

Pre & Post-Visit Activities

European Masters

Jan 29 – June 5, 2016

Explore works from some of the most iconic European artists of the 20th century including Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, Henri Matisse and more! Your museum visit and pre- and post-visit activities support learning by addressing National and Wyoming Common Core Standards for the Visual Arts, Language Arts and Social Studies.

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

- CS 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques and process to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories
- CS 2: Using knowledge of structures and functions: students learn the differences among visual characteristics and purposes of art in order to convey ideas
- CS 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.
- CS 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

CCSS Language Arts:

Speaking and Listening Standards:

- Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on other's ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to take, purpose, and audience.

Writing Standards:

- Write informative/explanatory texts to convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. Writing Standards

Wyoming Social Studies Standards:

- CS 4: Time, Continuity, and Change: Students analyze events, people, problems, and ideas within their historical contexts.
- CS 5: People, Places, and Environments: Students apply their knowledge of the geographic themes (location, place, movement, region, and human/environment interactions) and skills to demonstrate an understanding of interrelationships among people, places, and environment.
- SS12.4.5 Using primary and secondary sources, apply historical research methods to interpret and evaluate important historical events from multiple perspectives.
- SS5.6.1 Use various media resources in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Pre-Visit Activities

Before visiting the NIC, we recommend that you and your students explore and discuss some of the concepts and ideas listed below:

1. Introduce the concepts of “observation” and “interpretation” in art.

Discuss the concepts of “observation” and “interpretation” in art. Observation is a comment, statement or utterance based on something one has seen, heard, or noticed. Interpretation is explanation or statement that assigns meaning to a work of art based on observation.

Choose one of the artworks by the artists showcased in the *European Masters* exhibition (for the list refer to Appendix 1). First, have students work in pairs and share their observations only. Use the following questions to encourage observation:

- ◆ What do you see in this work of art? What else?
- ◆ How would you describe colors/lines/shapes/textures in this work of art?
- ◆ Who/what is the subject of this work of art?

Then, have students share their interpretations of the work. Use the following questions to encourage interpretation:

- ◆ What is going on in this work of art? What makes you say that?
- ◆ How does this work of art make you feel? What did the artist do to achieve this effect?
- ◆ Where and when do you think this scene is taking place? How can you tell?
- ◆ What do you think the artist is trying to communicate?

2. Research the socio-economic conditions.

The early 20th century was marked by rapid industrial, economic, social and cultural change, which greatly influenced art during that time. Have students research socio-economic conditions of early 20th century and analyze how these conditions set the stage for the art movements of that time.

Have students address positive and negative outcomes of industrialization and how it manifested in European art of the 20th century.

3. Explore artists and their media.

Discuss the different types of art media.

Inform students that many of the European artists showcased in the *European Masters* exhibition worked in a variety of media. While Picasso is widely known for his paintings and cubist collages, he also created sculpture and experimented with a variety of printmaking techniques. Henri Matisse was famous for his paintings, illustrations and collages. He also created sculpture, stained glass windows and furniture.

Have students choose one artist from the list (refer to Appendix 1) and research what media they worked in.

Vocabulary:

Industrialization: the large-scale introduction of manufacturing, advanced technical enterprises, and other productive economic activity into an area, society, country.

Medium: in art, medium refers to the substance the artist uses to create his or her artwork.

Lithography: a method of printmaking originally based on the immiscibility of oil and water; printing is from a stone or a metal plate with a smooth surface.

During Your Visit to the NIC

Look. Inquire. Investigate.

1. Select a work of art for observation and discussion. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- ◆ What do you see in this work of art? What else?
- ◆ What colors and textures do you see?
- ◆ What shapes and forms do you see?
- ◆ Describe the types of marks, lines, and brush strokes the artists have made in this work of art?
- ◆ What is happening in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that?
- ◆ What mood/feeling is the artist trying to convey? What do you see that makes you say that?
- ◆ What are the different media you see in this exhibition?

2. Observe Salvador Dali's *Elephant Herd*. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- ◆ What art movement was Salvador Dali associated with?
- ◆ What are the characteristics of surrealism? (The exploration of the dream and unconsciousness as a valid form of reality; the desire to push against the boundaries of socially acceptable behaviors and traditions; the incorporation of chance and spontaneity; emphasis on the mysterious and irrational; images depicting decay and violence).

Salvador Dali (1904 –1989) is best known for his bizarre surrealist paintings. However, he was also a skilled classical painter and illustrator, and produced other art works including sculpture, photography and prints. Many of his famous paintings depict strangely sunlit dream worlds with meticulously painted common objects manipulated and morphed into bizarre creations.

- ◆ What materials did the artist use to create this work of art?
- ◆ Do you think that Dali's lithographs in this gallery are different from his main body of work? Explain why or why not?
- ◆ Do you see any details in these works that remind you of Dali's surrealistic aesthetic? What else?

