

Art Adventure

Family, Friends, and Foes



India, Madhya Pradesh,
Shiva's Family
(*Uma-Mahaeshvara*),
about 1000

● **Become a member of the museum today!**

Thank you for participating in the Minneapolis Institute of Art's popular Art Adventure Program! By volunteering as a Picture Person, you build an important link between the museum and our region's schoolchildren.

By becoming a member of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, you can reach even further, bringing the experience of world-class art to thousands of museum visitors a year – some visiting for the first time ever, and many of them schoolchildren. Members help support the museum's free general admission every day. Members also help support the exhibitions, lectures, events, and classes offered for children, families, students, and adults.

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● **What are you doing next Family Day?**

Family Days at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts are free monthly events that highlight the museum's collection and special exhibitions for art lovers of all ages. The second Sunday each month, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., the museum is filled with hands-on art activities, live music, dance performances, artist demonstrations, family tours, and more. All activities are free and appropriate for children of all ages. Visit our website, www.artsmia.org, for specific Family Day dates, themes, and descriptions.

About the Art Adventure Program

What's the Art Adventure Program?

The Art Adventure Program at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts is a way of bringing works of art that can't leave the museum into elementary school classrooms. Each of the ten Art Adventure reproduction sets features eight works of art chosen around a theme of particular interest to children. Students and teachers are encouraged to follow up classroom presentations with a class visit to the museum to see the actual artworks. They can take a tour with an Art Adventure Guide or with their teacher using a self-guide brochure available from the museum.

What's a Picture Person?

Picture People are the volunteers from the school community who present the reproductions in the classrooms. They are the vital link between the original work of art in the museum and children in the schools. Before they visit any classrooms, Picture People come to the museum for a training session on the reproduction set their school will be using that year. At training they receive printed background material, learn presentation techniques, and—most importantly—experience the enjoyment of interacting with the original objects they will soon be introducing to students.

What does a Picture Person Presentation consist of?

Each participating school structures its Picture Person presentations differently. A Picture Person may present pairs of images in a series of short visits; all the images at once in a single, longer visit; or some other schedule arranged by the school's Art Adventure Coordinator. The presentation may consist only of a discussion or it may involve hands-on activities. In addition, Picture People bring their own individual creativity to their presentations.

Whatever the format, however, one essential characteristic is constant: the Picture Person encourages the children first and foremost to **look** at the reproduction and **talk** about what they see. Although the Picture Person is knowledgeable about the works of art, she or he facilitates the discussion with thoughtful open-ended questions and related props rather than delivering "lecture"-style information.

What does the Art Adventure Program do for kids?

Picture Person presentations provide students with a rare opportunity to spend time looking at art and express what they see in words. Students gain confidence in their ability to find meaning in artifacts from a wide range of world cultures. They practice seeing things from another person's point of view, whether it's their classmate's or the artist's. They feel the thrill of meeting an old friend when they later come upon familiar objects at the museum. And, not least, they enjoy meaningful contact with a visiting member of the school community.

Preparing for a Picture Person Presentation

Relax!

The information provided in this manual is intended as background material to help you feel comfortable when you present the images to children. You are not expected to convey all the details. On the contrary; choose two or three key ideas you think will be compelling for the age group to which you are presenting. Kids love stories—what might you “spin” into a tale? What parallels can you draw with their lives?

Be sure everyone is able to see the reproduction.

Talk with the classroom teacher to find out what routines the class follows when gathering for a visitor. Young groups will often sit on the floor; older students may remain at their desks. Try 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 throughout the group.

Establish a climate where students can listen to what each child has to say.

It is very difficult to listen to more than one person at the same time. Let the kids know at the outset that you expect them to take turns speaking. (If you don’t know the children’s names already, arrange with the teacher to have them wear nametags so you can call on them by name.) Paraphrasing what is said emphasizes that you are really listening and encourages them to listen to one another. Your rephrasing may also help expand their vocabulary. Take care to remember, however, that aesthetic judgments are personal and inexact—set your own preferences aside to allow students to form their own opinions.

Begin your presentation of each image with a long moment of silent looking.

Introduce the lesson by explaining who you are and that you have brought reproductions of real works of art from The Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Review with the class what a museum is and what you’ll be doing with them. Then make a show out of getting the class to understand that their first job is to look quietly. You might build the suspense by keeping each image hidden while you explain that you do not want them even to raise their hands until you ask them to. Model your expectations by spending the time looking too.

Give children time to talk about what they have discovered by looking.

Good questions to use are “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, with a little prompting. “What else can you find?” can help generate further comments. See the “Tips for Talking about Art” following this section for more ideas.

Connect your key ideas to the students’ observations.

When the student’s observations begin to slow down, use what you have learned about their interests to steer the discussion towards the key ideas you have chosen to focus on. 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 together ways to find an explanation.

Keep the age of your audience in mind.

A child’s interests and understandings evolve through generally predictable stages of development. Plan your presentations accordingly. Don’t expect young children to be able to focus for more than twenty minutes. Consider your class’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”? At the same time, try not to talk down to older students.

You can expect developmental differences in children’s aesthetic approaches to art, as well. Younger children will accept abstraction, while older children tend to demand a high degree of realism. Remember, too, that it’s hard for young viewers to look “through” subject matter to notice compositional devices until preadolescence. And it’s surprising to us as adults that children generally do not notice the emotional overtones of a work until the middle years of childhood. (Find out more about the stages of aesthetic development in *Invented Worlds*, by Ellen Winner, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982.)

Talk to other Picture People and use your own imagination!

Veteran Picture People have great ideas about how to capture the imagination of a class. Don’t hesitate to borrow and adapt their suggestions. In addition, several Art Adventure sets come with “prop kits,” an assortment of supplementary materials for you to use in your presentation. Talk to your school’s Art Adventure Coordinator to see if the set you are using comes with props.

Tips for Talking about Art

Remember, a key goal of the Art Adventure program is to help beginning viewers create personal meaning in a work of art. While your impulse may be immediately to begin "teaching," more is gained in the long run if you take the time to help the children establish an emotional connection with the art. The questions below help kids find their own relevance in works of art, and thereby learn to value art as having something to do with their own lives.

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

These simple questions work particularly well with artworks that have a narrative thread. You'll notice this question is different than, "What do you see?" Instead of eliciting a list of things in the picture, "What's going on?" invites a consideration of relationships and interactions and taps into children's natural interest in stories. The question, "What do you see that makes you say that?" focuses comments on the evidence at hand and helps kids explain their assumptions.

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

What would you hear? How would something feel to touch? What path would you take through the picture? What do you see that makes you say that? Imagining the picture as an environment engages all the senses. The expressive qualities of a work become more concrete, easier to relate to.

How is this object like something you encounter in *your* life?

What would you use this for? What do you see that makes you say that? Do you have anything like it? Why do you like to have pictures of yourself? Why do you buy postcards on vacation? Drawing parallels with children's experiences gives them a hook on which to hang new information. Identifying similarities helps illuminate differences as well.

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

What are people in the picture looking at? What has a lot of details? Where are there bright colors? What is biggest? Talking about what makes things seem important in a work of art can allow even a novice to address basic compositional principles.

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

What would happen if you changed a color? Made something bigger or smaller? Moved an object or person? Left something out? Added more details? Changed the quality of a line? Imagining changes helps identify visual elements and their contribution to the overall effect of the image.

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

"Compare and contrast" is a staple of art historical thinking, but it can be done by anybody, at any level of thinking. 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?

Want to take it further?

Have a look at *The Intelligent Eye: Learning to Think by Looking at Art*, by David N. Perkins (Santa Monica, Calif.: The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1994), a very readable guide on how and why to look carefully at art.

Another good book is *Take a Look: An Introduction to the Experience of Art*, by Rosemary Davidson (New York: Viking, 1994). Written for young readers, it provides a nice example of how to talk with children about art.

Tips for Using Props

Why props?

Students normally first encounter the Art Adventure works of art in their classrooms as 20 x 22-inch reproductions. In the reproductions, all 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 work of art, seeing the technique used to create it, or looking at a photograph in which the object is being used adds another dimension to the reproduction of the work of art. The use of props also helps engage learners who prefer hands-on learning styles, and reinforces the understandings of all learners.

What are the challenges of props?

Be aware that props will do little but distract your group without careful planning. Consideration of the following points can prevent group management challenges from undermining the benefits of props:

- What understanding about the work of art does the prop best illustrate? Present the prop in conjunction with information about a work of art or to help answer a question about the work of art.
- How will you structure the group's interaction with the prop?
There are a number of ways to use the prop. Among the variations:
 - Pass the prop around to each student. If you do it this way, give the students a question to consider while they are waiting for the prop and one to consider after they have held the prop. Encourage the students to be ready for discussion when the prop finishes circulating.
 - Ask a single student to come forward and describe how it feels to the whole group.
 - Hold the prop yourself and walk it around the group for the students to touch or look at closely. What should the students be doing while you're doing that?
 - Hold the prop yourself to illustrate relevant parts of the discussion. Then give everyone a chance to examine it more closely at the end of your presentation.
- How will you explain to the group what you expect them to do with the prop? Clear communication of your expectations is essential to getting the students to stay focused on the activity. Will they all get to touch the prop? How should they take turns? What should they do when it's not their turn? How should they treat the prop?
- How will you link the experience with the prop to the rest of the discussion? After the students have explored the prop in some fashion, refer to the experience as you continue the discussion.
- How will you get the prop back? Don't forget to plan how you'll get the props back! Schools are charged significant fees for missing or badly damaged props.

***Family, Friends,
and Foes***

**Art Adventure Program
An Educational Program of the
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
Revised 2014**

Family Friends and Foes

Prop Kit Contents

Work of Art	Prop	Replacement Cost
James Ensor, <i>The Intrigue</i>	●Photograph of James Ensor in his home, 1948, showing masks on mantelpiece	\$10
India, <i>Shiva's Family</i>	●Sample of sandstone	\$5
Berthe Morisot, <i>The Artist's Daughter, Julie, with Her Nanny</i>	●Sample painted canvas demonstrating texture of impasto	\$30
Gerrit van Honthorst, <i>The Denial of St. Peter</i>	●Photocopy demonstrating different light effects	\$15
Francisco Goya, <i>Self-Portrait with Dr. Arrieta</i>	●Reproduction of portrait of Goya by Vicente López Portaña, 1826 (Museo del Prado, Madrid)	\$10
Sir John Everett Millais, <i>Peace Concluded</i>	●Ring of fabric samples with a variety of textures	\$30
Nayarit, <i>House Group</i>	●Diagram of shaft tomb	\$10
Ijaw, <i>Memorial Screen</i>	●Reproduction of similar object from the British Museum (Kalabari, <i>Wooden Funerary Screen</i> , 19 th century)	\$10

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 items. Thank you!

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Introduction

Relationships with others were as central to the lives of people in Mexico 2,000 years ago or in Nigeria in the 19th century as they are to our lives in Minnesota today. The universal need to interact with other people manifests itself in diverse ways. Although cultural and historical differences certainly exist, the relationships humans form bear remarkable similarities.

Throughout history and around the world, artists have represented a broad range of human interaction. The eight works of art in this unit focus on diverse human relationships: parent and child, husband and wife, patient and doctor; relationships between friends, lovers, members of a community, and enemies. Some of the people depicted are compassionate, loving, or supportive in their relationships, while others are cruel, deceitful, or filled with prejudice. Viewed together, these works poignantly show that the experiences of suffering and isolation are as common to the bonds we form as are joy and companionship.

Whatever our own experiences are, we can find personal meaning in the human relationships and the emotions depicted in this series. We may also discover how art can heighten our awareness of the bonds that connect human beings beyond time, gender, race, or nationality.

