

1. ***Pierrepont Edward Lacey and His Dog, Gun***, c. 1836-37

Milton Hopkins, American, 1789-1844

oil on canvas

78.189

Observation questions:

- What is the first thing you see in this painting?
- Do you know the name for a painting of a person?
- Describe the clothes worn by this little boy.
- How does he feel about the dog? How can you tell?

Supplemental Image:

Photo: Bull mastiff



Information:

This painting is called a ***portrait*** – a picture of a person, in this case a young boy and his dog. You have your portrait taken every year when the photographers come to take school pictures. Before cameras were invented, self-taught artists like Milton Hopkins used to travel from town to town selling their services as portrait painters. This boy, named Pierrepont Lacey, dressed up in his special-occasion clothes -- red shoes that were probably hand-made, dark trousers and a matching jacket with a ruffled white collar, long tails in the back, and lots of shiny gold buttons – and had to stand still for a long time so that Mr. Hopkins could paint his portrait.

Maybe it was Pierrepont's idea to have Gun, his favorite dog, in the painting too. Gun is a ***bull mastiff***, a very large but gentle breed of dog that the Lacey family raised. By including the dog in Pierrepont's portrait, the artist added a personal touch, and perhaps showed how important the mastiffs were to the Lacey family. See how Pierrepont lays his hand on the dog as they stand together – they are obviously good friends!

Additional Info:

Pierrepont Edward Lacey lived south of Rochester, in Riga, with his family over 160 years ago (born 1832 – died after 1860). At the Memorial Art Gallery you can see not only Pierrepont's portrait, but portraits of his mother and little sister, all painted by Milton Hopkins.

2. ***Oxen on the Beach***, 1910

Joachin Sorolla y Bastida, Spanish, 1863-1923
oil on canvas
14.8



Observation questions:

- What kind of animals do you see?
- What are they trying to do?
- What is the most important thing(s) in this painting?
How does the artist tell us that?
- “Jump into” this painting and describe the smells, sounds, tastes, etc.

Supplemental Image:

Photo: Oxen pulling boats

Information:

These big, strong animals are oxen, a type of cattle used for centuries in many areas of the world to pull heavy loads. They are very powerful but quite calm and gentle too, which makes them ideal working companions. Notice how the artist used broad brushstrokes to highlight the ox’s huge muscles. By focusing our attention on the animals (very large at the center of the painting) and not on the men (we cannot even see their faces, and their blue clothing blends in to the water and sky), the artist lets us know that the oxen are the important part of this scene.

In the past, oxen have been used to pull wagons for travelers and plows for farmers, but in 1910 this artist found fishermen on the seashore in Portugal still using oxen to pull their heavy fishing boats down to the water in the morning. After a day spent on the boats spreading their fishing nets, the fishermen returned to shore and used the oxen to pull the heavy, wet nets back in – hopefully loaded with lots of fish – and drag the boats back on shore for the night.

Additional Info:

Today we are accustomed to seeing big trucks, tractors and other machines doing heavy work – digging, plowing, clearing snow, building roads -- but in some places in the world, animals still work hard together with people to get the job done.

What are the advantages and disadvantages to using machines?

What are the advantages and disadvantages to using animals?

3. ***The Fawn***

John Flanagan, American, 1895-1942

granite

74.2

Observation questions:

- What type of animal is this? How can you tell?
- What type of artwork is this, carved out of stone?



Supplemental Image:

Photo: Fawn



Information:

This is a sculpture of stone in the form of a compact creature, folded up on itself with legs tucked under its body. Its large eyes and even larger ears sometimes causes it to be mistaken for a rabbit, but a closer look might reveal that this animal is a baby deer, called a fawn. In order to search for food for themselves, mother deer must leave their young fawns alone at times, curled up and hidden in dense bushes or tall grasses. The fawns know to stay very still and quiet so that no hunting predator will find them before mother returns.

Perhaps this artist, John Flanagan, saw a fawn like this one, lying hidden in the brush, during his frequent walks in the woods near his home. Mr. Flanagan searched the woods for large rocks that caught his eye, reminded him something else – like a bird or a whale or a frog - or just had a nice shape and could be useful sometime in the future. He would carry the heavy rocks back to his artist's studio and use his sculpting tools to bring out the shapes he saw. In this stone, Mr. Flanagan must have "seen" the shape of a fawn, used his tools and his imagination, and let the fawn come out so everyone could see it just the way he did.

Did you ever go for a walk and find an interesting stone or piece of wood that you kept because of its shape? Maybe it reminded you of something else, like an animal or a person's face. That stone or piece of wood would be called a ***found object***, because you found it! Artists sometimes use found objects like stones, wood scraps, pieces of cloth or string in their artworks because they have interesting shapes or textures.

