

**Frist Art Museum
and Thomas Edison
Elementary School**

***Van Gogh, Monet,
Degas, and Their
Times: The Mellon
Collection of French
Art from the Virginia
Museum of Fine Arts
and A Sporting Vision:
The Paul Mellon Collec-
tion from the Virginia
Museum of Fine Arts***



STUDENT DOCENTS FOR THE EVENING

On Friday, April 12, 2019, thirteen fourth-grade students from Thomas Edison Elementary School shared their poems, narratives, comparisons, and other writings with approximately sixty family members, teachers, and friends in the Frist Art Museum's Ingram Gallery. These students were part of a pilot program between the Frist and their school. Frist educator Jason Trimmer visited their classrooms in February to introduce strategies for looking at and talking about works of art. The students then came to the Frist on a field trip to see the Mellon exhibitions. During the visit, they selected a work of art that interested them. They returned to their classrooms and, with the guidance of their teachers, developed and refined written pieces about their chosen paintings.

Our students thoroughly enjoyed the challenge and getting out of their comfort zones for this project. They rose to and exceeded our expectations! It was such a joy to be able to partner literacy with art in this special program.

—Ms. Naomi Pugh, fourth-grade teacher, Thomas Edison Elementary School



Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926). *Irises by a Pond*, ca. 1914–17. Oil on canvas, 78 1/2 x 59 1/4 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 71.8. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

A Review of Irises by a Pond by Arianna Mitchell

The painting that I chose to write about is titled *Irises by a Pond*, by Claude Monet. My love for flowers is partly why I chose this painting. It is a unique piece of artwork because of its size and style. Did you know that this painting was actually meant to be abstract? But when Monet finished it, it resembled the impressionist style of painting instead.

The colors in the painting are a mixture of warm and cool colors. You can see different shades of browns, pinks, purples, greens, and blues. The texture of the artwork is very chunky, meaning that the paint was not blended in all the way. You can actually see chunks of thick paint as you get closer to it. The atmosphere of the painting is calm and tranquil. When I look at this piece, I feel relaxed because of the subject, which is flowers overlooking a calm body of water.

Personally, if I could change something about the painting, I would add creatures, such as butterflies, caterpillars, bees, and snakes, to better represent nature.

In my opinion, I thought our trip to the Frist Art Museum was a great learning experience. I loved the variety of the paintings in the exhibit we saw. The only thing I disliked about the museum was the horse paintings because those don't interest me. I am so glad that we got to experience these incredible pieces of artwork up close!



William Williams (British, active 1802). *Farm Scene in Summer*, 1802. Oil on panel, 28 7/8 x 59 1/8 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Paul Mellon Collection, 85.479.1. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

A Sunny Day by Batrshia Tekla

Student's introduction:

This painting is titled *Farm Scene in Summer*, by artist William Williams. It stood out to me because of how detailed it is. To me, it looks as if you are standing right in front of the scene. For my writing piece, I chose to imagine that I was the artist of this work.

It was a hot and sunny day when I finally got to my new homeland. It was such a beautiful day that I knew I must quickly get to work on a new painting. I decided to paint outside today, because in my new city there was a lot going on out there! I sat on my chair and got my painting supplies ready. I looked up and saw beautiful houses and animals everywhere! That's when I decided to paint *Farm Scene in Summer*. It was such a bright day that I was able to fill my work with lots of colorful colors. All the animals and people around me seemed very happy.

Everyone was joyful and kind to each other. There were trees, plants, cows, horses, and chickens. I added more houses and animals in my painting. I was in a happy mood, so I made all the colors light, clear, and natural. As I went inside to get more paint, I left my supplies outside.

When I returned, somebody was in front of my house!

"Hi, can I help you?" I asked.

"Hi! Yes, I was just walking home when I saw your painting and wanted to ask if you could paint me a landscape, but with dark and deep colors?" the man replied. "I have never painted for someone else before, but I could do that!" I responded.

Then, word got around town and slowly, I began my career as a painter!



Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926). *Irises by a Pond*, ca. 1914–17. Oil on canvas, 78 1/2 x 59 1/4 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 71.8. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Irises by a Pond
by Ella Njie

Student's introduction:

This painting is titled *Irises by a Pond*. This piece stood out to me because of the vibrant colors. I was also impressed with how large it is. I'm sure it must have taken Monet a long time to paint this beautiful masterpiece! I chose to write a narrative as if I was the artist, Claude Monet!

