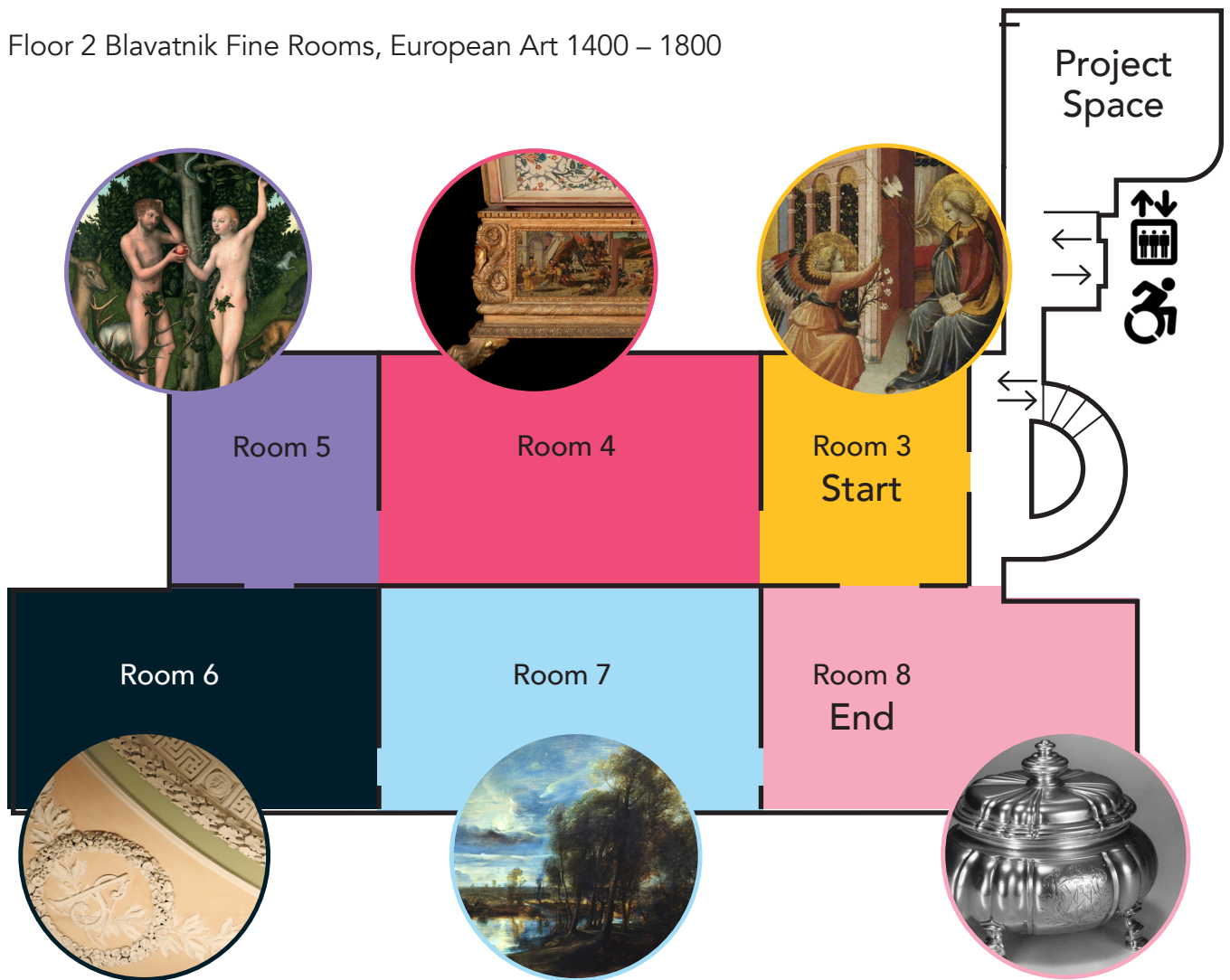


# **The Courtauld**

**Family Learning Resource**



# Instructions

Take the stairs or lift to Floor 2. Start in Room 3, Early Renaissance.

