



“If I were standing at the beginning of time, with the possibility of taking a kind of general and panoramic view of the whole of human history up to now, and the Almighty said to me, ‘Martin Luther King, which age would you like to live in?’”

“I would take my mental flight by Egypt and I would watch God’s children in their magnificent trek from the dark dungeons of Egypt through, or rather across the Red Sea, through the wilderness on toward the promised land. And in spite of its magnificence, I wouldn’t stop there.”



“I would move on by Greece and take my mind to Mount Olympus. And I would see Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Euripides, and Aristophanes assembled around the Parthenon. And I would watch them around the Parthenon as they discussed the great and eternal issues of reality. But I wouldn’t stop there. I would go on, even to the great heyday of the Roman Empire. And I would see developments around there, through various emperors and leaders. But I wouldn’t stop there.”

“I would even come up to the day of the Renaissance, and get a quick picture of all that the Renaissance did for the cultural and aesthetic life of man. But I wouldn’t stop there. I would even go by the way that the man for whom I am named had his habitat. And I would watch Martin Luther as he tacked his ninety-five theses on the door at the church of Wittenberg. But I wouldn’t stop there.”

“I would come on up even to 1863, and watch a vacillating President by the name of Abraham Lincoln finally come to the conclusion that he had to sign the Emancipation Proclamation. But I wouldn’t stop there.”

“I would even come up to the early thirties, and see a man grappling with the problems of the bankruptcy of his nation. And come with an eloquent cry that we have nothing to fear but fear itself. But I wouldn’t stop there.”

“Strangely enough, I would turn to the Almighty, and say, ‘If you allow me to live just a few years in the second half of the 20th century, I will be happy.’ Now that’s a strange statement to make, because the world is all messed up. The nation is sick. Trouble is in the land; confusion all around. That’s a strange statement. But I know, somehow, that only when it is dark enough can you see the stars.”

Excerpts from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s sermon “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop,” delivered on April 3, 1968, at Mason Temple Church of God in Christ, in Memphis, Tennessee. www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkivebeentothemountaintop.htm.

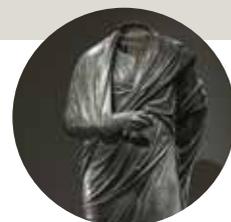
COVER: *Martin Luther King Jr.* (detail), 2002. John Woodrow Wilson (American, 1922–2015). Etching and aquatint on chine collé, 89.9 x 75.8 cm. Kari B. Goldfield Trust 2013.94.

LEFT: *Portrait of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (detail), Flip Schulke (American, born 1930). Gelatin silver print; 19.7 x 30.5 cm. Gift of George Stephanopoulos 2015.370.



Egyptian
GALLERY 107

Over 4,000 years of history are represented in this gallery. What do you think will last from our society today?



Greek/Roman
GALLERY 102–103

These galleries house grand examples of pottery and sculpture by the ancient Greeks and Romans.

Dr. King mentions the leaders and great thinkers of ancient Greece and the Roman Empire. How do you see leadership depicted in these galleries? How do these depictions differ from the way leaders are portrayed now?

The Emperor as Philosopher, probably Marcus Aurelius (reigned AD 161–180) (detail), c. 180–200, Roman. Bronze, hollow cast in several pieces and joined, 193 cm. Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund 1986.5.



**Renaissance/
Martin Luther**
GALLERY 112, 114, 118

Renaissance artists valued realistic depiction. Compare the human figures in the Renaissance galleries to what you’ve seen in other galleries. Find the follower of Luther and see how her portrait was painted. What do you notice?

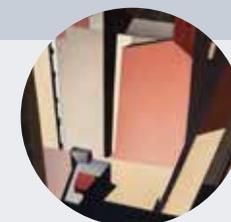
Portrait of Maria Kitscher, Frau von Freyberg (detail), 1545. Hans Melich (German, 1516–1573). Oil on wood; 61.4 x 46 cm. The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Collection 1944.88.



1863 American
GALLERY 207

Find the *Power of Music*. This artwork was painted before the Civil War and before President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation that was one of the steps to freedom for over three million slaves. What do you think is happening in this painting?

The Power of Music (detail), 1847. William Sidney Mount (American, 1807–1868). Oil on canvas; 43.4 x 53.5 cm. Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund 1991.110.



1930s
GALLERY 226 a

Though the Depression made life difficult for many people, art was an outlet for the struggles of the age. What words would you use to describe the artworks in this gallery?

Church Street El (detail), 1920. Charles Sheeler (American, 1883–1965). Oil on canvas; 41.00 x 48.50 cm. Mr. and Mrs. William H. Marlatt Fund, 1977.43.



1960s
GALLERY 226 b

Find *Fulton and Nostrand*. Jacob Lawrence painted this scene of everyday life at the height of the civil rights movement. History can inform the way we understand artwork of the era. What do you notice about the city scene?