Questions: Suggested Approaches

Suggested Questions

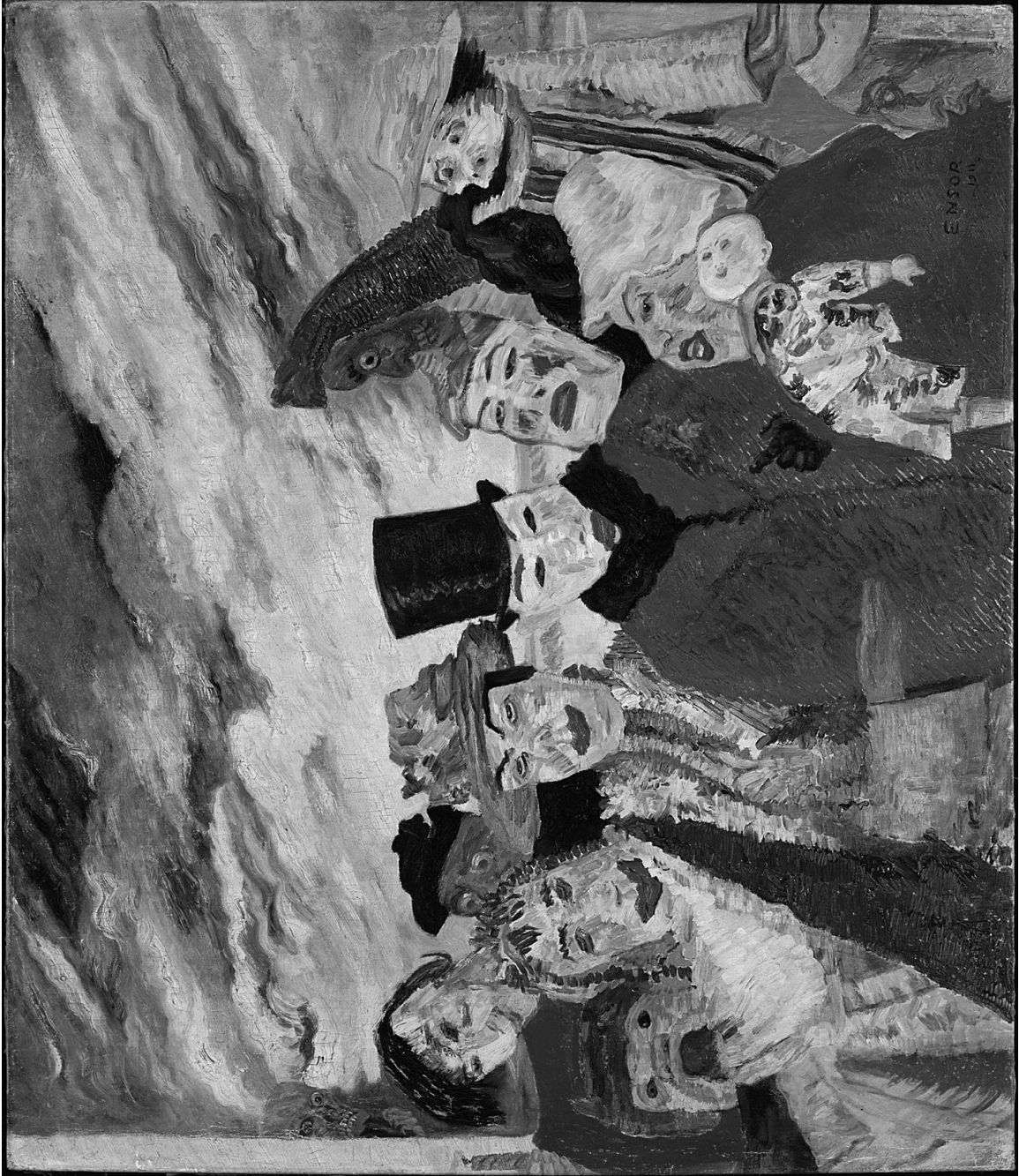
The suggested questions following each entry are offered as guidelines and starting points only, and you may prefer to disregard them altogether. Use your own creativity and expertise to devise additional or alternative questions.

General Thematic Questions & Discussion Points

- **Discuss the fact that these artworks come from different times and cultures.** Since these works are so diverse, how can they all be included in *Family, Friends, and Foes*? How do these works reveal that relationships, good and bad, have an important place in every age and culture? Why do we respond to artwork of this nature?
- **For each piece ask:** Does this work of art depict family, friend, or foe? Can a family member also be a friend? A foe? Can foes ever become friends and vice versa?

General Brain Teasers

- What do we mean by the word *family*? How many members of your family live in your home? Do any family members live in another house? Another city? Another country? Are all members of your family alive today?
- Do different cultures have different family patterns and relationships? Compare Africa, India, and England.
- What do we mean by the word *friend*? What do we mean by the word *foe*? Can foes ever become friends? Can friends ever become foes? What emotions do relationships between friends and foes produce?



James Ensor, Belgian, 1860–1949
The Intrigue, 1911
Oil on canvas
H.37¼ x W.44½ inches (canvas)
Gift of Mrs. John S. Pillsbury, Sr., 70.38

Theme

Although this painting was inspired by a specific personal experience, it also makes a very profound statement about the ugliness of prejudice and discrimination.

Background

During the 19th century, Belgium's artistic identity was based, for the most part, on its glorious Flemish past, particularly the 15th and 17th centuries, which produced such celebrated masters as Hubert and Jan Van Eyck, Hieronymous Bosch, and Peter Paul Rubens. Though James Ensor was influenced by his Flemish heritage, he was, in fact, a solitary genius, who rarely left his native town of Ostend aside from the time he spent studying art in Brussels. A uniquely original painter who defies categorization, Ensor emerged as Belgium's first artist of major importance since Rubens in the 17th century.

Ensor's beloved city of Ostend was a continuing influence on his artistic development and career. Ostend was a coastal resort town, and its geography, climate, people and customs helped nurture and shape the imagination of this extraordinary artist. Belgian art critic Paul Haesaerts sheds light on this important relationship:

Ostend had many attractions for its painter—the countryside surrounding it, crowned and exalted by enormous clouds and vast luminous expanses; its softly undulant dunes capped with sea grasses; its shifting skies; the enlarging presence of the sea; its winter fogs and bluster; the band concerts during the summer months; the teeming colors and smells of its crowded docks; the blunt speech of its people; the raciness of its indigenous life seasoned with cosmopolitanism; the comic strangeness of the watering season; its annual Carnival with joyous masks against a background of sadness; the frenzy of storms alternating with moments of total and silken calm. Each of these aspects of Ostend is matched by an aspect of Ensor's art.¹

¹ Paul Haesaerts. *James Ensor* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1957), p. 44.

The Intrigue

Ensor's *The Intrigue* depicts the harassment of his sister, Mitche, and her Chinese fiancé by the villagers of Ostend, Belgium. Mitche's romance with Tan Hee Tseu, an art dealer who lived in Berlin, caused a great scandal in the provincial town, and Tan's appearance in Ostend before the wedding provoked racist rumblings and gossip.

In Ensor's painting, Mitche and Tan, the masked man and woman in the center, are the main characters in the drama. She holds his arm protectively, while he seems to withdraw his expressionless mask down into the collar of his coat. The two are surrounded by grotesque gossips, also dressed in carnival masks, who appear to mock them. A heckler in the foreground carries a Chinese doll and points an accusing finger at Tan.

Although in some instances masks can be gay and festive, in Ensor's work they represent the dark side of human nature. Here they seem to reflect the true personalities of their wearers, showing them to be cruel people, as ugly in spirit as the masks they wear. Ironically, Mitche and Tan, like their tormentors, are also in masquerade. This device suggests the two-fold function of the mask: it can give both protection to the vulnerable and anonymity to the vicious. In the end, neither escapes from death, symbolized in the painting by a skeleton lurking on the left side in the background.

Ensor often painted several versions of the same work, particularly after 1900, when his production slowed down. The first version of *The Intrigue* was completed in 1890, two years before his sister's marriage. The Institute's painting is a close replica and was completed in 1911, many years after Tan Hee Tseu, unable to cope with the pressures of social ostracism, abandoned his wife, Mitche. The second painting is thus an even more bitter social commentary.

Style and Technique

Diverse and ever changing in his artistic style, Ensor approached painting with a sense of experimentation, invention, and capriciousness. During the 1880s, fantastic and grotesque creatures began to appear in Ensor's canvases, and his early interest in naturalism gave way to an expressionistic explosion of twisted brushstrokes and abrasive colors.

In *The Intrigue*, the scene seems to hover between dream and reality. Rather than depicting things as they actually appear, Ensor creates a sense of fantasy and caricature by his use of exaggerated color, line, and form. Painting in oil on canvas, he uses bright reds, blues, and greens juxtaposed with whites, browns, and blacks, creating an intense, vibrant effect. The jarring quality of the colors is intensified by Ensor's agitated, broken brushstrokes, which move frenetically in various directions. The fantastic effects of Ensor's color and line can be seen in the figure with the spiky blue hair to the left of Mitche, the green-haired creature looming over the crowd on the right, and in all the harshly painted masked faces with their garish red lips and blotchy skin.

The figures are placed close together in a stage-like setting, dramatically confronting the viewer. Ensor draws our attention to the main characters in the painting, Mitche and Tan, by placing them in the center of the crowd and the painting. They are frontally posed with their full torsos showing, while only the heads of the others are seen. Also leading us to the figure of Tan is the pointing finger of the heckler in the foreground who holds a Chinese doll.

The composition is divided horizontally into two separate parts, with the crowd of figures in the lower part and the cloud-swept sky above. Offering no relief from the tension below, the thickly painted sky is ominous and turbulent, echoing the uneasy feeling of the crowd. Moreover, emerging from the sky on the far left is a skeleton, peering out as if from the wings of a stage. Painted in the same whites and blues as the sky, the skeleton is not immediately apparent, but rather, appears subtly, startling the viewer with its lurking, sinister presence. Only the horizon in the background, suggested by the flat band that appears to stretch behind the figures, lends a note of calmness and stability to the scene.

Artist

James Ensor grew up in the Belgian seaside resort of Ostend where his family owned a souvenir shop located on the ground floor of their house. The grotesque masks, puppets, dolls, seashells, and hats in his parents' store, together with the town's elaborate carnival festivities, left an indelible mark upon Ensor's childhood imagination, and eventually became important motifs in his art.

In boyhood, Ensor studied under the tutelage of two local watercolor painters, and he enjoyed painting the countryside around Ostend, the dune-swept beaches, and the sea. He then pursued three years of formal training at the Brussels Academy, where he developed technical mastery but felt extremely frustrated by the conservatism of the school.

Ensor returned to Ostend in 1880 and remained there until his death, living and working in the family home. The oppressive life of the Ensor household, where father, mother, sister, and two aunts lived in constant tension, became the principal theme of his work. He also occasionally painted scenes of the local people and the Belgian seacoast.

During the early 1880s, Ensor's work was well-received in both avant-garde and conservative exhibitions, including the Brussels and Paris salons. His approach, however, soon began to change, moving toward brutal and shocking subject matter, and in 1884 his entries were rejected by the Brussels Salon.

The period of the late 1880s and much of the 1890s was a time of tremendous artistic productivity for Ensor as his style matured. But his harshly depicted imagery of bizarre masked figures was startling even to his avant-garde colleagues. The form and content of his work became so shocking that he was ostracized by the group of independent artists with whom he had exhibited in Brussels.

Rejected by his colleagues for his daring experimentation and deeply affected by his father's death in 1887, Ensor became obsessed with human falsity and mortality. He produced a vast number of satirical paintings and drawings in which the symbolic images of the mask and skeleton constantly appeared. His own sense of persecution was reflected in several self-portraits in which he painted himself as Jesus Christ.

In the 1890s critics began to recognize Ensor's originality and collectors began to buy his paintings and etchings. Ironically, the intensity of his work diminished during this period. The biting satire and brutality of his earlier work gave way to a new delicacy and sensuousness. After 1900 he produced few new canvases.

During the last decades of his long life, James Ensor was recognized for his artistic achievements, indeed, for the very works that were scorned years earlier. He was given the title of baron by King Albert I, and his bust was placed in a square in Ostend, the beloved city where he remained throughout his life, refusing to leave even when faced with perilous bombings during World War II. When he died in November 1949, he was given a “king’s funeral” with a procession through the streets of Ostend that evoked his carnival-like paintings.²

Although Ensor worked in isolation, the sense of macabre fantasy and spiritual decay in his art are characteristic of the work of some other late 19th-century European artists known as the Symbolists. Their work is filled with private, esoteric images and executed in a wide variety of personal styles, but common to all is a desire to shock the viewer. In his individual revolt against conventional technique and his emphasis upon personal expression, Ensor was an important transitional figure to the 20th century, influencing the movements of German Expressionism and Surrealism.