- Can you find the bag that matches the yellow page?
- Can you find the work of art?
- Open the bag, explore the objects and read about their meaning.

Move through to Room 4 and find the matching bag. Head to the chests and open the bag...We think you get the idea. We like an anomaly (something different) so Room 6 does **not** have a bag; we want you to explore the **entire** room using your eyes.

Please return everything to a member of staff on the Ground Floor. We would love your feedback!

# Welcome

We hope this family backpack helps you explore a part of The Courtauld collection in a different way. You will be using your senses to uncover the stories behind works of art.

We have chosen a painting, object or feature from each of the six rooms of European Art 1400-1800 on Floor 2. Hundreds of years ago, they belonged in places of worship and homes, not in a gallery. They tell us how people lived, and what they believed in, when the world was different to today. We hope this backpack helps you understand more about the human lives involved in making, using, and keeping works of art.

Please touch, smell, listen to, look at and explore the objects in the bags. Look at the works of art in the gallery, but as some are fragile and hundreds of years old, avoid touching them.

The objects contained in this backpack are not suitable for children under three years old. All children must be supervised. The trail takes place on Floor 2 only.

This family resource was created by The Courtauld's learning team, with special thanks to Francesca Herrick and Toya Walker. [education@courtauld.ac.uk](mailto:education@courtauld.ac.uk)

The Courtauld, London (Samuel Courtauld Trust) ©The Courtauld



# Room 3

Early Renaissance, 1400-1500

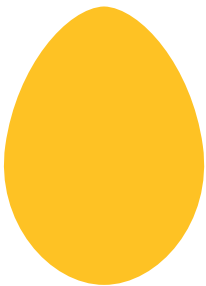


This small painting was made in Florence, Italy, around 600 years ago, long before art shops existed. *How would the artist have made the beautiful paints?*



## Lapis lazuli

This blue stone was mined in the Badakhshan mountains in Afghanistan and travelled a long distance to Italy. Great physical effort was needed to break it into a fine powder (pigment). As well as stone, artists used earth, plants, bugs and berries to make pigments.



## Egg

Sticky egg yoke (binder) was added to the pigment and a type of paint called egg tempera was created.



## Gold leaf

Precious gold leaf was pressed onto parts of the painting at the end of the process, on top of a sticky red clay. Hold this pot up to the light, then look closely at the painting, can you see marks where gold leaf was pressed?

The Annunciation around 1430-40,  
Egg tempera and gold leaf on wood

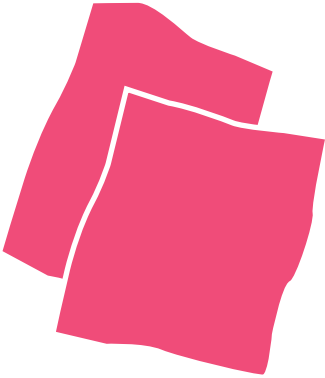
# Room 4

Italian Renaissance, 1500-1600



The objects in this room show how wealthy people lived 550 years ago. These chests (cassoni) were wedding presents carried through the streets of Florence as a celebration and demonstration of wealth. *What do you think was inside?*

## Silk and velvet



The wedding chests were filled with presents from the bride's family: amazing clothes and textiles for the new home. Do the materials feel soft? The most expensive ones in the wedding chests would have been made using silk, a valuable natural fibre, used to weave different textiles, including velvet.

Can you see and feel the individual threads?

Silk is made from the cocoon (home spun by an insect) of a silkworm. Silkworm eggs were first imported to Europe from China, where this incredible discovery was made.

## Patterns

Look at and feel the patterns on these textiles. Sit on the floor and look, can you see similar patterns on the chests? The paintings on these chests tell stories and were intended to be read like a book by the children of the couple.

Pair of marriage chests: The Morelli Chest, 1472  
Egg tempera, oil paint and gold leaf on wood

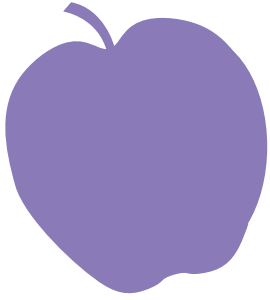
# Room 5

Northern Renaissance, 1500-1600





*Do you know which moment of what story this painting describes?*  
The artist, Lucas Cranach, worked in Germany around 500 years ago and painted this story over 50 times!



