



Norton Simon Museum

# Family Guide

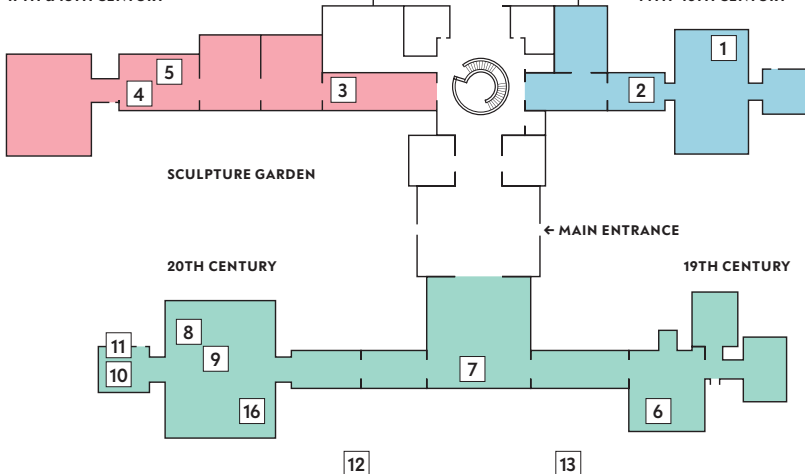
A reusable activity guide to inspire conversation,  
exploration and creation in the galleries.

## UPPER LEVEL

17TH & 18TH CENTURY

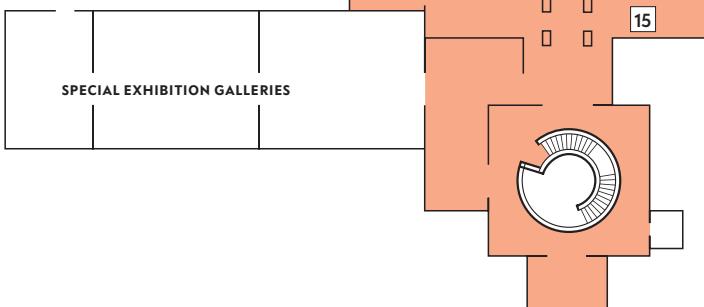
THEATER

14TH-16TH CENTURY



## LOWER LEVEL

SOUTH & SOUTHEAST ASIAN ART



**1** Jacopo Bassano, *The Flight into Egypt* **2** Frans Snyder, *Still Life with Fruit and Vegetables* **3** Jan Davidzoon de Heem, *Vase of Flowers* **4** Nicolas de Largillière, *Portrait of Lambert de Vermont* **5** Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, *Portrait of Theresia, Countess Kinsky* **6** Claude Monet, *Mouth of the Seine at Honfleur* **7** Vincent van Gogh, *The Mulberry Tree* **8** Barbara Hepworth, *Assembly of Sea Forms* **9** Constantin Brancusi, *Bird in Space* **10** Sam Francis, *Basel Mural I* **11** Sam Francis, *Basel Mural III, Fragments 1 and 2* **12** Auguste Rodin, *The Thinker* **13** Buddha Shakyamuni, *India: Tamil Nadu* **14** Shiva as Lord of Dance (*Nataraja*), *India: Tamil Nadu* **15** Jina Ajitanatha and His Divine Assembly, *India: Gujarat* **16** Henri Rousseau, *Exotic Landscape*

# Jacopo Bassano

## The Flight into Egypt, c. 1544-5

This painting depicts an event from the New Testament in which, after an angel appears to Joseph in a dream and warns him of coming danger, he escapes to Egypt with his family: Mary and the baby Jesus. Here, the artist shows the angel leading Joseph and his family away as they embark on their trip.

Bassano specialized in outdoor biblical scenes featuring people and animals like those he saw around him in his daily life. Check off these objects and animals as you find them in the painting:

☐ HOUSES ☐ FLOWERS ☐ ROOSTERS ☐ DOG ☐ DONKEY ☐ ROCKS ☐ TREES  
☐ WINGS ☐ BABY ☐ WALKING STICK ☐ BASKET ☐ TREE STUMP ☐ SPEAR

This painting includes a lot of movement, and Bassano depicts people from all different angles. Can you re-create the poses of each person in the painting? Notice that Mary and Jesus are the only figures who remain still.

Choose a small section of the painting that you like most and...

\* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* *draw it here* \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \*

# Frans Snyders

## Still Life with Fruit and Vegetables, 1625–35

This painting by Frans Snyders includes many different kinds of fruits and vegetables and contains references to all five senses. The first sense is sight, represented by the vivid colors in the painting. Can you find the rest?

