BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

# Museum of Fine Arts: Masterpieces

Twenty European paintings in Budapest's Museum of Fine Arts, from Giorgione and Bruegel to Delacroix, Manet and Munkácsy.



Budapest's Museum of Fine Arts is best known for its European paintings. It is a separate institution from the Hungarian National Gallery, which looks after Hungary's own traditions. The Museum of Fine Arts looks outward, to Italian, Spanish, Dutch and other European schools.

The twenty works chosen here run from Michele Pannonio's enthroned muse to Munkácsy's crowded Paris interior. Some of the names, such as Giorgione, Bruegel, El Greco and Velázquez, will be familiar. The subjects range widely: a lamentation and a martyrdom, a muse and an allegory, a sea battle, a horse caught in a storm, a man trimming his quill, a meal, a landscape and several portraits. A good number of the pictures assume that the viewer knows the biblical or classical story behind them. In these, much depends on which moment the painter chose to show: a hammer raised but not yet brought down, a dead body that takes several people to hold, an angel still descending.

The selection is independent of the museum and drawn from its documented holdings. Dates and attributions keep the qualifications given in the collection 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/fine-arts-budapest

# The selection · 20

1. Saint Andrew
   Francisco de Zurbarán · 1631
2. Cutting a Quill
   Adriaen van Ostade · c.1660 - c. 1670
3. Jeanne Duval Reclining: Lady with a Fan
   Édouard Manet · 1862
4. La Varenne de Saint-Hilaire
   Camille Pissarro · 1863
5. Lamentation of Christ
   Maarten van Heemskerck · c. 1543
6. Portrait of a Young Man, Traditionally Identified as Antonio Broccardo
   Giorgione · 1500
7. Salome
   Lucas Cranach the Elder · c. 1530
8. The Annunciation to Joachim
   Lucas Cranach the Elder · 1518
9. The Lunch
   Diego Velázquez · 1620
10. The Martyrdom of Saints Placidus and Flavia
    Francesco Solimena · 1697 - 1708
11. The Sermon of Saint John the Baptist
    Pieter Bruegel the Elder · 1566
12. Venus, Cupid and Jealousy
    Bronzino · c. 1549
13. The Holy Family with Saint Anne
    El Greco · c. 1595
14. The Naval Battle of Lissa
    Konstantinos Volanakis · 1869
15. Self-Portrait
    Christian Seybold · 1760–1769
16. Thalia
    Michele Pannonio · 1456–1457
17. Horse Frightened by a Storm
    Eugène Delacroix · 1824
18. Jael and Sisera
    Artemisia Gentileschi · 1620
19. Paris Interior
    Mihály Munkácsy · 1877
20. Portrait of Petrus Egidius de Morrion
    Jan Lievens · 1637

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# Saint Andrew

Francisco de Zurbarán

1631 · Oil on canvas · Museum of Fine Arts



Francisco de Zurbarán. Apostle St. Andrew. WikiArt source label: Public domain. Proportional resize and JPEG compression; no crop. Source: https://www.wikiart.org/en/francisco-de-zurbaran/apostle-st-andrew-1631 · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

Zurbarán gives Saint Andrew an open book, but it is hard to say whether he is reading it or has drifted into thought. Little in the background competes with him. Much of the picture rests on the pose, the book and the carefully directed light.

Object source · Open artwork

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# Cutting a Quill

Adriaen van Ostade

c.1660 - c. 1670 · Oil on wood · Museum of Fine Arts



Adriaen van Ostade. Cutting the Feather. WikiArt source label: Public domain. Proportional resize and JPEG compression; no crop. Source: https://www.wikiart.org/en/adriaen-van-ostade/cutting-the-feather · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

The writing has not begun yet. A man trims his quill, his eyes and hands fixed on this small preparatory task, and Van Ostade gives the modest action a picture of its own. Uneven light closes the room around his busy fingers.