Suggested Questions

1. Do these look like real people? Or do they represent types of people? Why do you think so? What types of people are they? Would you like to meet them? Do you think the artist Ensor likes them?
2. Have you ever worn a mask? Perhaps in a play or on Halloween? Why did you wear it? How did you feel behind the mask? Did you ever think of doing something wearing a mask that you would not do otherwise?
3. What kinds of people might wear masks?
4. Sometimes we can make our own faces into masks. If you’re sad, but don’t want anyone to know, what kind of mask do you wear? If you are frightened, but want to seem brave, what kind of mask do you wear?
5. **Tell the story of the painting. Then ask:** Have you ever been laughed at or had your feelings hurt in school? Did you like the faces of those who were teasing you? How did they look to you? Did you let them know you were hurt, or did you try to “mask” your feelings?
6. Look carefully at the figures in the painting. Can you tell which figure is Ensor’s sister, Mitche? Can you find her fiancé, Tan? How did you pick them out? What clues did Ensor give you?
7. How do you think the artist Ensor felt about the people who teased his sister and her husband? Is there anything about the way he painted them that tells us? How has he used color to tell us how he feels? How has he used line? Brushstroke? How does he show crowding? Ugliness?

² Haesaerts, p. 230.

8. Do you see anything here that might be a symbol? (*Skeleton, Chinese doll, etc.*) Why do you think Ensor includes them?
9. Do you think the artist wanted his painting to look pretty? Why or why not? Is there anything frightening about the painting?
10. If the people in the painting could speak, what would their voices sound like? What do you think they would say?
11. Have you ever felt that you were different from all the others in a group? How did this make you feel? How do you feel about people who are different?
12. What can we learn from this painting? Do you like this painting? Why or why not?



Uttar Pradesh (Asia, India, Central)
Shiva's Family (Uma-Mahaeshvara), c. 1000
Buff sandstone
H.59 x W32³/₄ x D.13¹/₂ inches
The John R. Van Derlip Fund, 97.36

Theme

Made for religious purposes, this sculpture represents the divine powers of the Hindu god Shiva (SHEE-va) and his family. Like Millais's *Peace Concluded*, it presents the timeless theme of family harmony and shows the close bonds between a husband and wife surrounded by their children.

Background

Extending from the Himalayan mountain ranges south toward the equator, India represents the oldest unbroken civilization in the world. The largest single nation within southern Asia, modern India is the birthplace of three major religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Each of these ancient faiths has played a basic role in the development of Indian art and culture.

The oldest faith, Hinduism is not one integrated religion, but consists of many related sects. Lacking a single founder, Hinduism evolved as a polytheistic (belief in more than one god) religion, combining many different beliefs and customs that developed over the centuries. The religion embraces an extremely complex pantheon of interrelated deities. The principal Hindu deities include Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the preserver; and Shiva, the destroyer and creator of the universe. The major gods all have numerous forms and manifestations, each associated with myths and identifying emblems, vehicles (animals that serve as their means of transportation), and postures. Although appearing human, Hindu deities have strongly idealized bodies, and often are shown with multiple arms, or even extra heads or animal parts — a way to show the special powers that clearly distinguish them as superhuman.

During medieval times, Hindu temples proliferated in India as local kings rivaled one another in building structures to enshrine their favorite deities. Considered an earthly recreation of the gods' celestial abode, the temples often have mountain-like towers placed above the sanctuary, referring to the mythical mountain where the gods reside. They were elaborately embellished both inside and out with sculptural images and decorative carvings, fulfilling the traditional belief that as representations of the divine, the temple should be suitably adorned. Hindu deities were represented on panels in niches running around the outer walls of temples. Other parts such as walls, ceilings, columns and doorways were also ornamented with carvings of divine and semi-divine figures, as well as patrons of the temple, devotees, and animals.

Shiva's Family

Typical of 10th- and 11th-century sculpture from central India, this elaborate relief would have originally decorated the exterior wall of a Hindu temple dedicated to the god Shiva. The sculpture portrays Shiva, whose dual identity as destroyer and creator reflects the Hindu belief that out of

destruction comes creation. Shiva is accompanied by his wife, Parvati (PAR-va-tee). The couple is surrounded by symbols that would be recognized by followers of the Hindu religion. They are seated on a throne made in the form of a lotus, the symbol of the universe, which in turn is supported by the bull Nandi, the vehicle of Shiva. The structure that surrounds the couple represents the house on Mount Kailasa (Ky-lah-shah) in the Himalayas where Shiva and Parvati reside.

Usually represented with multiple arms as a sign of his divinity, Shiva is seen with three arms in this sculpture (a fourth arm appears to have broken off). With one right hand he grasps a trident, a three-pronged spear that symbolizes his power. His left arm embraces his wife, while his other right arm rests on his leg. (This arm's hand is missing.) Shiva gently presses his right foot against a representation of Mount Kailasa in order to restrain warriors of the underworld, who appear in the lower register. Parvati holds a mirror in her left hand to reflect the glory of Shiva as well as her own beauty. Parvati's left foot rests on the figure of a lion, her vehicle.

The two figures are closely interrelated in form and in spirit, reflecting the Hindu concept that the wife or consort of an important male deity embodies the inherent energy or power within the male. Indeed Shiva is considered powerless without Parvati. The unity of this couple is shown in their similar regal adornment, with elaborate crowns and hairdos, sumptuous jewelry, and richly ornamented costumes. Their unity is reinforced by their fond intimacy and their interwoven limbs and gestures, which seem to be orchestrated in dance-like positions, and are portrayed in the traditional manner of Indian sacred sculpture. The sculptor was not concerned with naturalistic anatomy, but rather, with an idealized godly image expressing a sense of inner calm and spiritual serenity devoid of human emotion. This is seen in the figures' facial expressions as well as in their physical positions, which display the "lotus" posture of yoga with the sole of one foot turned upwards and with joints bent sharply. Although their bodies are animated in their tense contortions, they are also restrained. When seated in this manner, Hindu deities acquire a sacred aura that sets them apart from the everyday world.³

Distinct physical types evolved in Indian sculpture as models of divine beauty. In Indian art and mythology the gods are always youthful in appearance. Typical of Hindu male deities, Shiva is represented with broad shoulders and chest, a slender waist, and solid limbs. Like other female deities, Parvati is depicted with an elaborate headdress and jewelry, heavy round breasts, a narrow waist, ample hips, and a graceful posture.⁴ The exaggerated curves of her body reflect the Indian concept of ideal feminine beauty, which combines abstraction with naturalism. The rounded, organic forms of the figures blend with the curving lines of their garments and jewelry to create rich patterning and a rhythmic curvilinear design. Through the sensuous portrayal of the figures, the artist shows their divine nature.

³ Through physical and mental discipline, the practitioner of yoga aims to gain control over the mind and body. The lotus posture involves sitting with legs and feet in certain fixed positions that are thought to aid meditation.

⁴George Mitchell, *In the Image of Man: The Indian Perception of the Universe through 2000 Years of Painting and Sculpture* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, in association with the Arts Council of Great Britain, 1982), p. 16.

Their facial features also conform to traditional types. Both gods and goddesses in Indian sculpture have full faces with fish-shaped eyes, arched eyebrows, and full lips.⁵ The noses of the figures are partially broken off but would have been sharply defined. Their expressions are serene, contemplative and otherworldly.

To either side of the central couple are their offspring: Ganesha, on the lower right side, is the elephant-headed god known as the remover of obstacles; Skanda, on the lower left side, is the god of war and wisdom and protector of children, here shown with his peacock. The family is surrounded by various attendants, celestial guardians, elephants and lion figures. At the top and left sides are miniature temples containing other manifestations of Shiva. They are arranged in an orderly and symmetrical composition, contributing to the sculpture's overall balance and sense of stability. The surrounding pointed arch structure frames the central figures of Shiva and Parvati, and complements their organic forms. As in the African memorial screen in this set, the key figures are accentuated by their scale, frontal and central placement, and symmetrical arrangement.

Technique

Stone carving is a subtractive process in which material is chipped away from a block of stone to create an image. First a pointed metal instrument is used to cut the general outline of the sculpture. Then a variety of chisels are used to cut away more stone, gradually revealing the finished form.

Made of buff-colored sandstone found in central India, this sculpture has been carved in high relief with deep recesses and rounded forms. Sandstone is a relatively soft stone, which perhaps determined the artist's emphasis on sculptural form rather than minute detail. Since the sculpture was made to adorn a temple wall, its form and composition were probably dictated by architectural considerations such as its position on the wall, the depth of the niche in which it was placed, and the style of the temple. The figures of Shiva and Parvati are emphasized by their pronounced swelling forms. The deep carving provides areas of shadow that contrast dramatically with the protruding forms suffused with light. The sculpture has also been carved in receding planes to create a sense of depth, with Shiva and Parvati carved in highest relief and the subsidiary figures that surround the key deities set back in lower relief. They are also smaller in scale and treated with less attention to detail.

Artist

A Hindu ruler commissioned the building of a temple not only as an expression of piety, but also in celebration of important political events such as military victories or special ceremonies. Building in stone was an expensive undertaking: the stone needed to be cut and transported, and highly paid craftsmen of various skills were required.

⁵Ibid.

While we do not know the name of the person who created this sculpture, we know that the artist's role was to give visible form to religious ideas. Considering his work a means of connecting with the spiritual world, a sculptor went through various preparatory rituals before beginning a sculpture.

Like architects and other artisans, Indian sculptors working on sacred monuments were usually organized into groups similar to the guilds of medieval Europe or into families. In both, techniques were handed down from one generation to another. Stone sculptors worked on all aspects of temple buildings. Master sculptors created the principal sculpted images for the sanctuary and exterior walls, while other craftsmen were responsible for carving on beams, brackets, columns, and bases.

Important in the evolution of Indian sculpture was the close relationship between artists and priests. Priests developed rules for translating theological ideas into sculpted images. In written texts, they gave detailed descriptions of appropriate costume, ornament, facial expression, posture, hand gesture and emblems for various deities, their consorts, and animal vehicles. They also dictated the location of the figures on temple walls. Even the order of images and the proportions of figures were prescribed.⁶

Suggested Questions

1. This is a sculpture of Hindu gods. How do we know this it portrays a family? Who is most important? Why do you say that? Describe what the figures are wearing. What are they holding?
2. How would you describe the expression on Shiva's and Parvati's faces? Is it calm? Angry? Contemplative? Describe their posture. Is it active? Relaxed? Controlled? How are they sitting? Try to sit the way they are sitting. How does it feel?
3. Do these figures look like humans or gods? Why do you say that?
4. Shiva is represented with multiple arms as a sign of his divinity. Why would it be good to have many arms?
5. Shiva is a very powerful and important god in the Hindu religion. How does the sculpture show this? Is he scary? Is he friendly? Do you think he is a good husband and father? Why do you say that?
6. Additive sculpture is sculpture made by building up a form through molding a material such as clay as seen in the Nayarit house group. Subtractive sculpture is made by removing unwanted material from a mass, such as a piece of wood or marble. Is *Shiva's Family* an example of additive or subtractive sculpture? What makes you think so?

⁶ Mitchell, p. 24.

7. Major Hindu deities have specific animals that serve as their vehicles of transportation. How many animals can you find? Where do you see them? Why might Shiva and Parvati be associated with these animals? If you were a Hindu god, what animal would you want to be associated with? Why?
8. Hindu gods carry certain objects in their hands that tell us about their powers. These are called attributes. What attributes of Shiva do you see? Of Parvati? What do they tell us about them?
9. If these figures could speak, what would their voices sound like? What do you think they would say?
10. Parvati is considered to embody Shiva's energy and power. How has the artist shown their unity? How do they interact?
11. Balance is the way that art elements are arranged in a composition. How is this sculpture balanced? Does it have symmetrical or asymmetrical balance? Explain your answer.
12. This sculpture was originally on the exterior wall of a Hindu temple. Why do you think it was important to the Hindu people to build structures to enshrine their favorite deities? What does this sculpture tell us about the patron who supported its creation?
13. How is this sculpture viewed differently in The Minneapolis Institute of Arts from its original location? How does this affect the relationship between the sculpture and the viewer?
14. Where have you seen examples of sculpture integrated with architecture? Describe them. Did you see them in your neighborhood, on vacation, in a picture?
15. This sculpture was made for religious purposes. What other works in this set were made for religious purposes? How are they similar? How are they different?
16. In Millais' painting *Peace Concluded*, the artist showed family harmony. How is family harmony shown in this sculpture? In what ways are these works of art similar?



