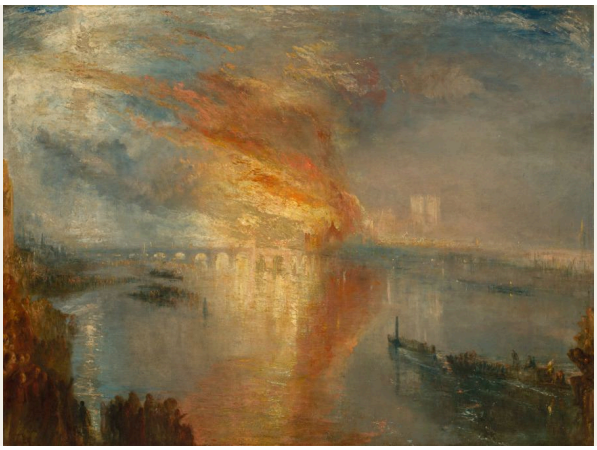
CLEVELAND, UNITED STATES

Cleveland Museum of Art: Masterpieces

Twenty works from the European and American holdings of the Cleveland Museum of Art, from Matteo di Giovanni and Filippino Lippi to Dalí and O'Keeffe



The Cleveland Museum of Art collects across many centuries and cultures. This selection keeps to one part of that range, its European and American paintings and works on paper, and runs from fifteenth-century Italian panels in tempera and oil to Dalí's The Dream and O'Keeffe's enlarged morning glory. The subjects are deliberately varied: martyrdom and classical myth, a road gang mending a street under plane trees, prizefighters at Sharkey's, an elevated railway seen steeply from above. Antoine Pesne's Lot and His Daughters, in chalk and wash, is the only drawing. Some pictures answer one another across the centuries. Matteo di Giovanni's orderly Crucifixion, painted with gold, can be set against Caravaggio's Saint Andrew, pressed close in darkness. Gentileschi's Danaë, awake to a shower of gold, and David's sleeping Psyche both lie on beds, in two very different myths.

Artline selected these works from documented museum holdings, independently of the museum. Being included here does not mean a work is on view: works on paper rotate, and paintings may be on loan or off display. Dates and attributions keep the qualifications given in the linked records.

Explore this selection in Artline

See the selected works alongside books and events from their period, or compare when the artists lived. The books and events provide context, not evidence of direct influence. Works without confirmed dates remain in this guide.

Artworks in context Who lived when?

artlines.org/guides/cleveland-museum-art

The selection · 20

1. The Burning of the Houses of Lords and Commons
   J. M. W. Turner · 1835
2. The Red Kerchief
   Claude Monet · c. 1868–73
3. The Crucifixion of Saint Andrew
   Caravaggio · 1606–7
4. The Holy Family with Saints John and Margaret
   Filippino Lippi · c. 1488–93
5. The Large Plane Trees
   Vincent van Gogh · 1889
6. Lot and His Daughters
   Antoine Pesne · 1756
7. The Dream
   Salvador Dalí · 1931
8. The Power of Music
   William Sidney Mount · 1847
9. The Brook
   Paul Cézanne · c. 1895–1900
10. The Crucifixion
    Matteo di Giovanni · 1470s
11. Twilight in the Wilderness
    Frederic Edwin Church · 1860
12. Stag at Sharkey's
    George Bellows · 1909
13. Christ and the Virgin in the House at Nazareth
    Francisco de Zurbarán · c. 1640
14. Church Street El
    Charles Sheeler · 1920
15. Cupid and Psyche
    Jacques-Louis David · 1817
16. Danaë
    Orazio Gentileschi · c. 1623
17. Elizabeth Shewell West and Her Son Raphael
    Benjamin West · c. 1770
18. Hunting near Hartenfels Castle
    Lucas Cranach the Elder · 1540
19. La Cervara, the Roman Campagna
    Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot · c. 1830–31
20. Morning Glory with Black
    Georgia O'Keeffe · 1926

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The Burning of the Houses of Lords and Commons

J. M. W. Turner

1835 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Bequest of John L. Severance. Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0; compressed study reproduction. · CC0 1.0

Fire destroyed much of the old Palace of Westminster in 1834, and it drew a large audience. Turner paints the crowds watching from the banks of the Thames and from boats as the flames reach high and their reflections spread across the water. He pushes light and smoke close to overwhelming, yet the spectators never vanish in the glare, and the burning building and the people watching it stay visible together. Turner painted the fire more than once: the Philadelphia view of the same blaze is a different canvas.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1942.647