**How does Snyders represent each sense?** (HINT: Imagine you're the child in the painting, exploring your surroundings. What sound would the bird make? How would each object smell and feel?)

**Hearing:** \_\_\_\_\_

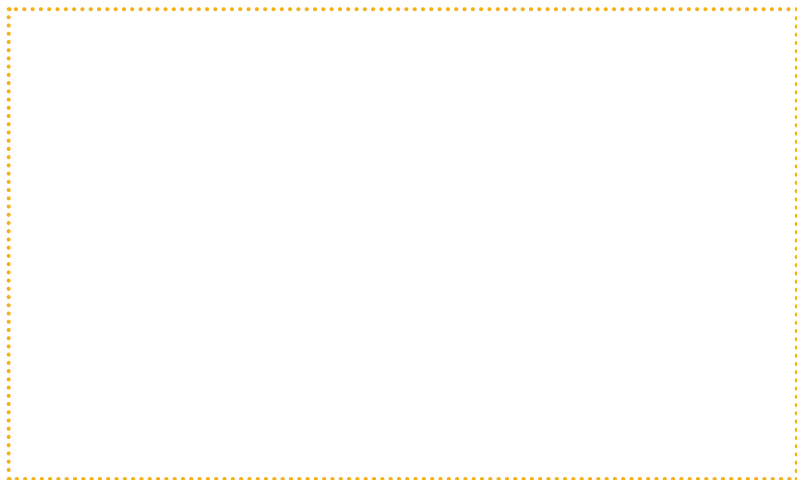
**Touch:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Taste:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Smell:** \_\_\_\_\_

This painting was once hung in a formal dining room, and it features foods that were rare and valuable at the time, like peas and asparagus.

 **Fill up** the space below with all of your favorite foods.



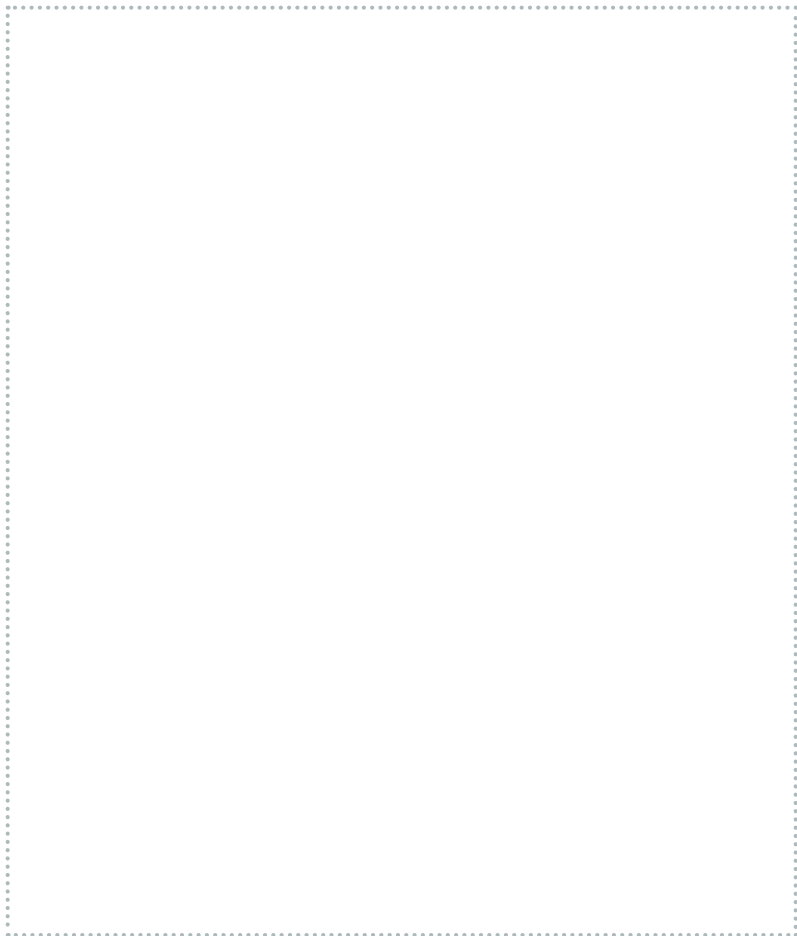
# Jan Davidzoon de Heem

## Vase of Flowers, 1654



Dutch artists spent a lot of time looking at the world around them and learning to recreate every detail in their paintings. Notice the detail in the flowers, bugs and even the reflection on the vase. What other details can you find in the painting?