Berthe Morisot, French, 1841–1895

The Artist's Daughter, Julie, with Her Nanny, c. 1884

Oil on canvas

H.22½ x W.28 inches

The John R. Van Derlip Fund, 96.40

Theme

Berthe Morisot has captured a poignant moment in her own daughter's life as the young girl keenly observes her nanny doing needlework. The painting offers a glimpse into French domestic life during the 19th century, as well as insight into the artist's roles as mother and painter.

Background

The French Impressionists were a revolutionary group of 19th-century artists who began painting modern life in the 1860s, challenging traditional French academic ideas with a new way of seeing and portraying the world. They wanted to capture in their art the vitality of modern life and to represent their subjects as the human eye actually perceived them. To this end, they explored ways to capture impressions of passing moments and of the constantly changing effects of light and atmosphere. By studying the new scientific theories on light and optics, they learned that the actual color of an object is modified by the intensity of the light surrounding it, as well as by reflections from objects and colors next to it. Hence, reality, as the eye perceives it, is always changing. In their quest for spontaneity, these artists often used broken brushstrokes and quick gestures. They rejected traditional techniques such as the modeling of forms in dark and light, sharp focus, precise detail and outline, the use of black for shadows, and continuous brushstrokes.

The Impressionists also explored contemporary themes in their art. During the 1850s and 1860s, Paris was rebuilt under Napoleon III and his architect, Baron Haussman, who transformed the city's narrow winding streets into broad boulevards lined with cafes, restaurants, and theaters. For the first time, people were drawn out into public places for leisure activity, providing new subject matter for the Impressionists. In order to paint directly from life, they moved their easels out of doors, painting in the open air (*en plein air*) rather than in their studios. Impressionist artists also painted quiet scenes of middle-class family life, perhaps as a defense against the rapid growth of urbanization and industrialization occurring at the time.

Female artists in this period, however, were restricted in their subject matter since the public aspects of modern Paris were not considered appropriate for respectable women to paint. During the 19th century, male and female roles and activities were clearly delineated. The realms of art, culture, commerce and public life were considered the province of men, while the private world of home and family was the realm of women. Boys were given public education that prepared them for leadership and public service, while girls were prepared for a life of domestic responsibility, motherhood, and artistic accomplishments suitable for enhancing the home, such as needlework

and watercolor painting.⁷ Because of these differences, female artists associated with the Impressionists often chose their subjects from the private world of the home and family. Focusing on the relationships in their lives, these artists often used family members as models.

The Artist's Daughter, Julie, with Her Nanny

This painting is one of several in which Berthe Morisot featured her daughter, Julie, with her Irish nanny, Pasie. Here they are seen at Morisot's spacious Paris home on the rue Villejust, which the family occupied beginning in 1883. The two are shown in an interior room, with a window view behind them. Both are intently focused on Pasie's act of sewing. The artist has captured this ordinary activity with little concern for detail. Instead she depicts the scene as it would be perceived in a single glance, which gives the picture a spontaneous appearance. Morisot freely applies the paint using sketchy brushstrokes and rapid movements. Certain areas appear more as energetic brushwork than recognizable objects, for example, Julie's dress and right hand, the sewing basket, and the vase with flowers at the left. At close range, the brushstrokes appear disjointed and the images somewhat abstract, but observed from a few feet away, they coalesce into recognizable forms. Because the forms are composed of strokes and patches of paint, however, they lose some of their solidity. In the background, the figure of a man with his back turned is barely discernible through the window. This is Morisot's husband, Eugène Manet, who was the brother of a famous painter of modern life, Edouard Manet.⁸

In this painting, Morisot explores the act of looking itself, revealing a child's sense of wonder. Julie is engrossed in watching Pasie's focused hand-eye coordination as she intently does her needlework. Julie's absorption mirrors that of the painter, who carefully observes her subject from outside the picture frame.⁹ The painting evokes a reflective, contemplative mood, partially because of the intensity of Julie's gaze and concentration on the needlework, but also because of the light-filled space and atmospheric effects. While the mood is tranquil, it is also psychologically charged by Julie's active mind. Her tender face, which is depicted with relatively careful observation in comparison to other parts of the painting, is constructed of boldly painted overlapping brushstrokes that show the play of light over her features.¹⁰

The nanny appears to be a mentoring and nurturing figure as she patiently demonstrates sewing to the child. The closeness of the figures and their shared concentration suggest a harmonious relationship. The placement of Julie and her nanny so close to the picture's surface engages the viewer and emphasizes the immediacy of the moment. The animated slashes of paint create a sense of energy, and also remind us of the artist's intense involvement in the act of painting.

Despite the freedom of brushwork, the painting is carefully composed, with structural elements in the walls, windows, and background buildings. Though the strokes and colors appear at times haphazard, the artist has also used color to order the painting and give it a sense of depth. The space extends from interior to exterior — from the needlework, which is barely recognizable, to the hazy figure in the garden, and to some edifices that are difficult to define. Morisot uses

⁷ Kathleen Adler and Tamar Garb, *Berthe Morisot* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 10.

⁸ Manet's 1866 painting *The Smoker* is in the collection of The Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

⁹ Charles Stuckey, "Impressionism's Leading Lady," *Arts* (December 1996) p. 7.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

complementary tones of red and green to expand the illusion of space. The pinks of the background building, Julie's ear and necklace, and both figures' facial features stand out against the greens of the garden as well as of Julie's dress. The warm tones of yellow-brown hair contrast with the blues of the nanny's dress. The placement of colors creates a sense of movement and energy.

Morisot's ability to integrate her roles as parent and professional artist is suggested in this painting. Julie, her only child, was her workday companion and favorite model. Like many mothers in the intimate act of producing a family album, Morisot observed and sensitively depicted her daughter during a precious moment of Julie's development. It is also significant that Julie's nanny is part of the scene, indicating Morisot's financial resources, which allowed her to hire support for Julie's upbringing and thus free herself to pursue painting as a profession.

Style and Technique

Unlike Millais's highly finished and precisely detailed painting in *Peace Concluded*, Morisot used a shorthand technique of spontaneous brushwork to capture visual experience of a given moment. This daring technique resulted in loose, rapid brushwork and a variety of sketchy markings.

Although she worked in oil paint on canvas, Morisot wanted her paintings to achieve the fresh, informal appearance of watercolors and pastels. Her extreme freedom of brushwork, which was more common in preparatory studies, done in pastel or watercolor, was considered exceptionally daring at this time. During her career, Morisot continued to investigate the possibilities of the rapid oil sketch.¹¹

Artist

Born in 1841, Berthe Morisot grew up in an affluent family with a strong artistic tradition. The youngest of three daughters, Morisot studied art from childhood, always confident that she would become a painter. She quickly evolved into an influential and daring art pioneer despite many obstacles. Because she was a woman, she was barred from the state-sponsored schools that produced the most successful artists of the time. With her sister Edma, she studied art with several painters but was particularly inspired by Camille Corot, who encouraged her to paint landscapes entirely outdoors rather than following the accepted practice of finishing the paintings inside a studio. She also studied with her brother-in-law, Edouard Manet.

Morisot's early works, which were loose in style and experimental in approach, were often rejected by the prestigious Paris salons. In 1874, she accepted painter Edgar Degas's invitation to show her work in the first Impressionist group exhibition, the first of many in which she participated. Morisot epitomized the new style, presenting daring work that helped alter the course of painting in Europe. In 1876 she became the first to present a series or a group of related works made at a single locale, a concept that the Impressionists continued to explore.

The subject of mothers and daughters always fascinated Morisot, and with the birth of her own daughter in 1878, Julie became a focus of her art. Morisot was able to combine her devotion to

¹¹ Stuckey, 7.

parenting and to art, engaging her daughter as her workday companion, model and fellow artist. In the early 1880s the artist began to specialize in autobiographical scenes. Morisot recorded Julie's physical and intellectual development from infancy through adolescence, often revealing the wonder with which Julie encountered the world around her. Morisot and her husband took an active role in their daughter's education, teaching her drawing, painting, reading, writing and history at home, a practice that was not unusual at the time.

Morisot's husband, Eugène Manet, died in 1892. Morisot died 4 years later at the age of 54, leaving their daughter, Julie, an orphan at age 16. Julie continued living in the rue Villejust home with her cousins' family.

Like many female artists throughout history, Berthe Morisot was not recognized in her day for her achievements as a painter. While she was often ignored or negatively reviewed by critics, she was respected by her colleagues and had a strong influence on them. It was not until after her death that Morisot's work received wide acclaim.

Suggested Questions

1. What is going on in this painting? How many figures do you see? What are they doing?
2. The artist organized the painting into three sections—a foreground, middle ground, and background. Who did she include in the foreground? What do you see in the middle ground? Look closely between the heads of Julie and her nanny. What is in the background?
3. What colors do you see in this painting? Are the colors bright or dull? Where do you see pink?
4. The term naturalistic describes art in which the subject is depicted as closely as possible to the way it truly appears. What looks naturalistic in Morisot's painting of her daughter and nanny? What aspects do not look naturalistic?
5. Why do you think the artist wanted to paint her daughter and the nanny? What is special about this time in Julie's life? Why do we want pictures today of our family members?
6. How are portraits made today? Have you had your portrait made? How was it done?
7. Where was the artist when she painted this scene? What makes you think so? Do you think she was more interested in telling a story or in showing exactly what she saw? Why do you say that?
8. What is the mood of this picture? How does it make you feel? What has the artist done to give you this feeling?

9. The impressionists wanted to capture the impression of a passing moment. What about this painting is impressionistic? How does Morisot's use of color and broken brushstrokes capture the fleeting moment of this scene?
10. What does this painting tell you about Morisot's roles as a mother and an artist? Do you think it was difficult for her to be a dedicated artist and a devoted mother? Do you know any women today who struggle with similar issues regarding work and family?
11. In the painting, Julie is watching her nanny sew. What skills have you learned from other people? What skills have you taught yourself by watching and looking at examples made by others?
12. Why do you think the artist painted this picture? Do you have pictures of your family members? If you created a picture of your family, who would you include?
13. Compare this painting of domestic life with the Nayarit house group and Millais's *Peace Concluded*. How are they alike? How do they differ? What is the relationship between the artist and subject in each? For what purpose was each made?



Gerrit van Honthorst, Dutch, 1592–1656
The Denial of Saint Peter, 1623
 Oil on canvas
 H.43½ x W.57 inches (canvas)
 The Putnam Dana McMillan Fund, 71.78

Theme

The Denial of Saint Peter shows a man betraying his friend when that friend is no longer popular. Peter denies his friendship with Jesus when the relationship threatens his own life—an act that Peter previously thought was impossible and that he would later deeply repent.

Story

The story of this painting is found in each of the first four books of the New Testament, the Christian body of sacred writings. It begins just after the Last Supper, the meal eaten by Jesus and his followers before he was taken by Roman soldiers and eventually executed. After the meal, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives, where he foretold that all 12 of his disciples would forsake him that evening when he was in danger. Peter told Jesus "Even if they all fall away, I will not," to which Jesus replied, "Truly, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times."

Jesus, with his disciples, then went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray, and it was there that the Roman soldiers found and arrested him. True to the prophecy, all of Jesus' followers deserted him, though Peter followed at a distance when the soldiers led Jesus away. As Jesus was being questioned by the high priest of Jerusalem, Peter stood in the crowd and watched from the edge of the courtyard, while warming himself at a fire.

