



The Turkeys by Claude Monet, 1877



Claude Monet

1840-1926

Claude Monet was a French painter and founding artist of Impressionism. Impressionistic painters attempt to capture an ‘impression’ of what the subject looked like to them through light and color. **The Turkeys** is the only known Monet painting of animals. Monet painted this image of the grounds of the Chateau of Rottenburg, an estate south of Paris. It was one of four paintings commissioned of the family home Ernest Hoschedé, a wealthy businessman and art collector. It is believed that each painting documented the estate during a specific season.

Questions:

1. Why do you think Monet's patron, Ernest Hoschedé, wanted to highlight the turkeys instead of his grand house?
2. How is this painting typical of Monet's work and how is it atypical. Research his work if needed.



Gamin by Augusta Savage



Augusta Savage

1892-1962

Augusta Savage was an artist, educator, activist and community leader during the Harlem Renaissance, a period of African American cultural growth. Savage built a reputation as a portrait sculptor, her subjects included prominent African Americans of her time. At 30, she was awarded a scholarship to the Fontainebleau School of the Arts in Paris, only to have the offer rescinded when they discovered she was black.

Activism and art went hand and hand for Savage. She taught other artists and nurtured their careers by providing space, supplies, and even her own gallery to show their work.

Questions:

1. Savage's sculpture (left) was titled **Gamin**, which means "street urchin." What do you think made it unique for the time it was created, 1929?
2. Savage believed that teaching others was far more important than creating art herself. Can you think of a teacher or other adult who inspired or encouraged you?



The Eclipse by Alma Thomas



Alma Thomas

1891-1978

Alma Thomas was an African-American artist and art teacher. She taught for thirty five years. After retirement she embarked on a life as a fine artist. She became an unintentional inspiration to women, African Americans and elderly people with her artistic accomplishments achieved in her 70s..

From her humble kitchen top easel she created distinctive works that established her as a major American painter of the 20th century. Her style included exuberant colors, abstract shapes, and patterns inspired from nature.

Questions:

1. While abstract, Thomas's paintings evolved from nature. What is the natural inspiration for the example of Thomas's on the left? How do you know?
2. As Thomas was an art educator before becoming a well known and successful artist. Have you ever asked your art teacher if he or she creates art outside of the classroom?
3. Look at a tile mosaic and then compare it to Thomas's work. What do they have in common?



The Sharecropper by Elizabeth Catlett



Elizabeth Catlett

1915-2012

Elizabeth Catlett was an African-American artist who explored themes relating to race, class, and gender. Catlett, whose grandparents were slaves, sought to depict the struggles of the suppressed. “I have always wanted my art to service my people—to reflect us, to relate to us, to stimulate us, to make us aware of our potential,” she once stated.

Catlett worked in paint, print and sculpture over her career. She spent time in Mexico City, where the public murals by artists such as Diego Rivera impressed on her art’s powerful social function. Rivera’s art inspired her to create a body of work detailing the hardships of African-American women in the South.

Questions:

1. How does Catlett’s work on the left, **The Sharecropper**, fit with what we know of the artist?
2. How do you think being the granddaughter of freed slaves and a black women during a time of segregation influenced her art?