THE WHITNEY’S COLLECTION: SELECTIONS FROM 1900 TO 1965
The Whitney Museum was founded in 1930 by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, who was a sculptor, an art collector, and a great supporter of American artists. All the works of art on this floor are part of the Whitney’s collection. Some of what you will see today are paintings and sculptures collected by Mrs. Whitney before there was even a Whitney Museum.

Don’t miss Whitney favorites like Alexander Calder’s *Circus*, paintings by Edward Hopper, and examples of 1960s Pop art. As you explore, you can see how these artists reveal the complexity and beauty of American life.

Visit the Museum on Saturdays and Sundays for Open Studio, our drop-in artmaking workshops for families with kids of all ages. Check out whitney.org/Families for a full list of our Family Programs.
JOIN THE CIRCUS

*Calder’s Circus* is made up of more than seventy small people, animals, and props. Alexander Calder used wire and found materials such as buttons, bottle caps, and corks to create each piece by hand. The circus characters came alive when the artist staged performances for his family and friends. Sometimes the action surprised even Calder: the dog didn’t always jump through the hoop successfully, or the trapeze artist missed the swing and landed in the net below!

If you joined the circus, what would you be? A daring sword thrower? A ferocious lion? A tiptoeing tightrope walker? Draw yourself as this performer. Include lots of details! Think about your pose, gesture, costume, props, and movements.
In *Summer Days*, Georgia O'Keeffe depicted some Southwestern flowers and a deer skull she had collected when she visited New Mexico. The large scale of the bones and flowers, and the way they seem to float in the sky give the painting a surreal, dream-like quality. This and other animal skulls that O'Keeffe found became powerful reminders of a landscape that inspired her.

A souvenir is something that is kept as a memory of a person, place, or event. What do you collect from the places you go?

Draw a special souvenir that you’ve collected and brought home from a favorite place. Is it something from nature, something you found, or was it bought in a store?
Much of Jacob Lawrence's work focuses on the story of African Americans' struggle for freedom and justice. These paintings are based on the artist's own experiences in the United States Coast Guard during World War II. Lawrence believed that one cannot “tell a story in a single painting.” Look closely at each of these works. Notice the repeated shapes and colors. What stories do you think these paintings tell?

Choose a person in one of these works and tell a story about them in pictures. Think about what might have happened before and after the scene in the painting.
Jay DeFeo said, “When I started *The Rose*, I had no notion of the rose about it. The title came later. It was just a painting. And all I knew about it was that it was going to have a center.” DeFeo worked on *The Rose* for almost eight years, applying thick layers of oil paint, then scraping it away. Eventually, the work was so large and heavy that the only way it could be moved out of her studio was through the window with a forklift!
DRAW MORE

Look at other works in the exhibition and sketch a few things that catch your eye.