



Minnesota History

Self-Guided Group Activity

Grades 4-12

Land of 10,000 Looks

Many of the enclosed questions are designed to prompt close looking and critical thinking. Read each artwork's label to find answers to fact-based questions. Artwork not on view? Don't worry: There are plenty of others to visit. And the collection is always only a click away.

Plan on spending time with 8-10 artworks.
Gallery numbers subject to change. To confirm locations of artwork, go to artsimia.org before your visit.



Gallery 259 George Morrison, United States, 1919–2000, *Collage IX: Landscape*, 1974, wood

Anishinaabe artist George Morrison was born in Minnesota. Today his art is popular with Minnesotans and across the United States.

- What adjectives would you use to describe this piece?
- What comes to mind when you look at it? What in the art made you think that?
- What do you like about this work of art? What do you wonder?
- Morrison loved to work along the northern shores of Minnesota. This is his interpretation of Lake Superior. What other sites in Minnesota could resemble this work of art? What do these sites have in common with Morrison's landscape?



Gallery 302 Robert Koehler, United States, 1850–1917, *Rainy Evening on Hennepin Avenue* (detail), 1902, oil on canvas, Gift by subscription in honor of the artist 25.403

Hennepin Avenue runs from downtown Minneapolis through Uptown and into south Minneapolis. It is still an important road for Minnesotans today.

- What do you notice first about the painting? What is happening in it?
- What choices did the artist make to create the look of a rainy day?
- How does the artist show movement?
- Have you walked through a downtown or major city? How does that compare or contrast to this painting?



Gallery 303 Edward K. Thomas, United States, 1817–1906, *View of Fort Snelling* (detail), 1850, oil on canvas, The Julia B. Bigelow Fund 44.21

Fort Snelling was an important military fort in the 1800s. Now, it is a tourist attraction where adults and students can learn about the impact—both positive and negative—the military post had in Minnesota and on the Native community.

- Look closely at the painting. What are some details that you see?
- Why do you think the artist painted this scene? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Look around the gallery and nearby rooms for other river paintings. How does this compare? Which interpretation do you prefer? Why?



Gallery 301 Philip R. Goodwin, United States, 1882–1935, *A "Bear" Chance* (detail), 1907, oil on canvas, Gift of the National Biscuit Company 70.64

The Minneapolis Institute of Art has always had support from local businesses, big and small. This painting was donated from a local business in 1970. These businesses support the museum not only through donations of art but also of money. Their support helps local students to visit and learn about art, different cultures, and history.

- What words would use to describe the bear and its habitat in the painting?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What do you think the purpose of this painting was? What do you see that makes you say that?
- What are some other local businesses from Minnesota that you know about?



Gallery 303 Tiffany & Co., United States, 1853, James J. Hill Presentation Tray, 1884, silver, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. G. Richard Slade 81.5

This tray was given as a gift to the railroad tycoon James J. Hill. It shows a view of Minneapolis in 1884 with the Stone Arch Bridge, Washburn flour mill, and the Pillsbury flour mill.

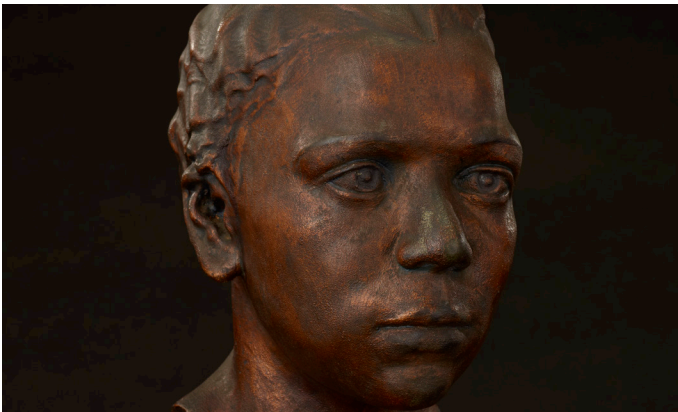
- Look closely at the scene on the center of the tray. Describe what you see.
- Look at the border of the tray. What animals and details do you see?
- What are some of your favorite details from the tray?
- How does this tray help tell about the history of Minnesota?