And as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the maids of the high priest came; and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You were also with the Nazarene, Jesus." But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you mean." (Mark 14:66–72)

Twice more Peter was asked if he had been with Jesus, and each time he denied it. Immediately after the third denial, a cock crowed, whereupon Peter realized what had happened and broke down crying, expressing deep repentance. After Jesus' death, Peter remained one of his most devoted followers and went on to play a leading part in the life of the first Christian communities in Jerusalem and Rome. History records that he was greatly admired as a leader and a man of exemplary faith. He died a martyr's death by crucifixion in A.D. 64, during the persecutions of the Roman emperor Nero.

Background

The 17th century was a golden age in Holland. After winning its independence from Catholic Spain in 1648 and securing religious, political, and economic freedom, Holland became a democratic and predominantly Calvinist Protestant country. Holding a position of great strength and power, it was the outstanding sea power in the world, and its towns became vigorous centers of trade and industry.

Since Calvinism prohibited the use of images in churches, few Dutch artists produced religious paintings. Instead still lifes, landscapes, portraits, and genre scenes grew in popularity. Nonetheless, the city of Utrecht was a stronghold of Roman Catholicism, and a number of artists in that city continued to paint sacred themes. Gerrit van Honthorst was a leading artist of Utrecht who painted a number of religious scenes that took place at night.

Honthorst lived in Italy for nearly ten years, and he absorbed the Italian Baroque style, which reflected the ideas of the Catholic Church and the Counter Reformation. This was a movement that developed as a response to the Protestant Reformation, a rebellion against the Catholic Church during the 16th century that had undermined its teachings. As part of the Counter Reformation, the Catholic Church established the Council of Trent in 1545. After nearly 20 years of meeting, the council instituted many reforms while reaffirming traditional doctrines. One of these was the sacrament of penance, which had come under strong criticism by Protestants. The Council's defense of penance led to the popularization of scenes of penitent sinners in art, such as Honthorst's depiction of Saint Peter and his denial of Christ.

The Catholic Church recognized the power of art to promote its religious teachings and make them accessible to the faithful. To make art easily comprehensible to the viewer, many artists began to explore styles based on the observation of real people. A leader in this effort was the Italian artist Caravaggio. His dramatic views of unidealized people, painted with bold contrasts of light and shade, attracted artists like Honthorst who sought a new, direct means of representing traditional religious themes. Caravaggio was a major influence on many artists of the 17th century working in Italy, France, and the Netherlands.

The subject of Peter's denial of Christ was particularly popular among Caravaggio's followers, including Honthorst, who painted at least three different versions of the event. His realistic treatment of the subject made this painting accessible to a popular audience.

The Denial of Saint Peter

Honthorst portrays the climactic moment of the story when Peter denies that Jesus is his friend. It is night and a candle illuminates the scene, though it is hidden from the viewer by the outstretched arm of a soldier in the foreground. Peter, dressed in a golden cloak, is confronted by the high priest's serving maid and four soldiers. To dramatize the confrontation, the artist gives much attention to gesture and facial expression. The maid, whose dress has blue-green stripes on its white sleeves, accuses Peter by grasping his cloak. With his back to the viewer, a soldier points an accusing finger. Three other soldiers, two carrying pikes, reproach the saint with wide, incriminating eyes and intense gazes. Peter denies the accusation with a hesitant outstretched hand and a defensive look suggesting both surprise and vulnerability. While two of the soldiers and the maid look to Peter for an answer, Peter directs his response to a fourth soldier—clearly the figure in authority, to whom the pointing accuser also turns.

Style and Technique

Painted shortly after his return to Holland from Italy, Honthorst's work reflects the Italian Baroque style, particularly that of Caravaggio. Salient features of his work adopted by Honthorst and seen in *The Denial of Saint Peter* are a sense of theatricality intended to involve the viewer, an interest in naturalism, and the use of strong contrasts of light and shade. In this picture, oil paint on canvas enabled Honthorst to create fine details, brilliant, luminous colors, and a wide range of tonal effects.

Honthorst employs a number of devices to involve the viewer and intensify the drama of the scene. Using bold lighting effects, he produces sharp contrasts of light and shade that play over the figures, spotlighting their faces and revealing their expressions. The soldier with his back toward the viewer is in silhouette, except for the glow of light flickering on his shoulder, sleeve, hand, and belt. The light draws the viewer into the circle of Peter's accusers and heightens the immediacy of the scene.

Also drawing the viewer into the scene is the placement of the figures, which both encircle Peter and are situated in the foreground. Indeed, the artist has left an opening between the soldier with his back to us and Peter, inviting the viewer to complete the circle and enter the drama. Heightening the impact, Honthorst creates the illusion of extending the action into the viewer's space. He uses foreshortening—a way of proportionately representing an object or person to make it appear three-dimensional—in depicting the right arm of the soldier with his back to us. In order for the elbow to appear to project out toward the viewer and not seem hugely out of proportion, Honthorst needed to adjust the dimensions of the arm from the elbow to the hand.

Further involving the viewer, Honthorst portrays the characters naturalistically. They appear to be real, unidealized human beings, with distinct feelings, thoughts, and facial expressions. Notice how we can identify with Peter's humanity as we view him closely, observing his furrowed brow, fearful eyes, and partially opened mouth uttering the fateful words.

Artist

Gerrit van Honthorst was born and received his initial artistic training in the Dutch city of Utrecht. Around 1610 he traveled to Rome, where the Italian Baroque style was reaching its height. Honthorst spent the next ten years studying, working, and absorbing the style of Caravaggio and his followers.

Exploring the dramatic possibilities of nocturnal scenes, Honthorst made them his specialty and established his reputation in Italy with this type of painting. Indeed, he was nicknamed Gherardo della Notti (Gerrit of the Night).

Although he had been extremely popular in Rome, Honthorst returned to Utrecht in 1620. There he played an important part in bringing knowledge of the southern Baroque style to Holland. His reputation continued to grow: he took on a large school of pupils, was invited to paint for the kings of England and Denmark, and from 1637 to 1652 served as official painter to the Dutch court at The Hague. He died in 1656.

Suggested Questions

1. Who is the most important person in this painting? Explain your answer. (*There is no right answer—it could be either Peter or the serving maid or even one of the soldiers.*)
2. Which person do you notice first? Why?
3. This is a painting taken from a story in the Bible. **Tell the story.** Find the serving maid; Peter; the soldiers.
4. What did Honthorst do to help us recognize Peter? Notice that everyone in this painting is looking at Peter. Count the hands you see. Where are the hands in the painting?
5. Why is the woman holding onto Peter's coat? Why is the man pointing at him?
6. How does the artist focus our attention on Peter? (*Other people in the painting are looking at Peter; curved lines of the arms flow toward Peter; all the hands in the painting are gathered around Peter.*)
7. Was the serving maid an enemy to Peter? Did she intend to make trouble for him? How do you think the soldiers felt about Peter? About Jesus? Look at their faces. Do you think they all feel the same about Peter?
8. How does Honthorst attempt to involve the viewer in the painting? (*dramatic placement of the figures close to the picture plane; figures posed in a circle with an opening for the viewer; arm of figure with his back toward us seems to extend into viewer's space through foreshortening; dramatic use of light and dark; naturalistic treatment of the figures.*)
9. Which is more important in this painting, color or light? What makes you think so?
10. If you wanted to step into the circle of figures, where would you stand?
11. What time of day does it seem to be in the painting? Why do you think so?
12. Why has Peter followed Jesus to this place?
13. Is this a painting of family, friends, or foes? What is a foe? At this particular moment, who is the greatest enemy of Jesus—the soldiers, the serving maid, or Peter? Explain your answer.
14. How do you think Peter feels surrounded by this crowd? Consider the occupation of some of the men surrounding him. How would you feel? Have you ever turned your back on a friend because you were afraid of what others would say or do? How did you feel afterwards?
15. Why does Peter deny knowing Jesus? Is he telling the truth? Why would he lie? How could Peter have been a better friend? What would you have done if you had been Peter? Have you ever been disloyal to a friend? Did you ever think it was possible to be disloyal to this person?



Francisco Jose de Goya y Lucientes, Spanish, 1746–1828

Self-Portrait with Dr. Arrieta, 1820

Oil on canvas

H.45 $\frac{1}{8}$ x W.31 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches (canvas)

The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund, 52.14

Theme

Goya's self-portrait is a deeply moving image of human friendship and compassion. Painted at a time when the artist was disturbed by the human capacity for cruelty, it affirms the benevolent relationships that can exist between individuals.

Background

The second half of the 18th century is often referred to as the Age of Enlightenment. It was a period in which many European philosophers and intellectuals, particularly in England and France, believed that the world operated according to natural laws. They thought that the human mind had the power to discover these laws and solve problems through reason and scientific inquiry. During this period, there was an increased interest in education and a growing production of encyclopedias and books. The revolution of thought that was sweeping Europe led some thinkers of the time to proclaim that human affairs should be governed by reason and the common good rather than by tradition and established authority.¹² These ideas led to the American and French revolutions, which were based upon a belief in liberty and equality that would shape the modern era.

One of Spain's greatest and most complex artists, Francisco Goya, was a product of the Age of Enlightenment. The period's values of liberal thought and reason were of underlying importance to his art. Goya has been seen both as a universal visionary who speaks to the modern world through his powerful exploration of fantasy and imagination, and as an artist reflecting his own time and country. In his prolific output, he explores the conflict between reason and the irrational, enlightenment and ignorance, hope and despair, light and darkness.

Goya was deeply affected by the turbulent political events taking place in Spain, particularly during the last 30 years of his life, when he saw the ideals of the Enlightenment eclipsed by chaos and suppression. He witnessed the corruption of the reign of Charles IV, which led to the French occupation of Spain in 1808. The French ruler, Napoleon Bonaparte, established a military dictatorship in Madrid under his brother, Joseph. When Napoleon's armies first occupied Spain, Goya and many other Spaniards hoped they would bring the liberal reforms so direly needed in the country, but they were sorely disappointed by the savage behavior of the French troops. On May 2, 1808, the citizens of Madrid rose up against Napoleon's forces; the insurrection, however, was quelled the following day with a brutal mass execution of the Spanish patriots. With

¹² H. W. Janson. *History of Art*. ed. Anthony F. Janson. 4th Edition (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1991) p. 619.

Napoleon's abdication as emperor of France in 1814, Ferdinand VII, the heir of Charles IV, was restored to the throne of Spain, ruling as an absolute monarch and instigating a new wave of repression and tyranny.

Self-Portrait with Dr. Arrieta

This double portrait was painted in 1820, just after Goya had recovered from a serious illness. It was a token of gratitude and included this inscription at the bottom: "Goya thanks his friend Arrieta for the sureness and care with which he saved his life from the serious and dangerous illness at the end of the year 1819 at the age of seventy-three. Painted in 1820."

In this poignant self-portrait, Goya portrays himself as an aged, dying man being nursed by Dr. Arrieta. Wearing a gray dressing robe, and appearing pale and feverish, Goya clutches the bedsheet with his left hand while his right hand rests limply on it. He is tenderly supported in an upright position by Dr. Arrieta who sits behind him and firmly offers his patient a glassful of medicine. The juxtaposition of the two men creates a striking contrast. Pale and sickly, Goya has a gray complexion, which contrasts with his white nightshirt and the healthy appearance of his doctor. Painted in colors suggestive of life, Arrieta wears a forest green jacket and has a rosy complexion. His demeanor is firm and in control with an expression of resolute calm on his face, while his ashen, pained patient—slumped with his head falling back and his eyes barely opened—seems to struggle for his life. The hands of the two protagonists are particularly expressive; the doctor's are strong and protective while those of his exhausted patient are groping and uncertain, though his left hand grasps the sheet—perhaps a sign of energy and willfulness.

At either side of the doctor and his patient there appear three vague figures that witness the scene, yet seem to vanish into the blackness of the sickroom. Their significance has been the subject of much scholarship. They have been interpreted as being friends or servants, or perhaps a reference to Goya's devoted companion—the woman with whom he lived at the time the work was painted. They are suggestive of the artist's mental state during his illness and have been compared to the nightmarish and menacing figures that populate many of Goya's late paintings.

