



Crystal Bridges
Museum of American Art

Verbal Description

Audio Guide Script

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Welcome to the Verbal Description Tour

NARRATOR: In keeping with Crystal Bridges' mission to welcome all, the museum developed this verbal description audio tour of several works of art in the collection that can be used by visitors with all levels of sight. Verbal descriptions are highly detailed reports of a work of art. By describing the size of an object in terms of the human body, the location of objects within the artwork, and the color, texture, and size of these objects, guests are able to imagine what a work of art looks like in their mind's eye. This tour is beneficial for visitors with all levels of sight because it helps everyone notice details in a work of art that might have been previously overlooked.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Florida Mexicana*

NARRATOR: The painting you are in front of is entitled *Florida Mexicana* and was made by the artist Alfredo Ramos Martínez in 1936 using oil on canvas. It is 36 inches tall by 30 inches wide and depicts an outdoor scene with a young indigenous Mexican woman offering a large bowl filled with vibrantly colored flowers. The painting is displayed in a plain, black, wooden double frame. The framed painting spans roughly from waist height to about a foot above the top of one's head.

[Pause]

The background of the painting is a landscape, beginning at the top with a small strip of cornflower blue sky that touches the tops of mountain peaks, some gently rounded, some sharply pointed. Below the mountain peaks, the mid ground of the painting consists of rolling green hills accented with thin black slanted lines that form rows into the hillsides. Toward the foreground of the painting, angular, geometric forms that suggest rocks are positioned on each side of the woman in the center of the painting.

[Pause]

The woman is a young indigenous Mexican woman holding a large bowl filled with a variety of vibrantly colored flowers. Her skin is a deep tan color, with darker tan shadows highlighting her angular cheekbones. Her long, straight brown hair is parted close to the center of her head and hangs behind her back. Her face is composed of dark brown almond-shaped eyes, framed by prominent black brows. The slanted line of her brow leads us down to her angular nose. Below her nose are full, lush pink lips outlined with thin black lines. She is wearing a tangerine colored dress with a modest sweetheart neckline. The bodice of her dress is closed with one visible button on the right side. A thin black line down the center of the bodice disappears behind the large bowl of flowers she is holding, which completely eclipses the center of her body.

[Pause]

The golden-colored bowl is wide and shallow with a horizontal strip of pink flowers and green leaves decorating the center. An abundant assortment of pink, yellow, orange, white, and purplish flowers, all perfectly in bloom, fills the bowl, spilling over the front and sides. Curving around the underside of the bowl, we see the young woman's hands holding the bowl, her fingertips overly blunted to form straight horizontal lines, matching the blunt angular lines forming many of her facial features but directly contrasting with the round lushness of the flowers.

[Pause]

As is typical in Ramos Martínez's work, the palette in this painting is mostly warm earth tones, which serve to reinforce a metaphorical connection between the indigenous subject and the land. Ramos Martínez moved to California in 1929 in order to seek medical treatment in the United States for his sickly daughter. During this time, he radically shifted the artistic style for which he was known in Mexico to a more art deco style. This style consisted of hard-edged ornamental lines, faceted geometric forms, a realistic yet severe figural style, joined together with hints of Cubism.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Mrs. Theodore Atkinson, Jr. (Frances Deering Wentworth)*

[♪ Antonio Vivaldi, The Four Seasons: Spring ♪]

NARRATOR: The painting that you are in front of is entitled *Mrs. Theodore Atkinson, Jr. (Frances Deering Wentworth)* and was made in 1765 by an artist named John Singleton Copley using oil paint on canvas. It is 40 inches wide and 51 inches tall and depicts a portrait of a woman named Mrs. Theodore Atkinson, Jr. who is seated in a chair beside a small circular table with her pet flying squirrel on a delicate chain. The painting is displayed in a wooden frame with a rope-like golden frame inside of it that spans from two feet above floor level to 2.5 feet over one's head.

[Pause]

Mrs. Atkinson is the only figure in this painting. She sits with her knees facing the right side of the canvas although the bottom of her legs are cut off from the frame. Her torso, neck and head are slightly turned towards us. She stares confidently at us with her dark brown eyes and regal upright posture.

