

Wilson G. Pонсeca

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Museum/Gallery Visit Experience Essay

Visiting museums has always been an enriching experience for me, but this particular activity, where I explored both the National Museum of Anthropology and the National Museum of Fine Arts, gave me a deeper appreciation for Philippine art, culture, and history. I conducted a virtual tour of the National Museum of Anthropology first, but since the online resources were quite limited, I decided to visit the site in person. Afterwards, I also explored the National Museum of Fine Arts with two of my friends. This combination of virtual and face-to-face visits allowed me to see the differences in accessibility, perspective, and emotional impact when engaging with art and historical objects.

The National Museum of Anthropology focused on telling the story of the Philippines through cultural artifacts, traditional clothing, and ethnographic collections. This museum helped me understand how diverse our history is, and how each region contributed to the richness of Filipino identity. For example, I learned how textiles, tools, and ritual objects carry with them not just utilitarian value but also deep cultural meaning. While I appreciated the educational content, I found myself more emotionally drawn to the next museum we visited.

The National Museum of Fine Arts left a stronger impression on me. Surrounded by grand paintings and sculptures, I felt a sense of awe at the creative talent of Filipino artists such as Juan Luna, Félix Resurrección Hidalgo, Fernando Amorsolo, Vicente Manansala, and Hernando Ocampo. The experience was both fun and meaningful since I was accompanied by friends. We often paused to analyze the artworks, sometimes even re-enacting poses of figures, which made the visit lively yet educational.

Completing the scavenger hunt activity made the visit more interactive and reflective. For example, I posed like figures in some artworks, noticed unusual clothing in historical paintings, and admired vibrant and colorful compositions that stood out in the gallery. I also encountered artworks with animals, food, and even strange or mysterious themes that challenged my perspective of what art could represent. Some pieces were monochromatic yet powerful, while others were humorous or even “ridiculous” in their subject matter, showing that art can be both serious and playful.

Through this activity, I realized that art is not only about aesthetic beauty but also about storytelling, symbolism, and human emotion. The Anthropology Museum grounded me in our history and traditions, while the Fine Arts Museum elevated my sense of Filipino pride through creativity and imagination. The combination of these two visits gave me a holistic understanding: history explains who we are, and art reflects how we express ourselves.

More than anything, this experience reminded me that museums are not static storage spaces but living classrooms. They invite us to look closer, to question, and to reflect. Visiting with my friends made it more memorable because we could exchange impressions and even laugh together when artworks seemed strange or funny. At the same time, I felt a sense of pride in knowing that these masterpieces belong to our cultural heritage.

In conclusion, this museum/gallery visit was both enjoyable and meaningful. From the virtual limitations I experienced at first, to the in-person discoveries that inspired reflection, I learned that art appreciation requires presence, patience, and openness. I left with the lesson that art is not only for artists or historians but for everyone who wants to connect with the past, understand the present, and imagine the future. This activity allowed me to see how history and creativity intertwine, and it gave me a deeper appreciation for Philippine culture and identity.



VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP

Choose a museum from somewhere in the world to explore virtually. You can use the list below or find your own. Record which museum you chose to visit and where it is located. Then complete the following activites.

National Museum of Fine Arts
Ground Floor, National Museum of Fine Arts Building,
P Padre Burgos Ave, Ermita, Manila, 1000 Metro Manila

Museum & Location: _____

MUSEUMS WITH VIRTUAL TOURS

*Museum Virtual Tour links may contain nude artworks

[Hermitage Museum \(Saint Petersburg, Russia\)](#)

[Kunsthaus Zürich \(Zürich, Switzerland\)](#)

[The J. Paul Getty Museum \(Los Angeles, California\)](#)

[The Metropolitan Museum of Art \(New York City, New York\)](#)

[Musée du Louvre \(Paris, France\)](#)

[Museo Nacional del Prado \(Madrid, Spain\)](#)

[The Museum of Modern Art \(MoMA\) \(New York City, New York\)](#)

[National Gallery of Victoria \(Victoria, Melbourne, Australia\)](#)

