

5

Exit the Rice Building, walk up the ramp, turn left, and **walk through the very long hallway.**

When you reach the gallery of **Asian art, turn left.**

Walk through the Asian art galleries, pass the spiral staircase, and enter Gallery 136.

Find this painting:



Jackson Pollock. *Greyed Rainbow*, 1953. Gift of Society for Contemporary American Art.

Jackson Pollock's artwork may look playful, but it took a great deal of effort to create the energetic effects he wanted in this painting. The artist placed canvases on the floor and used a variety of tools to drip, squeeze, and pour the paint across their surfaces. Look at the floor in front of you, move your arm, and pretend that you are making an "action painting" too!

Discover:

- ◆ Overlapping layers of black and white paint
- ◆ Rainbow colors toward the bottom
- ◆ Gray paint peeking through here and there

The Art Institute of Chicago invites you to the Kraft Education Center, where families can enjoy the excitement of seeing and learning about original works of art in a fun and friendly environment.

- ◆ Exhibitions ◆
- ◆ Family Workshops ◆
- ◆ Gallery Walks ◆
- ◆ Drawing in the Galleries ◆
- ◆ Storytelling ◆
- ◆ Performances ◆
- ◆ Parent Workshops ◆
- ◆ Gallery Games ◆

Pick up a family programs calendar at the Kraft Education Center information desk.

For more information, call (312) 857-7161 or visit the Web site at www.artic.edu/aic.

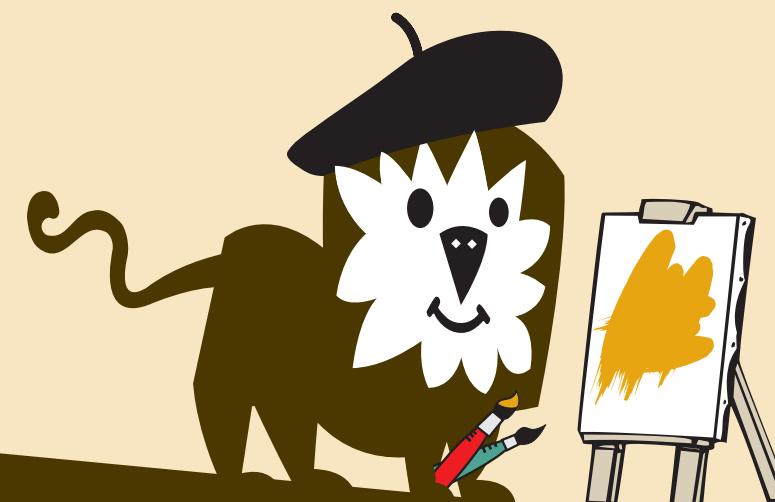
Educational programming support is generously provided by the Brinson Foundation. Additional funding is provided by the Shapiro Foundation.

©2007 The Art Institute of Chicago

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

Family Self-Guide

American Artists at Work and Play



american perspectives

THE
ART INSTITUTE
OF
CHICAGO

American Artists at Work and Play

1

Begin on the lower level next to the **Grand Staircase**.
Go up one flight of stairs to the first floor.
Walk through the glass doors, up the short flight of stairs, and down the long hall.
At the end of the hall turn right into the **Rice Building**.
Go down the stairs and enter the second gallery on your right.
Walk around the quilt on the wall and find this sculpture:



Frank Memkus. *Whirligig, entitled "America,"* c. 1938/42. Restricted gift of Marshall Field, Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Kubicek, Mr. James Raoul Simmons, Mrs. Esther Sparks, Mrs. Frank L. Sulzberg and the Oak Park-River Forest Associates of the Woman's Board of the Art Institute of Chicago.

America is a whirligig, a playful object designed to spin in a strong breeze. This is the only work of art known to be made by Frank Memkus, a Lithuanian immigrant. It was made in honor of pride and patriotism. He brought the whirligig out on special occasions, like the Fourth of July. How do you celebrate national holidays?

Discover:

- ◆ The uniformed figure on top
- ◆ Wheels on the bottom, so it can be moved
- ◆ Red, white, and blue flags and striped patterns

2

Exit this room the way you entered.
Walk straight across the large room full of figure sculpture and into **Gallery 177**.
Find this desk.



Frank Lloyd Wright. *Desk*, 1908. Restricted gift of the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts.

The architect Frank Lloyd Wright was famous for his buildings, but he also designed the things that went into them. The long lines that decorate this desk suggest the shape of his buildings and the flat plains of the Midwestern landscape. Imagine working at this desk in the glow of the two built-in lights. Where would you keep your writing supplies?

Look closely to see:

- ◆ Two amber glass lamp shades
- ◆ Four drawers and four doors
- ◆ Repeated shapes of squares and rectangles

3

Look at the **small painting hanging above the desk.**



Charles Courtney Curran. *An Alcove in the Art Student's League*, 1888. Bequest of Kate L. Brewster.

A central archway frames the scene as a cluster of students learn to draw while crammed into a small classroom. They are working from sculpted portraits and figures, a common way to learn their craft during the late 1800s and the early 20th century. What do you like to draw?

Try to find:

- ◆ A woman looking out at us from the center of the painting
- ◆ Four portrait busts on the table
- ◆ Four framed artworks hanging on the walls

4

Exit this gallery the way you came in.
Turn left and **walk through the sculpture court**.
Walk past the skylit area and into **Gallery 171**.
Find this painting.



John Singer Sargent. *The Fountain, Villa Torlonia, Frascati, Italy*, 1907. Friends of American Art Collection.

This painting by the artist John Singer Sargent shows two of his friends. The female artist dressed in a white smock is hard at work. She is seated upright, carefully observing the subject of her painting. The man next to her is leaning on his elbows, relaxing and enjoying the sunshine. What do you think the subject of her painting is?

Look for:

- ◆ Tools of the artist—canvas, brushes, and palette
- ◆ The folding easel and footstool
- ◆ A spray of water from the fountain in the background