Whatever their significance, these shadowy figures are superseded by the clearly stated figures in the foreground, who ultimately offer a message of hope and triumph. The doctor has saved Goya's life, and can be seen as the embodiment of science and reason, triumphing over the darkness of impending death.¹³ We have here not only a thankful tribute to a friend's steadfastness, loyalty, and devotion, but also a profound statement about Goya's confrontation with death.

Style and Technique

Goya creates strong contrasts of light and dark to focus our attention on the protagonists in the painting. Set against a dark, murky background, the faces of Dr. Arrieta and his patient are dramatically presented. Because the dim figures in the background are painted in dark tones, the figures of Goya and Dr. Arrieta, which are depicted in lighter flesh tones, come forth in relief.

¹³ Alfonso E. Perez Sanchez and Eleanor A. Sayre, *Goya and the Spirit of the Enlightenment* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts 1989), p. 272.

These two main characters are solidly defined, while the figures in the background are difficult to read. Their dim presence adds a mysterious quality to the painting.

In contrast with the rosy complexion of the doctor, the artist uses drab, muted grays to suggest the dire illness of the feverish patient. While Goya's ashen face is offset by his white nightshirt, his gray robe reinforces the gray pallor of his face. The doctor, on the other hand, wears a green jacket, which enhances the rosy tone of his skin. The complementary colors red and green appear more vibrant when placed next to one another. The red blanket occupying the foreground reinforces the doctor's healthy glow and enlivens the painting.

Goya's use of oil paint on canvas achieves a variety of effects, including translucent colors, a range of tonal qualities, and the representation of naturalistic details.

Notice how the paint is applied with great variety. Some areas, such as Goya's robe and the red blanket, are painted with a filmy smoothness, while other areas reveal the artist's brushstroke and his vigorous, free handling of paint. This can be seen on the hair of the doctor, the white collar and cuffs of Goya's nightshirt, and the shadowy figures in the background.

Artist

A painter, engraver, and draftsman whose prodigious output defies classification, Francisco Goya was a highly individual artist. A man of paradoxes and contradictions, he was at once a realist and a romantic, a court portraitist and a social critic, a humanitarian and a misanthrope. Born in Fuentetodos, Aragon, in the northeastern region of Spain, Goya was the son of a gilder. Though little is known of his early training, he began his career as a designer for the Royal Spanish Tapestry Works, where he spent six years producing cartoons (drawings) of scenes of popular Spanish life that were used in creating tapestries. His work was so well received in Madrid that in 1789 he became court painter to the Spanish king, Charles IV. Widely renowned by this time, Goya was celebrated by members of the Spanish upper class, whose portraits he painted throughout his career.

Goya's life changed dramatically in 1792 when he contracted a serious illness that caused a complete loss of hearing. This change could be seen in his artwork, which began to show greater psychological insight as well as a sense of despair. Giving free rein to fantasy and imagination, Goya often depicted demonic subjects, particularly in prints and drawing, his more private forms of expression. Between 1796 and 1798, he produced a series of etchings titled *Los Caprichos* (*The Caprices*), a brutal satire of the foibles and follies of contemporary society and the Catholic Church.

Despite the nonconformist element in his work, Goya managed to continue his official commissioned work and, in 1799, he was appointed to the prestigious position of First Painter to the King. This was an extremely productive and successful period in his career, during which he produced some of his best-known portraits.

As the political situation in Spain grew more repressive, Goya's disillusionment became more apparent in his work, particularly after 1808 when Napoleon invaded Spain. (See **Background**.) In 1814 Goya commemorated the horror and violence of the invasion and the resulting insurrection, during which 5,000 Spaniards were ruthlessly slaughtered, in his famous painting *The Third of May, 1808*. Even more scathing in its indictment of human cruelty and depravity is another series

of etchings, *The Disasters of War*, executed between 1810 and 1814, which depicts the atrocities committed by both the French and Spanish.

In 1812, Goya's wife of 36 years died. In 1819 he withdrew to the seclusion of his country house, La Quinta del Sordo (House of the Deaf Man), located on the outskirts of Madrid. Here he lived with Leocadia Weiss, a woman he had known for many years and who became his devoted companion until his death. Unofficially removed from the court, Goya was virtually retired from public life after 1815, but continued to produce work for himself and friends.

Self-Portrait with Dr. Arrieta was executed during these years at La Quinta del Sordo following his recovery from his second serious illness, which occurred in 1819. After painting this self-portrait, Goya created 14 large black murals, known as the "Black Paintings," which covered the walls of his villa with fantastic, grotesque imagery.

In 1824, King Ferdinand unleashed a fresh wave of repression in Spain. Goya, fearing reprisals because of his numerous works depicting the nightmarish world of Ferdinand's Spain, left to settle in France. He died in Bordeaux in 1828 at the age of 82.

In his imaginative and expressive approach to painting, Goya prefigured the later developments of the Romantic Movement in France during the 19th century, as well as modern art beginning with Manet and the Impressionists. He paved "the way for modern art with his freedom of interpretation, his violent technique and his use of distortion."¹⁴

Suggested Questions

1. This is a painting of a sick man, Goya, and his doctor, Dr. Arrieta. Which is the sick man? How has the artist shown you that he is sick?
2. Which man is the doctor? How can you tell? What is he doing? What makes him look healthy?
3. Have you ever been very sick? How did you feel physically? Emotionally? Did anyone help you?
4. This painting contains two portraits. One of these is a self-portrait. Which one? Why is it called a self-portrait? Was Goya young or old when he painted it?
5. How do you think Goya felt about his doctor? Is he afraid of him? Does he like him? Trust him? Admire him? How can you tell?
6. How do you think Dr. Arrieta felt about his patient?
7. Are there more than two people in the painting? Why does the artist make the background figures so shadowy? How do they make you feel? Do you think Goya likes these people?

¹⁴ Pierre Gassier and Juliet Wilson. *The Life and Complete Work of Francisco Goya*. (New York: Reynal & Co. in association with William Morrow & Co., Inc., 1971) p. 10.

8. How does Goya get us to notice the hands and faces in this painting? Why are they important?
9. What colors do you see in this painting? Where is green used? What might green represent here? Where is red used? What might red represent?
10. Can you discover when this painting was made? Look for the date someplace on the painting.
11. **Compare this painting with *Peace Concluded*, by Millais:**
 - Which artist is more interested in detail?
 - Which painting seems more naturalistic and why?
 - Which painting arouses your emotions more? What emotions does each arouse?
 - Contrast the pose of the two main figures in each painting. Contrast the representation of the supporting figures.
 - Are both artists trying to paint pleasing pictures? Are both artists trying to evoke the same feelings?
12. **Compare this painting with *The Artist's Daughter, Julie, with Her Nanny*, by Morisot:**
 - How many people do you see in each painting? Count them. Which painting seems more crowded? Why?
 - Which painting gives us more naturalistic detail?
 - Which painting is more emotionally moving to you? Why?
 - Each of these paintings expresses a mood or overall feeling. How are the moods in these two paintings the same? How are they different?
13. Goya painted this picture for Dr. Arrieta as a thank-you. Would you like to receive a thank-you like this from someone you have helped?



Sir John Everett Millais, British, 1829–1896
Peace Concluded, 1856
Oil on canvas
H.46 x W.36 inches (canvas)
The Putnam Dana McMillan Fund, 69.48

Theme

In *Peace Concluded*, Millais depicts the peace and contentment of a family happily reunited after a war. The rich symbolism of the painting suggests that this scene is an allegory for the healing of a country as well.

Background

Queen Victoria's long reign in England from 1837 to 1901 was a period of unprecedented industrial growth at home and imperial expansion abroad during which Britain emerged as the world's leading financial, manufacturing, and shipping power. The height of this period, the 1850s and 1860s, was marked by booming prosperity, an expanding middle class, and a pervasive spirit of scientific exploration and technological invention. As England shifted from an agricultural to an industrial society, life changed dramatically for many with the development of the railroads, complex new machines, and the electric telegraph, all of which contributed to a growth of mass communication and mass production. In an age when science and technology were transforming the physical environment and increasing the nation's wealth, a strong faith in knowledge, industry, and progress seemed to guarantee a prosperous future.

Interrupting the relative peace of the period was England's involvement in the Crimean War (1854 to 1856). Alluded to in Millais' painting *Peace Concluded*, the war was waged against Russia by the armies of England, France, Sardinia, and Turkey and took place principally in the Crimea, a Russian peninsula on the north shore of the Black Sea. The chief cause of the war was Russia's ambition to attain an outlet to the Mediterranean through seizing territory held by Turkey. Russia was defeated, its plans thwarted, Turkey's integrity guaranteed and the Black Sea neutralized. During the Crimean War, Florence Nightingale's heroic nursing activities became celebrated and Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade" was written to commemorate the massacre of 600 British cavalymen during the Battle of Balaklava. This war, with its implied theme of separation and family loss, was to provide rich subject matter to British artists.

During the Victorian Age, painting in England was remarkably varied, and English artists enjoyed considerable prestige and popularity. A newly prosperous middle class had the means to acquire art, and private patronage increased. Characteristic of the period was a taste for narrative paintings depicting stories from familiar everyday life. Especially popular were domestic scenes reflecting Victorian values of dignity, hard work, morality, and domesticity, which were often presented in a very sentimental style. Such paintings show a love of carefully observed detail, typically seen not only in Victorian painting but also in literature and architecture. The accurate representation of factual details conformed with the scientific spirit of the age.

A common theme recurring in Victorian narrative art is that of home and family, the central

institutions of Victorian life. Pictures of home life nearly always include children. The Victorians often had large families, and were typically strict parents who, nonetheless, had great affection for their children. Indeed, Queen Victoria was herself the very model of middle-class morality and set the tone for Victorian values. She and her husband, Prince Albert, produced 9 children and watched over their brood dotingly.

During a period of sweeping social change, the Victorian family provided security and stability. It was an institution based on strict ideas about the correct ordering of society and individual behavior. The roles of men and women were clearly drawn: the business world was the domain of men, while the home was the domain of women. The notion that the home was a sanctuary and the wife its guardian angel became widely accepted.

After battling all day in the market place, the Victorian father wanted to come back to his own peaceful, private fireside, surrounded by dutiful children and an adoring wife. The very competitiveness of business life seems to have encouraged a corresponding elevation of home to a private temple of domesticity . . . Presiding over the temple was the wife, “the Angel in the House,” dutiful, submissive, obedient, faithful, pure and decorative.¹⁵

According to Victorian ideals, a woman needed to be protected from the coarse business world. She, in turn, served as the calm, gentle, morally superior presence in the home, making the lives of those around her more pleasant.¹⁶

Despite their significant role at home, women during the Victorian era were second-class citizens facing legal, professional, and educational barriers. Women who needed to earn wages had few alternatives: they either worked at home at a trade such as sewing piecework, in other people’s homes as domestic servants or governesses, or in factories where they faced harsh working conditions. During the century, the campaign for women’s rights intensified and raised questions about the place of women in society. Progress was made in the areas of protective legislation for factory workers, of divorce and property laws, as well as in education and career opportunities. Many middle-class women left the retreat of the home to do charity work in slums, hospitals and prisons. A number of pioneering women laid the groundwork that opened up new occupations to women, such as Florence Nightingale, who established the nursing profession, and other pioneers in teaching and social work.

Peace Concluded

In *Peace Concluded*, Millais depicts a family reunited after a soldier’s return from the Crimean War. The painting celebrates the end of the war through the experience of one family. Surrounded by his adoring and attentive wife and children, the officer, who appears to be wounded and convalescing, holds a copy of the London *Times* (March 31, 1856) announcing the end of the war. Seated together on a sofa, he and his wife are the central figures. Their close relationship is suggested by their intertwined positions. Dressed in his robe (called a “dressing gown”), he

¹⁵ Christopher Wood. *Victorian Panorama: Paintings of Victorian Life* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1976), p. 59.

¹⁶ Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz. *Becoming Visible: Women in European History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977), p. 311.

relaxes within the warm embrace of his wife. Her right arm is wrapped around his shoulders, protectively supporting him while her left hand affectionately holds his.

