

Avery to Warhol Self-Guided Tour

Tell Me A Story: Narrative in Art – Examine the formal devices artists adopt to convey narrative, discuss the choice and particularities of narrative



Henry Hubbell
American, 1870-1949
Portrait of Three Sisters, 1903
Oil on canvas
Gift of Elizabeth Phillips
Marshall

As you view this painting, what is your sense about the life style of this family? What can we sense about the painter?

At this particular time in history, families of a certain level would travel to Europe to spend a period of time absorbing culture and lifestyles. This was true of the Fitch family, whose three daughters are the subjects of this painting. Travel played a significant role in Hubbell's life and artistic growth.

Henry Hubbell began his art education in Chicago, then went to Paris to continue development of his painting skills. At Whistler's Academie Carmen in Paris, he learned the importance of color, tone, and composition. Hubbell carefully planned for harmonious tones, which play a significant role in this portrait. What color tones do you see?

"Playing off the significant tones" in a painting was an important technique Hubbell developed as a mature artist. The sisters were dressed in lightly toned dresses, and he included secondary objects of similar tones. This technique encouraged careful viewing in order to better enjoy the entire composition. Do we notice this secondary figure?

The sisters in this portrait are Alva Jane, Dorothy, and Katherine Fitch. Later, the sisters became residents of Vero Beach. Their parents built the first home and named the community of Riomar in Vero Beach. To this day the family is involved with supporting the community they dearly loved.

Avery to Warhol Self-Guided Tour

Tell Me A Story: Narrative in Art – Examine the formal devices artists adopt to convey narrative, discuss the choice and particularities of narrative



Carlos Merida
Guatemalan (1895-1984)
Alegorica de la Danza (Allegory of the Dance), 1976
Serigraph, 31/100
Gift of Peter and Patricia Thompson

What do you see in this picture?
Describe the shapes and colors.
What do the shapes represent to you? What colors stand out?

Carlos Merida was a Central-American artist who studied in Guatemala and Paris. In France, he met Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Paul Klee and Diego Rivera, with whom he later worked on a mural in Mexico. He was influenced by Mayan and Aztec art, as well as the Cubism and Surrealism that he saw in the works of the European

artists. Cubism displays several aspects of an item at the same time, fragmenting the form. Surrealism uses fantastic or incongruous imagery in art.

Music and dance were lifelong interests of Merida. Note the title of this work. An allegory is a symbolic representation. How has the artist used Cubism and Surrealism in his representation of dance? Has the artist represented music? Think of other representations of dance that you might have seen. How is this the same or different?

Merida once said, “I learned to paint by long conversations about things that had nothing to do with painting.” What do you think he meant by that?

Avery to Warhol Self-Guided Tour

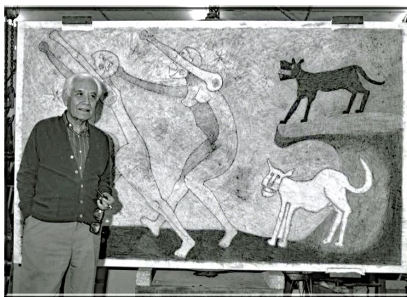
Tell Me A Story: Narrative in Art – Examine the formal devices artists adopt to convey narrative, discuss the choice and particularities of narrative



Rufino Tamayo
Mexican, 1899-1991
Dos Personajes Atacados por Perros
(*Two People Attacked by Dogs*), 1983
Mixographia on paper, 65/73
Gift of Barbara Avellin

What do you think is happening? If you could enter this work of art what emotions might you feel?

Rufino Tamayo was an important Mexican artist who combined European painting styles of figurative abstraction and Surrealism with Mexican folk motifs/themes. Figurative abstraction is a style that does not attempt to represent subjects in an accurate or natural way, but to communicate intense feelings. Surrealism explores the subconscious mind and dreams, rather than literary realism. Tamayo was one of the first artists to utilize a new type of printed artwork called *Mixografía*. This technique is a unique printing process invented by Tamayo and his studio, that allows production of three-dimensional prints with texture and fine surface detail.



This large paper mural was printed from the largest lithographic stone measuring 103 x 63 inches. The stone, with Tamayo's original drawing, is on permanent display at Mixografía Gallery in Los Angeles.

What was your initial reaction to this artwork? What might the dogs represent? What do you think the people are feeling? Does the title contribute to your understanding? Does the painting remind you of something that is happening in our world today?

Tamayo became recognized for his mastery of colors that were saturated with Mexican earth tones and imbued with light. He stated: "As the number of colors we use decrease, the wealth of possibilities increases." He used few colors in his painting to give the image greater force and meaning. What colors has he used in this print? How do they impact you?

Avery to Warhol Self-Guided Tour

Tell Me A Story: Narrative in Art – Examine the formal devices artists adopt to convey narrative, discuss the choice and particularities of narrative



Sharron Quasius
American, b. 1948
Watson and the Shark, 1982
Relief sculpture,
cotton duck over wood
Gift of Mr. and Mrs.
Charles Spahr

Sharron Quasius' sculpture, *Watson and the Shark*, appropriates the well-known history painting of the same name by John Singleton Copley. As a category of painting, history scenes are usually meant to tell an important story

with dramatic action and to impart a lesson to the viewer. When you look at this sculpture, what actions do you notice? Who are the important actors in the story?

The central figure in the narrative is Brooks Watson, who commissioned Copley to portray a swimming incident during which he lost his leg to a shark attack in Havana harbor almost 30 years after the fact. Both Copley's painting and Quasius' sculpture position the sailors in the rescue boat along a sweeping diagonal that points toward the floundering Watson. This emphasizes the climax of the extraordinary event when Watson is snatched from the jaws of death. Why might Watson want Copley to depict this scene from his youth? In his old age, Watson bequeathed the painting to Christ's Church in London to "serve as a useful lesson to youth." What lesson do you think Watson intended?



Whereas Copley's vividly colorful and detailed painting highlights the stark terror of Watson, the heroism of the other sailors, and predatory viciousness of the shark, Quasius's sculpture differs in its materiality that renders the scene in an all-white, soft tactility. Does Quasius' sculpture change the tone or emphasis of the image for you? Does the change in medium seem to offer any commentary on the original?