Gallery 303 McKim, Mead, and White, United States, 1879-1961
Model of original scheme for the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts, 1912
Wood, plaster, and paint, Transfer from The Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts 99.159a-d

This model is more than 100 years old and shows the originally intended design for the museum you are standing in right now. Mia looks very different today, but even in 1912 it was destined to be an important art and cultural institution for Minnesota.

- Look closely at the model. What are some patterns you see throughout the building?
- Describe the model. Think about terms you use in geometry. How do these forms and repetition of forms make you feel? Why do you suppose the people who were planning to build the museum did it that way?
- What is your favorite part about the design? Why did you pick that?
- Think about your experience today at Mia. Which part do you think you are standing in, if any? What parts of the building still exist? What parts never got built?



Gallery 302 Henry Bannarn, United States, 1910-1965, *Cleota Collins* (detail), 1932, plaster, pigment, Gift of funds from the Decorative Arts, Textiles, and Sculpture Affinity Group 2011.64 © The artist, artist's estate, or assignees

This sculpture was made while Bannarn was studying across the park at the Minneapolis School of Arts, now known as the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. Made in the summer of 1932, this is one of Bannarn's earliest known works. Henry Bannarn was born in Wetumpka, Oklahoma, but he moved to Minnesota as a young child. Mia is lucky to consider him a local artist.

- At first glance, what does this look like it's made of?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What type of emotion is this woman expressing?
- How would you describe this sculpture to a friend?
- Bannarn made this as a student in his early 20s. Take a moment to walk through the Community Commons on the first floor of Mia to see other local students' art.



Gallery 320 John S. Bradstreet, United States, 1845-1914, Living Room from the Prindle House, 1900s, Gift of Wheaton Wood 82.43

John Bradstreet moved to Minnesota from Massachusetts to open an interior design store. He designed and furnished this living room, taken from a Duluth home. He also helped to create the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts in 1883, which became the Minneapolis Institute of Art in 1915.

- Look around the room. How would you describe it? Which details pop out at you?
- What does the room tell us about Minnesota taste and culture in the early 1900s? How can looking at rooms like this teach us about history?
- Think about the colors used in the room. What do those colors make you think of? Why do you think they were chosen for the space?
- What is your favorite part of the room?



Gallery 259 Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) or Dakhóta, United States, North America, Man's Pouch, 1800, hide, beads, quills, wool, cotton, Gift of funds from Duncan and Nivin MacMillan 2000.75.1

For the Dakhóta, the location of modern-day Minneapolis sits upon their sacred birthplace and traditional homeland.

- What words would you use to describe the beadwork and embroidery on this bag?
- What is your favorite part of the bag? Why?
- Look around the gallery. Which do you prefer: beaded objects or painted objects? Why?
- Dakota artists are skilled bead and quill workers. Look closely at the detail on this pouch. Which material do you wish you could try working with? Why?
- Scholars wonder if some of the beadwork on this pouch is Anishinaabe (Ojibwe). Why do you suppose it might be difficult to know for sure? Think about when you share your ideas with other people, and they share theirs with you.



Gallery 303 Alexis Jean Fournier, United States, 1865–1948, *Mill Pond at Minneapolis* (detail), 1888, oil on canvas, The John R. Van Derlip Fund 46.8

This is a representation of Mill Pond and the Stone Arch Bridge in 1888. When this was painted, the Stone Arch Bridge was only 5 years old. Today, you can still see Mill Pond and the bridge by Hennepin Island and Saint Anthony Falls.

- What do you notice first? What words would you use to describe this painting?
- Think about the color choices. How does this painting make you feel? What about it make you feel that?
- Think about the style of brushstroke and colors. How does this painting compare to the scene on the James J. Hill Presentation Tray? How does it compare to the Fort Snelling painting?
- What does this painting tell you about Minnesota history? What do you see that makes you say that?



Gallery 303 Julius Holm, United States, 1855–1930, *Tornado over St. Paul* (detail), 1893, oil on canvas, The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund 77.28

This painting was inspired by a photograph that captured the infamous tornado over Saint Paul of July 13, 1890.

