

ANAMALIA! DEPICTIONS OF ANIMALS IN RENAISSANCE EUROPE

Lesson Plan

Grades 3-6



Detail of animals from the *Creation of Eve* (Altarpiece of Ciudad Rodrigo)
Maestro Bartolomé and his workshop, Spain.
1480-1488, University of Arizona Art Museum

Summary:

Maestro Bartolomé chose to represent the story behind the creation of animals in his painting entitled *Creation of Eve*, including specific references to Martin Schongaur's depiction of beasts. Painters often did not have the luxury of observing these animals first-hand and would either compose images of creatures from memory or referring to prints and drawings. Throughout the Medieval and Renaissance periods, certain animals bore special meaning and often represented moral virtues. Students will be asked to identify the animals depicted in the painting, discuss their significance and construct a composition of their own inspired by Renaissance images.

Age:

Grades 3-6.

Length of lesson:

55 minutes.

Objectives:

- Introduce the students to the artists and their paintings/sketches.
- Deepen the students' understanding of how artists create their work and how they use external information as sources of inspiration.
- Enable creative exploration and discovery.
- Trigger the students' interest in visual culture.

Materials:

- Unlined paper and pencil for each student.
- Handouts (or projected slides) of animal images (see Appendix).
- One full color copy of the painting by Maestro Bartolomeo.

Lesson:

1. Ask the students if they can identify each of the animal depicted in the painting by Bartolomeo. There are a number of birds in the background as well as a lizard in the foreground. Other animals include a griffin, camel, bull, horse, bear, lion, and a rooster.
2. How many of these animals have they seen for themselves?
3. What kind of demeanor is associated with each animal?
4. For older ages groups, research and discuss the significance associated with each of the animals depicted. Why do they think Bartolomeo decided to include these animals and beasts and not others?
5. Which animals appear to be "fabricated" or invented?
6. Ask them to draw a sketch of two of their favorite animals without using ANY picture aids. Remind them that Schongauer and Bartolomeo had to do the same for many of their paintings.
7. When they finish, distribute the handouts of animals and ask them now to sketch a third animal that is "invented," combining attributes from at least two different animals.

Appendix:



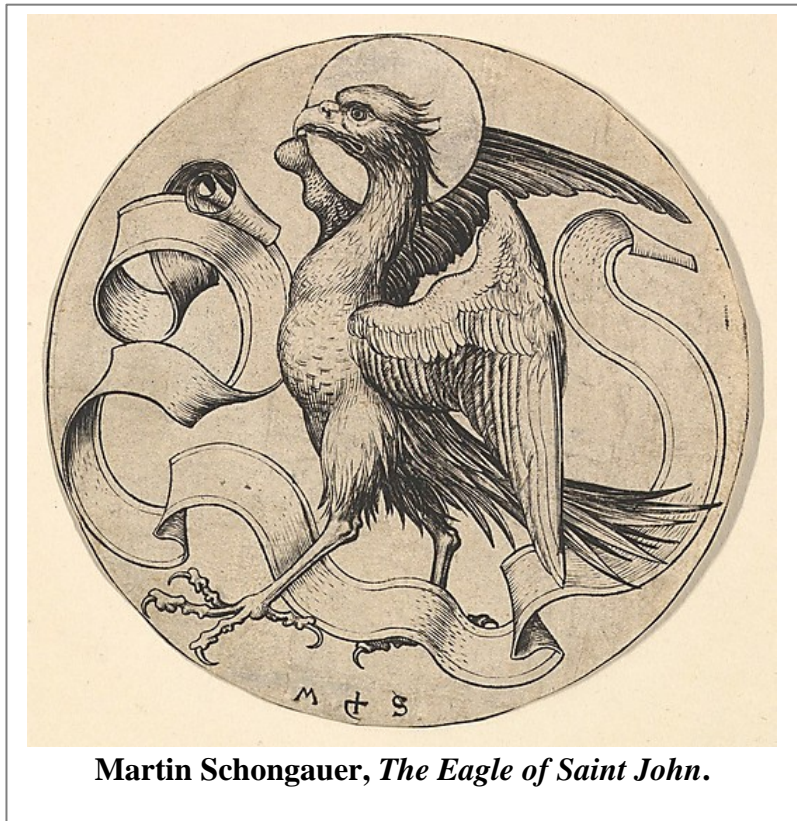
Detail of the Bear and Lion in *Creation of Eve*



Detail of the Griffin/Eagle and Rooster in *Creation of Eve*



Martin Schongauer, *Elephant in Hortus Sanitatis*.



Martin Schongauer, *The Eagle of Saint John*.



Martin Schongauer, *The Pig Family*



Martin Schongauer, *The Griffin*

References:

Bomford, David, ed., *Art in the Making. Underdrawings in Renaissance Paintings*. London: National Gallery Company, 2002.

Dotseth, Amanda W., Barbara C. Anderson and Mark A. Roglán, ed. *Fernando Gallego and His Workshop. The Altarpiece from Ciudad Rodrigo*. Dallas: Meadows Museum, SMU and Philip Wilson Publishers, 2008.

[Retablo Underdrawings](#) – webpage hosted by the University of Arizona Museum of Art showcasing infrared reflectograms of the entire retablo.

Oxford Art Online, last accessed August 22, 2013, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com>.

[“Maestro Bartolomé Reconstruction” on the Kress Reconstruction Website](#)