[Pause]

Mrs. Atkinson is a wealthy woman, and Copley emphasizes this by painting her wearing expensive fabrics and jewelry. She wears a formal, ball gown-like dress that is made of a fine gray satin that is slightly darker than her porcelain skin. The dress has a low neckline with puffy sleeves that end at her elbows. The neckline and sleeves of the dress are decorated with lace trim at the ends and embellished with pearls and jewels, which further emphasizes her wealth. She wears a thin brown sash with golden threads woven through it that is draped across her body from her right shoulder to below her left elbow. Additionally, she wears a luxurious emerald green fabric that curves elegantly around her body from her back to the floor. Her hair is pulled away from her face, and there is a string of pearls that appears to zig zag in the top of her hair. She also wears a string of pearls on her neck that are fastened with a large white bow at the nape of her neck. There is a deep blue sapphire earring in her right ear. We are unable to see her left ear due to the position of her face. The light source appears to be coming from the left side of the canvas, so the left side of her face is cast in shadow.

[Pause]

In contrast with her elaborate dress, the dark wooden chair and table set that Mrs. Atkinson sits at are very simple, although the top of the table is highly polished. She lightly grips the table with her right hand. In her left hand, she holds a golden chain that is attached to her pet flying squirrel [squirrel chattering]. The pet squirrel, which is small enough to fit in one of Mrs. Atkinson's hands, is seated on the table as it nibbles on a small morsel.

[Pause]

Mrs. Atkinson sits in front of a backdrop with one large column framing her and the painting on the right side of the canvas. On the left side are several vertical lines that appear to be part of the architectural elements of the room. A red velvet curtain with golden fringe is draped diagonally from the top of the column on the right side of the canvas to the area behind her chair on the left side of the canvas.

[Pause]

Copley delighted painting different textures, which is especially evident in this painting in the sheen of the satin, softness of the velvet, reflectiveness on the tabletop, and light glinting off the pearls and jewels.

[End of Stop]

Description of *A Tight Fix – Brea Hunting, Early Winter* [*The Life of a Hunter: A Tight Fix*]

NARRATOR: The painting you are in front of is entitled *A Tight Fix--Bear Hunting, Early Winter* and was created by Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait in 1856 using oil on canvas. It is 40 inches tall by 60 inches wide and depicts an action scene set in a wintery forest landscape. It is displayed in an ornate gold frame that hangs roughly at eye level.

[Pause]

If this painting were a picture in a storybook, it would illustrate the climax of the story. Immediately, our eyes are drawn to the dramatic confrontation between a hunter and a bear in the foreground of the painting. The large black bear is to our left. It sits on its haunches with its claws raised. Its mouth is opened in a snarl, and a splotch of red on its side reveals an injury. To the right of the bear, the hunter has fallen to the snowy ground. His back and left side profile faces us. Jaw clenched with fierce determination, he props himself up using his left hand, while his right hand holds a bloody hunting knife, raised to further defend himself from the bear's imminent attack.

[Pause]

The fight appears to have escalated for quite some time. The man's tan buckskin shirt and pants are ripped and smeared with traces of snow and blood. His hat and powder horn have fallen to the ground behind him. His hunting rifle lies in the snow underneath the bear's haunches, rendering it useless, and the barrel of the revolver visible at the left waistband of the his pants points down into the snow. Finally, we notice a blood trail, the red sharply contrasting with the white snow that covers the ground, leading toward the forest in the background.

[Pause]

The background of the painting is a dense, wintery forest full of barren trees. On the right side of the canvas, behind one of the trees, we see a second hunter with his rifle raised. At first glance, one might assume that he is aiming at the bear, but upon closer inspection, the perspective is unclear. Is he aiming at the bear or at something beyond the frame?

[End of Stop]

Description of *The Gems of Brazil*

NARRATOR: The display you are in front of is a grouping of 16 small, ornately framed oil paintings from Martin Johnson Heade's series *The Gems of Brazil*. Each framed painting is 18.5 inches by 16.5 inches and depicts an outdoor jungle scene, all containing a pair of hummingbirds, except for one, which contains a single large blue butterfly. The gold, cove frames are roughly six inches thick with vines and leaves detailing their corners and edges. The grouping begins about two and a half feet from the floor and towers about four feet above the tops of our heads. Its total width is slightly wider than the span of our outstretched arms.

