

Queer Eye on CAM

Explore the Cincinnati Art Museum with this LGBTQ+ themed scavenger hunt

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Welcome to the Cincinnati Art Museum. **While you're getting your bearings, don't forget to look up to Felix Gonzalez-Torres.** His word-portrait of the museum combines events from the history of the institution with unexpected associations of personal significance to the artist, such as the 1855 publication of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. A great reminder as you start your visit: The world is queer because you're in it.

This little figure from the Assyrian Empire is definitely female. Wait, no. Definitely male. Or maybe a rattle. Gender fluidity, B.C.E.-style? Maybe. But one thing is for sure: shifting readings of ancient objects tell us a lot about present-day understandings of bodies and gender. Sometimes the experience of not understanding the past is a good way to see the limitations of our own ideas.



2

3



The eighteenth-century English sculptor Anne Seymour Damer was remarkable for a lot of reasons. **Discover some of them while reading about her sensuously carved marble bust of Caroline Campbell—definitely not Damer's mother, and also not just her friend.** Given the love that dare not speak its name, why do you think Damer signed this artwork so many times, in so many different ways?

It's easy to walk (or sashay, if you prefer) past enormous old paintings like this one—but pause here and do some closer looking. You're allowed to see what you see! **In fact, Joshua Reynolds is practically begging for your queer eye, and Mr. Peers Symons is relying on your ability to read coded messages sent from the past. Don't disappoint him or either of his sinewy companions.**



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A groundbreaking painter of female lifeworlds, the artist Lotte Lasserstein emerged in a slim moment of possibility—the bohemian and very queer Berlin cultural scene of the 1920s and early 1930s. **She painted countless intimate scenes featuring her muse and favorite model, Traute Rose. There's knowing someone like the back of your hand, and then there's knowing someone's back by heart.**

Answers

- 1** Felix Gonzalez-Torres (American, 1957–1996), *Untitled (Portrait of the Cincinnati Art Museum)*, 1994, paint on wall, Museum Purchase: Gift of the Contemporary Collectors Circle, © The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation, 1994.218. Located in the Front Lobby.
- 2** *Human Figure*, 1300–600 BCE, Jordan, Assyrian Empire (1365–609 BCE), terracotta, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Nelson Glueck, 1961.102. Located in Gallery 147.
- 3** Anne Seymour Damer (English, 1748–1828), *Caroline Campbell, Lady Ailesbury*, 1789, marble, Lawrence Archer Wachs Fund, 2023.58. Located in Gallery 209.
- 4** Sir Joshua Reynolds (English, 1723–1792), *Richard Peers Symons, M.P. (Later Baronet)*, 1770–1771, oil on canvas, Museum Purchase: Bequest of Mr. and Mrs. Walter J. Wichgar, The Edwin and Virginia Irwin Memorial, John J. Emery Endowment, Fanny Bryce Lehmer Endowment, Mr. and Mrs. Harry S. Leyman Endowment, and gift of Mary Hanna, by exchange. Acquired in honor of Chairman of the Board John W. Warrington for 50 years service as Trustee of the Cincinnati Art Museum, 1941–1991, 1991.62. Located in Gallery 210.
- 5** Lotte Lasserstein (German, 1898–1993), *Seated Nude (Traute Rose)*, circa 1930, oil on canvas, Fanny Bryce Lehmer Endowment, 2024.2. Located in Gallery 228.