

FAMILY GUIDE

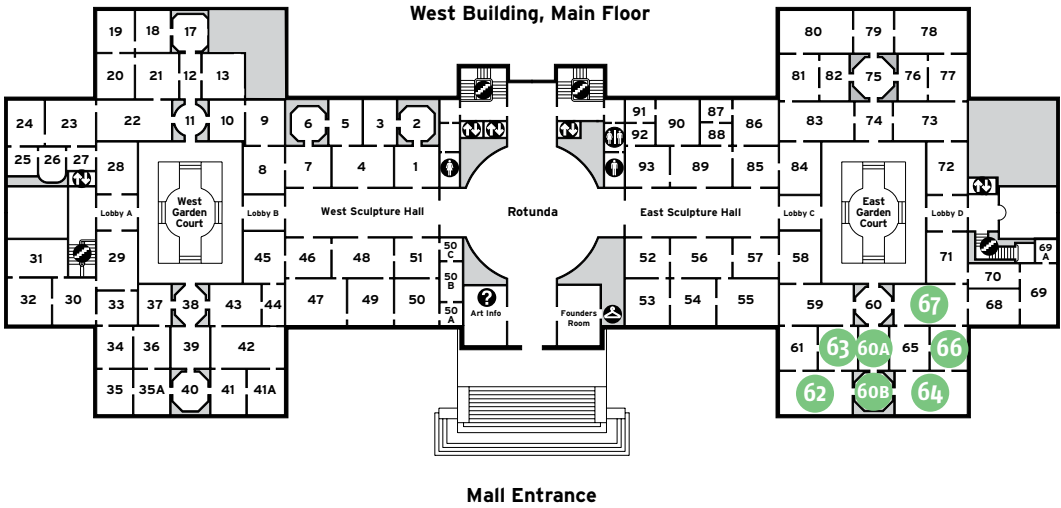
American Art at the National Gallery of Art



ages
6 and up



Welcome to the National Gallery's Collection of American Art

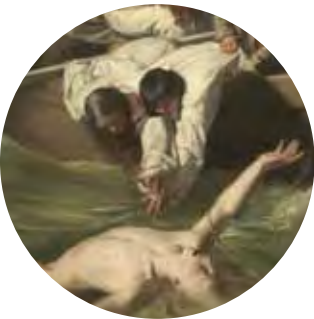


Follow this booklet for an experience in “artful looking.” **Cues** and **questions** encourage group discussions that turn looking into learning. Share and compare opinions as you look at the art on display.

Remember to explore paintings with your eyes only; do not touch. If you stand about three feet away from the art, you will have a perfect view.

GALLERIES

60A 60B 62



Memorable Moments

Today, photographic portraits keep memories alive. In early America, painted portraits served this purpose by making images of family members last for future generations.

Take a step into the memories of earlier Americans, captured by portraits in Galleries 60A, 60B, and 62.

Find portraits that show:

- People looking their best
- Careers
- Wives and husbands
- Activities or chores
- Leaders of the country
- Family groups

Would you want an image of your worst memory? Someone pictured in these galleries did . . .

Find the large painting in Gallery 60B and **imagine** yourself flailing backward in the ocean, at your head a shark with its jaws wide open. This is Brook Watson, a young orphan and boat hand who later became mayor of London, England. He had this painting made to show others that even an orphaned child who loses his leg to a shark can succeed in life.

Can you **identify** three ways Watson's mates are trying to save him?

Answer:
1. Two men reach out toward Watson. 2. One sailor throws him a rope. 3. The man at the front of the boat spears the shark with a boat hook.

GALLERY

63



Pennsylvania German Chest,
1935/1942, Index of American Design



Folk Artist's Checklist

Early American portraitists were often self-taught or learned painting in a different trade such as sign, ship, or furniture painting. That's why their portraits may look flat, with bold colors that resemble stenciling.

Look carefully at the paintings in Gallery 63. All the phrases below describe elements of folk art. **Check them** off as you find them in works on view here:

- ___ Thick outlines
- ___ Doll-like expressions
- ___ Bright colors
- ___ Stiff poses
- ___ Flat surfaces
- ___ Intricately patterned fabrics (rugs, clothing)

Study the expressions of both humans and animals pictured in this gallery. Now **choose** who best conveys the feelings or moods listed below among the cows, horses, children, adults, lions, bears, and other creatures depicted. Don't forget dogs!

worried joyful surprised thoughtful

alert excited contented

Which person or animal would you choose as a companion?

Want to make your own folk art? Go to NGAkids Faces & Places at www.nga.gov/kids/zone/facesplaces.htm.

GALLERIES

64 67



Let's Go for a Walk

Nineteenth-century landscape paintings recorded the features and atmosphere of actual and imaginary places. Many of these scenes symbolized the promise Americans saw in their vast country.

Locate and **check off** the kinds of American landscapes you see in Galleries 64 and 67.

- Scenic vistas of mountains, valleys, gorges, lakes, and rivers
- Colors of autumn
- Quiet places in the woods
- Large stretches of land
- Technicolor skies

As you wander through these galleries, **choose** one place you would like to visit. Now **imagine** yourself there and **record** your experience by filling in the letter on the next page.

GALLERIES

64 67

Date _____
record today's date or the year of the painting

Dear _____,



I thought of you today when I went for a walk with _____
artist's name

to see _____. We
type of place in picture

went on a _____ day
weather

in the _____. I was
morning, afternoon...

surprised to see _____.
describe your surroundings there

I took a deep breath, and the air smelled of _____.