[Pause]

The painting we will focus on is in the bottom left corner of the grouping. The blue sky in the background of the painting covers roughly two thirds of the canvas. In the bottom third, hazy gray and white clouds touch the tops of mountains covered with lush green vegetation in the distance. In the foreground, tree branches and vines covered in moss and leaves curve across the top and center of the canvas, giving us the impression we are viewing the scene from a high altitude.

[Pause]

In the center of the foreground, one small hummingbird with outstretched wings perches on a branch. Its body is mostly shades of brown save for the white ring at the base of its exposed throat and the brilliant patch of iridescent pinkish-purple feathers that extends up the underside of its neck to its beak. Its head is looking up and to the right, its characteristically long beak almost touching the beak of the second hummingbird in this scene.

[Pause]

The second hummingbird is perched on a portion of the same branch that is slightly above and to the right of the first bird. Its head and beak are pointed down toward the other bird. This bird's feathers are also shades of brown, but the feathers on its neck are solid white, causing it to fade into the surrounding scenery. A nest hangs from a branch in the bottom left corner of the canvas. In the nest, two baby hummingbirds, their backs turned to us, raise their beaks up into the air.

[End of Stop]

Description of *The Bathers*

NARRATOR: The sculpture you are in front of is entitled *The Bathers* and was made of acrylic paint and graphite on wood with plaster casts by the artist Marisol in 1930. It is approximately 84 inches tall by 70 ¼ inches long by 63 inches wide and is displayed both on the wall and low white base made of wood. This piece is a blend of both painting and sculpture and depicts three women relaxing in the sun.

[Pause]

On the wall before us, reaching from the floor to about a foot above the top of our heads, a sky blue wall of six vertical wooden planks forms the backdrop of the piece. In the lower right corner, we see a woman's face, torso, and half of her legs painted directly onto the blue backdrop. Her hair is black and her skin is deeply tanned. Her posture is relaxed, with her arms behind her head. Her three-dimensional wooden legs extend out from the portion of her body painted onto the backdrop. The leg to our right is bent at the knee; a pale plaster-casted foot rests flat on the floor. The leg to our left is bent so that the ankle rests on the knee of the leg to our right. The foot resting on the knee is topped with a pale plaster toe pointing up towards the sky. It is unclear whether or not this figure is nude because a sky blue section of color matching that of the background covers her torso.

[Pause]

Moving to the middle of the base, slightly to the left of the first woman, a second woman, made entirely of assembled wood shapes and positioned fully on the floor, reclines on her back. She is also relaxed with her hands behind her head. Her knees are bent with both pale plaster-casted feet flat on the floor. She is wearing a red bikini, and her skin is deeply tanned. Her square face highlighted with pale plaster features points up toward the sky.

[Pause]

On the floor in front of the second figure, a third woman stretches out on her stomach horizontally to us. Her wooden legs are bent at the knees with pale plaster feet in the air. Her unrealistic head is a wooden cube with different facial profiles sketched in graphite onto several facets of the cube. The fingertips of her plaster-casted hands rest below her chin. A bright yellow hat sits on top of her head. Her skin is also deeply tanned, and she is completely nude. The artist has highlighted her nudity by stacking a pale plaster cast over her backside to exaggerate her curvaceous buttocks. The rounded shape and pale color of her buttocks contrast sharply with the blocky shapes and tanned color comprising the majority of the rest of the piece.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Sappho*

NARRATOR: The sculpture you are in front of is entitled *Sappho* and was made of white marble by the artist William Wetmore Story. It was modeled in 1862 and carved in 1867. It is 58 inches tall, 34 inches wide, and 38 inches deep and is displayed upon a waist-high, gray marble pedestal, causing the sculpture to tower several feet above our heads. The sculpture depicts Sappho of Lesbos, a sixth-century-B.C. poet who, according to legend, committed suicide for love.

[Pause]

Sappho is facing towards you, seated in a chair, and the side profile of the chair's back is on your left. Her flowing, wavy hair is pulled into a bun behind her head. The bun is secured with a ribbon that is nestled across the front crown of her hair to the back where it is tied around the bun. Her face is a perfect oval; her balanced facial features and smooth skin enhanced by the pure milky-white marble from which they are carved. Although her eyes appear empty because they are without visible pupils, her eyelids are slightly closed as though she is looking down, lost in deep thought. Around her neck is a beaded necklace that comes to a slight "V" in the center of her chest. The breast on your right is bared, while the breast on your left is covered by a loose, white garment attached with a clasp at the shoulder. Her garment is cinched at the waist with a thin belt, the fabric draped in folds down her legs to where it pools around the tops of her exposed, sandaled feet. Extra material from her skirt is also draped horizontally from left to right across her lap, and around her back where the material has been gathered to spill over the back of the chair in which she is seated.