Object source · Open artwork

03 / 20

# Jeanne Duval Reclining: Lady with a Fan

Édouard Manet

1862 · Oil on canvas · Museum of Fine Arts



Édouard Manet. Jeanne Duval, Baudelaire's Mistress, Reclining (Lady with a Fan). WikiArt source label: Public domain. Proportional resize and JPEG compression; no crop. Source: https://www.wikiart.org/en/edouard-manet/portrait-of-jeanne-duval-1862 · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

The dress comes first. Its white expanse takes up so much of the canvas that it largely sets the portrait's proportions. Only Jeanne Duval's dark head and one small exposed shoe break into it, and curtains crowd the background. For a portrait, surprisingly little of the emphasis gathers around the face. Much of her presence in the picture is carried by the fabric.

Object source · Open artwork

04 / 20

# La Varenne de Saint-Hilaire

Camille Pissarro

1863 · Oil on canvas · Museum of Fine Arts



La Varenne de St. Hilaire. WikiArt; Camille Pissarro. Proportional resizing and JPEG compression; source frame preserved. · Public domain

Small figures cross the field. There are enough of them to make it an inhabited place, but none becomes a main event. Pissarro gives the broad stretches of ground and sky space of their own, and lets trees and buildings mark the line where one meets the other.

Object source · Open artwork

05 / 20

# Lamentation of Christ

Maarten van Heemskerck

c. 1543 · Oil on panel · Museum of Fine Arts




Maarten van Heemskerck. Lamentation of Christ. WikiArt source label: Public domain. Proportional resize and JPEG compression; no crop. Source: https://www.wikiart.org/en/maerten-van-heemskerck/lamentation-of-christ · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

Christ's body, pale and muscular, cannot hold itself up, and it takes several hands and arms to support it. Heemskerck packs the mourners so tightly together that their grief becomes bound up with the practical difficulty of handling a dead man. The weight they share is what holds the group together.

Object source · Open artwork

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# Portrait of a Young Man, Traditionally Identified as Antonio Broccardo

Giorgione

1500 · Oil on panel · Museum of Fine Arts



Portrait of a Youth (Antonio Broccardo). WikiArt; Giorgione. Proportional resizing and JPEG compression; source frame preserved. · Public domain

Who he was is not settled. The name Antonio Broccardo is a traditional identification and should be read as one. The precision of the likeness does nothing to confirm it. What the picture does give us is a young man whose attention is hard to locate. His hand is spread and his face turned slightly away. The small objects resting on the ledge add information without explaining that inward turn.

Object source · Open artwork

07 / 20

# Salome

Lucas Cranach the Elder

c. 1530 · Oil on wood · Museum of Fine Arts



Lucas Cranach the Elder. Salome. WikiArt source label: Public domain. Proportional resize and JPEG compression; no crop. Source: https://www.wikiart.org/en/lucas-cranach-the-elder/salome · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

Jewellery, fine clothing, pale skin, and a severed head on a platter. Cranach arranges the scene like a portrait and presents the head as calmly as the young woman's finery. Elegance and violence belong to the same moment of the story, and nothing in the narrow picture marks a change of tone between them.

Object source · Open artwork

08 / 20

# The Annunciation to Joachim

Lucas Cranach the Elder

1518 · Oil on panel · Museum of Fine Arts



Lucas Cranach the Elder. The Annunciation to Joachim. WikiArt source label: Public domain. Proportional resize and JPEG compression; no crop. Source: https://www.wikiart.org/en/lucas-cranach-the-elder/the-annunciation-to-joachim-1518 · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

This is the earlier of the two Cranachs here, and it is arranged quite differently from the Salome. Instead of drawing everything into one close space, the painter keeps his figures apart. The angel comes down from above, the kneeling Joachim looks up, and a marked difference in height separates them. Their gestures are directed across the gap, but sky and earth remain separate spaces. Sheep and rocky ground keep Joachim's part of the picture pastoral.

Object source · Open artwork

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# The Lunch

Diego Velázquez

1620 · Oil on canvas · Museum of Fine Arts



Diego Velázquez. The Lunch. WikiArt source label: Public domain. Proportional resize and JPEG compression; no crop. Source: https://www.wikiart.org/en/diego-velazquez/the-lunch-1620 · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

Pouring, receiving, reaching, eating: everything on the cloth is caught up in some action. Velázquez connects the men through what they do at the table and gives each a different pose. The bread, vessels and fruit belong to the company as much as the diners do.