02 / 20

The Red Kerchief

Claude Monet

c. 1868–73 · Oil on fabric · Cleveland Museum of Art



Bequest of Leonard C. Hanna Jr.. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0. Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression to at most 100,000 bytes; no crop or generated content. · CC0 1.0

Camille Monet, out in the snow, looks in through the French doors. Her red kerchief catches the eye through pale curtains and glass, and the panes keep her side separate from the room. That puts the viewer indoors, looking out at someone looking in, through the doors of an ordinary house.

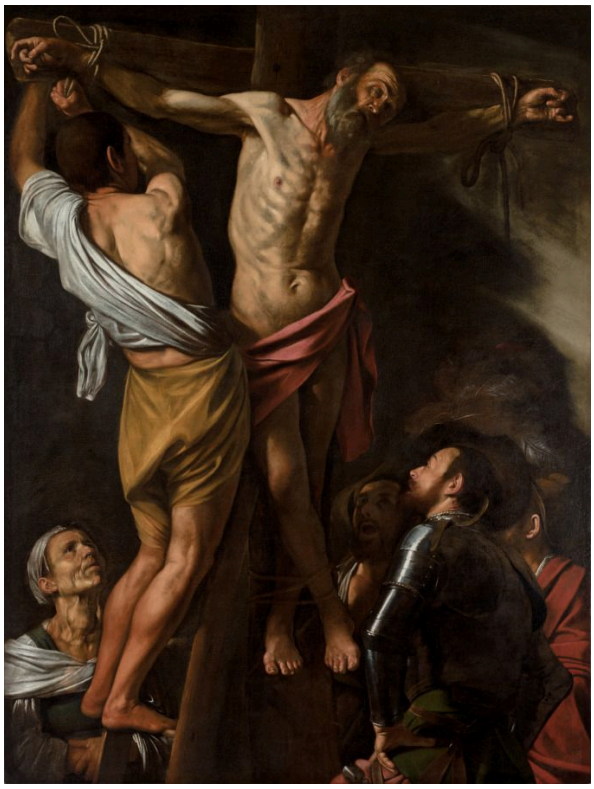
Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1958.39

03 / 20

The Crucifixion of Saint Andrew

Caravaggio

1606–7 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0. Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression to at most 100,000 bytes; no crop or generated content. · CC0 1.0

Caravaggio leaves little room to stand back. Andrew's ageing body, the people holding him and their coarse clothing loom out of a darkness that hides most of the setting. What is left is the physical business of the execution: weight, hands, strain, and faces close enough for suffering to register without rhetoric.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1976.2

04 / 20

The Holy Family with Saints John and Margaret

Filippino Lippi

c. 1488–93 · Tempera and oil on wood · Cleveland Museum of Art



The Delia E. Holden Fund and a fund donated as a memorial to Mrs. Holden by her children: Guerdon S. Holden, Delia Holden White, Roberta Holden Bole, Emery Holden Greenough, Gertrude Holden McGinley. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0. Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression to at most 100,000 bytes; no crop or generated content. · CC0 1.0

A round picture has no corners to leave empty. Filippino Lippi fits the Holy Family and Saints John and Margaret inside the curve by overlapping their gestures, and small glimpses of landscape ease the crowding. The design is held together by turned heads and linked hands rather than by symmetry.