4. *Hummingbird with Cattelya and
Dendrobium Orchids*, ca. 1890

Martin Johnson Heade, American, 1819-1904
oil on canvas
76.3

(CAT-lee-ya)



Observation questions:

- What is the first thing you see in this painting?
- What kind of bird do you see? Was it hard to spot? Why or why not?
- What words would you describe this place? What land might we be in?
- What other types of animals might live in this place?

Supplemental Images

Photo: Hummingbird



Information:

At first look, this painting seems to be all about the gorgeous pink flower – it is very large, brightly colored, and near the center of the painting, so it catches our attention right away. However, this flower is not all by itself, in a vase or on a plain background. The artist, Martin Johnson Heade, chose to show this flower, called an orchid, in its natural rainforest home with other flowers and creatures, in particular the tiny, brilliantly colored hummingbird. By painting the hummingbird in its natural setting, surrounded by the lush foliage and amazing flowers of the rainforest, Mr. Heade created a small window that allows us to look out into an exotic tropical landscape.

Additional Info:

Martin Johnson Heade became fascinated with hummingbirds and began work on a book about them, called *The Gems of Brazil*. In order to include all the different types of hummingbirds, Heade traveled to the tropical rainforests of not only Brazil, but also Colombia, Panama and Jamaica. In the late 1800s, this meant weeks of travel by boat and train, as there were no airplanes in those days. There he was able to make many small paintings and sketches that he could refer to back to his studio, composing very dramatic, exotic and imaginary yet lifelike arrangements.

5. ***The Fable of the Fox and the Heron***, 1630-40
Franz Snyders and workshop, Flemish, 1579-1657
oil on canvas
72.75



Observation questions:

- What animals can you see in this painting?
- Describe what is happening in this scene.
- Could a scene like this happen in real life?
Why or why not?

Supplemental Images:

Photos: Red Fox
Great Blue Heron

Information:

At first look, this painting seems to be about “real” animals. A red fox and a pair of long-legged birds called herons stand alongside a stream in a woods, while a duck and frogs look on. However, a closer look reveals some strange things – one heron appears to be eating from a large glass jar, and the fox, usually a clever hunter, seems disinterested by the readily available herons and duck.

While all these animals are indeed “real,” in this painting they “act out” a scene from one of *Aesop’s Fables*. ***Fables***, which star animals as the main characters and teach a life-lesson, or ***moral***, at the end, have been told and retold for centuries. Some of the most famous fables are credited to Aesop, a poet who lived over 2,500 years ago in ancient Greece. One story tells about a tricky fox and an even trickier crane -- a tall bird with long legs, neck and beak, very similar to a heron.

One day Fox invited his friend Crane over for dinner, but served nothing but soup poured out into a broad flat stone dish. Crane could not scoop up his soup with his long thin pointed bill, but Fox lapped his up hungrily with his tongue. Poor Crane went home hungry, but Fox thought his clever trick was very funny.

Crane decided that Fox should be taught a lesson, so some time later, Crane invited Fox to dinner with him. Fox came eagerly, and was served his dinner in a tall jar with a tall narrow mouth. Crane could easily reach his bill into the jar's neck and enjoy his dinner, but Fox, with his short snout, could not even reach in to taste it.

Moral: *Treat others the way you yourself would like to be treated.*

- Which scene of the story is shown here?
- Did you notice another scene of the story in the background of the painting?
- How does the fox feel? Why? How can you tell?

Additional Info:

About 400 years ago in Flanders (modern Belgium), Franz Snyders became very popular for his detailed, realistic landscapes populated by familiar animals. To illustrate the fable of *The Fox and the Crane*, he chose to substitute the native Grey Heron. The photo shows the similar Great Blue Heron of North America.

6. *Horse*

Chinese, Tang Dynasty, 618-907 CE
clay with glaze and polychromy
30.26

Observation questions:

- What words would you use to describe this horse?
- Can you tell what the horse is made of?

Supplemental Image:

Photo: Turkmen horse



Information:

This Chinese horse figure is very large, standing almost 2 feet tall! It was made by hand about 1,500 years ago from clay poured into a mold, and then baked until hard. Notice how the saddle and bridle are painted in beautiful brown, green and blue glazes, a new and expensive technique developed in China at this time. Production of such a large clay figure requires considerable time and effort, so we can be sure that this must represent a very special animal.