Object source · Open artwork

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# The Martyrdom of Saints Placidus and Flavia

Francesco Solimena

1697 - 1708 · Oil on canvas · Museum of Fine Arts



Francesco Solimena. The Martyrdom of Sts Placidus and Flavia. WikiArt source label: Public domain. Proportional resize and JPEG compression; no crop. Source: https://www.wikiart.org/en/francesco-solimena/the-martyrdom-of-sts-placidus-and-flavia-1708 · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

On the ground, kneeling figures and armed men form several separate centres of action. Solimena uses bright drapery to keep them distinct across the wide, crowded canvas. Above them, a heavenly group occupies the air. The martyrdom below and heaven's response happen at different heights, and no single gesture or focal point gathers the whole subject together.

Object source · Open artwork

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# The Sermon of Saint John the Baptist

Pieter Bruegel the Elder

1566 · Oil on panel · Museum of Fine Arts



The Sermon of St. John the Baptist. WikiArt; Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Proportional resizing and JPEG compression; source frame preserved. · Public domain

The sermon is in the title; the preacher takes some finding. Bruegel gives more of the panel to the crowd than to John the Baptist. He sets John inside a dense gathering of people who turn, stand and lean in many directions, some close to him and others at a distance.

Object source · Open artwork

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# Venus, Cupid and Jealousy

Bronzino

c. 1549 · Oil on panel · Museum of Fine Arts



Bronzino. Venus, Cupid and Jealousy. WikiArt source label: Public domain. Proportional resize and JPEG compression; no crop. Source: https://www.wikiart.org/en/agnolo-bronzino/venus-cupid-and-envy · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

Bronzino paints his figures smoothly and twists them around one another so thoroughly that the group is hard to untangle. Gestures, flowers and darker forms are fitted into a shallow, crowded space. The allegorical title is a starting point rather than a complete key. Venus, Cupid and Jealousy may be named, but the way the figures overlap and reach across one another complicates any simple reading of affection and desire.

Object source · Open artwork

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# The Holy Family with Saint Anne

El Greco

c. 1595 · Museum of Fine Arts



El Greco. Holy Family with Saint Anne. Image credit: El Greco / After El Greco. Wikimedia Commons. Public domain (https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/mark/1.0/). Resized and JPEG-compressed; selected source frame preserved. · Public domain

Long fingers reach around the child and bind the close group together, even though El Greco has stretched the bodies into elongated proportions. Intense colours in the clothing keep one figure distinct from the next, while all of them share a single focus. Behind them, a turbulent sky stops the gathering from settling into an ordinary domestic scene.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 50.755

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# The Naval Battle of Lissa

Konstantinos Volanakis

1869 · Museum of Fine Arts



Konstantinos Volanakis. Naval battle at Lissa. Image credit: Konstantinos Volanakis. Wikimedia Commons. Public domain (https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/mark/1.0/). Resized and JPEG-compressed; selected source frame preserved. · Public domain

Anyone hoping to follow the course of the engagement will be disappointed. Smoke and tilting masts block any overall view of the fighting. The viewpoint is low, which leaves the small boats and wreckage beneath the warships looking exposed. Volanakis offers none of the detached clarity of a battle plan. The immense vessels appear among the immediate damage, with ships and bodies in the same dangerous water.