 **Create** your own detailed drawing from real flowers in the garden.



# Nicolas de Largillière

## Portrait of Lambert de Vermont, c. 1697

Largillière was one of the top portrait painters in Paris. If you could go back in time and speak with the sitter for this painting, Lambert de Vermont, what would you ask him? What kind of a person do you think he is? Friendly? Serious? Important? Silly? What do you see that makes you say that?

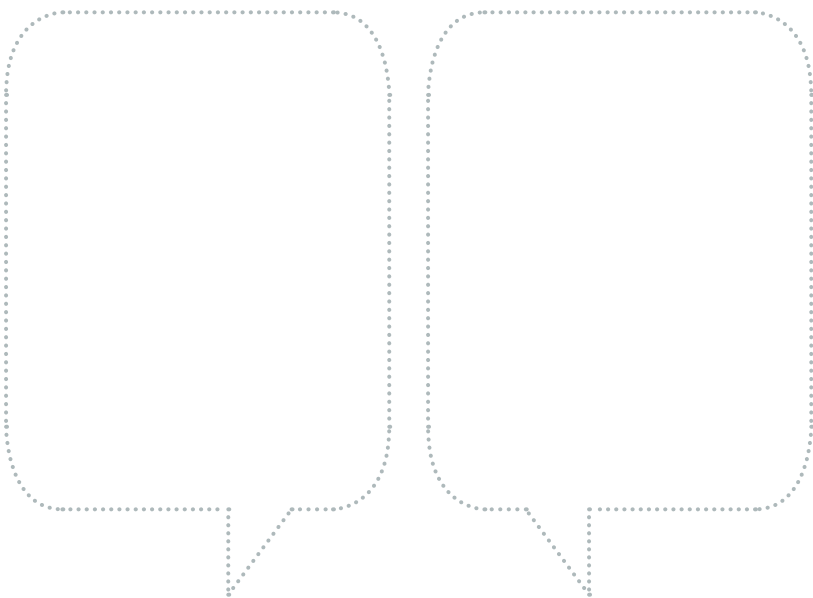
# Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun

## Portrait of Theresia, Countess Kinsky, 1793

Vigée Le Brun wrote that she admired the beauty and kindness of the sitter for this painting, the Countess Kinsky. How would you describe this woman? Based on her expression, the setting and what she's wearing, where do you think she is going?

Imagine Lambert de Vermont and Countess Kinsky had a conversation.


 **Fill in** what they would say below.

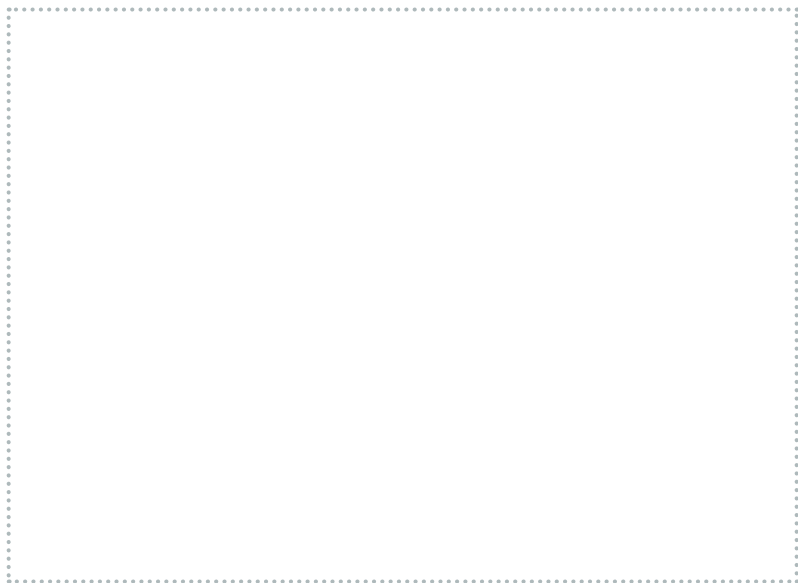


# Claude Monet

## Mouth of the Seine at Honfleur, 1865

Imagine you are on one of the fishing boats in this painting. How does it feel to be out on the sea sailing in this weather? What do you feel and hear?

 **Draw** what you see around you and **write** about what you will do once you reach the shore.



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# Vincent van Gogh

## The Mulberry Tree, 1889

Van Gogh believed in painting things as he felt when looking at them rather than as they actually looked in nature. Here he has painted a mulberry tree that he saw every day in St. Remy and turned it into something extraordinary.

**What are three words you would use to describe the mulberry tree in his painting?**

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

Van Gogh used color as a form of expression. What colors do you see in this painting? What do you think Van Gogh was trying to express by using these colors?

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If you could give this tree a new name based on your observations, what would you name it?

