



# A is for ART

## **Dear Parents and Caregivers,**

We created this online guide to introduce you and your children (or grandchildren) to selected works of art at the Figge Art Museum. You can use this guide at home and at the museum.

### **At home:**

If you are planning a trip to the Figge, preview the featured works of art. If your family isn't able to visit the Figge, you can still enjoy viewing and discussing the artworks with your child.

For each letter of the alphabet, the guide introduces one or two works of art. (In some cases, the image is a detail.) After you discuss the artworks, try the suggested activities with your child.

Bring the printed pages and **map** to the museum to use as a guide.

### **At the museum:**

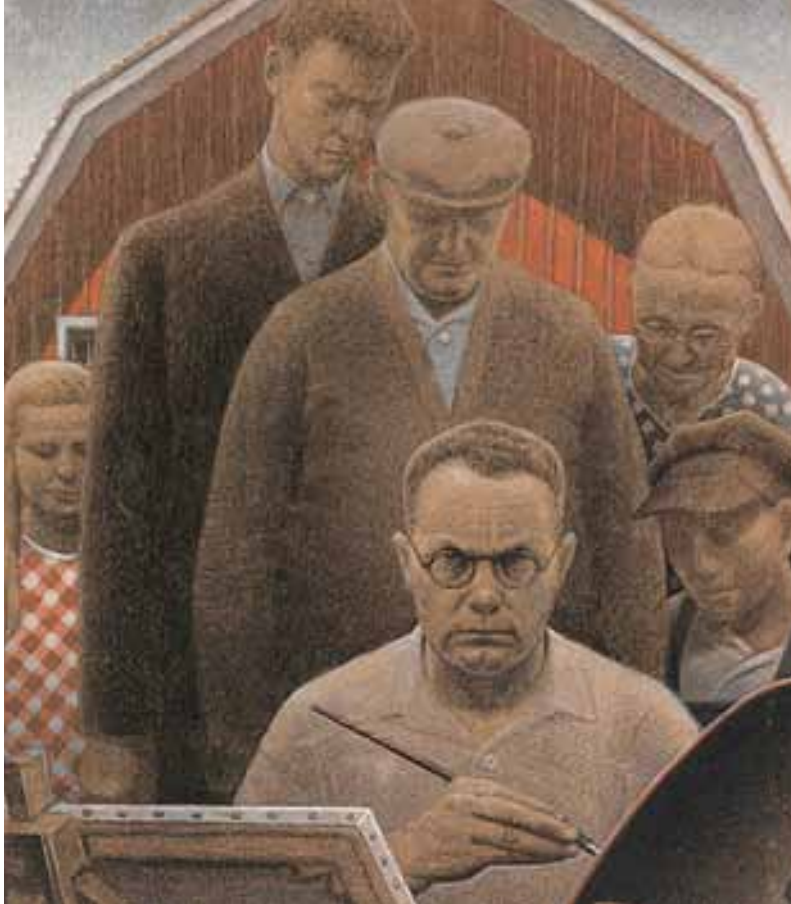
Most of the works featured in this online guide are also on display at the Figge. (Works that are not on display are noted.) The map highlights the galleries and rooms where you can find the works. If you have trouble locating an artwork, ask a security officer or visitor services staff member for assistance.

### **Additional resources:**

- For tips on talking to children about art, please read the online booklet *Art Appreciation for Families: Ideas for Talking to Children about Art*.
- For creative activities, please visit the Family Activity Center and Studio 1 Activity Center during regular museum hours.
- Original artwork by master etcher Arthur Geisert for his forthcoming book *Country Road ABC: An Illustrated Journey through America's Farmland* will be on display at the Figge from February 27-May 31, 2010.

# A

# is for ARTIST



**A**rtists have their own favorite subjects. Grant Wood enjoyed painting the people of Iowa. In this work, people are watching him paint a picture.

*Why do you think Grant Wood looks so serious?*

*Grant Wood also liked to paint the rolling hills of Iowa. Look for his landscapes when you visit the Figge!*

## Try these activities at home.

**Make up** a story about this picture. What is Grant Wood painting? Why are these people watching him work? Do you think they like his painting?

**Read** a book about Grant Wood. *Artist in Overalls: The Life of Grant Wood* by John Duggleby is a good introduction to the artist's life and art.

# B is for Boat



**T**he artist used an old wooden canoe to make this unusual sculpture.

Can you identify other objects the artist attached to the canoe?

Do you think he found the objects or purchased them?

**Try this activity at home.**

**Design** a boat that can also drive on a road.

# C is for Chair



**A**rchitect Frank Lloyd Wright designed this chair. Notice the cut-out design on the back of the chair.

*Does this chair look comfortable?*

*Unfortunately, you can't sit in this chair because it's in a gallery.*

**T**his chair looks more comfortable, doesn't it? It's called a Womb chair. Finnish-born architect Eero Saarinen designed this chair in 1948. Saarinen also designed the Deere & Company World Headquarters in Moline, Illinois. You can sit in this chair because it's in the library!



