

BE A GALLERY SPY

PERCEPTION TRICKS ARE ALL AROUND

You've seen how artists in *Eye Spy, Playing with Perception* create illusions using different tools and techniques. Check out a few more examples in the Atrium and in the American Art and Maritime Art galleries.

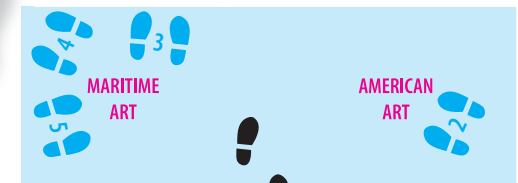


1

Let's start in the Atrium. Look into the mirror sculpture called *Halo*. Can you see yourself? If not, whom or what do you see? Try walking closer; then move from side to side. What happens?

How does *Halo* compare with *Self-Centered Mirror* in *Eye Spy*?

FOLLOW THE GALLERY SPY MAP BELOW TO CONTINUE YOUR QUEST.

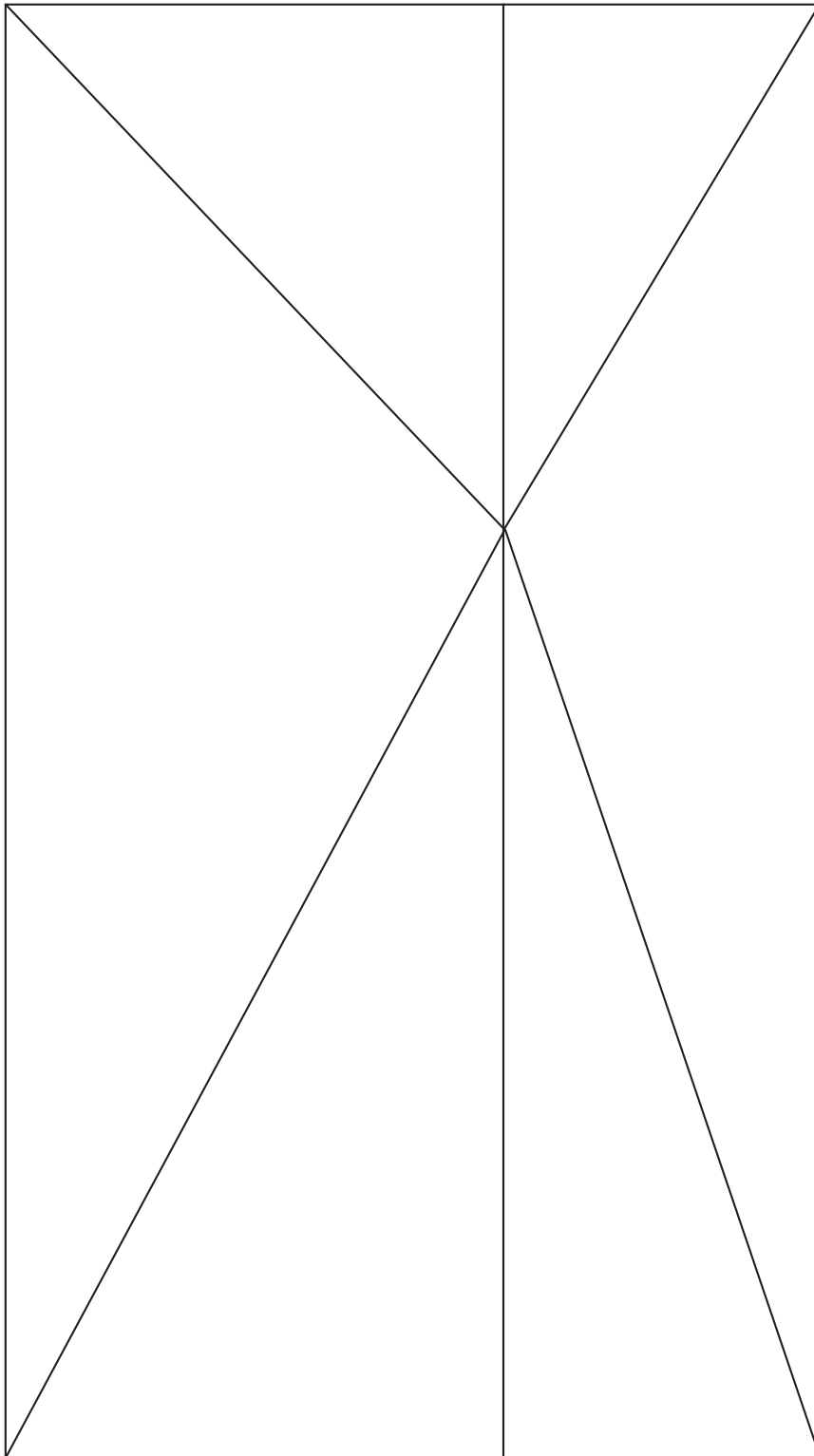


START HERE!

ART & NATURE
CENTER

PEM Peabody
Essex
Museum

We started you off with a horizon line, a vanishing point and some diagonal guidelines. Try drawing a road, trees, buildings or mountains and a river. Remember that objects in the foreground should appear larger, while objects in the background should look smaller — like the columns in *The Grand Saloon of the Palace Steamer Drew*. Need more ideas? Just look around.





2 Find the *Girandole Looking Glass*. How is this mirror different from the one in your bathroom? Do the reflections look a little odd to you? Why?

Things look strange because this is a convex mirror. Light reflects back at a different angle than that from a flat mirror. Where else might you find mirrors that are rounded or wavy?

Did you know? People place candles in front of mirrors to help light up a room!

3 Find the two paintings below. Notice how the light falls on the sails of the ship flying the flag in *The Great Gale of 1846*. Compare that with the hull of the ship on the left. The light appears to come from the opposite direction! Could this happen in nature?

Now look at *New Ways on Banquereau*. See how the center of the scene appears to glow? Observe the way the light shines through the sails and the reflections on the water. Is there more than one source of light?

