

Women in Art

Tour Description

What have women contributed to the visual arts? Whether creator or inspiration, women have been a power for influence and change in the production of artworks around the world.

Tour Objective This tour can explore art made by women, as well as critically examine the ways women have been depicted by artists—particularly male artists—in various time periods and places. The contributions of women to art, social roles women have played, the relation of women and men, how women have been viewed, and what these portrayals tell us about the cultures in which these women lived, are all issues you could consider.

Means For a general public tour, use a variety of objects from different cultures and historical periods. For school groups, discuss the scope of the tour and its organization with the teacher.

Themes This tour can look at how women have been depicted historically using a chronological approach, discuss art made by women, and/or show the various ways artists have depicted women in multiple roles.

Women Throughout History

Here are some objects to consider for a chronological tour:

Roman, *Portrait of an Older Woman*, 1st century CE, 32.16
Roman, *Portrait of a Young Noblewoman*, 2nd century BCE, 68.9.4
Tang female tomb figures, 618-906, 50.46.181
Daddi, *Madonna Enthroned with the Christ Child*, 1339, 34.20
Cranach, *Portraits of Moritz and Anna Büchner*, c.1520, 57.10
Rembrandt, *Lucretia*, 1666, 34.19
Largillière, *Portrait of Catherine Coustard*, c.1699, 77.26
Copley, *Portrait of Mrs. Nathaniel Allen*, c.1763, 41.3
Girodet, *Portrait of Mlle. Lange as Danaë*, 1799, 69.22
Degas, *Mlle. Hortense Valpinçon*, c.1871, 48.1
de la Fresnaye, *Married Life (La Vie Conjugale)*, 1912, 52.1
Lange, *Migrant Mother*, 1936, 92.136
Modigliani, *Head of a Woman*, c.1911, 62.73.1
Miro, *Head of a Woman*, 1938, 64.44.1
Add contemporary works currently on view

TOUR DESCRIPTIONS:
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**Art Made by
Women**

Women from cultures around the world have created art using all types of media and forms of expression. Here are suggested objects:

Nansun Coulibaly, *Skirt of a Married Woman*, 20th century, 86.100.5, and other Bamana mudcloths
Kuba pile cloth, 99.2.16
Embroidery and applique on Kuba dance skirt, 20th century, 2001.289.6
Magdalene Odundo, Kenya, *Reduced Black Piece*, 1990, 97.5
Sokari Douglas Camp, Nigeria, *Cheering Woman*, 1986, 96.112
Lakota woman's dress, c.1880-1900, 74.64.5
Lakota pipe bag, late 19th century, 2004.27.2
Birchbark baskets, 2008.99.60
Ojibwe bandolier bags, c.1870, 2002.166
Nampeyo, Vessel, 20th century, 96.73.2
Dextra Quotskuyva, *Awatovi Birds*, 1990, 91.3
Maria Martinez, Vessel, 20th century, 86.94.1
Oglala Lakota, Moccasins, 1900, 91.95.2a,b (and others)
Jaune Quick-To-See-Smith, *Sources of Strength*, 1990, 92.64
Hmong embroideries (story squares and clothing)
Nancy Sibley, Sampler, 1808, 81.91
Florence Barton Loring, Crazy Quilt, 1905, 82.139
Kate Harris, *Silver Presentation Cup with Lid*, 1901, 86.42a,b
Hester Bateman, *Cake Basket*, 1783-1784, 86.13.15
Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun, *Portrait of Countess Maria Theresa Bucquoi*, c.1807-1808, 78.7
Georgia O'Keeffe, *Pedernal—from the Ranch #1*, 1956, 64.43.2
Grace Hartigan, *Billboard*, 1957, 57.35
Bridget Riley, *Nineteen Grays*, 1968, P.86.21.1 and *Deny IV*, 1966, 78.74.1
Claire Zeisler, *A Public Affair II*, 1978, 91.140.1
Sheila Hicks, *Evolving Tapestry: The Principal Wife, Yellow Decked*, 1989, 89.40.3

Note photographs from the permanent collection that are on view, including examples by Dorothea Lange, Julia Margaret Cameron, Berenice Abbott, Diane Arbus, Gertrude Käsebier, Jane Tuckerman, and Helen Levitt.

The Prints and Drawings collection includes works of art by many women, including Maria Sibylla Merian, Rosa Bonheur, Mary Cassatt, Käthe Kollwitz, Wanda Gág, and Yvonne Jacquette.

**The Many Roles
of Women**

Artists have viewed women in many different ways. The categories that follow could be used separately as thematic tours, or in combinations. Be sure to include artists from various times and cultures.

