

How to Read a Museum Wall Label

Who made it?
Where and when
did the maker live?

Chuck Close

American, born 1940

Frank, 1969

Acrylic on canvas

The John R. Van Derlip Fund 69.137

What is it titled?
When was it made?
What is it made of?

Sometimes an artist's
name is not known,
but art historians
invent a name based
on the individual's
style of painting. Dates
when the artist worked
are often shown.

Master of the Embroidered Foliage

Netherlandish, active 1480–1500

Virgin and Child in a Landscape, c. 1492–98

Oil on panel

Gift of the Groves Foundation 90.7

Often the title on a
museum label has
been invented by
somebody other than
the artist many years
after the artwork was
created.

How did the museum
get it? You'll see
purchases, loans,
and gifts.

Luba artist

Democratic Republic of Congo

Dance mask, 19th century

Wood and pigments

Gift of Stephen, Peter, and Michael Pflaum 53.14

Many times all that
can be identified is the
culture that the maker
was a part of. The label
often also provides
the modern political
name of the place he
or she lived.

Italian artist

Italy

Salvator Mundi (Savior of the World), page from an illuminated Antiphony, c. 1425–50

Ink, gouache, and gold on parchment

Gift of Robert Lehman 43.20

Every object has an
accession number to
help identify it. You
can learn what year
it became part of the
museum's collection
from the first part of
the number.