Horses first came into China as a gift to the emperor from a far-away western land (now Kyrgystan). These rare western horses with their long legs, elegant necks and great strength became very valuable and treasured possessions of the wealthy nobles. They also inspired the invention of fantastic stories which magnified their true qualities to magical proportions, such as the ability to run 1,000 miles in one day, to live for weeks without food or water, and even to run so fast that they could actually fly right up to heaven. This last tale led to the idea of the souls of the dead riding up to heaven on the back of these "heavenly horses," known as *tian-ma* (*tee-ON mah*). The presence of *tian-ma* became an essential part of the furnishing and decoration of tombs, considered to be the earthly home of the soul in the *afterlife*, where all good things in life continued after death.

The idea of "heavenly horses" is an example of a *myth*, a made-up adventure story about gods, heroes and creatures with fabulous powers. People told myths to explain and answer big questions like: *What causes thunder and lightning? Why does it get cold in the winter? How does the sun move across the sky? What happens to people after they die?* And, just as we do today, they probably enjoyed hearing fantastic, imaginary stories about real people, events and animals, which only added to the excitement and interest of the real thing.

Additional Info:

This figure is based on a real horse breed, known as Turkmen or Akhal-Teke horses today.

7. *Jaguar Effigy Vessel*

Guanacaste-Nicoya Region, Costa Rica
Middle Polychrome Period, 800-1200 CE
terracotta
69.90

Observation questions:

- How would you describe the animal in this object?
- Is this a real animal? Why or why not?
- What animal could it be? What clues do you see?
- Can you tell what material was used to make this vessel?
- How does this object make you feel? Why?



Supplemental Image:

Photo: Jaguar

Information:

This three-legged, or *tripodal*, vase comes from Central America. The people living there around 1,000 years ago produced beautiful pottery that incorporated the shapes, colors, and features of the animals that lived around them. Parts of this vessel suggest a jaguar, the largest predator in Central and South America. Observe the jaguar's sharp teeth bared in a ferocious growl, the spotted pattern of its coat, and its long striped tail. In the case of this jaguar jar, the tail helps it to balance on its two hind legs. Do you think that real jaguars can sit that way?

The people of Costa Rica worshipped the jaguar as representing the power of the earth and of their kings. This jaguar's unusual squatting pose, with his "arms" resting on his knees in a human-like way, means he is more than just the fierce hunting cat of the forest. This vessel, half man, half jaguar, likely had a ceremonial use, possibly in rituals intended to enhance the ruler's power and prestige. In addition to its dramatic appearance, this jaguar vessel also has a "noisy" presence—the hollow legs and open mouth contain tiny clay balls which rattle around when the vessel is shaken, reproducing the frightening rumble of a jaguar on the prowl.

8. **Antelope Crest-Piece: Chi Wara** (*chee WAR-ah*)
Mali, Western Sudan Style Zone, Bamana Culture
wood
69.107

Observation questions:

- What kind of animal do you see? What clues tell you so?
- How is this object similar / different from the real animal?

Supplemental Image:

Photos: Roan Antelope;
Dancers in full costume



Information:

This carved wooden object features some recognizable animal traits such as long curved horns, long sticking-up ears, a sharp pointed snout, and long, elegant neck. However, instead of recreating the image of an animal, the artist utilized a technique known as **abstraction**. By taking the familiar characteristics of the real animal, the roan antelope, and greatly simplifying and exaggerating them, the artist created something new and exciting.

This object is really a type of mask. This part, the crest-piece, attached to a basket-woven cap that fitted onto the head of a dancer, who then covered his entire body in a costume of long raffia grasses and used sticks as front legs. By hiding in a costume, the dancer could completely “become” the legendary antelope, Chi Wara, whose name means “working animal.”

The Legend of the Chi Wara

At the beginning of the world, people did not know how to farm, so had to wander the land to search for food. Chi Wara felt sorry for the people, so decided to help them by teaching them how to farm. He used his antlers to show them how to find seeds and dig holes, and showed them how to cover the holes with soil by using his hooves. Now the people could live in one place and grow their own food. Chi Wara became their special friend, staying to

help them work their gardens and farms. The people became happy and prosperous, but the abundance of good things caused them to become wasteful, careless of the Earth and forgetful of the thanks owed to the one who had taught them. Chi Wara felt hurt and neglected, so he buried himself deep in the earth and waited for the people to remember and honor him as he deserved. The people sculpted antelope figures and took them to the fields when the grain was being hoed and planted; in a special ceremony, they called upon the spirit of Chi Wara to honor the memory of their great friend and helper.

Additional Info:

Only male members of a secret club are allowed to wear the Chi Wara masks, dancing them out in the fields with music and drumming during planting and harvesting times. As shown in the photograph, these dancers always danced in pairs, one representing the male and one the female. Can you tell which one is which? How?