[Pause]

The chair is a klismos chair, a type of chair from ancient Greece. A swirling flower and vine pattern along the back of the chair's frame adds texture to the smooth white marble. Between the back legs of the chair is a sheet of solid marble on which is a circle with a swirling symbol etched upon it. Below this symbol is the word ROMA and the year 1867. Resting against the side of the chair on your left is a wilting rose drooping across an unstrung lyre.

[Pause]

The chair is attached to a 3-inch white marble base. The top of the base has a faint diamond pattern etched onto its surface. Capital letters spelling “Sappho” protrude slightly from the front of the base. Below the white base, the layered gray marble pedestal is triangular with rounded corners. A layered lip extends around its top. Beneath the lip, the pedestal is smooth and even for about two feet until another layered lip extends around its bottom. Beneath the gray marble pedestal is a 6 inch wooden platform, painted light gray to blend in with the gray marble of the pedestal.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Along the Shore*

NARRATOR: The painting that you are in front of is entitled *Along the Shore* and was made by an artist named William Trost Richards in 1903 using oil paint on canvas. It is about 39 inches tall by 78 inches wide, which is roughly the width of an adult's outstretched arms and on the wall, it hangs roughly about 2.5 feet over one's head, installed tightly with other landscape paintings surrounding it. The painting depicts a dramatic seascape of waves crashing violently against rocks near the shoreline of Newport, Rhode Island. It is displayed in a gold frame that is decorated with leaves and berries on the outside border.

[Pause]

The scene is primarily made up of sea and sky—the ocean covers a little over half of the bottom portion of the canvas, and the stormy sky in the background covers the remaining top portion of the canvas.

[Crashing ocean waves fade in]

What makes this scene particularly dramatic is that, as viewers, we are placed in the crashing waves of the ocean instead of viewing them from the safety of the beach. We stand among three jagged rocks, which are placed in the direction of 3 o'clock, 5 o'clock, and 9 o'clock in the foreground of the painting.

[Pause]

The ocean is painted in subtle variations of a jade green color. Where sunlight shines through the waves, this jade color is lighter and appears almost translucent. As the ocean gets further away from us, the jade color becomes much darker. The crashing waves closest to us are lined with frothy white foam, which looks like lace against the darker green of the waves.

[Pause]

The sky in the top portion of the painting shows us that a storm might be heading towards us. On the left half of the canvas, there are hazy bluish-purple clouds off in the distance that connect the sky to the water, which might suggest that it is raining. On the right side of the canvas where the ocean meets the sky, we can see a small sailboat on the water, about the size of your thumbnail. Above the sailboat, we see a tiny seagull flying over the water [seagull call fades in].

[End of Stop]

Description of *Little Joe with Cow*

NARRATOR: The painting that you are in front of is entitled *Little Joe with Cow* and was made by the artist Yasuo Kuniyoshi in 1923 using oil on canvas. It is 28 inches tall by 42 inches wide and depicts an outdoor scene with a young boy and a cow in an area with vegetation. The painting is displayed in a white-washed, beveled wooden frame with a few delicate decorative elements lining the center. The framed painting spans roughly from waist height to slightly above the top of one's head.

[Pause]

In the foreground of the painting is a boy and a large brown cow [cow mooing]. The cow is a mix of curved and angular shapes with the straight line of its back running across from the center of the painting to its tail in the upper right which forms a sharp angle that extends with a straight line to its foot. The tail is long, black, and finely textured with hair that curls down in front of the cow's leg. Below the cow's tail is a small pointed hoof on the bottom of its triangular leg. Behind the leg is a white and swollen udder with gray color, white spots and four teats. The belly of the cow is plump and curved with a curved line running to the cow's angular head which is about halfway up the painting on the left side. Dark brown hair that looks like bangs rests on the cow's forehead and two curved white horns protrude from the sides of its head. A single wooden yoke rests on its shoulders and one of the cow's large light brown eyes peers out at us the viewers.

