

LESSON ON LOCATION

Inspired by the Chicago Outdoor Film Festival's August 29 screening of "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" in Grant Park, a film in which the Art Institute and our fair city figure prominently, we've used titles of movies set or filmed in Chicago to make some surprising connections with works of art in the collection.



FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF

GALLERY 205

***A Sunday on La Grande Jatte*—1884 (1884–86) by Georges Seurat**

In *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (1986), the little girl in the center of this iconic painting captivated the attention of Ferris' friend Cameron. Was he entranced with Seurat's sophisticated use of color theory or did he and his hooky-playing buddies simply identify with the artist's depiction of leisure time? Comprised of tiny dots of color that blend optically, this master painting presents an unforgettable image of Parisians enjoying a day off of work on an island in the Seine river.



LOVE JONES

GALLERY 271

***Woman (Elevations)* (1912–15, cast in 1927) by Gaston Lachaise**

Just as Darius Lovehall had a "thing" for Nina Moseley in the 1997 film *Love Jones*, Gaston Lachaise was known to admire Isabel Dutaud Nagle, the Boston matron who was his model for this voluptuous female nude and whom he later married. Lachaise, who immigrated to the United States in 1906 in part to be near Nagle, wrote of this sculpture in a letter to her in 1915: "I want to create a miracle with it...as great as you." The figure's exaggerated curves recall ancient images of goddesses and are typical of the idealized female form that would come to dominate Lachaise's art.



HOME ALONE

GALLERY 236

Solitaire (1943) by Balthus

A game of solitaire seems insufficient to contain this girl's pent-up energy. Her taut, arched pose indicates physical restlessness. Similarly left up to his own devices, Kevin McCallister of the popular 1990 film *Home Alone* occupied himself by devising elaborate pranks and obstacles to thwart a couple of would-be thieves. Balthus painted *Solitaire* while taking refuge in Switzerland during World War II, and it is often interpreted as a metaphor for the anxious waiting game of a refugee.



THE BREAKFAST CLUB

GALLERY 68

Coffee pot (c. 1715) made at the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory

It was strictly styrofoam cups for *The Breakfast Club*, a group of hapless high-schoolers who bonded over Saturday detention in this 1990 release. Those lucky enough to be served coffee from this 18th-century pot were decidedly more advantaged. This sumptuous vessel was made in the early years of the Meissen factory, which was Europe's first and foremost celebrated manufacturer of porcelain. Crafted of red stoneware that was lacquered and gilded, the coffee pot is lavishly decorated with fanciful figures that include fighting cocks, frolicking children, a dog, and a falcon.



THE BREAK-UP

GALLERY 243

Mother and Child (1881–1973, cast in 1921) by Pablo Picasso

Breaking up is hard to do. That's not only the focus of this summer's hit *The Break-Up* but also the experience Picasso had in composing this monumental painting. He struggled with the arrangement of a man, woman, and child. Unhappy with the result, he "broke up" the arrangement by cutting out the male, remounting the section, and painting over what was left. In the resulting work, the child appears to reach for his mother's face. In fact, the child was gesturing toward a fish held above his head by a male figure who was seated on the left, possibly the father.



THE UNTOUCHABLES

GALLERY 10

Touch Gallery

Okay, Brian De Palma's 1987 *The Untouchables* and Gallery 10 have nothing in common. It's a ploy to lead you to this unusual gallery in which everything is touchable. Specifically designed for visually impaired visitors to the museum but available to all, the Touch Gallery exhibits five sculptures accompanied by text panels and labels presented in both large type and Braille. Labels were written with the assistance of a consultant, who is blind, from the Catholic Guild for the Blind who explored the works of art while staff recorded his observations.



PRETTY IN PINK

Whether they're pretty or not, you decide. Tina Barney's evocative *Jill and Polly in the Bathroom* is featured in the exhibition *So the Story Goes: Photographs by Tina Barney, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Nan Goldin, Sally Mann, and Larry Sultan*, which opens September 16.