

Give Thanks for Art

Just in time for Thanksgiving, here are a few artists' renditions of harvests and Thanksgiving for your enjoyment.



The Harvesters, 1565, Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1526-1569). The piece is owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and is one of a series of pieces painted by the Flemish artist depicting seasons or times of the year.



Embarkation of the Pilgrims (1843), Robert Walter Weir (1803-1889). The most famous of Weir's paintings, *Embarkation of the Pilgrims*, which is located in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda, depicts a group of English pilgrims departing their temporary home in Holland aboard the *Speedwell*, which was to accompany the *Mayflower* to New England. A smaller version of the painting (1857) is part of the collection of the Brooklyn Museum. The painting was depicted on the back of the \$10,000 bill issued in 1918, of which only five examples are known.



The Angelus (1857-59), Jean-François Millet (1814-1875). Hanging in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, *The Angelus* depicts two peasants reciting a prayer over a basket of potatoes. Millet was one of the founders of the Barbizon school in rural France.



The Veteran in a New Field (1865), Winslow Homer (1836-1910). Part of the collection of the Metropolitan Museum, Homer's painting depicts a Union soldier just home from the war harvesting a field of grain. His uniform coat, canteen and haversack are visible in the lower right hand corner of the painting. The title of the painting is interesting: this is a mature, not new, field, so the "new field" may be a reference to the returning soldier's "new" occupation.



The Turkeys (1877), Claude Monet (1840-1926) shows a flock of turkeys on the grounds of the Chateau de Rottenberg in Montgeron, France (just south of Paris). *The Turkeys* is one of four panels commissioned by the owner of the chateau, Ernest Hoschedé, a wealthy department store magnate and art collector. *The Turkeys* is in the Musée d'Orsay.



The Harvest (1888), Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890) is in the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam. The painting shows the plain of La Crau, outside Arles within distance of the mountains of Alpilles. Van Gogh considered this to be one of his finest works, writing to his brother, Theo, that “the canvas absolutely kills all the rest”.



The First Thanksgiving 1621 (1912), Jean Leon Gerome Ferris (1863-1930). Ferris is best known for his series of 78 paintings of scenes from American history entitled *The Pageant of a Nation*. The paintings have been described as idealized portrayals. The veracity of virtually every aspect of this particular painting has been called into question by historians.



Thanksgiving Parade When Danny Kaye Was Young (1940), Joseph Delaney (1904-1991). Delaney was an African-American artist active at the time of the Harlem Renaissance. This particular piece is part of the collection of the Smithsonian Museum of American Art.



Catching the Thanksgiving Turkey (1943), Grandma (Anne Marie Robertson) Moses (1860-1961). Grandma Moses is an icon of American folk art, often depicting scenes of everyday life in America. She painted this particular theme numerous times. She did not start painting in earnest until the age of 78; she lived to be 101.



Freedom from Want (1943), Norman Rockwell (), is also known as *I'll Be Home for Christmas* and *The Thanksgiving Picture*. It is the first of four paintings that were inspired by Franklin Roosevelt's 1941 State of the Union Address, known as Four Freedoms. (The other three freedoms were: Freedom from Fear, Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Worship). *Freedom from Want* was published in the March 6, 1943 edition of *The Saturday Evening Post*. The painting is in the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.



Thanksgiving (2003), John Currin (1962-current) is the work of an American figurative painter who combines aspects of the beautiful and the grotesque. Influenced by the Dutch masters and Velasquez, Currin used his wife as a model for this work as well as others. *Thanksgiving* is part of the collection of the Tate in London.