**Woman as
Goddess or
Madonna**

Egypt, *Isis*, 1st century, 68.9.5 and other goddess figurines
Cambodia, *Prajnaparamita*, c. 1200, 97.105
India, *Devi as Uma (Parvati)*, 17th c., 2009.12.1
Tibet, *White Tara*, n.d., 91.23.2
China, *Kuan Yin, Goddess of Mercy*, c.1800, 87.71.1
Antimenes Painter, *Hydria*, c. 530 BCE, 61.59
Daddi, *Madonna Enthroned with the Christ Child*, 1339, 34.20
Mariotto di Nardo, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, 1408, 65.37
di Ancona, *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, c.1490, 75.53
Segna, *Madonna and Child*, c.1310, 87.64
Gauli, *Diana the Huntress*, c.1690, 69.37
Mignard, *Venus and Adonis*, c.1650, 87.5
Millais, *Peace Concluded*, 1856, 69.48
Warhol, *Marilyn*, 1967, P.68.379

**Woman as
Symbol**

Paleolithic *Venus Figure*, c.20,000 BCE, 72.10
Gauguin, *Under the Pandanus*, 1891, 41.4
Miro, *Head of a Woman*, 1938, 64.44.1
Epstein, *Female Figure*, 1913, 67.29
Warhol, *Marilyn*, 1967, P.68.379
Senufo, Staff Finial, 19th-20th century, 98.249.33
Sande Society Mask, 19th century, 72.69.1
Chokwe, Mwana Pwo mask, c.1910, 86.16
Côte d'Ivoire, Guro Mask – represents idealized feminine beauty, 19th century, 72.69.2
India, *Shiva's Family*, c.1000, 97.36– male power does not exist without female energy

**Woman as
Worker**

Lange, *Migrant Mother*, 1936, 92.136
Clementine Hunter, *The Wash*, 1950s, 91.88.2
Gauguin, *Under the Pandanus*, 1891, 41.4
Troyon, *Landscape with Cattle and Sheep*, c.1852-1858, 49.6
Florine Stettheimer, *Portrait of Our Nurse, Margaret Burgess*, 1929, 59.21

**Woman as
Mother**

Tissot, *Comtesse d'Yanville and Her Four Children*, about 1895, 97.65
Kabila, about 1900, 2001.198.37a,b
Rufina Tamayo, *The Family*, 1936, 60.4
Millais, *Peace Concluded*, 1856, 69.48
India, *Shiva's Family*, about 1000, 97.36

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Mary Cassatt prints

Cadzi Cody, *Elk Hide*, Wind River Shoshone, c.1880, 85.92

Yombe, *Mother with Child*, Democratic Republic of Congo, 20th century, 90.68

Chokwe Stool, Angola, 19th century, 2002.27.3 – female figures form the support for the chair, as mothers are the foundation of society

Segna, *Madonna and Child*, c.1310, 87.64

Largillière, *Portrait of Catherine Coustard*, c.1699, 77.26

Sargent, *The Birthday Party*, 1887, 62.84

Bouguereau, *Temptation*, 1880, 74.74

Navez, *Portrait of the Gaspard Moeremans Family*, 1831 and 1833, 91.35

Morisot, *The Artist's Daughter, Julie, with her Nanny*, c.1884, 96.40

Woman as Hero

St. Catherine, c.1450-1460, 20.11

Esther and Ahaseurus tapestry, c.1460-1485, 16.721

Vecchia, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, c. 1635-1650, 66.49

Guercino, *Erminia and the Shepherds*, 1648, 62.12

Rembrandt, *Lucretia*, 1666, 34.19

Walker Evans, *Allie Mae Burroughs, Wife of a Cotton Sharecropper, Hale County, Alabama*, 1936, 75.26.14

Dorothea Lange, *Migrant Mother*, 1936, 92.136

Thompson, *Homage to Nina Simone*, 1965, 89.83

Côte d'Ivoire, *Generous Woman Spoon*, n.d., 2000.201

**Woman as
Tempress**

Girodet, *Portrait of Mlle. Lange as Danaë*, 1799, 69.22

Bouguereau, *Temptation*, 1880, 74.74

de la Fresnaye, *Married Life (La Vie Conjugale)*, 1912, 52.1

Munch, *Jealousy*, 1893-1894, 55.12

Kirchner, *Seated Girl*, 1910, altered 1920, 52.12

Wesselman, *Expo Mouth #10*, 1967, 69.135

Lehmann, *Calypso*, 1869, 88.36

Lehmann, *Portrait of Clementine Karr*, 1845, 67.53

Perugini, *I know a maiden, fair to see, take care*, 1868, 2003.204

**Woman as
Decorative
Object**

Largillière, *Portrait of Catherine Coustard*, c.1699, 77.26

Vecchia, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, c.1635-1650, 66.49

Matisse, *White Plumes*, 1919, 47.41

Lehmann, *Calypso*, 1869, 88.36

Dewing, *Girl with Cello*, c.1900, 70.61.18

Ukiyo-e prints of actresses and courtesans (Utamaro, Hokusai)

Tagasode (Whose Sleeves?), c.1610, 84.81.1 – empty garments with lovely fragrant sleeves bring to mind beautiful women who wear them

Kirchner, *Modern Bohemia*, 20th century, 55.3

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**Woman as
Individual**

Roman, *Portrait of an Older Woman*, 1st century, 32.16
Cranach, *Portraits of Moritz and Anna Büchner*, c.1520, 57.10 &
57.11
Clouet, *Portrait of Charlotte of France*, c.1522, 35.7.98
Cuyp, *Portrait of a Anna Blocken*, 1649, 46.12
Copley, *Mrs. Nathaniel Allen*, c.1763, 41.3
Courbet, *Portrait of Madame Robin*, 1862, 40.2
Vigée-Lebrun, *Portrait of Countess Maria Theresa Bucquoi*, 1793,
78.7
Eakins, *Portrait of Elizabeth L. Burton*, 1905-1906, 39.53
Bellows, *Mrs. T. in Cream Silk, No. 2*, 1920, 60.33
Catlett, *Sharecropper*, 1957-1968, P.97.1