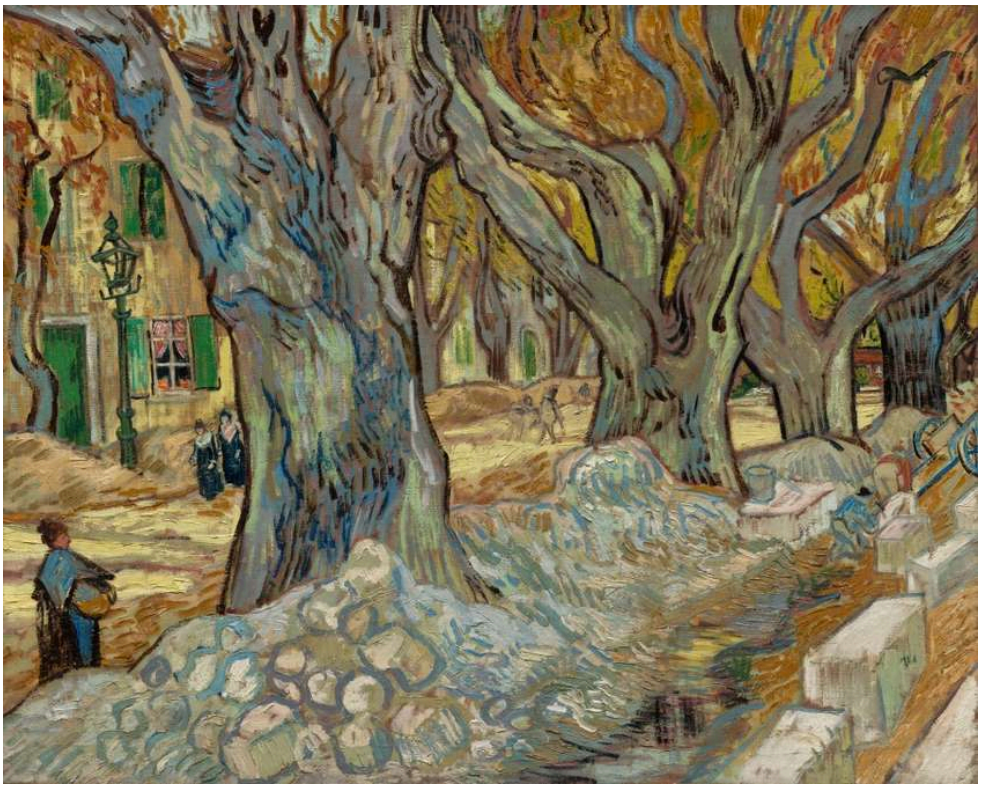
Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1932.227

05 / 20

The Large Plane Trees

Vincent van Gogh

1889 · Oil on fabric · Cleveland Museum of Art



Gift of the Hanna Fund. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0. Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression to at most 100,000 bytes; no crop or generated content. · CC0 1.0

The title gives the trees top billing, and the painting agrees. Their great trunks rise through the picture while road workers repair the street, small, beneath them. Van Gogh varies his strokes to tell bark from paving and foliage, and gives the trees at least as much painted activity as the people at work.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1947.209

06 / 20

Lot and His Daughters

Antoine Pesne

1756 · Black and red chalk wash, gray wash, heightened with white gouache; framing lines in black ink · Cleveland Museum of Art



Antoine Pesne. Lot and His Daughters. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0 1.0. Compressed full-frame reproduction. · CC0 1.0

Black and red chalk wash, grey wash and white gouache heightening, inside framing lines in black ink: the sheet shows a composition still being worked out. Pesne fits three figures together on uneven ground. Warm washes suggest their volume without closing every contour, and darker touches add weight to the faces and drapery. The subject is the biblical one named in the title, but the drawing can just as well be read as a group being adjusted, pose by pose and overlap by overlap, until it holds.

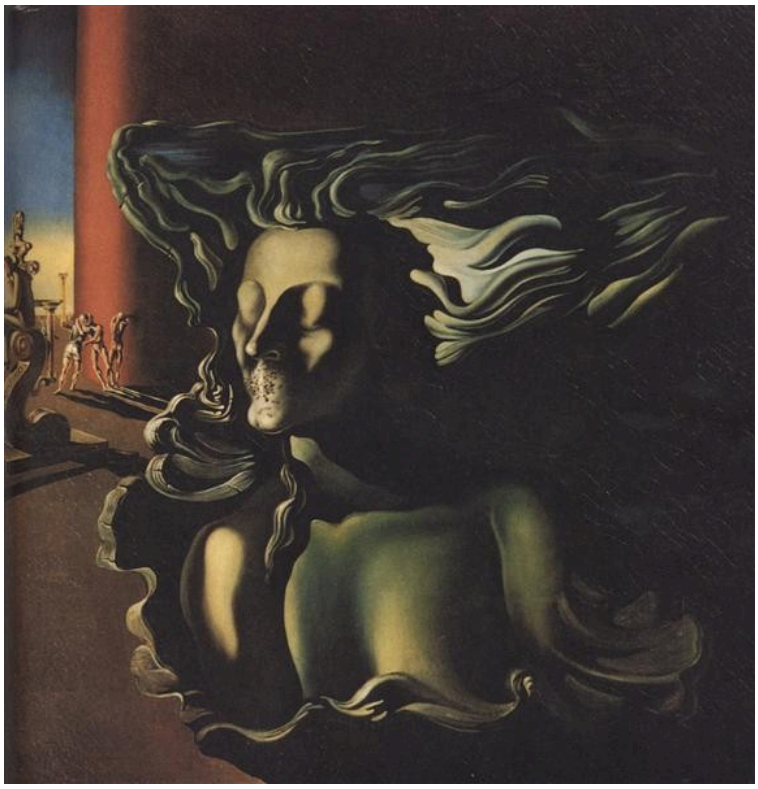
Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1975.15