I sat down next to a large pond on a bright, beautiful day. There were these amazing purple and pink irises growing beside the water! I started to paint the flowers, with the most vivid colors I could make. I kept on painting until the day was done. When I was finished, I loved what I had created!

By the end, I noticed that my painting doesn't look like any of the other art I have seen before, but I am proud of my work. It took a while to paint this extra-large canvas, especially since I had to mix all of the colors myself, but it was all worth it in the end!



Paul Gauguin (French, 1848–1903). *Still Life with Oysters*, 1876. Oil on canvas, 21 x 36 3/4 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 83.23. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Thanksgiving by Fbrownia Labib

I chose to write about this painting, which is titled *Still Life with Oysters*, and is by Paul Gauguin. This piece stood out to me because it reminded me of Thanksgiving, which is a holiday spent with family. It reminded me of this holiday because there is a lot of food on the table, just like during Thanksgiving. I noticed there was a large bird, oysters, fruit, and many drinks.

This painting caused me to feel a sense of sadness because of the dark colors and because I imagine someone having this meal alone. The dark colors in the background combined with the amount of food on the table cause me to think the person having the meal is alone. Although there is a lot of food, it does not look like enough for a whole family. I also wonder what the story behind the bird is. It does not look like it is prepared to eat, so maybe it was once his pet?

Or, if the person is not having the meal alone, maybe the artist chose to paint something that would show how he was feeling that day. Either way, the items on the table are arranged in a neat, clean way.

Lastly, I want to point out that the artwork looks very realistic. The artist chose to include many details that help make it look this way. Like how he includes the wrinkles in the tablecloth or even the knife being stuck in the bread, rather than just lying flat on the table. I love the details in this painting and so many others in the collection.



Camille Pissarro (French, 1830–1903).
Landscape, St. Thomas, 1856. Oil on canvas,
18 1/4 x 15 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts,
Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul
Mellon, 83.46. Image © Virginia Museum of
Fine Arts

An Ombre Colored Sky
by Jayda Moorer

Student's introduction:

This piece is titled *Landscape, St. Thomas*, by Camille Pissarro. I chose to write [a] narrative in which I imagined that I was the artist of this piece.

When I was just a little boy in school, I wasn't good at math or reading like other students.

However, there was one subject I was great at, and that was art. As I grew older, the number of paintings I created grew larger and larger. One thing I enjoyed as I grew older were my daily walks to the beach to enjoy the ombre colored sunset before I go to bed. I dream of the beautiful colors in my mind, going from here to there. One morning, I wake up and have the urge to paint. I think of that beautiful ombre sky that I always enjoy so much and know what I will paint! I set out to paint during the day this time. The finished product contains the path that I love to walk down each night. I was approached by an employee of a nearby art museum.

He asked if I would agree to have my painting hung in the museum! Of course, I agreed!



Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926). *Camille at the Window, Argenteuil*, 1873. Oil on canvas, 23 3/4 x 19 5/8 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 83.38. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

At the Window by Maddie Allen

For my writing, I chose to write about a piece titled *Camille at the Window*, by artist Claude Monet. I was attracted to Monet's use of bright colors, lighting, and flowers. I also liked the emotion I experienced when I was looking at this painting. It made me feel peaceful because the woman looks like she is just enjoying a sunny day.

You see a woman standing in what looks like a barn, surrounded by bright, beautiful flowers. It's interesting to me that the artist chose not to include a facial expression on the woman. I think this is so the viewer stays more focused on the flowers. There are dark colors behind her, in the background. This causes you to pay more attention to what is outside, where the bright colors are, than to the inside of the building. However, if you look closely behind her, you will notice something hanging on the wall next to what looks like a mirror or picture. Up close, the painting appears to be sort of fuzzy and blended together. But, the further away you get, the clearer the whole picture becomes.



Philip Reinagle (British, 1749–1833). *Portrait of an Extraordinary Musical Dog*, 1805. Oil on canvas, 28 1/4 x 36 1/2 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Paul Mellon Collection, 85.465. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.
Photo: Katherine Wetzel

A Musical Dog: An Opinion & Description by Mariah Little

This painting is titled *Portrait of an Extraordinary Musical Dog*, and was created by Philip Reinagle in 1805. I chose to talk about this painting because it reminds me of my own dog, Neno. My dog is pretty lazy, so I wish he could play an instrument, like this dog. Another reason I chose this painting is because of the emotions it makes me feel. When I see this painting, I feel cheerful because, who wouldn't feel cheerful when they see a dog playing a piano?!