[Pause]

Standing directly in front of the cow is the young boy, Little Joe. He faces us and leans on the cow with an extended left arm. Little Joe is wearing a white shirt mostly covered by a dark brown blazer and knee-length black shorts. We cannot see his ankles and feet which appear to be sunken into the earth and covered by a mix of grasses and other vegetation. Little Joe has a square-shaped face and short black hair. His facial features are small and angular, and his brown eyes peer out at us the viewers, although Little Joe's eyes are smaller and less defined than the cow's large eye.

[Pause]

Surrounding Little Joe and the cow is a mix of vegetation including ferns, reeds, and grasses. The plants line the foreground of the painting in front of the boy and cow along with a large dark mass that appears to be a rock, branch, or mud. Plants also flank the cow's body on the right side, including a larger plant with drooping seed pods. A dark ridge of the landscape in the background extends from the right edge of the painting upwards and curves to the left, complementing the shape of the cow's rear and back. Two plants grow behind the cow's head on the left side of the painting, including a larger rust-colored botanical that almost appears to be sprouting from the cow's head, due to the flatness of the perspective of the painting.

[Pause]

Left of center on the top of the painting in the background is a small, modest two-story house. The house includes a vertical white rectangular shape with a flat black roof with another shorter horizontal rectangle attached to its right. Connecting the two sections is a triangular shape that looks like a lean-to roof. The house lacks ornamentation and has a front door and four windows – two windows on the second floor of the main building and two on the smaller horizontal section attached. One window on the top floor of the main building has curtains while the rest are bare. A small path leads from the front door across the front of the house to the right and up and behind into a darker area that resembles hills or mountains.

[Pause]

The overall color palette of the artwork is earth tones including shades of browns, ochres, blacks and rusted oranges. A few yellow-green grasses grow in the foreground on the left side of the painting, which contrasts with the right side which is overall darker in color with dark browns and grays, giving the appearance of water or shadows.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Au Café (Synchrony)*

NARRATOR: The painting you are in front of is entitled *Au Café (Synchrony)* and was painted using oil on canvas by Stanton Macdonald-Wright in 1918. It is 50 inches tall by 28 inches wide and is displayed in a black wooden frame.

[Pause]

At first glance, the painting appears to be pure abstraction, composed of randomly placed, jewel-toned prisms and planes of color. Upon closer inspection, however, two figures emerge from the vibrant rainbow of fragmented colors. In the upper half of the composition, a woman faces us wearing a small, stylishly tilted hat atop her neatly groomed hair. She raises a martini glass by its stem in her left hand. Her right hand holds a small, cylindrical object, perhaps something from which she is pouring a drink. Her head is slanted down towards a man who sits below in the bottom right section of the painting. The man's back is turned toward us, his gaze, to the left, showing us the side profile of his face. His features are sharp and angular. The lines defining his hair sweep back away from his forehead.

[Pause]

Together with compatriot Morgan Russell, Stanton Macdonald-Wright founded the art movement “Synchromism” in Paris in 1912. The word means “with color,” just as symphony means “with sound.” Macdonald-Wright and Russell wanted to express the idea that music and color are similar. Synchromist paintings were based on color “scales” that were similar to musical scales. Macdonald-Wright arranged his brilliant, jewel-like pigments in staggered blocks and prismatic shapes, as if to mimic sequences of musical chords.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Trois noirs sure un rouge* (Three Blacks Over Red)

NARRATOR: The sculpture you are in front of is entitled *Trois Noirs Sur un Rouge* (which means *Three Blacks Over Red* in French) and was made of painted sheet metal by the artist Alexander Calder in 1968. It is 130 inches tall, 118 inches wide, and 86 5/8 inches deep and is displayed upon a white wooden circular base with a diameter roughly the length of your outstretched arms. It is an abstract mix of long lines created by silver metal bars and curving biomorphic shapes made of painted red, black, and white sheet metal.

[Pause]

This piece is a classic example of Calder's standing mobiles. Although the term mobile implies movement, this sculpture is at rest.

[Pause]

Beginning at the bottom, three legs, gently curving inward into one line, rise up through a circular hole about the size of a standard bathroom sink cut through a rounded, black shape that loosely resembles a giant guitar pick. This shape is not directly touching the stand, making it appear to float unsupported in the air. Upon closer inspection, however, we see it is attached to the rest of the sculpture from the top by a round hook and loop and that the weight of the rest of the sculpture pulling upward from this hook is allowing the shape to remain fixed in the air, perfectly flat and balanced.