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# Barbara Hepworth

## Assembly of Sea Forms, 1972



Turn to the person you came with and share your thoughts on the questions below.

Hepworth often named her sculptures after she finished them. Only then could she look at them and recognize their inspiration. Walk around the sculpture, *Assembly of Sea Forms*. How do you think this sculpture communicates a sense of the sea or an assembly (a gathering or group of people or objects coming together)?

The “Sea Forms” are also individually titled: back row: “Sea Mother” and “Sea King”; center row: “Shell,” “Sea Form and Young” and “Rolled Sea Form”; front row: “Embryo” and “Sea Bird.” How do you think each sculpture expresses these names? How do these names change the way you look at the sculpture?

If you could rearrange the parts of *Assembly of Sea Forms* to create a new sculpture, what would it look like? Give it a new title and...

\* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* draw it here \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \*

# Constantin Brancusi

## Bird in Space, 1931

Brancusi spent years trying to create an abstract, or non-representational, sculpture of a flying bird. He wanted to create a sculpture that brought to mind the soaring feeling of a bird in flight without depicting the physical characteristics of an actual bird.



Walk around this sculpture and watch how its surface and shape change as you move.

How would you describe the sculpture's color and surface texture?

Is it rough or smooth?

What other words would you use to describe it?

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Does the sculpture remind you of anything?

Would you describe this sculpture as light or heavy?

How does it make you feel to look at it?

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# Sam Francis

## Basel Mural I and Basel Mural III, Fragments 1 and 2, 1956–8

In 1956 California-born artist Sam Francis made three murals, including *Basel I* and *Basel III* (now in fragments), which are now on view in the Norton Simon Museum; originally they were made to be installed in a Swiss museum.

Take a moment to look closely at the paintings. Examine the details by making a telescope with your hands (or by rolling a piece of paper, like this guide, into a cylinder) and using it to explore one small part of the painting at a time. Then, together with each member of your family or group, come up with three words to describe this painting and how it makes you feel. What did you see in the painting that inspired those words?

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Use those words to create a short  
collaborative poem about the painting below.

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# Auguste Rodin

## The Thinker, 1880

Every part of the body of Rodin's *The Thinker* is engaged in active thought, from his furrowed brow to his bent back and muscular legs. What do you think he's thinking about?



# Buddha Shakyamuni

India: Tamil Nadu, c. 1100

The Buddha was once a prince, but he gave up his princely life in order to become a great teacher and help others find wisdom and peace. In art, the Buddha can be identified by his attributes, or symbols that tell us his identity in artistic representations. These symbols include:

**Ushnisha:** the bump on top of his head is a sign of the Buddha's great wisdom.

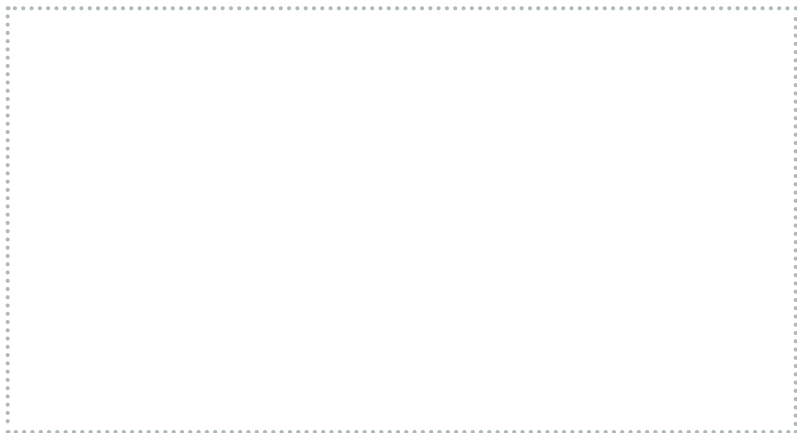
**Urna:** the tuft of hair between his eyes is a sign of enlightenment and the ability to see all.

**Elongated earlobes:** his earlobes are stretched out from having worn heavy earrings when he was a prince.

Find the Buddha sitting outside in a classic meditation pose. Can you pose like him? Have a seat, close your eyes, and take 3 deep breaths. Now, open your eyes. How do you feel? Circle the word(s) that express how you feel or write your own.

CALM SAD CURIOUS STILL SILLY WISE HAPPY MAD SHY -----

 **Sketch** that feeling below.



# Shiva as Lord of Dance (Nataraja)

India: Tamil Nadu, c. 1000



Shiva is one of the main gods of Hinduism. In his form as Lord of Dance (Nataraja), he dances the destruction and rebirth of the world. In one hand he holds the fire of destruction and in another he holds a drum signifying creation. His third eye, indicating his dominion over all, tells us that this is someone special with special abilities.