07 / 20

The Dream

Salvador Dalí

1931 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Salvador Dalí. The Dream. Image: WikiArt. Copyright protected (WikiArt label). Proportionally resized and JPEG compressed; no crop. · Copyright protected (WikiArt label)

Every element of The Dream is painted with disconcerting clarity: the head, the distant column, the streaming, hair-like forms. What unsettles is how they relate to one another. Scale and substance behave unpredictably, and recognising each thing does little to explain how they belong together.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 2001.34

08 / 20

The Power of Music

William Sidney Mount

1847 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund. Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0; compressed study reproduction. · CC0 1.0

A Black man rests just outside the doorway. The music reaches him through the opening, and his posture shows he is attending to it, but the wall keeps him physically apart from the musicians inside. Mount builds the picture around that threshold, so pleasure and exclusion share a single scene. The title speaks of music's power, and the listener's absorption bears that out. How far does that power reach, though? Through the doorway, plainly, but not, the composition suggests, past the wall that keeps him outside.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1991.110

09 / 20

The Brook

Paul Cézanne

c. 1895–1900 · Oil on fabric · Cleveland Museum of Art



Paul Cézanne. The Brook. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0 1.0. Compressed full-frame reproduction. · CC0 1.0

A stream leads into wooded ground, but Cézanne never draws its banks as continuous edges. Patches of blue, green and ochre meet, overlap and separate, suggesting water in one place, vegetation in another and the space between them. Plenty of single strokes cannot be pinned to any object, yet the brook stays recognisable.

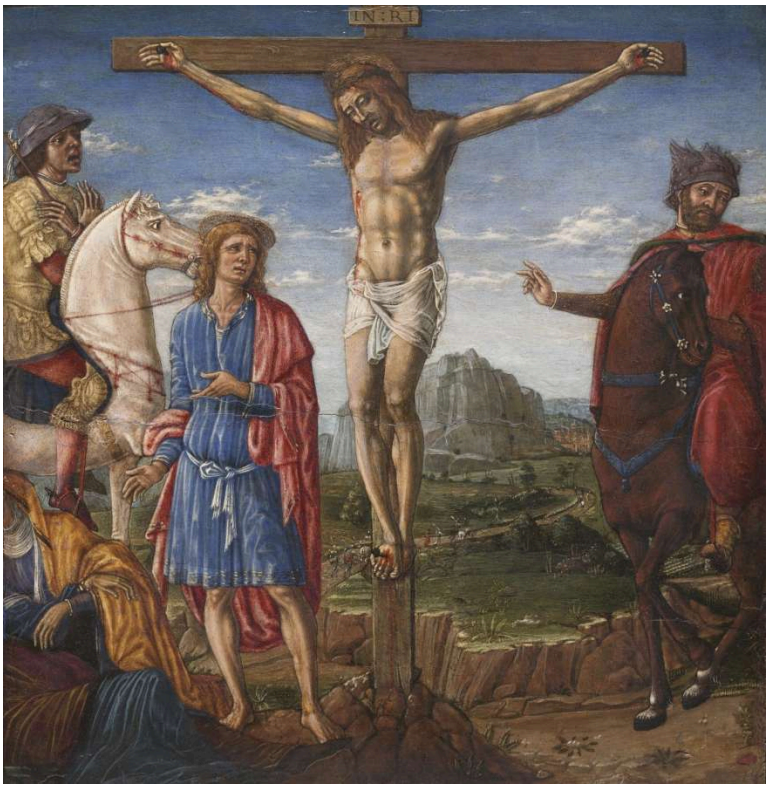
Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1958.20