- Notice the colors in the painting. What mood do they create? How do they create it?
- What tells you this is actually a painting? What about this painting reminds you of a photograph?
- What do you think most motivated Julius Holm to document this storm in a painting? How do you learn about extreme weather today?
- Think of a time you have experienced a storm—whether it be thunder, lightning, blizzard, etc. How would you describe that storm in an artwork? How does it compare to this representation?



Currently off view Cy Thao, United States, 1972, #50 (detail), 1993–2001, oil on canvas, Gift of funds from anonymous donors 2010.55.50 © Cy Thao

Cy Thao spent five years creating the Hmong Migration series of 50 paintings. The series is a visual narrative of Hmong and Hmong American history based on the personal experiences of the artist's family and his people. The trail of the Hmong migration goes through Vietnam, China, Laos, Thailand, Burma, South America, France, Australia, Canada, and America.

- What drew your attention to this?
- How does this painting show Hmong migration?
- Have you, a friend, or family member migrated from a different country? If so, from where? How did that experience affect you or them?
- What can we learn from a painting like this? Why is this important to know?



Currently off view Cy Thao, United States, 1972, #43 (detail), 1993–2001, oil on canvas, Gift of funds from anonymous donors 2010.55.43 © Cy Thao

In 1975, Saint Paul became a popular destination for the active resettlement of Hmong people. To keep their culture alive, the Hmong had to adapt to their new home. When they celebrated their traditions—around existing American holidays and on weekends—was one of many things they had to change, because it was the only time they could have off from work.

- What do you suppose is happening in the painting? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Think about the colors and figures. How does this painting make you feel? What details lead you to feel that?
- Name some details that show Hmong culture and American culture. How does Cy Thao show the two intersect? Do you, a friend, or family have cultural traditions that have been adapted to new ways? If so, what?
- What does this painting tell you about Minnesota history?



Currently off view Wing Young Huie, United States, 1955, *Celebration, Frogtown* (detail), 1994, gelatin silver print, Gift of David L. and Mary M. D. Parker 2002.183.62 © Wing Young Huie

Frogtown is a neighborhood in Saint Paul near University Avenue, close to the State Capitol. Because it has long been a popular neighborhood for immigrants to Minnesota, it is an incredibly diverse community.

- What do you notice first in the photograph?
- Why do you suppose the photographer made the choice to do black and white photographs instead of color? Do you prefer black and white or color? Why?
- What do you suppose this family is celebrating? What do you see that makes you say that? How does it compare to your community or family's celebrations?
- Why do you think capturing a photo of a celebration is important? Have you, a friend, or family member taken a photo of a special moment? Why?



Gallery 213 Ka Zoua Lee, born Laos, Laos, Village Story Blanket, 1980, cotton, silk, synthetic; appliqué and embroidery, Gift of funds from Ellen and Sheldon Sturgis 84.7.1

These embroidered textiles often reflect personal experiences that relate to life in refugee camps, memories of traditional life, and impressions of war. They relay stories of and for people separated by geopolitical reasons.

- Look closely. What first catches your attention? Why?
- This blanket tells several stories. Discuss a few scenes. What appears to be going on? What do you see that makes you say that?
- What are some of your favorite details from the story? Why? What are your favorite visual details? Why?
- Think of different ways people tell stories. How do you normally hear, see, or read a story? How is it different and similar to the blanket?
- If you made a story blanket, what story would you tell on it? Why did you choose that story? What designs, symbols, or things would you put on the blanket?



Currently off view Dakhóta, United States, North America, Cradle board cover, 1880, hide, quills, beads, ribbon, sequins, cloth, The Driscoll Art Accessions Endowment Fund, 2003.162.2

Dakhóta artists designed cradle board covers to nestle a baby when the board was worn on the mother's back or attached to the side of a horse. This intricately decorated cradle board cover shows symbols that the artist portrayed to protect and bring special gifts to the child.

- Look closely. What designs do you see on the cradle board?
- Dakhóta artists are skilled bead and quill workers. What part of the cradle board do you think would be the hardest part to make? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Think about its function and design. What do you like most about this artwork?
- What can we learn about looking at the function, design, and symbolism of objects? Thinking about this specific object: why is it important?