Fulton and Nostrand (detail), 1958. Jacob Lawrence (American, 1917–2000). Tempera on Masonite; 60.9 x 76.2 cm. Mr. and Mrs. William H. Marlatt Fund 2007.158. © 2017 The Jacob and Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence Foundation, Seattle / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

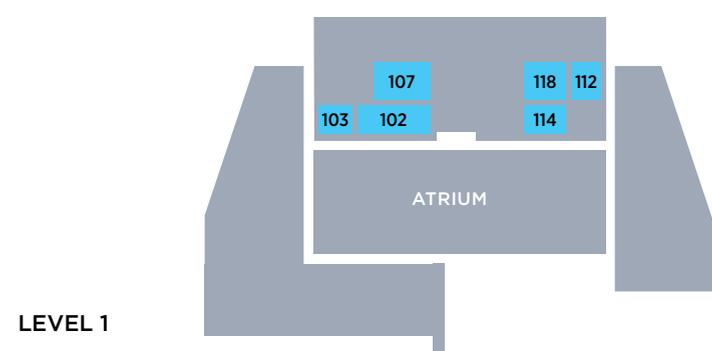
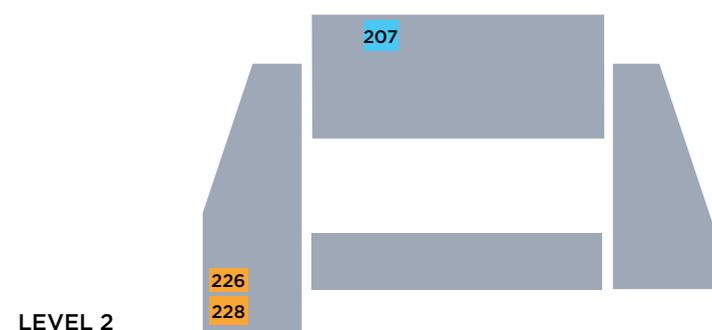


Cleveland
GALLERY 228 b

Find *Untitled (Rooftop View)*. Hughie Lee-Smith painted many urban scenes, often with a solitary figure. Which passage from Dr. King’s words connects with this image for you?

Untitled (Rooftop View) (detail), 1957. Hughie Lee-Smith (American, 1915–1999). Oil on masonite; 61.00 x 63.50 cm. J. H. Wade Fund 2009.7. © Estate of Hughie Lee-Smith/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

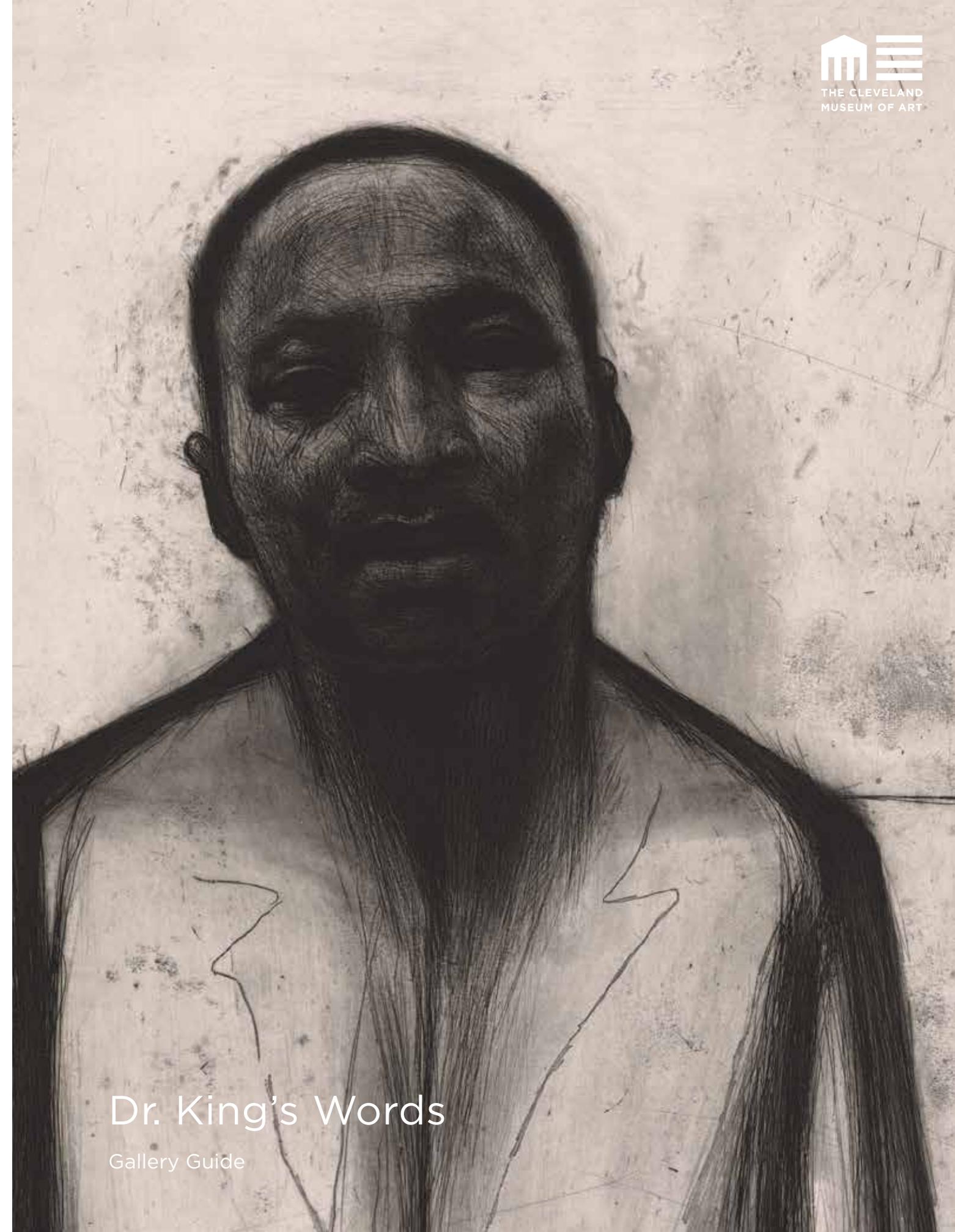
Printed in this guide are excerpts from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s sermon *I've Been to the Mountaintop*, delivered on April 3, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee. Use this guide to take a journey through the museum's galleries and imagine the eras described by Dr. King through the art made by the hands and minds of those who lived in that time.



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Dr. King's Words

Gallery Guide