[Pause]

Continuing up the sculpture, we see the hook is actually the end of a long, thin, metal bar that slants upward in the direction of 10 o'clock for about a foot to where it intersects with the top of the tripod stand before continuing upward for roughly a yard. At the end of this bar is another hook, pointing upward. Balancing in the bend of this hook is a small triangular loop about the size of a balled up fist, attached to the middle of a second slightly thinner, metal bar slanted in the direction of 11 o'clock. The junction of the two bars forms angles like a "T" with a slanted top.

[Pause]

One side of the second bar slants downward in the direction of 5 o'clock for about a yard, with a red sheet metal circle about two feet in diameter capping the end. The other side of this bar slants upward in the direction of 11 o'clock for about a yard, ending with another pointed hook. From this hook hangs a third long metal bar, slightly thinner than the last and more sharply slanted. The end of this bar slanting downward in the direction of 5 o'clock is capped with a white sheet metal circle, roughly half the size of the red circle, and the end of the bar slanting upward in the direction of 11 o'clock ends with another pointed hook.

[Pause]

Twisting around this hook is a thin, rigid black wire, with its top arcing upward in the direction of 1 o'clock about a foot above the hook, and its bottom curving downward in the direction of 6 o'clock about two feet below the hook. The wire runs through the center of four small, irregular, rounded shapes, suspending them in space, with approximately a foot of wire between each shape. A black shape caps the top, making it the highest point of the piece, followed below by two more black shapes, ending with a red shape hooked at the bottom.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Distant Figures*

NARRATOR: The sculpture that you are in front of is entitled *Distant Figures* and was made in 1971 by an artist named Louise Bourgeois using marble and stainless steel. This abstract sculpture is 46 inches wide by 22 inches tall by 30.5 inches deep and features several long marble columns of varying heights and widths that are clustered together on the right side of a large marble slab. It is not clear where the stainless steel element is located in this work—perhaps it is used inside of the columns for support. The sculpture spans from about one arm’s length in width and from the floor to one’s knee in height and roughly from one’s elbow to one’s fingertips in depth and it sits on a low rectangular white pedestal.

[Pause]

The large marble slab that the clustered forms are grounded on has a matte-textured top that is a mottled sandy color. There are delicate gray sections and meandering gray lines running through the top of the slab. The bottom portion of the slab is, by contrast, much more rough-hewn where the artist carved the sculpture into its irregular rectangular shape with rounded corners. This portion of the sculpture is also a slightly darker brown color with areas of brownish red. In several places, there are distinctive vertical or horizontal chisel marks that are lighter gray or white in color.

[Pause]

There are 34 long cylindrical columns of varying heights and widths ranging in diameter of about 1 inch to 3 inches, clustered into an oval shape on top of the right side of the marble slab. The taller columns form the outer portion of the oval, while the shorter columns are located on the inside of the oval. These columns are highly polished to achieve a slippery, shiny surface. All of the columns have smooth, rounded tops except for the shortest one on the left side of the oval, which has a broken upward-tilting edge like a tube of lipstick.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Self-Portrait with Fish and Cat*

NARRATOR: The painting you are in front of is entitled *Self-Portrait with Fish and Cat* and was created by Joan Brown in 1970 using oil enamel on board. It is 96 inches tall by 48 inches wide and is displayed in a thin, wooden frame. The framed painting spans from roughly four inches off the floor to about two feet above the tops of our heads.

[Pause]

The background of the painting is a rich, vibrant red. Against this background, we see Joan Brown, standing tall, stretching almost the entire length of the canvas. Her figure is positioned on the side of the canvas to our left. Beginning with the top of her head, we notice her short blonde hair, cropped just below her ears. Her skin is a thickly-layered mixture of white, pink and reddish-brown paint applied with smooth, broad strokes. Her pale aqua eyes gaze out toward us. She is dressed in a dark-colored, loose fitting top and pants that are heavily splattered with paint. Transparent, latex gloves cover her hands, and in the hand to our left, she is holding a paint brush with greenish-yellow paint on its tip. Her arm to our right is curved around a large fish that spans from the bottom of the artist's chin all the way to her knees. The fish is a thickly layered mixture of green and yellow paint. Its long back is arched in a half-moon shape that curves around the artist's arm.

