

Mondays with MoMA



MoMA

Step 1

Look closely

Questions

1. What do you notice about the characters in the painting?
2. What might they be thinking or saying?
3. What other details do you notice around the characters?
4. What do you imagine is happening at this moment?

Step 2

Learn more

In *And Then We Saw the Daughter of the Minotaur*, the artist Leonora Carrington portrays herself as the White Goddess, the cloaked figure in the center of the composition. She was inspired by a book that she read titled *The White Goddess*. In the story, the White Goddess is a mythic figure who combines the powers of love, destructiveness, and poetic inspiration, and who ruled during a matriarchal period in distant history before she was deposed by patriarchal guards that represented cold, reason and logic.

Carrington rebelled against the societal expectations she encountered as an upper-class young woman born in Lancashire, England. Her interests, instead, lay in Irish fables, and English writers such as Lewis Carroll, Jonathan Swift, and Beatrix Potter. In her work, you can often see her interest in mysticism, female power, the occult, and witchcraft.

Step 3

Activity: Create a Character Sketch

Materials: Pencil, pen or anything to write with, and paper.

1. Spend time focusing on the details related to the characters and the setting.
2. Brainstorm any thought you might have about your character. Make a list or freewrite to develop a character sketch, which is a description and exploration of a character in a book or story. Consider the following questions:
 - a. What does your character look like?
 - b. What is your character feeling?
 - c. What role does your character play in this scene?
 - d. How would your character interact with the others in the artwork?
 - e. Would it be observing the scene or taking a specific action?
 - f. Would it have any special attributes or powers?
3. Continue until you feel satisfied with your sketch.
4. Optional: Imagine your character talking to another character in the scene. Write out a dialogue.

Step 4

Share!

Share your character with a friend or share your work with us at MoMA:
schoolprograms@moma.org.



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Leonora Carrington. *And Then We Saw the Daughter of the Minotaur*. 1953. The Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Galleries. Medium Oil on canvas. Gift of Joan H. Tisch (by exchange). © 2021 Leonora Carrington / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.