



Birds in Art

Avian Portraits & Design Decisions

A **portrait** can communicate more than a likeness of the subject.

Artists can influence how viewers perceive a subject's character or behaviors based on the design, colors, and setting included in a portrait.

Nicholas Coleman's hornbill portrait shows off the bird's statuesque profile with a muted background that doesn't draw attention away from the subject. Notice how the round painting resembles the dramatic curve of the bill and the angular, trapezoid-like shapes in the frame border complement the large "horn" atop the bird's beak.

Your Art Project

Using scissors, glue, and images – a bird subject, background pictures, colorful paper, and a circular window to frame your subject – create an avian portrait.



Nicholas Coleman, *Oriental Pied Hornbill*, 2020, oil on linen on board

Design Ideas

Opposites Attract

If the bird or background image features round, organic shapes, experiment with graphic, geometric shapes to add contrast to your design.



Mimic Marks

Re-create lines and shapes found in your artwork image or landscape photograph to create new patterns.



OVER

Combine Images

If you like the look of multiple images for your bird's background, use more than one by adding a scene over the paper frame.



Taking Direction

Search the background images for vertical and horizontal lines. If one type is stronger – like the horizontal lines of tree branches – add lines moving in the opposite direction for contrast.



Pick a Palette

Identify color combinations found in the images; cut construction paper shapes to feature your favorite color schemes.



Making Spaces

Explore how positive and negative spaces can add balance and visual interest to your portrait by expanding the bird's background environment onto the paper frame.



Leigh Yawkey
Woodson
Art Museum

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* Unless temporarily closed; check our website for updates or call.

Franklin & 12th St.
Wausau, WI 54403
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www.lywam.org

Museum Hours*

Tuesday – Friday

First Thursday of each month

Saturday – Sunday

Closed Monday and holidays

9am – 4pm

9am – 7:30pm

Noon – 5pm

Always FREE Admission

Share

Take a photo of your finished artwork and share it on social media; include #WoodsonArtMuseum

Art Kit supply support comes from the Steinberg Family Foundation and from Wilmington Trust and the M&T Charitable Foundation.



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