10 / 20

The Crucifixion

Matteo di Giovanni

1470s · Tempera and oil with gold on wood panel · Cleveland Museum of Art



Matteo di Giovanni. The Crucifixion. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0 1.0. Compressed full-frame reproduction. · CC0 1.0

Matteo di Giovanni gives each witness a separate place beneath the tall cross. Firm contours and distinct colours keep their gestures legible on the small panel, and the orderly arrangement lets the eye move deliberately from one figure to the next.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1940.535

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Twilight in the Wilderness

Frederic Edwin Church

1860 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Mr. and Mrs. William H. Marlatt Fund. Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0; compressed study reproduction. · CC0 1.0

Church puts his most intense colour high in the red clouds, above a valley with no one in it. Dark trees give the foreground a near foothold, and from there water and distant hills lead the eye back towards the sky. Nothing happens on the ground. The empty valley is the wilderness of the title, and the twilight supplies the only event.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1965.233

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Stag at Sharkey's

George Bellows

1909 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



George Bellows. Stag at Sharkey's. George Bellows; The Cleveland Museum of Art; Hinman B. Hurlbut Collection. CC0 1.0 (https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/). Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression. · CC0 1.0

The boxers collide above a crowd pressing up against the ring. Bellows handles the paint roughly, so arms, torsos and faces never settle into smooth, separate forms. Turner's spectators watch the fire from banks and boats. The crowd at Sharkey's is close enough to be implicated, part of the cramped reality of the fight.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1922.1133

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Christ and the Virgin in the House at Nazareth

Francisco de Zurbarán

c. 1640 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0. Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression to at most 100,000 bytes; no crop or generated content. · CC0 1.0

A boy and a woman go about their tasks in a sparse household, and Zurbarán leaves a gap between them so that each posture reads clearly. Small objects, flowers and birds emerge only on slower looking. The title names the pair as Christ and the Virgin in the house at Nazareth, yet the painting keeps its attention at the scale of a table, work in hand and time spent together indoors.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1960.117

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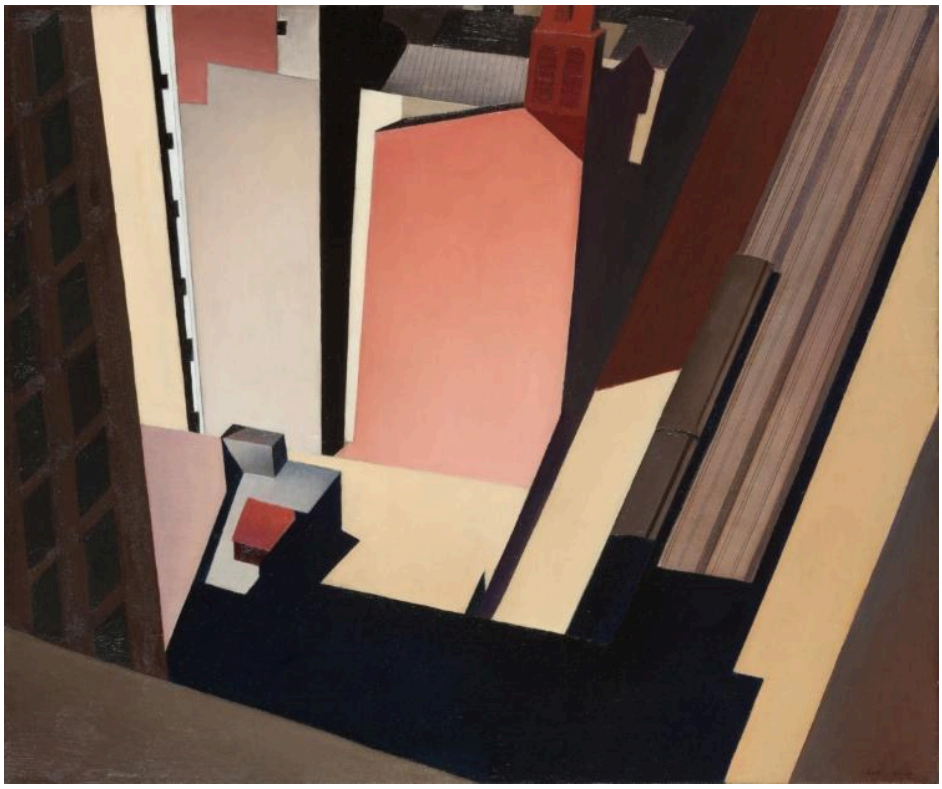
Church Street El