Do you see any other extraordinary figures in this gallery? Are there any special characteristics that you see repeated in multiple figures? What features does the artist use to tell us they are gods? How are their poses similar to or different than the Nataraja sculpture?

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# Jina Ajitanatha and His Divine Assembly

India: Gujarat, 1062

Jina Ajitanatha is the second of twenty-four teachers in the Jain religion. He is known as the “invincible master,” because he never gave in to the temptations of material comforts and he was never defeated. Here, he stands surrounded by celestial attendants and deities, with the donors who sponsored the sculpture at his feet. How might you describe Jina Ajitanatha in comparison to the figures that surround him?



Notice the diamond-shaped symbol on his chest.

This symbol, called the *srivatsa*, represents his divine status.

Design a symbol that represents who you are and share it with a family member or friend.

\* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* draw it here \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \* ↓ \*



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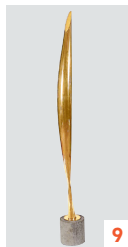
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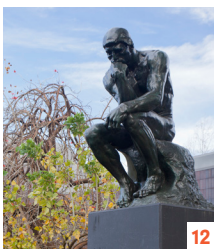
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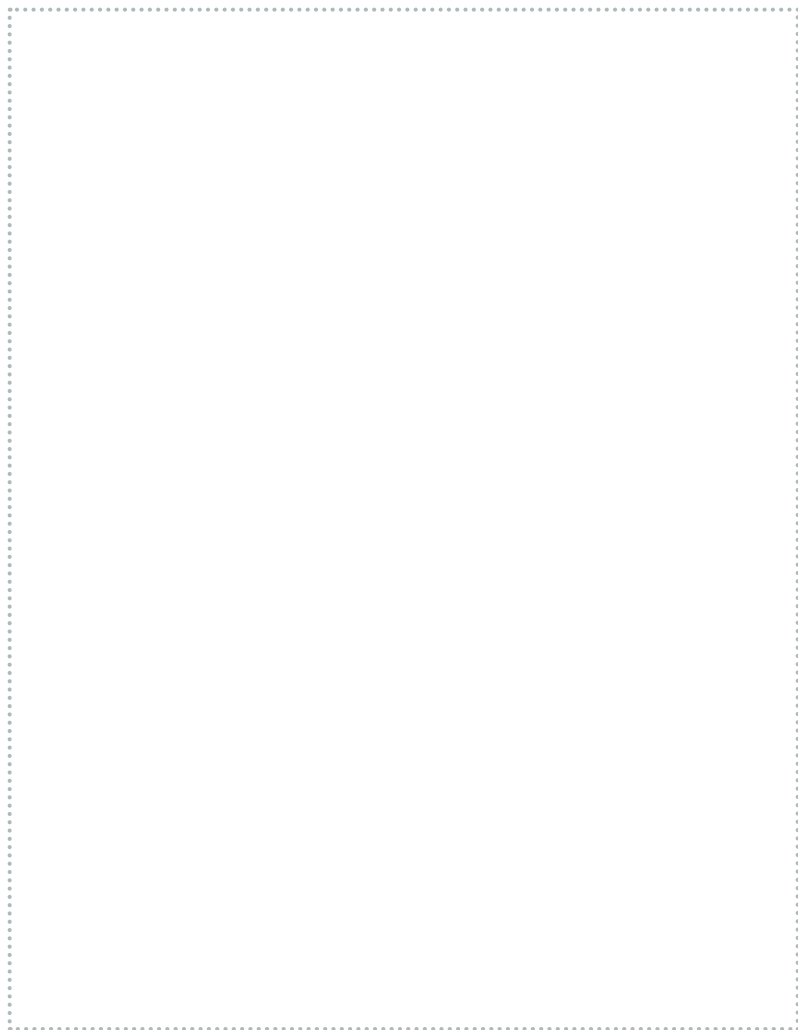


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# Imagine...

Imagine that you are a collector like Norton Simon. Which paintings and sculptures from the museum's collection would you choose for your own collection?

 **Draw** a picture of how you would place them in your own personal gallery.



# Henri Rousseau

## Exotic Landscape, 1910

Rousseau was known for his dream-like, magical landscapes with lush plants, exotic flowers and wild animals like the monkeys seen here. Imagine you are in the jungle with Rousseau’s monkeys. How would you describe your surroundings? What is the weather like? What sounds do you hear? Are the monkeys friendly? How did you get here and what will you do next?



CUT HERE

POST CARD



Four vertical lines for writing an address.

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## Norton Simon Museum

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