[Pause]

Moving down the painting, we see the artist's white shoes, also heavily splattered with paint. She is standing on a series of white square gridlines faintly outlined in black that cut through the vibrant red background in the bottom fourth of the painting. These gridlines form 4 inch squares stacked 5 ½ squares high by 12 squares wide. These squares seem to suggest a plane on which the artist could stand, but fall short of providing realistic depth or perspective, for the soles of her shoes are not flat against the grid's surface. Instead, her toes are pointing straight down, as though her feet are not anchored solidly on any surface at all. Below the toes of her shoes is the dark, solid shadow of her feet and ankles, which reaches to the bottom of the canvas. In the bottom, right corner of the painting we see a black cat with white whiskers, its head pointed down and to our left. Its paws are in mid-step, as though walking. The dark shadow of the cat's paws and body is also visible to the bottom of the canvas.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Black Balloon*

NARRATOR: The painting you are in front of is entitled *Black Balloon* and was created by Gene Davis in 1964 using acrylic paint on canvas. It is 93 ½ inches tall by 171 ½ inches wide and is displayed in a thin wooden frame.

[Pause]

This painting consists entirely of equal-sized vertical stripes of color that reach from the top of the canvas to the bottom with no empty space in between. Each stripe is roughly three inches wide. Some, but not all, of the long, solid stripes form visual patterns. For example, the side of the canvas to our left consists mostly of alternating orange and black stripes; however, three deep lavender stripes are interspersed at random intervals, interrupting the pattern. The middle section of the canvas abruptly shifts to four alternating green and yellow stripes, followed by stripes of royal blue, white, orange, black, lavender, black, and white. A bright red stripe marks the center of the canvas, followed by stripes of light green, dark purple, lavender, black, orange, and white. As our eyes continue to travel to our right, the stripes return to roughly the same pattern as the left side of the canvas, alternating orange and black stripes, with six deep lavender stripes interrupting at random intervals.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Still Life with Mirror*

NARRATOR: The painting that you are in front of is entitled *Still Life with Mirror* and was made in 1972 by Roy Lichtenstein using oil and acrylic paint on canvas. It is 96 inches tall and 54 inches wide and depicts a cropped view of a still life with everyday objects on a table with a curtain and a mirror in the background. The painting is displayed in a slim, wooden frame that spans roughly from one foot above floor level to five feet over one's head.

[Pause]

The bottom right portion of the painting features the top of the black table that is turned almost parallel to us as we stand in front of this painting. If this table top existed in real life, all of the still life objects that rest on it would crash to the floor because of the angle.

Near the bottom right corner of the table sit a white tea cup and saucer that rest partially on a white napkin. The napkin is turned at the same unusual angle as the table. On top of the upper left corner of the same napkin rests a rounded white bowl filled with yellow pieces of fruit, which include three bananas and what appears to be an orange.

[Pause]

Peeking out from behind one of the bananas on the left side of the bowl, we see part of a red apple with a bold white highlight. There is also a clump of dark blue grapes located on the right side of the bowl.

[Pause]

Behind the grapes and located near the upper right corner of the table, we see the back of a picture canvas. The wooden stretcher of the canvas is bright yellow, and the canvas that is wrapped over part of the stretcher is stark white.

[Pause]

Behind the canvas stretcher and reaching to the upper right portion of the painting, there is a bright yellow curtain. An oval-shaped mirror hangs on the pale gray wall to the left of the curtain.

[Pause]

The artist, Roy Lichtenstein borrowed elements of commercial art to create this artwork. Rather than using carefully blended highlights and shadows to make the objects in the painting look more realistic and three-dimensional, he painted each object as a flat area of color. He kept his color palate for this painting very simple by using only red, yellow, blue, black, or gray as the color for each object. Many of the objects in the painting are outlined with thick black lines similar to what you would find in a comic book. Lichtenstein also uses a series of black dots placed closely together in order to create shadows on some of the objects, including the right side of the mirror, the back of the canvas stretcher, the bottom of the fruit bowl, and inside the cup and saucer. This technique is also used to create shadows or complex colors in comic books.