Object source · Open artwork

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# Self-Portrait

Christian Seybold

1760–1769 · Museum of Fine Arts



Christian Seybold. Self-Portrait. Image credit: Christian Seybold. Wikimedia Commons. CC BY-SA 3.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0). Resized and JPEG-compressed; selected source frame preserved. · CC BY-SA 3.0

There is no ceremonial setting here. Seybold shows himself as an older man in an open white shirt and a loose head covering, facing the viewer directly. He pays closest attention to the wrinkles of the face and to the small changes of light across it.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 421

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# Thalia

Michele Pannonio

1456–1457 · Museum of Fine Arts



Michele Pannonio. Thalia. Image credit: Michele Pannonio; Source credit: [1]. Wikimedia Commons. Public domain (https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/mark/1.0/). Resized and JPEG-compressed; selected source frame preserved. · Public domain

This is a muse on a throne. Michele Pannonio does not give Thalia a single attribute and leave her to stand alone. Instead he builds an elaborate seat of state around her, crowded with ornament, fruit and smaller decorative forms, and sets her narrow, pink-robed body within it. Much of her authority as a personification comes from that ceremonial structure.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 44

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# Horse Frightened by a Storm

Eugène Delacroix

1824 · Museum of Fine Arts



Eugène Delacroix. Horse Frightened by a Storm. Image: WikiArt. Public domain (WikiArt label). Proportionally resized and JPEG compressed; no crop. · Public domain (WikiArt label)

The fear is not confined to the horse's eye. It runs through the whole animal: the forelegs are raised, the mane is blown about and the body turns, as the storm throws it off balance. Delacroix ties the lightning and the dark sky closely to that physical reaction.

Object source · Open artwork

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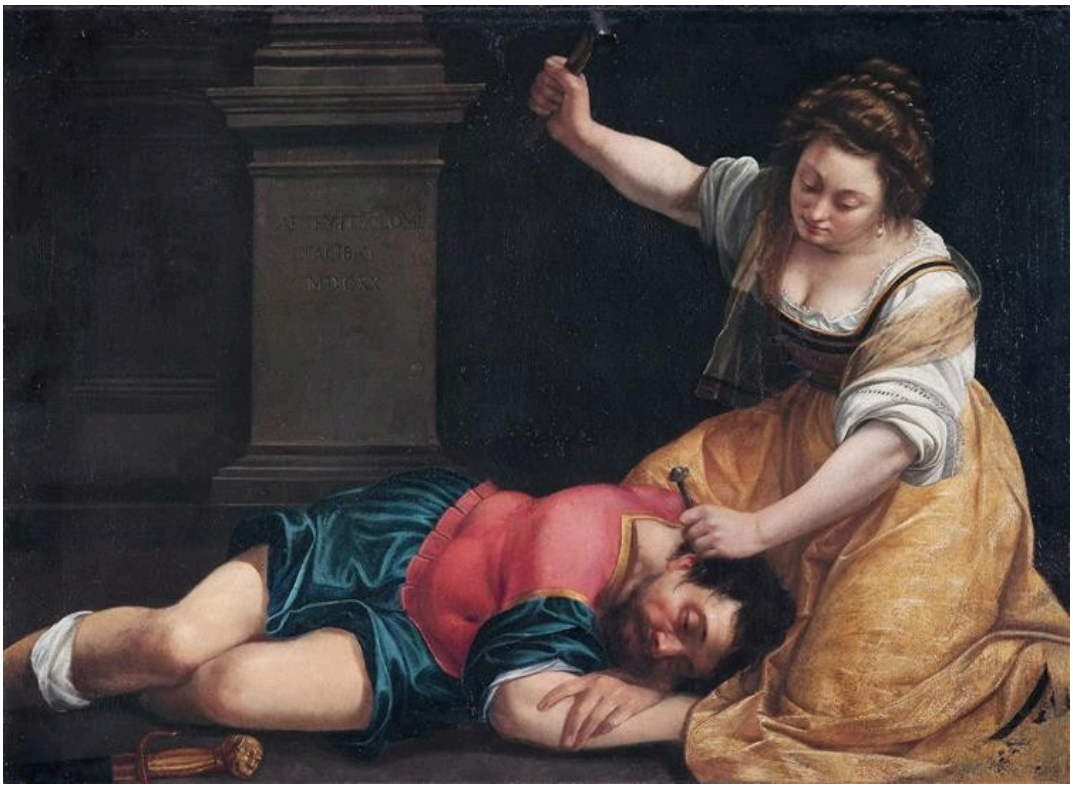
# Jael and Sisera

Artemisia Gentileschi

1620 · Museum of Fine Arts



Artemisia Gentileschi. Jael and Sisera. Image: WikiArt. Public domain (WikiArt label). Proportionally resized and JPEG compressed; no crop. · Public domain (WikiArt label)

The hammer is raised, and the fatal blow has not yet fallen. Artemisia Gentileschi sets Jael's coordinated hands and taut readiness against the outstretched body of Sisera, asleep in the foreground. One figure is prepared to act and the other is helpless, and the biblical episode is built on that imbalance.

