Stay tuned! We will set up a peer learning opportunity later, in the winter, for a Cross Currents tour.

# Homework

To prepare for next week's session, watch the video "[Language Matters: How to Talk about Native Nations](#)" or read through the video summary [HOW TO TALK ABOUT NATIVE NATIONS: A GUIDE](#) from the Native Governance Center.

Also, if time, watch Juan Lucero's talk, especially from 21 minutes to 36 minutes:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/2905962/video/609999279>

Next session: November 11, 1 to 3 pm, virtual (combined session for all guides)



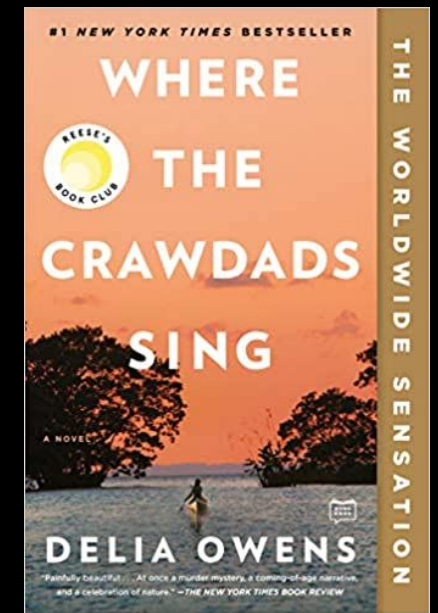
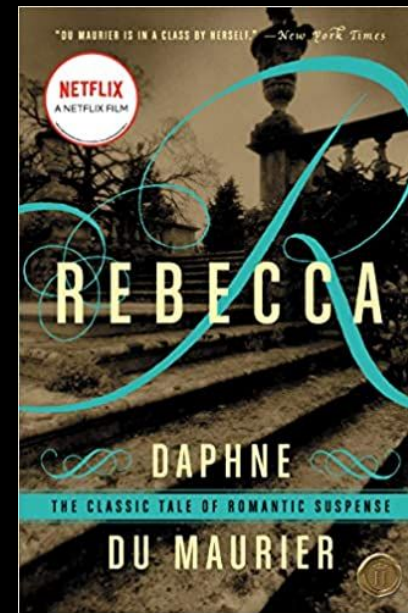
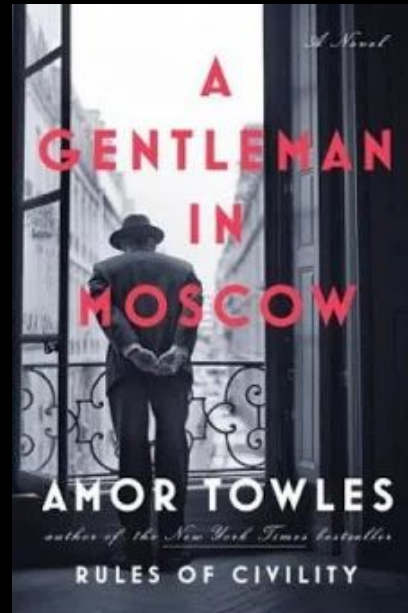
Naomi Schindler, Boy Reading, 2nd half of the 20th century, Woodcut, 2018.125.5, © Estate of Naomi Schindler

# Upcoming peer learning opportunities

## Sample book tours

- Emily Shapiro, *A Gentleman in Moscow* - Friday, 11/19 at 1 PM (in person)
- Ginny Wheeler, *Rebecca* - Tuesday, 11/30 at 11 AM (in person)
- Lynn Dunlap, *Where the Crawdads Sing* - Thursday, 12/2 at 6:30 PM (virtual)

amazon.com



# Upcoming peer learning opportunities

## Sample public tours

- Fran, Friday, 11/5, 11 AM (full)
- Fran (virtual) Thursday, 11/11, 6:30 PM
- Nancy, Friday, 11/12, 11 AM (full)
- Rose, Saturday, 11/13, 11 AM (full)

Graham Sutherland, *Three Standing Forms in a Garden*, 1951, Oil on canvas, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John Rood, 63.73, © The Estate of Graham Sutherland



Other Questions?