[End of Stop]

Description of *Our Town*

NARRATOR: The painting that you are in front of is entitled *Our Town* and was made in 1995 by an artist named Kerry James Marshall using acrylic and collage on canvas. It is 143 inches wide and 101 inches tall and depicts an outdoor scene featuring two African American children running and bicycling toward us as a dog runs beside them on a road amongst trees and several white houses in the background. Instead of being displayed in a frame, the painting was created on a sheet of canvas with finished edges and is attached directly to the wall with several silver grommets. Large smooth sheets of paper have been collaged onto this sheet of canvas, and the painting was made directly onto these sheets of paper. The painting spans from roughly one foot above floor level to 5 feet over one's head in height with a width of two adults' outstretched arms.

[Pause]

To get a sense of the shape of the road that the children play on, extend your right arm out beside you. Now, bend your elbow and bring your right hand to touch your nose. In this scene, the children and the dog would be located near your right shoulder, while the white houses of the neighborhood in the background would be located along your forearm. A large, open area filled with grass and trees that the children are playing in front of would be located within the sideways U-shaped space created by the shape of your bent arm.

[Pause]

A large white wooden house would be located closest to your elbow. This house is two stories high with a brick-red roof, several large windows flanked by light blue shutters, and an enclosed garage that extends off of the right side of the house. To the right of the garage, we see an above ground pool and a swing set that is cut off by the right side of the canvas.

[Pause]

An African American woman stands on the well-manicured lawn in front of this house. She wears a pink dress with a full skirt and a frilly pink apron. She is too far off in the distance for us to see her facial features, but we can see that her left hand is on her hip as her right hand is raised to wave at the children.

[Pause]

The other houses on the left side of the artwork are smaller and clustered together. These houses are also made of white wood with brick-red roofs, but there are very few additional details beyond the horizontal slats of the wood including no doors or windows. Several trees with leaves made using a stamping technique provide a lush backdrop behind the houses.

[Birds chirping fades in]

The dog and the two children are located closer to us in the foreground—they are just slightly off center in the lower right portion of the canvas. The children are a boy and a girl that appear to be between the ages of 8 and 10. Both children's skin is a deep shade of black—as black as the three unnaturally circular shadows that are cast below them and the dog on the mottled gray road that they play on. Their facial features are delicately rendered using thin lines of white paint.

[Pause]

The boy's hair is cut close to his scalp, and he wears a greyish-white sweatshirt, blue jeans, and white sneakers as he rides a red bicycle with red and white tassels on the handlebars [bike spokes whirring and children laughing]. The boy's face is turned to the right side of the canvas where the girl runs beside him, but his eyes peer quizzically at the viewer.

[Pause]

The girl runs to the right of the boy and is wearing a Campfire Girls uniform that features a red vest over a short-sleeved oxford shirt, a blue skirt, white sneakers and blue knee high tube socks. The girl's hair is pulled into three sections at the top and sides of her head with bubble ponytail holders. Her runner's pose appears to be rigid or powerful with her hands balled into tight fists as her right arm is pulled up next to her head while her right leg trails behind her. Instead of looking directly at us, the girl appears to gaze somewhere behind us. Above the girl's head are five light mint-colored bubbles that are reminiscent of a thought bubble. The small black and white dog runs with all four paws off of the ground to the right of the girl [dog barking].

[Pause]

The large, open area filled with grass and trees is located just behind the children on the left side of the canvas. Small blue birds swoop down from the tree tops with yellow ribbons in their beaks in an almost fairy-tale-like fashion, and some of these ribbons are tied in bows on a few of the trees in this scene. At the top of the trees near the upper middle portion of the canvas, the artist has placed the words “Our Town” in blocky red and white letters.

[Pause]

The artist has disrupted the harmony of this otherwise idyllic scene by placing harsh lines of scratchy, black, white and blue graffiti-like markings over the trees and yellow ribbons in this section. Similarly, the artist has completely covered over a few star-shaped areas to the left of the “Our Town” words with the same scratchy blue paint that is reminiscent of graffiti. White graffiti-like marks also appear in the bottom right corner of the canvas near to where the dog runs and on several oddly-placed signs throughout the canvas. A fire hydrant painted in red, white, and blue is located in the bottom right corner of the canvas next to the dog. Additionally, a red ball with white lines and a star sits in the bottom left corner of the canvas.

[birds chirping fades out]

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[End of Stop]