Object source · Open artwork

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# Paris Interior

Mihály Munkácsy

1877 · Museum of Fine Arts



Mihály Munkácsy. Paris Interior. Image: WikiArt. Public domain (WikiArt label). Proportionally resized and JPEG compressed; no crop. · Public domain (WikiArt label)

Is the subject the seated woman or her room? Pictures, fabrics and polished objects crowd so thickly around her that the question is a fair one. Munkácsy shows wealth as a whole environment, not a few choice possessions. A dog in the foreground adds one more layer.

Object source · Open artwork

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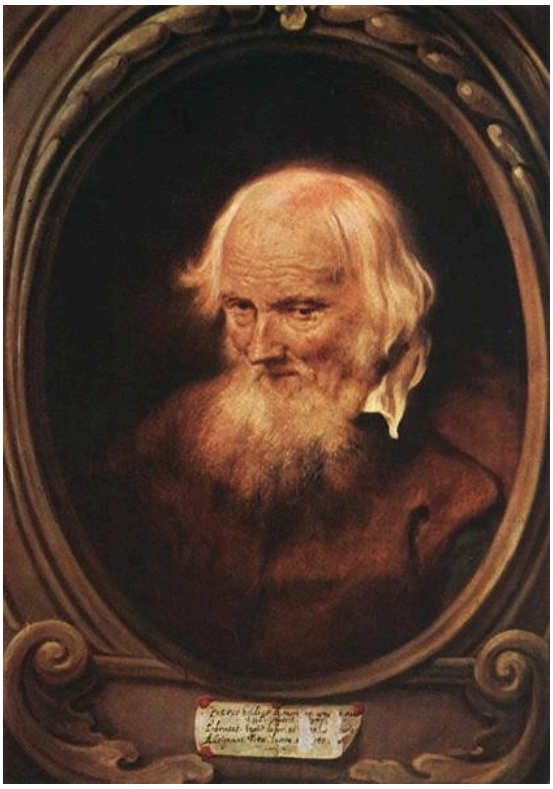
# Portrait of Petrus Egidius de Morrion

Jan Lievens

1637 · Museum of Fine Arts



Jan Lievens. Portrait of Petrus Egidius de Morrion. Image: WikiArt. Public domain (WikiArt label). Proportionally resized and JPEG compressed; no crop. · Public domain (WikiArt label)

A dark oval inside an elaborate frame makes for a formal presentation. Warm light on the forehead and white beard gives the face enough weight to hold its own within them. Lievens differentiates the features sharply, and for all the ceremony of the format, the sitter remains a particular person.

Object source · Open artwork

# Starting with the hands

If a picture here is slow to open up, try looking at the hands. The man in Van Ostade's room is busy with his quill. The diners at Velázquez's table pour, receive and reach. The long fingers in El Greco's Holy Family close around the child, and the young man in the Giorgione portrait spreads his hand without explaining the gesture. What is being held, offered or supported, and what is about to be done? You can ask those questions of a painting before its title or its story comes into play.

# Further reading

## A Treatise on Painting

Leonardo da Vinci; translated by John Francis Rigaud · Read free · English

In John Francis Rigaud's English translation, Leonardo's notes on painting give a painter's precepts on gesture, expression and the arrangement of figures. That makes them a good companion for looking at the hands and poses in this selection. The advice is general, and none of these pictures is discussed.

Museum website · Official collection guide

Sources and visitor information checked: 2026-10-12

Artline · Museum of Fine Arts: Masterpieces