**Try these activities at home.**

**Design** a special chair for your room.

**Construct** a miniature chair made from cardboard, drinking straws, or whatever materials you have at home.

# D

# is for Danger



**T**his family is in a dangerous situation! Yes, it's a tornado!

*What do you notice about the sky?*

Tornadoes are common in Kansas. Many farm families have a storm shelter because it is the safest place to be during a tornado.

*The father, mother and two sons each have an important task. What is it?*

## Try these activities at home.

**Read** the children's book *Tornado* written by Betsy Byars and illustrated by Doron Ben-Ami.

**Draw** a tornado using swirling lines.

# E is for Eye



*Do you feel like this man is staring at you?*

**T**o paint a realistic self-portrait, Grant Wood had to study his reflection in the mirror very carefully.

**T**his young boy is not making eye contact with you because he is daydreaming.

What do you think he is thinking about?



## Try these activities at home.

**Draw** a self-portrait. Grant Wood added a windmill to his self-portrait to show that he lives in the Midwest. What object could you include in your self-portrait to tell others about yourself?

**Make up** a story about this boy. What do you notice about his clothes? Is fishing a hobby or a job? What do you think he would like to be doing right now?

# F

# is for Fancy

**B**efore photography was invented (and even for many years afterwards), wealthy people commissioned artists to paint their portraits. The sitter would often be shown with an object that would tell something about his or her interests, accomplishments, or personal values.

*Do you think this woman hunts?  
Why else might she be holding a bow?*



**M**en also dressed up for a portrait. In colonial America, a wealthy man would wear a nice jacket and a shirt with ruffles. There is something else about his clothing that indicates he is wealthy. (Hint: there are many)

*Can you guess what it is?*

## Try this activity at home.

**Dress** in fancy clothes (or your favorite clothes) and have your photo taken. Be sure to include an object from a favorite activity.

# G is for Giraffe



**I**n this painting, many different kinds of animals are living peaceably in the same jungle. However, in the real world, giraffes must be on guard against lions and crocodiles.

Which animals would scare you if you met them in a jungle?



**T**he giraffe is the tallest land animal. Giraffes can easily reach the leaves on an acacia tree (a giraffe's favorite food) or peek in a window on the upper level of a house!

How did the artist paint the tree to make the giraffe look even taller?

## Try these activities at home.

**Discover** more fun facts about giraffes on the San Diego Zoo website ([www.sandiegozoo.org](http://www.sandiegozoo.org)) or another zoo website.

**Compare** the giraffe's coat pattern in these paintings with photographs of giraffes on the zoo website. How are they different? Try drawing a family of giraffes, each with its own unique coat pattern.

# H is for Horse

**N**ot only does Deborah Butterfield create horse sculptures made from found branches and twigs (which are then cast in bronze), but she also rides and trains horses on her ranches in Montana and Hawaii.

Why do you think the artist named this horse Half-Moon? (Hint: look at Half-Moon's neck)



Visit the Museum to see this really big horse!



**S**pring storms in the Midwest often develop quickly.

How do you know this horse is frightened?

Do you think this horse will find a safe place?

## Try these activities at home.

**Read** a book about horses such as *Ancient Thunder* by Leo Yerxa.

**Create** a horse sculpture out of air-dry clay or whatever materials you have at home.

# I is for Imagination



*Does this look like a real or imaginary world?*

**A**lthough this old cat has lost his eyesight, he sees things in his imagination.

*What unusual things do you see?*

*Would you like to visit this place?*

**P**enguins only live in cold areas. Imagine what it would be like if penguins could live in a warm climate. This artist did!

*What are these penguins doing?*

*Do they look like they are having fun?*



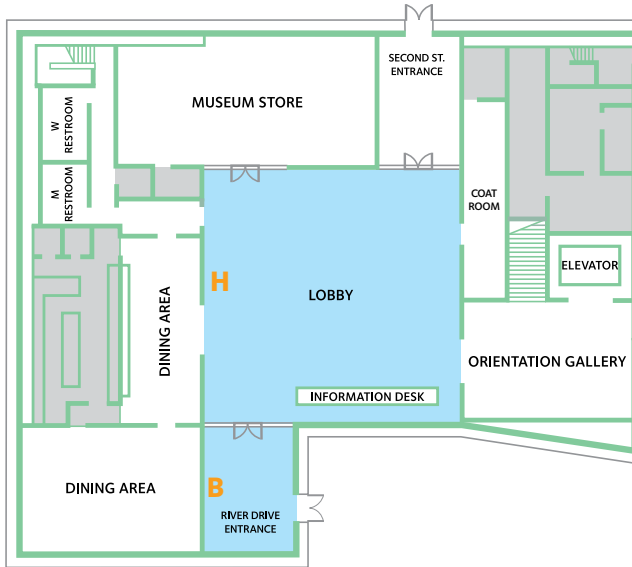
## Try these activities at home.

**Make up** a story about this cat. How does he spend his day? What would it be like for people to live in a place where cats were as big as mountains?

**Draw** animals having a birthday party or doing something unexpected.

# Museum Map

## LEVEL 1



## LEVEL 2