[National Museum of Korea \(Seoul, South Korea\)](#)

[Van Gogh Museum \(Amsterdam, Netherlands\)](#)

[Tokyo National Museum \(Tokyo, Japan\)](#)

[National Museum of Anthropology \(Mexico City, Mexico\)](#)

*No Nudity

[Van Gogh Museum Oil Paints](#)

[Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting](#)

[National Palace Museum \(Taipei, Taiwan\)](#)

[Victoria and Albert Museum \(London, England\)](#)

[National Museum New Delhi \(New Delhi, India\)](#)

[Acropolis Museum \(Athens, Greece\)](#)

[National Gallery of Art \(Washington, D.C.\)](#)

[The Israel Museum, Jerusalem \(Jerusalem, Israel\)](#)

[National Gallery \(London, England\)](#)

[Museum of Fine Arts, Houston \(Houston, Texas\)](#)

[Museu de Arte de São Paulo \(São Paulo, Brazil\)](#)

[Musée d'Orsay \(Paris, France\)](#)

[Mauritshuis \(The Hague, Netherlands\)](#)

[Art Institute of Chicago \(Chicago, Illinois\)](#)

[Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History Western Cultures](#)

[National Gallery of Art True to Nature Exhibit](#)



SCAVENGER HUNT

Find an artwork for each of the categories below. Make sure to document the original artist, artwork name, and year it was created.

- Pose like the figure in the artwork.
- An artwork where people have the most unusual clothing.
- An artwork that has lots of lines or shapes.
- An example of perspective in an artwork.
- An artwork that has lots of color (very vibrant).
- An artwork with animals in it.
- The strangest artwork.
- An artwork that is monochromatic.
- An artwork with something mysterious in it.
- Find an artwork that is ridiculous.
- An artwork that has food in it.
- An artwork that has a lot of interesting texture.
- A figure with the craziest expression.
- A painting that you would like to be in.
- Find an artwork with a person you would want to have lunch with.

MAKE A MEME

Choose an artwork from the museum and turn it into a funny meme. Make sure to document the original artist, artwork name, and year it was created.