When you first look at the painting, you probably notice that a dog appears to be playing a piano! Personally, I have never seen a dog actually play a piano, but wouldn't it be cool if they could? When I think of that, it makes me want to laugh! Imagine a world where all dogs could play the piano! Anyways, I would like to point out a few details. If you look closely at the book in front of the dog, you will notice musical notes. As if the dog can read the music!

If you look behind the dog, you will see a window. Looking out the window, there is a lake and a forest. This area is the only place that the artist used earthy colors, which gives the painting a calm tone. The rest of the painting is a variety of shades of warm colors. Notice that the artist blended his brushstrokes together to make the painting look realistic.



Philip Reinagle (British, 1749–1833). *Portrait of an Extraordinary Musical Dog*, 1805. Oil on canvas, 28 1/4 x 36 1/2 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Paul Mellon Collection, 85.465. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.
Photo: Katherine Wetzel

My Musical Dog by Marly Ezzat

Student's introduction:

This piece is titled *Portrait of an Extraordinary Musical Dog*, and is by Philip Reinagle. I chose this piece because it reminded me of when I lived in Egypt. Piano lessons were very popular, and many people would travel to get lessons. The writing style I chose was a narrative where I write as if I am the artist.

I went out one day and saw my neighbor sitting in front of his house. I decided to go talk with him. Suddenly, our conversation became about our dogs!

"My dog is faster than a horse!" I said.

"Well, I believe my dog is faster than yours!" he replied.

"I don't believe that," I thought to myself. "I should tell him about my dog's secret talent."

So, I told him how my dog can play the piano! Of course, he didn't believe me. So, to prove it, I decided to paint a portrait of my extraordinary dog, playing the piano.

I quickly ran into the house and got my art supplies ready. Then, I place my dog on the piano bench. Next, I put his paws on the keys. "Stay. Look at me," I command. Once everything was in place, I began painting. I started off at the bottom of the painting, with the piano bench. I continued by adding my dog, then the piano, then the background, and lastly, some details. I was almost done, just needed one more touch and, "Voila! I'm done!" I shouted!

Now, all I need is to let it dry. The next day, I woke up and it was ready! I carefully picked it up and rushed to my neighbor's house to show him just how extraordinary my dog is!



Roger de La Fresnaye (French, 1885–1925). *Still Life with Bottle, Pipe, and Pot of Tobacco*, 1913–14. Oil on canvas, 28 3/4 x 36 1/4 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 83.29. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Still Life
by *Matthew Abraham*

Student's introduction:

I chose to write an explanatory piece in which I give a detailed description of the painting of my choice.

This piece is titled *Still Life with Bottle, Pipe, and Pot of Tobacco*, and was created by Roger de La Fresnaye during 1913 to 1914. This painting stood out to me because it is very calm, has lots of dark colors, and because of its Cubist style. This means there are lots of geometric shapes, such as squares and rectangles and a lack of shading and realism, which makes the painting appear very flat. To me, it looks like the painting is in an office setting. You will also notice that you can see a bottle of wine, a pot of ink, and a tray. If you look closely, you can see the pipe, too. It is almost as if someone was working and then suddenly stopped and left it a mess during the middle of their work. At the bottom of the painting, the colors are muddled grays and browns, as opposed to the bright colors near the center.



Vincent van Gogh (Dutch, 1853–1890). *Daisies, Arles*, 1888. Oil on canvas, 13 x 16 1/2 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 2014.207. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photo: Travis Fullerton

My First Van Gogh by Michael Douglas

This painting is titled *Daisies, Arles*, and was created by the famous Vincent van Gogh. Van Gogh has a technique that you can see in most of his paintings. This technique is that he leaves the brushstrokes visible on purpose. If you are familiar with his work, then you can easily pick his out of a group. Along with the brushstrokes, you will notice that you can actually see the thickness of the paint. Instead of smoothing the paint out evenly, he leaves the chunks of paint to make his artwork unique. You will notice that he did that in this piece. His unique style is one of the reasons why I chose to talk about this painting in particular. When I studied this painting, I noticed that he uses muddled colors around the basket, but chose to use darker, more vibrant colors for the plants inside the basket. If you take a closer look, you'll even notice that there are many shades of green within the basket. For example, the leaves look greenish, but I can see a leaf that is closer to a shade of blue. This could be because of the position of the sun when he was painting. In the far back corner, I also noticed that there are some flowers that look identical to the flowers in the foreground. When I look at this painting, I feel calm, peaceful, and collected. I think this is because of his use of light, cool colors. I feel so honored to have been able to see one of Van Gogh's paintings in person!



Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881–1973). *The Chinese Chest of Drawers*, 1953. Oil on panel, 58 x 45 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 83.43. © 2019 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

The Chinese Chest of Drawers: An Opinion
by Olivia Sumner

This painting is titled *The Chinese Chest of Drawers*, and is by Pablo Picasso. It stood out to me because of the style and because of its vibrant colors. In this painting, you will notice some very obvious shapes. This style of painting, in which you see shapes such as squares, is called Cubism, which is a type of abstract art.

Although I can't be certain, it looks like there is a window in the green section. It also looks like there is a vase on top of the dresser, in the white section. I would also like to bring your attention to how colorful this piece is. There are no muted colors. The composition is chaotic, with overlapping shapes. It appears as if Picasso hurried through this painting because the strokes are irregular and the color balance varies in different areas. When I view this painting, it seems very thought provoking to me. I wonder why he chose this style, why he chose these colors, why he picked this set of drawers, and so much more. Although the lines are not as clean cut as I would like them to be, I still like the painting overall.



Édouard Manet (French, 1832–1883). *On the Beach, Boulogne-sur-Mer*, 1869. Oil on canvas, 12 3/4 x 26 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 85.498. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.
Photo: Katherine Wetzel

Too Little, Too Late by Evan Davis

Student's introduction:

This painting stood out to me because I love going to the beach and because it reminded me of a game I play with my auntie, called *Battleship*. I chose to combine two of the writing choices and write a poem from the perspective of someone in the painting: A young boy, walking with his mother when he begins to recall a memory.

There are battleships on the seas,
On that trip there wasn't much to eat.
One hour later, a lot of people are rude,
But there still isn't any food.
Other battleships didn't treat us right,
But I'm lucky to survive.
I don't want to be here, other families,
Trying to find deer.
I want to hug my father tight but it is too late,
He already died.
I have to go to the restroom so bad,
Again, I still want my dad.
I'm filled with stress and pain,
too bad I can't go home with my family (that didn't make it).
My whole family has passed,
I guess I ran out of time.
People say this is fair.

If I could, I would hug my sister,
And hug her like a bear.



Camille Pissarro (French, 1830–1903).
Landscape, St. Thomas, 1856. Oil on canvas,
18 1/4 x 15 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts,
Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul
Mellon, 83.46. Image © Virginia Museum of
Fine Arts

Tropical Feeling
by *Destiny Carmona Trejo*

Student's introduction:

This painting is titled *Landscape, St. Thomas*, and was painted by Camille Pissarro. This was my personal favorite because I liked the light color and texture of this work. I chose to write a poem about this piece.

This is a sight
That gives you a feeling,
Not just a feeling,
A tropical feeling.
Tropical Colors blended together,
Yellows, Reds, Greens, and Blues.
In the eyes of an artist's paint,
She sees a world,
In Peace and Harmony.



Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926). *Camille at the Window, Argenteuil, 1873*. Oil on canvas, 23 3/4 x 19 5/8 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 83.38. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Odd Yellowish Flowers by Yasmin Dirshe

Student's introduction:

This piece is titled *Camille at the Window*, by Claude Monet. I really liked this piece because it seems to express the way that the artist felt. The writing style I chose was a narrative in which I wrote a background story for this painting.

As Monet was gathering flowers for his painting of their house, he wonders, "Should I put Camille right here?" He finally agreed. While he patted down the last of the yellow flowers, he called for Camille. So, she asked Alice to go take care of the children. Monet asked her to sit next to the odd yellowish flowers. Camille complained about their color and said that they were "uncomplimentary" to the rest of the flowers. Little did she know that they were there to make her stand out.

As he was finishing up, he noticed that Camille was getting tired, and was sure that Alice was probably exhausted from the children. So, they decided to finish up the following morning. The next morning, she woke at the crack of dawn to finish. As Monet was finishing, he didn't like how the painting was turning out. When they neared the end, Camille said, "It's beautiful, honey." Once completed, he set out to market, to try to sell his piece. With no luck, he returned home, empty-handed. He tried again the following day, and was again, unsuccessful. "After all, who would want to buy a piece that was created in the new style of impressionism?" he thought. Maybe Monet will try again next year. . . .

Exhibitions organized by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Platinum Sponsor



2019 Frist Gala Patrons

*Van Gogh, Monet, Degas,
and Their Times* Gold Sponsor



A Sporting Vision
Supporting Sponsor

THE HORATIO B. AND WILLIE D.
BUNTIN FOUNDATION

Hospitality Sponsor



Additional Funding

