



family guide

# LOOKING at LABELS

How to read a David Owsley Museum of Art label...

**Reading is important**, even in an art museum. It helps us better understand artworks. Not only can you read exhibition titles, museum maps, and object labels, you can find out a lot by “reading” a work of art when you look at it and talk about it. Take the time to piece the visual information together with the labels around it. **Labels are your key to learning more about any artwork!**

- ? Can you figure out the age of the artist when he or she made the artwork?
- ? What about his or her nationality?
- ? Who gave the artwork?
- ? What else does a label tell you?



(enlargement of this label below)

**In Poppyland, 1901**  
**John Ottis Adams**  
 American (1851-1927)  
 oil on canvas  
 In Brookville, Indiana on the bank of the Whitewater River, John Ottis Adams shared a home with his wife, painter Winifred Brady, and the artist T.C. Steele, and his wife. Adams often painted the cultivated and wild flower beds—like the bright red poppies seen here—that flourished in the soil around his Brookville summer home.  
 Frank C. Ball Collection, partial gift and promised gift of the Ball Brothers Foundation  
 1995.035.040

USE THE EXAMPLE BELOW as a guide when looking at art labels

Title                      Year the artwork was made                      Artist's birth and death dates

***In Poppyland, 1901***

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 American (1851-1927)

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Artist's name

Artist or maker's nationality or cultural origin

The material, how it was made

When available, a museum writer provides a description of the work's art historical or social context and/or something about the life of the artist or the technique used.

Donor name or fund to note how the museum received the artwork; who gave it, or the money to buy it.

Accession number—a unique numeral for keeping track of an artwork and accessing more information; tells the year it was given and the order in which it was given.



f a m i l y   g u i d e

With thanks to all  
the people who developed  
“Looking at Labels”

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FOR THE ARTS

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