Compare the water in the two paintings. Which ocean would you want to swim in? Why? Are the waves in the foreground of *The Great Gale* the same size as the ones in the distance? Can you feel the wave motion in either painting? Does one painting appear to have more depth?

Some artists can manipulate details such as reflections and light to make a painting feel like you can step right into the scene.



The Great Gale of 1846



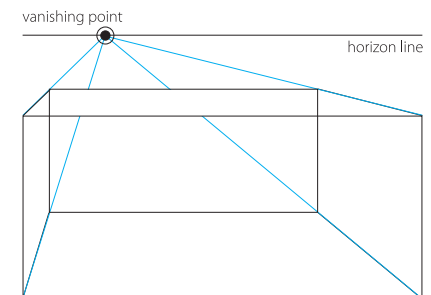
New Ways on Banquereau

4 Turn left and find the *Batavier Lijn* poster. How would you describe this scene? Notice the way the artist shows us the underside of the top rail and the bottom of the child's shoes, perched on the lower rail. Do you think you are looking down on the deck or up from a dock in this scene? What details make it seem as if the family is leaning forward out of the picture to wave goodbye? Artists sometimes use a trick called "breaking the picture plane" to create the illusion that parts of a scene are in our physical space. Look at other posters on this wall. Do any of them appear to be almost 3-D? If so, which ones and why?



5 Find the *French Line* poster nearby. Describe the ship in the picture. Do you think it is small? Huge? Tall? Narrow? What clues did you use to help you decide?

Did you notice the strong lines leading your eye to the stern (back) of the ship — the narrowing deck floorboards and shrinking people? This technique is called linear perspective. All the lines come together at the vanishing point. Artists use this effect to create a sense of space and depth on a flat surface. In this poster, the illusion of distance is enhanced by the almost invisible horizon line. Notice where the white dashes of waves stop and become the dots of distant stars.



TRY YOUR OWN PERSPECTIVE DRAWING ON THE BACK PAGE!