I picked up _____ and
something in your painting

studied it. It felt _____
describe

and looked _____.
describe

My artist guide named this place _____

title of painting

your signature



GALLERY

66



Veterans of the Massachusetts Fifty-fourth Regiment at the ceremony in Boston unveiling the *Shaw Memorial*, May 31, 1897



In Glory Everlasting

Do you have a friend or family member who is serving or has served in the military? The *Shaw Memorial* honors one of the first African American regiments to fight in the Civil War (1861–1865), which ended slavery in this country.

Look closely at this monument by sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens. **Search** for:

- Rifles
- Backpacks with sleeping rolls
- Flags
- Drums
- Men and boys in uniform
- A man on horseback
- Canteens

Identify any sounds you might hear.

Based on what you see and hear, do you think the soldiers are going into or returning from battle?

Convince your group of your opinion.



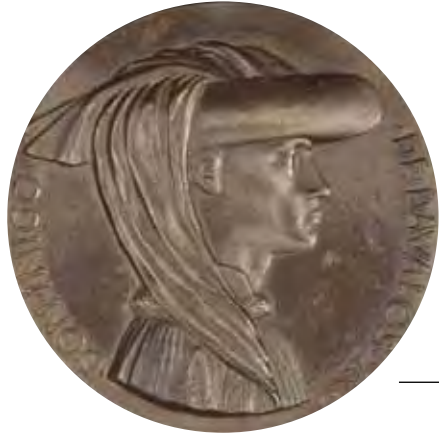
Saint-Gaudens designed a twenty-dollar gold coin, issued from 1907 to 1933.

Reliefs by Other Names

The *Shaw Memorial* is a relief sculpture — parts of its design stand out from the background. Relief sculpture is an art form that has been used to honor personal and public events from ancient times to the present.

Match these images to their type of relief sculpture and you will have traced some of its most famous uses throughout history.

- A** Greek grave marker (*stèle*)
- B** Egyptian obelisk
- C** Cameo
- D** Roman arch
- E** Italian chest (*cassone*)
- F** Renaissance portrait medal
- G** Coin



A Watery Coat of Arms

Brook Watson's personal crest recalls the shark attack that took part of his right leg. Can you find the sea god Neptune and Watson's missing limb?



Games children played in early America included duck-duck-goose, hide-and-seek, marbles, checkers, and dominoes (pictured here).



To convince his skeptical British audience that the colors of autumn in America truly were as brilliant as in *Autumn – On the Hudson River*, Jasper Cropsey placed specimen leaves beside the painting while it was on view in his London studio. Why? English fall foliage was drab in comparison.

Captions

All images in this booklet are details from the following works of art:

Cover

Jacob Eichholtz, *The Ragan Sisters*, 1818, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mrs. Cooper R. Drewry

John Singleton Copley, *Watson and the Shark*, 1778, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ferdinand Lamot Belin Fund

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Jacob Eichholtz, *The Ragan Sisters*, 1818, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mrs. Cooper R. Drewry

Gilbert Stuart, *Catherine Brass Yates (Mrs. Richard Yates)*, 1793/1794, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

John Singleton Copley, *Watson and the Shark*, 1778, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ferdinand Lamot Belin Fund

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Betty Jean Davis after Anonymous Craftsman, *Pennsylvania German Chest*, 1935/1942, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Index of American Design

William Matthew Prior, *Little Miss Fairfield*, 1850, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch

Edward Hicks, *Peaceable Kingdom*, c. 1834, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch

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Asher Brown Durand, *Forest in the Morning Light*, c. 1855, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frederick Sturges, Jr.

Jasper Francis Cropsey, *Autumn—On the Hudson River*, 1860, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of the Avalon Foundation

William Stanley Haseltine, *Narragansett Bay*, 1864, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Alexander M. and Judith W. Laughlin

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George Inness, *The Lackawanna Valley*, c. 1856, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mrs. Huttleston Rogers

Worthington Whittredge, *Second Beach, Newport*, c. 1878/1880, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Paul Mellon Fund and Gift of Juliana Terian in memory of Peter G. Terian

Jasper Francis Cropsey, *Autumn—On the Hudson River*, 1860, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of the Avalon Foundation

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Veterans of the Massachusetts Fifty-fourth Regiment, 31 May 1897, Robert A. Bell Post Memorial Photograph, Photograph Collection of the Grand Army of the Republic. Memorial Room, Massachusetts State House, Courtesy Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Arts Commission

Augustus Saint-Gaudens, *Shaw Memorial*, 1900, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, Cornish, New Hampshire

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Augustus Saint-Gaudens, *Shaw Memorial*, 1900, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, Cornish, New Hampshire

Augustus Saint-Gaudens, “*Double Eagle*” *Twenty Dollar Gold Piece* [obverse], model 1905–1907, struck 1907, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of John Wilmerding

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Classical Greek, *Grave stele of Dexileos*, c. 390 BCE, Marie Mauzy/Art Resource, New York, Kerameikos Museum, Athens, Greece

New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, *Relief on a fallen obelisk at Karnak*, c. 1465 BCE, Werner Forman/Art Resource, New York, Karnak, Thebes, Egypt

Florentine 16th Century, *Walnut cassone made for Strozzi family*, first half 16th century, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection

Alfred André, *Pendant with the head of Medusa*, 1885/1890, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection

Pisanello, *Don Inigo d'Avalos, d. 1484, Grand Chamberlain of Naples from 1442* [obverse], c. 1448/1449, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

Arch of Constantine, c. 315, Vanni/Art Resource, New York, Rome, Italy

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Jasper Francis Cropsey, *Autumn—On the Hudson River*, 1860, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of the Avalon Foundation

American 18th Century, *The Domino Girl*, c. 1790, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch

Autumn leaves photograph by Donna Mann

Back Cover

American 18th Century, *The Domino Girl*, c. 1790, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch

John Singleton Copley, *Watson and the Shark*, 1778, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ferdinand Lamot Belin Fund

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