Create a Cabinet of Curiosities

Now that you’ve had a chance to explore Leland Stanford Jr.’s collection of prized objects, think about what you would feature in your cabinet of curiosities. What hobbies and interests will tell people the cabinet represents you? Here are two drawings that Mark Dion made.

4. Museum Manners

Please look at the art with your eyes but do not touch it. Staying at least an arm’s length away is a good way to remember.

If you get lost or have any questions about the art museum, friendly guards are stationed throughout the galleries. Say hello, and don’t be afraid to ask them for help if you need it.

Children must always stay close to their parents or an adult supervisor.

Remember to walk, not run, in the museum. Always be aware of your surroundings (art may be behind you).

The Rodin Sculpture Garden is part of the museum, so we use our museum manners there even though we are outside. We can protect the art by not climbing on the sculpture.

Draw your own museum collection in the cabinet below!
Family legacy
This house post is carved from cedar trees and painted to display a visual record of a family history. It may tell stories, convey relationships, or express beliefs and experiences. Carved house posts hold images of human and non-human beings. First Nations peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast have developed relationships with these beings over eons.

Did you KNOW?
The house posts display traditional family emblems: an eagle, a raven and a bear holding a salmon.

What animals or characters would be on your family totem?
1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________

Find your way!

Did you KNOW?
The crossbeam (lintel) features Sisiutl, the double-headed serpent that symbolizes supernatural power and is one of the most high-ranking crests of the Kwakwaka’wakw people, an Indigenous nation of British Columbia. The combination of crests is mixed with beings and creatures embodying everything from the creation of the world to the balance of how everything works.

Mark Dion | Mourning Cabinet

Ruth Asawa | Untitled (Wall of Masks)

Featured artworks

Calvin Hunt | House Posts and Lintel with Family Crests
(Canadian, born in 1956). House Posts and Lintel with Family Crests, 2007. Cedar and paint. Museum purchase made possible by an unrestricted gift from an anonymous donor, 2007.6.a–c. The crossbeam (lintel) features Sisiutl, the double-headed serpent that symbolizes supernatural power and is one of the most high-ranking crests of the Kwakwaka’wakw people, an Indigenous nation of British Columbia. The combination of crests is mixed with beings and creatures embodying everything from the creation of the world to the balance of how everything works.

Ruth Asawa | Untitled (Wall of Masks)