

# ANIMALS ALL AROUND

## in the Greek Galleries

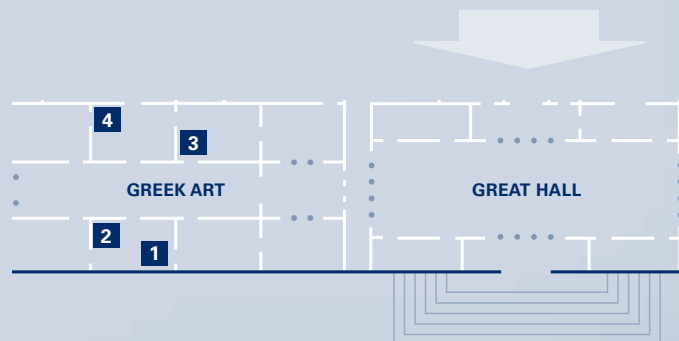


Come with us on a search through the Greek galleries, where we'll explore art that features animals, big and small! The galleries include many different works—grave reliefs carved in marble; beautifully decorated vases; small figurines; objects made of bronze, gold, and silver; and many more. They represent some of the oldest and finest traditions in Greek art—traditions that have inspired artists for thousands of years.

As you walk through these galleries, keep a list of the different animals you see (there's a place for your list on the back of this guide).

**Let's get started!**

Use this map as your guide. Start in the Great Hall. With the main entrance behind you, turn left and head into the Greek galleries.



Walk through the first gallery to enter the long gallery with skylights. Go through the first doorway on the left and then through the doorway on the right. Stop at the grave stele directly in front of you.

## 1. A girl with her doves

This grave stele—a carved stone slab that marked a grave like a modern tombstone—shows a little girl saying good-bye to her pet **doves**. You can almost feel the fabric of her clothing, which is draped so you can see the way she is standing. Her weight is on her right leg, and her left leg is bent. Her hair falls gently down her back. The combination of the elegant folds of fabric and the sweet, serious expression of her face shows how skilled the carver of this piece was.

- *How does the girl feel about her doves? How can you tell?*
- *Can you find another example of a bird in this gallery?*
- *What are some similarities between it and these doves?*
- *What about differences?*



In the same gallery, you'll find the next sculpture that we'll take a look at.

## 2. A mighty roar

Grrr! When you walked into this gallery, your eyes might have gone right to this statue. With its open mouth and body ready to pounce, this **lion** presents a fierce, commanding image. It's not known whether the sculptor ever saw a real lion, but this sculpture would certainly make you think that he had; it's tremendously lifelike and powerful. The artist probably modeled the features on those of a dog, an animal with which he would have been familiar.

Such marble statues were sometimes used as tomb monuments or guardians. It's certainly easy to imagine this lion protecting a tomb!

- *What do you think the lion's next move might be?*
- *What details make him seem especially menacing?*
- *What part of the statue has been broken off?*



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## Bonus

On your way to object 3, see if you can find a mythical creature with wings and the body of a lion.



## Did you know?

Decorations on this jar are known as black-figure painting. Paintings made on this jar showed figures as black silhouettes against the red clay of the jar. This technique was perfected in the sixth century B.C., when this jar was made.

Leave this gallery by retracing your steps and exiting through the two doorways by which you entered. Cross the long gallery with the skylights and go through the doorway directly ahead. To the left of the doorway, look in the large glass case against the wall. On the bottom shelf, find the last jar on the left.

## 3. Heavenly horses

Look at the **horses** on this and other jars in this gallery. Horses were represented quite often on jars and were shown racing, pulling chariots, or sometimes simply being tended with great care. The horses are usually shown as dignified and stately. They were obviously well cared for and respected by the Greeks.

One of the greatest heroes in Greek mythology was Herakles, known as Hercules to the Romans. Among his incredible feats of strength were the Twelve Labors; they included such tasks as slaying the Lernaean Hydra and capturing the powerful Cretan bull. Here, Herakles is shown with Athena, his protector, as he is introduced among the gods, the only hero who was ever given that honor. Which figure is Herakles? (Hint: Look for the lion head and skin.) As one of his labors, Herakles wrestled the Nemean lion to its death and from then on he wore its skin as part of his own special armor.

**What do you think is about to happen in this scene? Write your ideas below:**



- 1. Marble grave stele of a little girl;** Greek, ca. 450–440 B.C.; found on the island of Paros; Fletcher Fund, 1927 (27.45).
- 2. Marble statue of a lion;** Greek, ca. 400–390 B.C.; said to have been found in Trastevere, near Porta Portese, Rome; purchase, Rogers Fund and James Loeb and Anonymous Gifts, 1909 (09.221.3).
- 3. Terracotta amphora (jar)** [reverse]; Greek, Attic, black-figure, ca. 520–510 B.C.; attributed to the Lysippides Painter; obverse, introduction of Herakles into Mount Olympus; reverse, combat of two warriors over a third; gift of Colonel and Mrs. Lewis Landes, 1958 (58.32)



**Terracotta vase in the form of a lobster claw**; Greek, Attic, red-figure, ca. 460 B.C.; attributed to the Class of the Seven Lobster-Claws; donkey; keras (drinking horn); Rogers Fund, 1923 (23.160.57)

**Design a cup, plate, or pitcher** shaped like an animal or part of an animal. Who would use it? When would it be used?

Facing the case containing the jar, go through the doorway on the right. Look for the far large glass case against the right wall. Now look on the bottom shelf.

#### 4. Pinch me— what's this I "sea"?

Here's a horse—or rather, a *donkey*—of a different color! Greece is a mountainous land that depended on the sea for trade, for transporting goods, for exploration, and, of course, for food. Since the Greeks were familiar with the sea and the creatures in it, a container for such liquids as perfumed oil shaped like a **lobster claw** might not have been that unusual. Even so, it wouldn't have been used every day. The donkey, which was associated with Dionysos, the god of wine, gives us a clue that this container was used in celebratory gatherings.

- *How would you hold this container to pour from it?*
- *What other animal-shaped containers do you see in this case?*

#### Animal Round-Up

As you walked through the galleries, what animals did you see? List them below. What do they have in common? Which animal did you see represented most often? Circle it on your list.

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#### Education

The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
1000 Fifth Avenue  
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