Scattered throughout the painting are symbolic elements intended to help the viewer read the meaning of the scene. In the background, for instance, is a painting depicting a battle. It is partially obscured by a lush bay laurel, the traditional emblem of victory and virtue. (The ancient Greeks used the foliage of this tree as wreaths to crown the victors in various contests.) Conspicuously arranged on the mother's lap are four toy animals, each associated with one of the countries involved in the Crimean War: the lion representing Britain; the polar bear, Russia; the game cock, France; and the turkey, Turkey. As well as being familiar symbols of the war, these toy animals are part of Noah's ark, seen in the lower left corner of the painting, one of the most popular toys in Victorian England.¹⁷ One daughter holds her father's combat medal, and the other offers him a toy dove with an olive branch in its beak. Both the dove and the olive branch are symbols of peace. The family is posed in a circle to suggest the unity of family bonds. A dog, a traditional symbol of fidelity, nestles at his master's feet. Millais's use of an arched frame, a shape he favored during his Pre-Raphaelite period, reveals the influence of Italian altarpieces. This reference is underscored by the "halo" of braids that surrounds the mother's head and transforms her into a secular madonna.

Besides celebrating the end of the Crimean War, *Peace Concluded* can be seen as a personal statement of the artist, who was celebrating his marriage of one year when he painted this.¹⁸ Posing as the wife and mother is his wife, Effie, whom he depicts as a strong, supportive woman. In the painting, we see a warm, loving relationship between two people. In all, the work extols the joys of family life, conveying relief that the war has ended as well as the peace and contentment felt by a family reunited. Although England suffered great losses during the Crimean War (the husband appears to be wounded), the Victorian ideals of patriotism and family continued to flourish. The Empire, as well as this family, was safe.

Style and Technique

This painting reflects Millais' connection with the Pre-Raphaelite movement in Victorian art. Founded in 1848 by Millais, William Holman Hunt, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was a group of artists who sought to recapture the ideals and craftsmanship of the Middle Ages and early Renaissance, "before Raphael." They found in the paintings and frescoes of this period a simplicity and spirituality lacking in contemporary British painting. In contrast to the dark, grandiose history paintings encouraged by the Royal Academy (the professional institution that trained and promoted artists), the Pre-Raphaelites dramatized biblical subjects and scenes from British literature and legend, rendering them in meticulous detail and with rich jewel-like colors.

Peace Concluded is a transitional work, created at a time when Millais was turning away from the stricter Pre-Raphaelite ideals, but not yet displaying the sugary sentimentality of many later examples of his work. Characteristic of the Pre-Raphaelites, Millais uses symbolism, lifelike

¹⁷ Elaine Shefer, "The Order of Release and *Peace Concluded*: Millais's Reversal of a Victorian Formula," *Woman's Art Journal*, 11 (Fall 1990/ Winter 1991): p. 31.

¹⁸ Shefer, p. 32. In letters written at the time *Peace Concluded* was painted, Millais expressed his extreme happiness with his marriage.

textures and jewel-like colors in this painting. Also typical is his use of family and friends as models. His wife, Effie, not only posed as the mother, but his friend Colonel Michael Paton also posed as the father, and his Irish wolfhound Roswell, modeled as the pet dog. What is new here to the Pre-Raphaelite style is the use of contemporary subject matter and the element of sentimentality.

Millais's skillful use of oil paint achieves vivid, glowing colors, fine details and luxurious textures, enhancing the comfortable feeling and peacefulness of the scene. An abundance of warm colors—reds, yellows, browns, and oranges—permeates the painting. Tones of green, the complementary color of red, are seen in the bay laurel as well as in the richly patterned carpet, enhancing the warmth of the reds. Playing off these dark colors are highlighted areas of white and flesh tones that keep our eye moving around the canvas as we “read” the story and discover the meaning of the characters and the objects. The complex play of rich textures depicted naturalistically—such as the velvets of the mother's and older child's dresses and of the sofa, the white embroidered eyelet of the younger child's dress, the nubby wool of the father's robe, and the soft fur of the dog—offer variety to the scene and suggest that we are seeing a cozy, safe haven.

Further conveying a sense of family harmony are the placement and poses of the figures. The four family members form a triangle—a shape that connotes stability—with the mother's head at the apex and the children at its base. When the dog is included, the configuration becomes a circle, a shape that implies harmony and unity. The intertwining of the figures reinforces the family unity. Millais has directed the focus of our attention to the wife and mother, a figure of strength and support. She is centrally placed, and hovers over her husband protectively. Our eyes focus on her billowing, white sleeves and embracing arms, her gentle face that tilts toward his, and her nurturing hands.

Artist

Born in Southampton, England and raised in the Channel Islands, John Everett Millais was a child prodigy. Encouraged by his family to pursue art from early childhood, Millais was accepted at the Royal Academy for training at the unprecedented age of 11. At 17, the age at which most students entered art school, Millais had already completed his artistic training and had won all the prizes then conferred by the academy. Independent in spirit, however, he became increasingly disillusioned with the pretension and conservatism of the academy's philosophy. His discontent was shared by two other young art students, William Holman Hunt and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Together they founded the short-lived Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848.

Around 1854, Millais' style changed as he moved away from the minutely detailed Pre-Raphaelite manner toward a broader, freer approach to painting. Desiring popularity and distinction, Millais began to lose interest in the lofty Pre-Raphaelite ideals. By 1856, his art had undergone a major shift: sentimentality replaced moral fervor, and anecdotal domestic scenes and children's portraits became his primary subjects. Due to this change in content and tone, his work became much more marketable. An amiable and well-liked man, Millais enjoyed great success during his lifetime. He was the first British artist to receive the rank of baronet, and was elected president of the same Royal Academy against which he had revolted as a young Pre-Raphaelite.

Suggested Questions

1. Look carefully at the way these people are dressed. Is this scene taking place today or a long time ago? Are their clothes like the ones we wear? How are they dressed differently?
2. This picture was painted at the end of a war. What person in the scene might have been in the war? Who do you think the other people are?
3. Does the family look happy to have the father home again? Do you think he could have been wounded in battle? Why do you think so?
4. What emotions might each of these family members be feeling?
5. What colors are important in this painting? Which color seems most important? How many shades (variations) of red can you find? Colors can give us feelings about a work of art. How do the colors affect the mood of the painting?
6. What temperature do you think it might be inside this room? What season is it outside?
7. This painting is full of details. Let's have a scavenger hunt. Find: a lady's slipper, a wedding ring, a medal, a bracelet, a tiger, an elephant, a lion, a bear, a turkey, a dove, a cock, etc. **Or give each child one item to find from this list.**
8. **After the students find the animals on the mother's lap, talk about symbols.** What is a symbol for Christmas? For Valentine's Day? Millais uses symbols to stand for the countries that fought in the war. Can you find the symbols for the warring countries? Name these animals. Can anyone guess what countries they represent? If the United States had fought, what symbol might he have used? The older daughter is holding another symbol. What kind of bird is this? What does it represent? Do we still use that symbol today? Each of the four animals is a symbol of a country. Why do you think the artist chose these four countries to symbolize the war?
9. Find at least six patterns in this painting. Can you find more?
10. Is this a happy picture? Why or why not?
11. Who is the stronger person in the painting, the husband or the wife? What makes you think so? **(There is no one right answer: the man is wounded and therefore weaker, while the woman is stronger in her supportive role; the man is stronger because his duty was to protect the country, whereas the woman's duty was to protect the home; the woman shows strength because of the artist's personal feelings about his wife, the model for this painting.)** How have the roles of men and women changed from Victorian times to today?
12. The artist has used his wife, Effie, as a model for the mother. What is a model? Why do some artists use them? Why do you think Millais wanted to use his wife? He also used his dog, Roswell. Why do you think he wanted to use his dog?



Nayarit (North America, Mexico, Pacific Coast region, Ixtlan)

House Group, 200 B.C.–400 A.D.

Ceramic, pigment

H.18 x W.9¾ x D.7 inches

The John R. Van Derlip Fund, 47.2.37

Theme

This sculpture shows that families enjoyed gathering together for meals in ancient Mexico just as they do in America today. Family life, which was marked by a strong sense of unity and warmth, was so important to the Nayarit (Nye-a-REET) culture that they sought to ensure its continuation even after death.

Background

The states of Nayarit, Jalisco, and Colima make up a cultural area located in western Mexico along the Pacific Ocean. The terrain of the region is divided into two geographical zones, a highland area averaging 5,000 feet above sea level, and a relatively narrow tropical coastal plain. Today the region is home to Huichol and Cora Indians. Two thousand years ago, earlier Indian people lived there in small farming villages scattered among the foothills of the Sierra Madre. Isolated from the rest of the country by the mountains, these people led simple communal lives. There are no archaeological remains of their buildings, which were probably made of perishable materials—wood, straw, adobe bricks—nor do any historical records survive.

The numerous graves discovered in western Mexico are our only source of knowledge about the ancient cultures of the region. The Nayarit, Jalisco, and Colima people developed a distinctive form of burial. Rulers and other important members of society were buried in shaft chamber tombs found only in this region. These tombs consisted of vertical shafts extending 3 to 52 feet deep; the deepest shafts opened into one or more chambers, each of which could contain multiple burials. Clay figures and sculptural groups have been found in these tomb chambers. They consist of lively depictions of people playing musical instruments, grinding corn, tending children, and eating meals. Often whole families and villages are portrayed doing a variety of activities from daily life.

Between the 5th and 7th centuries A.D., the Nayarit culture began to fade. Cultural influences from central Mexico had penetrated the region, and by the 9th century, the distinctive local tradition of shaft chamber tombs containing clay figures had disappeared. Since tomb artifacts offer valuable clues to the everyday life, customs, and beliefs of this long-lost culture, it is unfortunate that many Nayarit tombs were damaged by local farmers, or looted by people searching for these very marketable clay figures. Though thousands of objects have been recovered from tombs in western Mexico, archaeologists are frustrated by the lack of systematic scientific excavations. Without texts, oral traditions, or controlled excavations, we cannot be sure of the meaning of these clay figures. They may have been placed in the tomb to honor or protect the deceased, or to serve as a link between this world and the next.

House Group

Like other ceramic pieces from western Mexico during the period, this Nayarit house group was made for a tomb. The sculpture consists of an elaborately polychromed, two-storied house inhabited by several men, women, and children, most likely a ruler and his family. They appear to be involved in activities of daily life—preparing and eating food, talking and relaxing. The women can be identified by their short skirts while the men wear loincloths (which are difficult to see) and sometimes hats.

In the upper story, which is open on two sides and is covered by an ornate pagoda-like roof, are eight seated figures. At the rear, one figure faces outward, while four are positioned in the room's interior. They are gathered around a bowl filled with cylindrical objects, most likely corn or tortillas for their meal. Two of the figures appear to be eating, their hands raised to their mouths. Outside on the porch-like structure are three more figures perched on their knees. Two appear to be children, since they are smaller in scale than the other figures. The child on the right sits in a relaxed pose. The one on the left is embraced by the woman seated nearby. The figures' poses, gestures, and actions, as well as the entire setting, suggest that the scene represents a time of feasting and relaxing for this family.

Two stairways along the sides of the piece lead to the area below, which consists of two rooms. A male figure wearing a conical hat leans against the doorway to the back room, while two women turn toward him and the container of food (similar to the one above) that sits on the floor between them. The representation of two stories probably has symbolic significance since multistoried buildings were uncommon in western Mexico at the time this sculpture was made. Recent research by archaeologists suggests that the two-story house represents the Nayarit worldview, in which the living and the dead coexist, sharing one place with only a fragile barrier between them. Here, then, the dwelling of the dead below is a mirror image of the realm of the living above. Feasting links the living family members with those who have died.

Typical of Nayarit sculpture, the figures have been depicted with ovoid heads, distinctive hatchet-like noses, and flattened chests. They are adorned with painted body tattoos and other ornaments. Also characteristic of Nayarit sculpture, the figures are full of energy and evoke a sense of individual personalities. Even though they are rather general in appearance, their poses are quite naturalistic. The roof of the house and the facade below are covered with a geometric pattern of concentric diamond shapes, which gives the sculpture a highly decorative surface and a unifying design. This colorful display reflects the vital spirit of the Nayarit people and their faith in both this world and the next.