Charles Sheeler

1920 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Mr. and Mrs. William H. Marlatt Fund. Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0; compressed study reproduction. · CC0 1.0

Seen steeply from above, the El, or elevated railway, and the buildings around it become interlocking planes. Sheeler cuts out the incidental detail that would make this a busy street scene. The city stays identifiable, but the track reads as a geometric line, and a shadow can seem as solid as the structure that casts it.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1977.43

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Cupid and Psyche

Jacques-Louis David

1817 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0. Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression to at most 100,000 bytes; no crop or generated content. · CC0 1.0

Psyche sleeps while Cupid turns outwards, so only he seems aware of being seen. David surrounds the myth with luxury, an elaborate bed with a landscape opening beyond, but Cupid's direct glance cuts through all that distance, as if he has caught the viewer looking at the sleeping Psyche.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1962.37

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Danaë

Orazio Gentileschi

c. 1623 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0. Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression to at most 100,000 bytes; no crop or generated content. · CC0 1.0

Gold falls from above, and hands move across the pale bed to meet it. Gentileschi stages this supernatural visitation among fabrics whose folds and weight seem insistently tangible, closed in by dark curtains. The story is told through reach and response between the reclining Danaë and what arrives from the sky.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1971.101

17 / 20

Elizabeth Shewell West and Her Son Raphael

Benjamin West

c. 1770 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



The Charles W. Harkness Gift. Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0; compressed study reproduction. · CC0 1.0

West brings the child's face close to his mother's cheek and encloses the boy in her arms. There is almost nothing else: no furniture to place them in a household or signal their status, only light joining the two faces against the dark.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1927.393

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Hunting near Hartenfels Castle

Lucas Cranach the Elder

1540 · Oil, originally on wood, transferred to masonite · Cleveland Museum of Art



Hunting near Hartenfels Castle. The Cleveland Museum of Art; John L. Severance Fund. CC0 1.0. Full-frame resize and JPEG compression. · CC0 1.0

No rider in the chase could have seen it like this. Cranach sets the vantage point high above, and horsemen, dogs and deer spread across woods, water and clearings, so that each incident can be followed in turn and the hunt reads as an organised spectacle. The picture has had a history of its own: it was painted on wood and later transferred to masonite.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1958.425

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La Cervara, the Roman Campagna

Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot

c. 1830–31 · Oil on fabric · Cleveland Museum of Art



Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0. Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression to at most 100,000 bytes; no crop or generated content. · CC0 1.0

Pale, uneven ground stretches between sparse trees. Corot holds the view together with broad divisions of earth and sky and puts no dramatic incident at the centre. The figures and animals are there to show the scale of the terrain and do nothing more, which leaves the rough country of the Campagna as the subject.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.91

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Morning Glory with Black

Georgia O'Keeffe

1926 · Oil on canvas · Cleveland Museum of Art



Bequest of Leonard C. Hanna Jr.. The Cleveland Museum of Art. CC0. Full-frame proportional resize and JPEG compression to at most 100,000 bytes; no crop or generated content. · CC0 1.0

O'Keeffe enlarges the morning glory until almost nothing else fits in the frame. At this scale the folded petals read less as botanical detail than as surrounding space. The black of the title comes as a dark curve at the bottom, breaking into the pale surfaces. It gives the soft gradations an edge, which makes their shifts of light easier to follow.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1958.42

Planning a visit

The order of this selection is not a route through the galleries. Check the museum's current object records and visiting information before planning a trip around a particular work.

Further reading

The Practice and Science of Drawing

Harold Speed · Read free · English

Harold Speed's general manual of drawing deals with line, mass and composition in practical terms and sets exercises for the reader. Those exercises bear most directly on the difference between Pesne's worked sheet, where wash models the figures without closing their contours, and the more fully modelled paintings. His account of line, mass and composition also provides practical terms for comparing the crowded and the sparsely arranged works in this selection, from Lippi's packed tondo to Corot's thinly peopled Campagna, though it is not a study of this museum or its pictures.

Museum website · Official collection guide

Sources and visitor information checked: 2026-10-12

Artline · Cleveland Museum of Art: Masterpieces