3. Observe and discuss Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's *Marie-Louise Marsy*.

Toulouse-Lautrec (1864 - 1901) was a French painter, printmaker and illustrator. He was immersed in the theatrical life of Paris and produced many images of modern Parisian life. His career lasted just over a decade and coincided with two major developments in late nineteenth-century Paris: the birth of modern printmaking and the explosion of nightlife culture.

- ◆ How would you describe the woman in this work of art?
- ◆ What is the woman doing?
- ◆ What kind of clothes is she wearing? Is she dressed to go out? What clues tell you that?
- ◆ What do you think this woman is feeling and/or thinking about?
- ◆ What can you tell about her occupation? What makes you say that?

Toulouse-Lautrec was fascinated with the actors and actresses of the Parisian theatre, and Marie-Louise Marsy was one of its stars. The print is one of 13 lithographs from the *Portraits of Actors and Actresses* series. The actresses in other Lautrec posters are depicted in the full extravagance of their stage costume while in this lithograph, the focus is on the woman's face instead of her captivating theatrical costume.

- ◆ Why do you think the artist renders Marie-Louise in this manner? What message is he trying to communicate?

Post-Visit Activities

1. Research and Analyze.

The Industrial Revolution of the late 19th and early 20th century brought significant socio-economic transformation. The economic and social changes greatly impacted European thought and prompted the emergence of new styles of art. Developments in natural sciences and psychology, and the rise of technology provided a new array of subject matter and themes for artists as well as led to the discovery of new artistic materials. Artists began to challenge traditional conventions of reality, space and time, perspective and representation.

Have students research one of the art styles of the early 20th century: cubism, surrealism, fauvism, Dada, etc. Have students choose an artist representing a style and analyze how s/he treated notions of reality, space and time, perspective and representation in her/his art.

2. Make connections.

Select a topic from a social studies or science curriculum (Indigenous Civilizations of Latin America, Age of Imperialism, Revolutionary War, The Great Depression, Civil Rights Movement, Investigating Environmental Sustainability, Renewable energy, etc.) Have students come up with ideas and sketch designs the way an artist of the early 20th century might represent the chosen theme.

3. Write.

Observe *Les Saltimbanques* by Pablo Picasso and discuss the subject matter of this work (for the image refer to Appendix 3). Examine how the theme of the circus recurs throughout Picasso's career. What do the circus performers represent to Picasso? Have students write an opinion piece on this topic stating reasons and other information supporting their point of view.

4. Create.

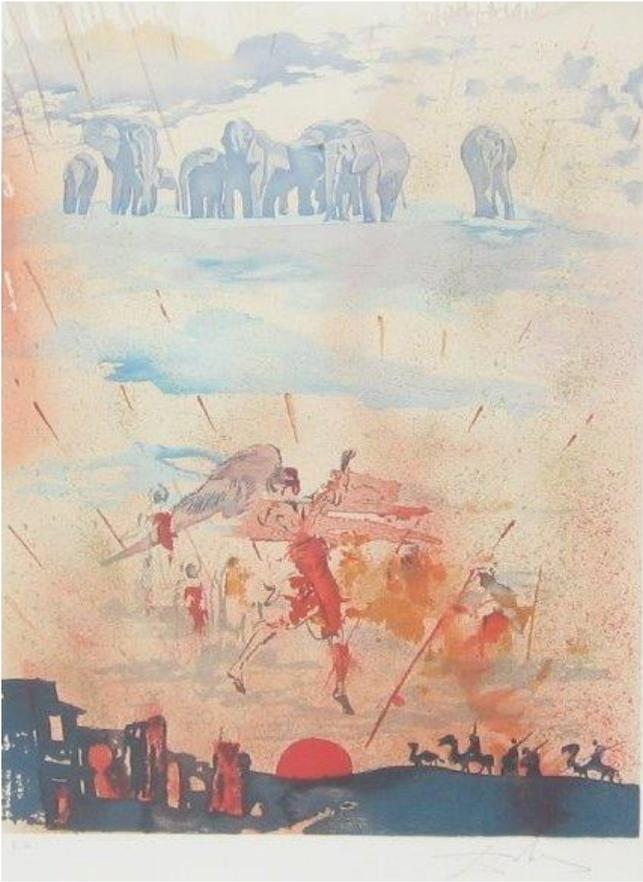
Toulouse-Lautrec created posters that promoted Montmartre entertainers as celebrities, and elevated the popular medium of the advertising lithograph to the realm of high art. Have students research Toulouse-Lautrec's theatre posters. Have students think about a contemporary celebrity and create a poster of this person in Toulouse-Lautrec's style.

Appendix 1.

List of the artists showcased in *European Masters* exhibition:

Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, Henry Matisse, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Carl Link, Joan Miro.

Appendix 2.



Dali, *Elephant Herd*, Lithograph 1977.



Toulouse-Lautrec's *Marie-Louise Marsy*, lithograph, 1898.

Appendix 3.



Les Saltimbanques, Lithograph, 1958