## **Bitten apple**

Why a bitten apple? This is the moment that Adam was tempted to eat the apple (forbidden fruit) from the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden.

Feel the difference between the different surfaces. The white area is gesso, used to prepare the wood before painting. Cranach mixed pigments with linseed oil to make oil paint, which takes longer to dry, giving him time to blend brushstrokes and add details.

How many other animals can you find in Cranach's painting? Have you spotted the snake, which he used as his signature?

Adam and Eve, Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1526  
Oil paint on wood

# Room 6

Rubens at work, 1600-1640



We thought we would give you a rest from opening bags for one room!

Have a wander instead, take your time to explore this room. You are standing in the North wing of Somerset House, designed by the architect William Chambers in the 1770s. *What do you see outside the windows?* Look at the doors and the fireplaces and the architectural details, then look up!

## Ceiling

Have you noticed the ceilings in The Courtauld? Many are very detailed with all sorts of shapes, patterns, pictures and colours. What letters can you see in this ceiling? Read the label on the wall to learn why.

Did you know that builders at the time used horse hair in the plaster on ceilings? It added strength.

William Chambers travelled to many countries around the world, learning from different styles of architecture and decoration, before setting up his own practice in London.

# Room 7

Rubens & 17th century Europe



Rubens painted this landscape for his enjoyment (not to sell) later in his life near his home in the countryside in modern-day Belgium. *What do you think he could hear, smell, see and feel while painting this peaceful place?*



## Soundscape

Have you found the headphones? Relax, press play and listen to this soundscape whilst looking at this painting.

What do you hear?

Is there a sound that you cannot see in the painting? Rubens originally included a group of people sitting around a fire underneath the trees but later painted them out. Could you hear the fire towards the end of the soundscape?

Soundscape composed by Nicolette Macleod @nicolettemacleodmusic

The soundscape is also available to listen to on the Bloomberg Connects app.

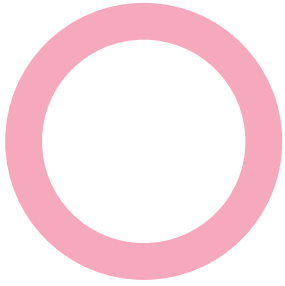
**Landscape by Moonlight, Peter Paul Rubens 1635–40**  
Oil paint on wood

# Room 8

18th century Europe

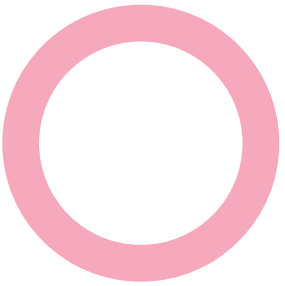


In this room you will see a glass case full of silver objects which were made in England nearly 300 years ago. *What do you think they were used for?*



## Sugar cane

What can you smell? Sugar comes from a plant called sugar cane. Can you smell freshly cut leaves, sugar cane, and soil? In the 1700s, sugar was imported to Europe from the Caribbean, where enslaved African people suffered the treacherous work of harvesting sugar cane by hand.



## Polishing silver

Look at how shiny the silver is! To keep it this shiny, the silver would have to be regularly cleaned. Can you smell lemon juice, cellar workrooms, and sweaty clothes?



## Silver spoon

Look at and feel this small silver spoon. Can you see how different it is to the silverware in the case? This spoon hasn't been polished very often and it has become tarnished.

Scents by Sarah McCartney, Perfumer, 4160 Tuesdays

George II Sugar box, Augustin Courtauld, 1737-38  
Silver

# Quick quiz

What colour is lapis lazuli?

What was put in the wedding chests?

Which animals can you remember from Cranach's Adam and Eve painting?

What did they add to the plaster to make it stronger?

What sounds did you hear in the soundscape?

Which smells do you remember?

# World map

Can you find some of the places you have learnt about?