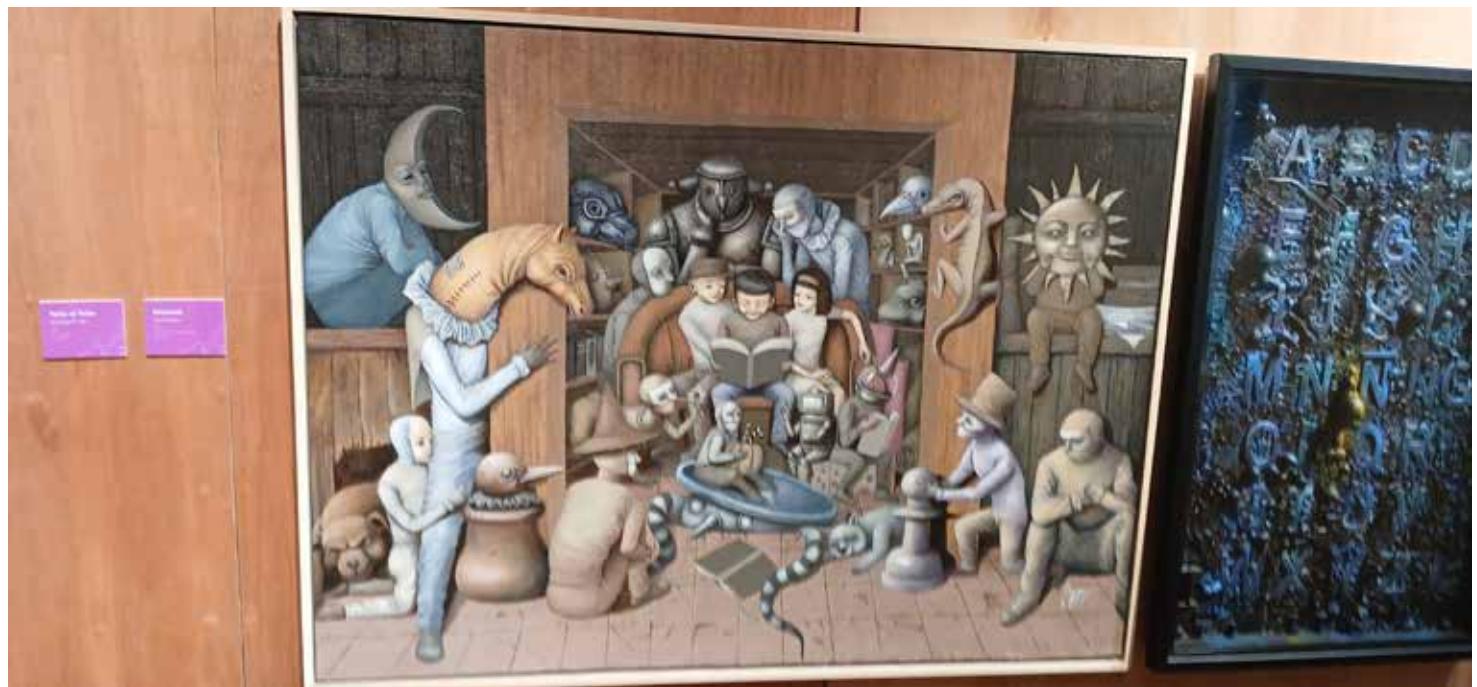
Pose like the figure in the artwork



Hofileña, Saul Jr., and Guy Custodio. *The Dreamweavers*. 2018, oil on canvas, HOCUS.



An artwork where people have the most unusual clothing.



Yap, Christopher. Teller of Tales. 2021, oil on canvas.



An artwork that has lots of lines or shapes.



Hofileña, Saul, Jr., and Guy Custodio. Swords of the Cross. 2017, oil on canvas, HOCUS.



An example of perspective in an artwork.



Luna y Novicio, Juan. Spoliarium. 1884, oil on canvas, National Museum of Fine Arts, Manila.



An artwork with animals in it.



Tabuena, Romeo V. Carabao in Pink. 1957, oil on board.



An artwork that has lots of color (very vibrant).



Ocampo, Hernando R. Kasaysayan ng Lahi. 1970, acrylic on canvas.



The strangest artwork



Manansala, Vicente S. Ang Pamilya sa Oras ng Pagkain [A Family at Mealtime].
1961, oil on canvas mounted on wood, The Philam Life Manansala Series.



An artwork that is monochromatic



Doloricon, Leonilo "Neil." Utang Panlabas (A/P). 1993, woodcut print on paper.



An artwork with something mysterious in it.



Alcuaz, Federico Aguilar. Autumn Night. 1970, Manila, pressed dyed wool.



Find an artwork that is ridiculous.



Sansó, Juvenal. Muscle Bound. 1960, pen and ink on paper.



An artwork that has food in it.



Amorsolo y Cueto, Fernando. *Tindahan (Stall)*. 1964, oil on canvas.



An artwork that has a lot of interesting texture.



Rodolfo Samonte. Paperwork II. 1977. Cast paper relief.



A figure with the craziest expression.



Luna y Novicio, Juan. Student Works in Italy, including Rome, Venice, and Naples (Pompeii). Circa 1879–1884, oil on panel.



A painting that you would like to be in.



