

The Art of *Play*

Masterpiece, the Art Auction Game, Comes to Life!

If you grew up in the 1970s, it's likely that your first introduction to the Art Institute was the board game Masterpiece. Doesn't ring a bell? Meet the game's characters and the works they vied for on this tour of museum favorites. Make sure to stop by the Kraft Education Center to play the game!

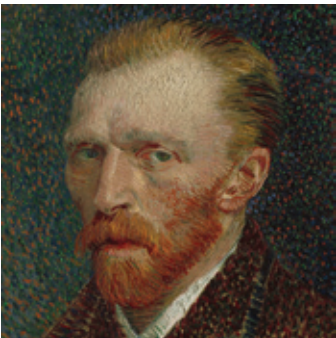


GALLERY 201

Two Sisters (On the Terrace) (1881) by Pierre Auguste Renoir

One of the most popular paintings in the Art Institute, Renoir's *Two Sisters (On the Terrace)* is a tour de force of technical skill and artistic mastery. A celebration of the beauty of spring and the promise of youth, the two young girls posed for the painter in idyllic Chatou, a suburb of Paris where Renoir spent much of the spring of 1881. The older girl, formally dressed, looks off into the distance as the younger girl seems to have just dashed into the picture.

Roxy "Big D" Warrenson: "I am simply charmed by those two darling girls. Their hats are to die for...I should know, as I have impeccable taste."



GALLERY 205

Self-Portrait (1887) by Vincent van Gogh

Inspired by Georges Seurat's newly developed Pointillism method of painting, Van Gogh infused the cool objectivity of Seurat's technique with an intense emotional language. The surface of the painting dances with molecular particles of greens, blues, reds, and oranges. Dominating this dazzling array of dots and dashes are the artist's deep green eyes and the intensity of their gaze. As Van Gogh once wrote to his brother Theo, "I prefer painting people's eyes to cathedrals."

Bitsy Rich Wong Dobrowski Keyes: "Such an interesting and misunderstood man. If only I had lived in his time we might have personally connected as I did with my previous three husbands."



GALLERY 207

Saint George Killing the Dragon (1434/35) by Bernat Martorell

This painting has it all...romance, adventure, and a dashing knight who saves the day. This energetic piece depicts the medieval legend of Saint George, in which the model Christian knight saves the townsfolk cowering behind the castle walls from a ferocious dragon. Riding his triumphant white steed, he spears the beast just before it attacks the lovely princess in her ermine robe.

V. Elton Whitehall Esq.: "Now who's to say the dragon didn't have a just cause? As a criminal lawyer I've represented a few serpents in my day."



GALLERY 216

Old Man with a Gold Chain (c. 1631) by Rembrandt van Rijn

Plush velvet, an intricate gold chain, and a plumed hat all suggest the opulence of this evocative character study. The sitter, once assumed to be Rembrandt's father, was a favorite model of the artist who appeared in many of his early works. His weathered and watchful glance contrasts against the figure's upright, stately posture. Rembrandt was fascinated by the portrayal of single figures, penetratingly observed through the use of dramatic costume and rich, subtle lighting.

Count Francois du Bonnet: "This piece is a must for my collection. It would look perfect next to the original Rembrandt that I got for a steal for 34 francs in 1951. Completely legitimately, of course."



GALLERY 262

The Rock (1944-48) by Peter Blume

Peter Blume's surreal image of a shattered, but enduring, rock, with its implied message of hope, must have struck a responsive chord in many post-World War II viewers. The rock is flanked by two scenes, one symbolizing destruction, the other re-creation. On the right, smoke billows around the charred timbers of a house. On the left, laborers are constructing Frank Lloyd Wright's famous 1936 house, Falling Water, which he built for the owners of *The Rock*, Liliane and Edgar Kaufmann.

Baron Dietrich von Oberlitzer: "Although I'm not at liberty to discuss my whereabouts prior to this conflict, I can say that this painting speaks to the opportunities, er...I mean, devastation, of war."



GALLERY 263

American Gothic (1930) by Grant Wood

Grant Wood adopted the precise realism of 15th-century northern European artists, but his native Iowa provided the artist with his subject matter. *American Gothic* depicts a farmer and his spinster daughter posing before their house, whose gabled window and tracery, in the American gothic style, inspired the painting's title. In fact, the models were the painter's sister and his dentist. Wood was accused of satirizing the intolerance and rigidity that the insular nature of rural life can produce; he denied the accusation. *American Gothic* is an image that epitomizes the Puritan ethic and virtues that he believed dignified the Midwestern character.

Millicent Friendly: "I really don't see it. I can't tell you how many times I've been compared to that spinster daughter."

Play Masterpiece!

Which character will get the most bang for his buck? Stop by the Kraft Education Center to play the board game Masterpiece and try your hand at speculating the art market. Or, join in at city's celebration of all things playful during "The Art of Play," June 1-September 30. Go to 72 E. Randolph Street to see demonstrations of new games and play the featured game of the week. Visit <http://artofplaychicago.com/> for more information.