Style and Technique

In contrast to the subtractive process of stone carving used in *Shiva's Family*, this sculpture was made by an additive process using various simple techniques. The piece was made with wet slabs of clay. The artist shaped the roof, walls, floors and steps by hand, perhaps using a paddle-like tool to help flatten the surfaces and a cutting tool for precise edges. The bodies of the figures were also shaped from wet clay slabs. Thin clay strips were rolled to form the arms and legs, which were then added to the bodies. After forming the rounded heads, the artist made certain features such as the noses and ears by pinching the clay. These too were added to the figures.

A ceramic object like this would have been dried and then fired on or near an open flame. Firing makes clay harder and stronger, better able to survive the passage of time. Afterward, the artist painted the details—the patterned roof, face decoration, and clothing—in red, buff, and black pigments. Some of the colors have faded over time.

Artist

We do not know the name of the expressive artist who created this house group. Art in ancient Mesoamerica was not signed, and no written records of Nayarit traditions exist to provide clues to the artist's identity, training, or even gender.

Suggested Questions

1. How many rooms can you find in this house? Do you think these people have separate rooms for sleeping, dining, preparing food, talking and relaxing? In what ways is this different from your house? Are there any ways in which it is the same?
2. Look at the people in this house. How many do you see? What does each one seem to be doing?
3. Do you think these people are all related? Do they seem relaxed and comfortable with each other? How can you tell?
4. What can we tell about their lives from looking at this work of art? Consider family ties, clothing, what houses were like, food and how it was cooked, furniture, relationship to nature.
5. By looking carefully, can you guess if these people lived in a warm or cold climate? What do you see that makes you say that? Do you think the place where they lived had lots of mosquitoes as we do in Minnesota? Why or why not?
6. **Discuss additive and subtractive sculpture.** How do you build a form when you are working with clay? Do you usually cut away material from a block of clay or start with a lump and manipulate it, adding on as you go? We call this kind of sculpture additive. Why? What would you call a sculpture made from a bar of soap or a potato? Do you add on or cut away to produce the form? We call this kind of sculpture subtractive. Why?
7. What parts of this sculpture look as if the clay were rolled? (*Heads, arms, etc.*) Pinched? (*Noses, ears, steps.*) Cut? (*Sides of house, etc.*)
8. Which do you think would require more tools, a sculpture made from clay or a sculpture made from stone? Which would require more strength? More time? Can you think of any reasons why this early Mexican artist used clay? (*Availability of material, no need for complicated tools, etc.*)

9. If the clay used to make this piece was soft, how would it become hard? (*By drying in the air or being fired in a kiln.*)
10. Can you find areas on the house that are painted? What color paint was used? What shape was used most often in the painted decoration? (Diamond.) Were the people painted too? Point out areas where they are painted. Would the artist have painted this sculpture before or after it dried? Did all the paint stay on?
11. This sculpture was made in Mexico almost 2000 years ago. What material do you think was used to make it? Where would the artist have found the clay? Why would the clay be reddish in color? Have you ever seen earth that looked red?
12. How many colors did the artist use to decorate this house model? Since the artist could not buy paints at a store, where do you think the colors came from? (*Plants, soil, minerals.*) What do you think the artist may have used for a brush?
13. How do you suppose the Nayarit people cooked their corn or tortillas? In an oven? Over a fire? Have you ever eaten food cooked over a fire? What kind of food was it? Where did you cook it? At home? On a picnic? Camping? At the lake?
14. **Describe what an archaeologist does—digging up things buried long ago that give us clues about how people used to live.** This house group and other like it tell us that home and family were important to people living in Nayarit Mexico long ago. What would you bury in a time capsule that would show people in the future about your life and what you like to do?



Ijo (Africa, Nigeria, West Africa region)

Memorial Screen, Late 19th century

Wood, raffia, pigment

H.37½ x W.28 x D.9¾ inches

The John R. Van Derlip Fund, 74.22

Theme

The importance of family relationships unites all human society. Among the Ijo people of Nigeria, deceased ancestors remain involved in family affairs and decisions. This memorial screen provides a dwelling place for the spirit of an important ancestor.

Background

The Ijo people live on the delta of the Niger River in the West African country of Nigeria. They inhabit the eastern part of this huge delta, which dominates the coast of Nigeria, creating a salty tidal swamp. The Kalabari are a subgroup of the Ijo peoples, related by both language and culture, yet maintaining a distinct culture of their own.

A fishing and trading people, the Kalabari have been known as traders of salt, fish, and palm oil. They were also active as middlemen in the slave trade. In the past, they depended heavily on their water environment, as is evident in their religion and art. Their most important and prestigious institution was the Ekine Society, a male social group whose function was to invoke the help of the water spirits that presided over the delta's creeks and inlets. This society also played an important role in the social organization of the Kalabari and the funerary rituals of leading tribesmen.

Traditional Kalabari society consisted of small village communities made up of complex family, or lineage, groups of varying sizes. Members of a lineage lived together as a unit, holding land and electing a head or chief. Beginning in the late 15th century, in response to European contact, the Kalabari turned from a fishing to a trading economy dependent on European trade. Undergoing a number of changes in social structure, Kalabari lineage groups developed into "houses" which were trading organizations involved in both export and import. A house consisted of an elected head and a membership that grew by adopting men and women of different origins into the lineage as sons and daughters. Houses were bound by common economic interests as well as by ties of kinship, and their members felt the same sense of obligation to each other as members of traditional kinship groups did. Gradually an atmosphere of intense competition between houses and within individual groups became part of Kalabari society. Certain families acquired great wealth and economic power, comparable to the merchant princes of Europe.

Kalabari society was not only competitive but also very fluid, and success came to individuals as a result of achievement. While house heads held great power, they were dependent on their followers and needed to perform well in order to maintain their position. Theoretically, anyone could rise to the top through hard work and entrepreneurial skills.

When an important member of a trading house died, relatives commissioned an artist to produce

an elaborate memorial screen called a *duein fobara* (doo-en fo-bah-rah) or “forehead of the dead.” According to traditional Kalabari religious belief, every person has a spirit, or *teme* (teh-meh), the invisible vital force of life. The immortal spirit resided in the forehead, and after death the memorial screen became the spirit’s home. Within a *duein*, the spirit of an ancestor lived on and remained active in the affairs of the community, looking after its family, attending celebrations, and commanding respect from its descendants.

Traditionally, a screen was constructed a year or two after the death of the person whom it represented. When completed, the screen was placed in an inner room of the trading house, behind an altar of three mud pillars. Following elaborate consecration and installation rituals, food and drink were brought to the shrine every eight days by the head of the deceased’s household. Every seventh year, a goat was sacrificed and its blood sprinkled in front of the screen.

Memorial screens were made to honor the spirits of the most important citizens—the Kalabari chiefs and the heads of trading houses. A screen also served to protect a house, to proclaim its importance and power, and to reinforce a sense of continuity between past and present house leaders.

Memorial Screen

This 19th-century memorial screen made of wood and raffia pays homage to the powerful spirit of a leading Kalabari citizen. The deceased appears as the large central figure, flanked by two smaller figures who probably represent his kinsmen-followers. His large size emphasizes his importance.

The memorial screen is constructed with a standard set of elements common to all the Kalabari screens. The three figures are carved in relief from odumdum wood, chosen because of its allegorical association with orderly human social life. No attempt was made to produce an individual portrait, for the Kalabari recognized an ancestral representation by the accessories rather than the features. Thus, the chief is shown wearing his Ekine Society headdress, which indicates his identity and prestige; the objects, now lost, that were once in his and his followers’ hands were attributes of leadership such as a canoe paddle, a tusk, a speaker’s staff, a fan, or a fly whisk. Originally, the figures would have had cloth skirts around their waists. On some screens, the identity of the house is indicated by initials carved on the frame. The letters marked on the top and sides of this frame are not clearly identifiable. The pegs above the screen probably supported a row of small heads that symbolized the great number of dependents and followers this chief had. Typical of Kalabari figurative art, the figures are abstract, symmetrical, and frontal. The dotted lines painted on their torsos represent the backbone, and reinforce the human quality of the ancestors, who continue to be involved personally with their descendants.

Style and Technique

The memorial screen is an exceptional form of construction in African art. Other forms of ancestral sculpture commonly portray a single figure carved in the round from a single piece of wood. The memorial screen figures, however, are groups of figures suggesting meaningful relationships. They typically consist of three frontal wooden figures. Rather than portraying a naturalistic image, the artist concentrates on key features, reducing the various anatomical parts to stylized geometric components: large ovoid heads, eyes, and mouth; flat, square torsos;

outstretched arms with hands cupped to hold objects. These features are not individual characteristics, but rather, conform to a conventional representation or a recognized cultural norm. Components such as heads, bodies, appendages, and accoutrements are individually carved, and the parts are then assembled in a construction on a framed rectangular screen. The many pieces of wood are attached by being nailed, jointed, tied with raffia, stapled, and pegged.

The development of this unique form remains unexplained, although it may reflect the hierarchical structure of Kalabari society itself. This can be seen in the arrangement of the figures according to rank, with the most important figure carved larger in size and placed prominently in the center of the composition. It is flanked by the smaller, dependent figures, which reinforce the deceased leader's importance. In addition, the division of the screen into vertical columns, the window-like shapes flanking the larger head, (which originally held mirrors), and the repeated geometric shapes and border patterns also serve to convey the strict order of society. Thus, the sculptural form itself suggests the essence of the Kalabari social structure, emphasizing the importance of the head of the house in assuring the prosperity of the trading house even after his death.

Artist

Although the memorial screen is not signed, the artist was probably not unknown at the time it was made. Because of the variety of techniques involved in fabricating such an elaborate memorial, it is likely that one family specialized in the production of screens and maintained their monopoly by transmitting the skills of the craft from generation to generation. Clearly, the carver's primary objective was to provide a service for the community rather than to express an individual creative vision.

Suggested Questions

1. Who do you think is the most important figure here? Why?
2. If the largest figure is a chief or leader, who do you think the other figures might be? Why are they smaller? Do you think all the members of the society had memorial screens made in their honor or only the most powerful and important people?
3. What parts of this sculpture look wooden? Raffia is used to tie various components together. **Explain that raffia is a fiber produced from the leaves of a palm tree found in many parts of Africa.** Where do you see raffia? The empty square spaces to the left and right of the chief's head held mirrors at one time. Would mirrors have been easily available to the Kalabari people? How might they have acquired them in the late 19th century? Why would they want to use them? (*No right answer—for decoration, to incorporate European objects, etc.*)
4. There are little dots on each figure. They stand for a certain bony part of our bodies—can you guess what? **Have the children feel their spines.** Why do you think these bones are represented as dots?
5. Can you find designs on this sculpture? Are they made with geometric or organic shapes? Does the artist use vertical, horizontal, or diagonal lines? Where are they?

6. Do you think these faces were meant to be portraits? Why do they look alike? How would the relatives recognize their ancestor, the chief? (*Symbols such as the crown and the possessions he once held in his hands.*)
7. One term to describe these figures is “stylized.” While there are no individual characteristics, the artist exaggerated certain features to suggest similar characteristics of the Kalabari people. In what way does the artist carve his figures to conform to a recognized cultural norm? Discuss stylization.
8. What does this screen tell us about the values of the Kalabari people? What is important to them?
 - the relationship between family members
 - the prominence and power of this family in the community
 - the importance of the head of the family
 - the continuity between past and present house leaders
 (*All of the above are correct*)
9. Does each of the figures here represent a particular individual or the role of that individual? Why do you think so? (**Explain the missing accessories representing leadership that would have been in the hands of the figures.**)
10. If you wished to be recognized not by your face but by what you wore and the objects you held, what would you wear and hold?
11. This screen was made to honor dead ancestors or relatives. How do we honor our dead today? Do you have any memorials of deceased family members in your home?
12. The relatives of the ancestor honored in the screen left food and offerings in front of it several times a year. Why would they do that? What do some Americans do to honor the graves of their dead?
13. How is this representation of a Kalabari family system different from the representation of an English family shown in the Millais painting?
14. If you wanted to represent your family in art, how would you do it—in sculpture, painting, collage, photography? What family characteristics would you emphasize? Would you include any family possessions? Would you include both living and dead relatives?

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