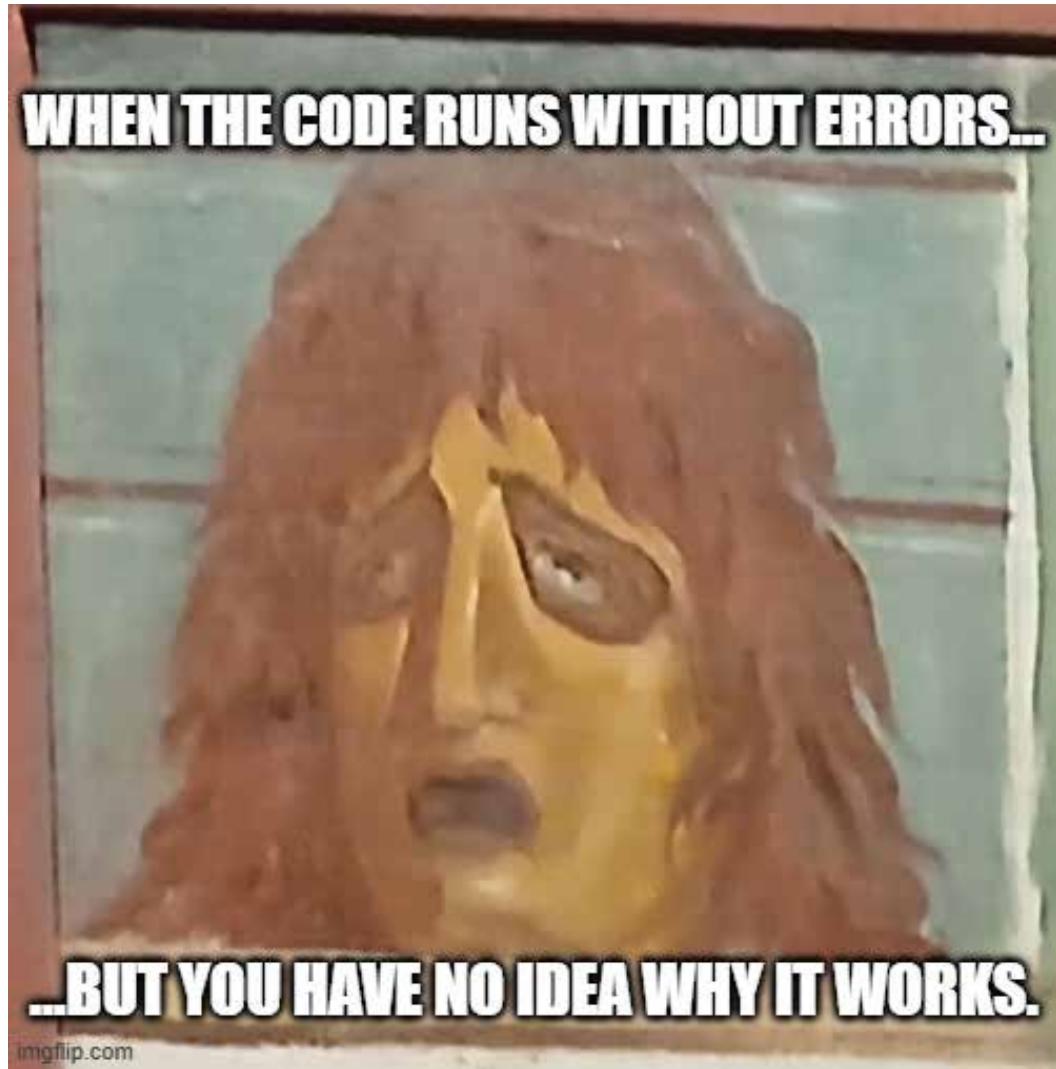
Luna y Novicio, Juan. Interieur d'un Café (Parisian Life). 1892, oil on canvas.



Find an artwork with a person you would want to have lunch with.



Tabuena, Romeo V. Carabao in Pink. 1957, oil on board.



Luna y Novicio, Juan. Student Works in Italy, including Rome, Venice, and Naples (Pompeii). Circa 1879–1884, oil on panel.

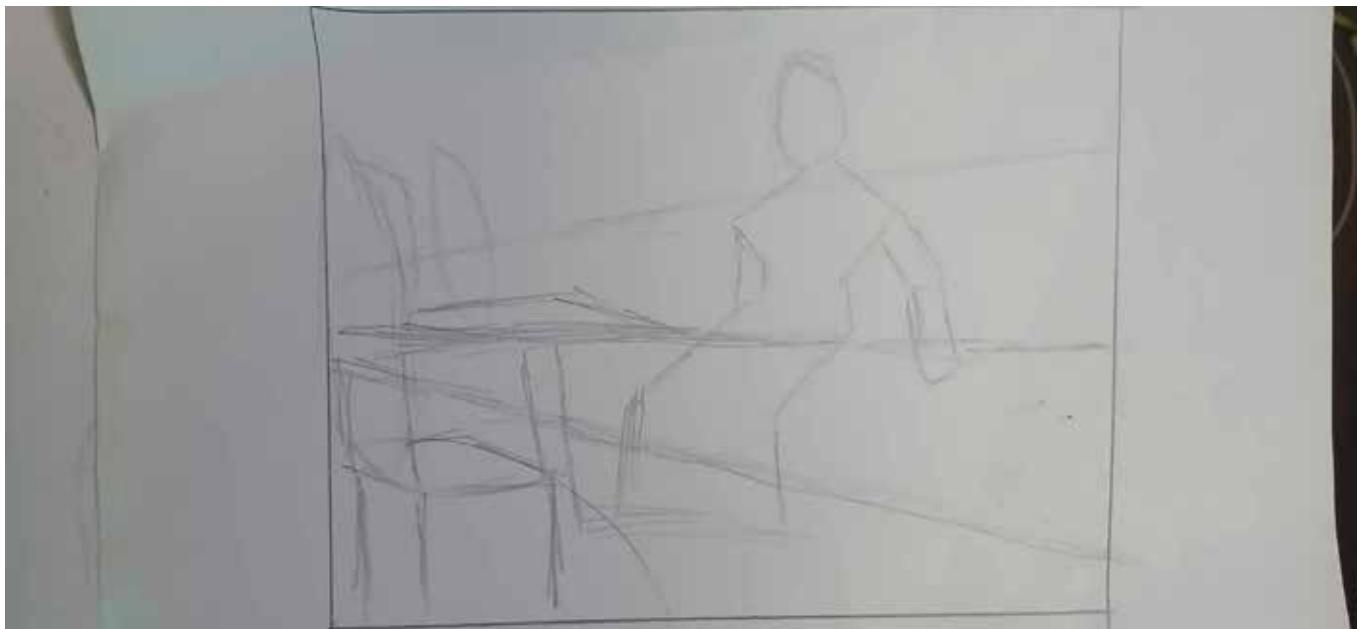
MAKE A MEME

Choose an artwork from the museum and turn it into a funny meme. Make sure to document the original artist, artwork name, and year it was created.



SKETCH

Find an artwork that really speaks to you. Spend a few minutes with that artwork looking at it closely and sketching it. Make sure to write down the original artist, artwork name, and year it was created.



Artist: Juan Luna Y Novicio

Artwork: Interieure d'un Café (Parisian Life)

Date: 1892



REFLECT

Take a few minutes to think about your time exploring the museum and answer the questions below.

What was your overall impression of the museum?

The museum left me with a meaningful impression as it was both inspiring and educational. Walking through the galleries gave me a deeper appreciation of Filipino history, culture, and artistry. Every exhibit seemed carefully curated, making the experience both reflective and enjoyable.

What was your favorite part?

My favorite part was exploring the National Museum of Fine Arts. Compared to the Anthropology section, the Fine Arts collection caught my interest more because of the visual creativity and the strong emotions expressed in the artworks. It was exciting to see how Filipino artists expressed identity and culture through their masterpieces.

What was your favorite artwork or one that drew you to it?

The artwork that drew me in the most was Juan Luna's *Interieure d'un Café (Parisian Life)*. The mysterious atmosphere of the painting, the elegance of the woman in the foreground, and the subtle narrative between the figures captured my attention. It felt as though the painting was inviting viewers to uncover hidden meanings behind the scene.

What did you discover?

Through this visit, I discovered that art is more than just visual beauty, it is a medium for storytelling, reflection, and connection. The pieces I saw revealed the struggles, values, and aspirations of Filipinos across time, allowing me to see history and culture from a more human perspective.

Reflect and write a paragraph about your experience today.

My museum visit was both fun and meaningful, especially since I went with friends, making the experience more memorable. It reminded me of the importance of preserving our cultural heritage and of looking at art with a more critical and reflective eye. The activity helped me realize that art connects the past and present, allowing us to not only admire creativity but also to better understand who we are as a people.