

Learn Greco-Roman mythology from great works of art



ABC Greco-Roman mythology in Art

Acknowledgement

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Front cover: Italy, Laocoön and his sons, c. 200 BCE
Musei Vaticani, Vatican City

Back cover: Greek, Black-figure Kylix, c. 570 BCE
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles US

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A is for Apollo

Apollo is the Greek god of music, poetry, prophecy, medicine, and the sun, son of Zeus and Leto, and one of the twelve Olympian gods



After Leochares (c. 4th century BCE)
Apollo Beldereve, c. 2nd century
Musei Vaticani, Vatican City

B is for Bacchus

Bacchus is the Roman god of wine, fertility, and ecstasy,
often associated with partying, joy, and liberation



Caravaggio (1571-1610)
The adolescent Bacchus, 1635-1638
Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy

C is for Cupid

Cupid is the Roman god of love and desire, often depicted as a winged child with a bow and arrow



François Baron Gérard (1770-1837)
Psyché et l'Amour, 1798
Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

D is for Demeter

Demeter is the Greek goddess of agriculture, harvest, and fertility, who was often associated with the cycles of nature and the growth of crops



Greek
Figurine of Demeter with Pig, c. 400 BCE
The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, US

E is for Eurydice

Eurydice is a figure from Greek mythology, who was the wife of Orpheus, died shortly after their marriage, leading Orpheus to journey to the underworld to try to bring her back to the world of the living



Jean Raoux (1677-1734)
Orpheus and Eurydice, c. 1709
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, US

F is for Flora

Flora is the Roman goddess of flowers and spring, often associated with fertility, renewal, and youthfulness



Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510)
La Primavera, c. 1480
Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy

G is for Gaia

Gaia/Gaea is the primordial goddess of the earth and the mother of all life in Greek mythology



Anselm Feuerbach (1829-1880)
Gaea (ceiling painting), 1875
Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Vienna, Austria

H is for Heracles

Heracles is a legendary hero from Greek mythology known for his incredible strength and his twelve labors



Galeazzo Mondella (1467-1528)
Hercules Strangling the Nemean Lion, c. 16th century
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US

I is for Icarus

Icarus is a figure from Greek mythology who, despite his father's warning, flew too close to the sun with wings made of feathers and wax, resulting in his tragic downfall



Herbert Draper (1863-1920)
The Lament for Icarus, 1898
Tate Britain, London, UK

J is for Janus

Janus is the Roman god of beginnings and endings, often depicted with two faces looking in opposite directions



Roman
Quadrigratus of Janus, c. 225-212 BCE
The Walsh Gallery at Seton Hall University, South Orange, US

K is for Kronos

Kronos is a titan from Greek mythology who overthrew his father Uranus and was eventually defeated by his son Zeus, who became the new king of the gods



Agostino Zoppo (1520-1572)
Chronos (Kronos), c. 16th century
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US

L is for Leda

Leda is a figure from Greek mythology who was seduced by Zeus in the form of a swan and gave birth to Helen of Troy



After Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519)
Leda and the Swan, c. 1510
Galleria Borghese, Rome, Italy

M is for Medusa

Medusa is a figure from Greek mythology who had serpentine hair and the power to turn people to stone with her gaze, slain by the hero Perseus



Caravaggio (1571-1610)
Medusa, 1595-1598
Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy

N is for Neptune

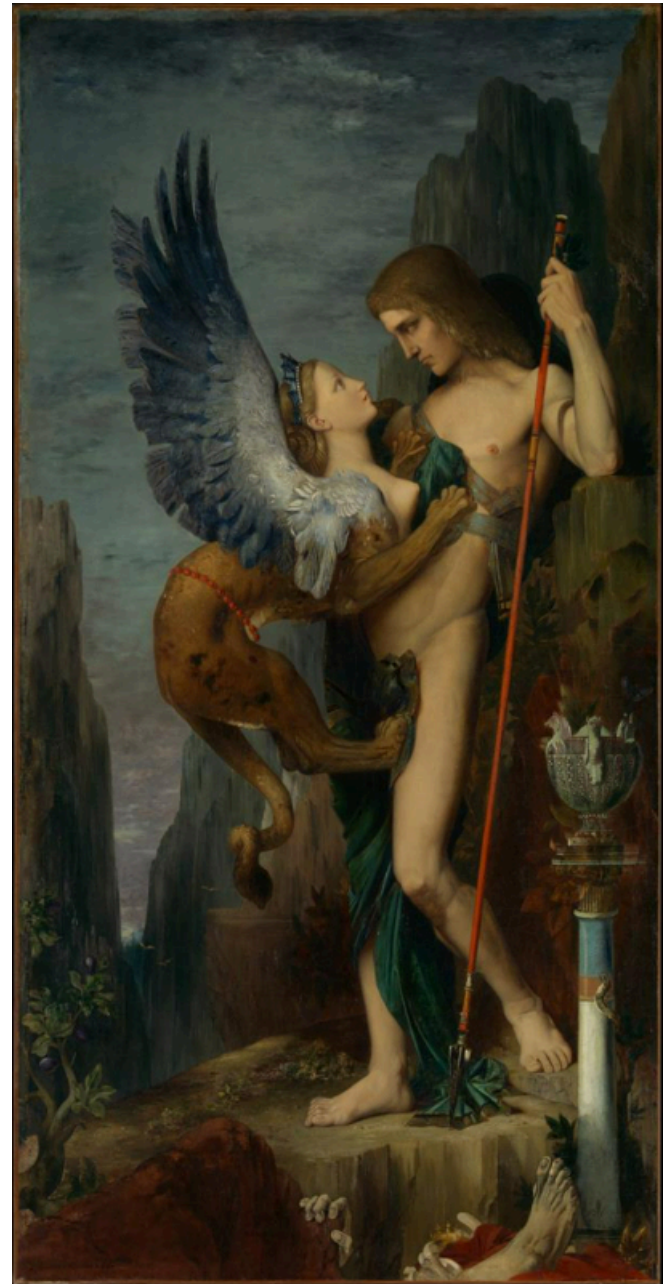
Neptune is the Roman god of the sea, earthquakes, and horses. He was often depicted as a bearded figure holding a trident



Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680)
Neptune with Dolphin, after 1623
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, US

O is for Oedipus

Oedipus is a tragic hero from Greek mythology who unknowingly fulfilled a prophecy by killing his father and marrying his mother



Gustave Moreau (1826-1898)
Oedipus and the Sphinx, 1864
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US

P is for Prometheus

Prometheus is a titan in Greek mythology who defied the gods by giving fire to humans and was punished by being chained to a rock and having his liver eaten by an eagle every day



Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640)
Prometheus Bound, c. 1611-1618
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, US

Q is for Quirinus

Quirinus is the Roman god of war and one of the three deities that made up the Archaic Triad along with Mars and Jupiter



Roman
Denarius (coin) depicting the god Quirinus, c. 60 BCE
Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, US

R is for Rhea

Rhea is a titaness in Greek mythology, known as the wife of Kronus and the mother of several major gods and goddesses, including Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades



Roman
Statuette of Cybele (Rhea), c. 2nd century
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, US

S is for Siren

Siren is a creature in Greek mythology with the upper body of a woman and the lower body of a bird, who lured sailors to their doom with their beautiful singing



Greek
Terracotta statuette of a siren, c. 550-500 BCE
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US

T is for Titan

Titans are a powerful race of gods and goddesses in Greek mythology who ruled during the Golden Age and were eventually overthrown by the Olympians, led by Zeus



Cornelis van Haarlem (1562-1638)
The Fall of the Titans, c. 1588-1590
Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, Denmark

U is for Ulysses

Ulysses, also known as Odysseus, is a legendary figure from Greek mythology who is best known for his ten-year journey home after the Trojan War, famously recounted in Homer's epic poem, the *Odyssey*



John William Waterhouse (1849-1917)
Ulysses and the Sirens, 1891
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

V is for Venus

Venus is the Roman goddess of love, beauty, and fertility



Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510)
The birth of Venus, c. 1483-1485
Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy

W is for Winged Pegasus

Pegasus is a winged horse in Greek mythology, born from the blood of the slain Medusa and known for his incredible speed and ability to fly



Greek
Winged horse, c. 6th century BCE
Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

X is for Xanthus

Xanthus is a figure from Greek mythology who was one of the immortal horses of Achilles



Henri Regnault (1843-1871)
Automedon with the Horses of Achilles, c. 1868
Museum of Fine Art Boston, Boston, US

Y is for Youth goddess, Hebe

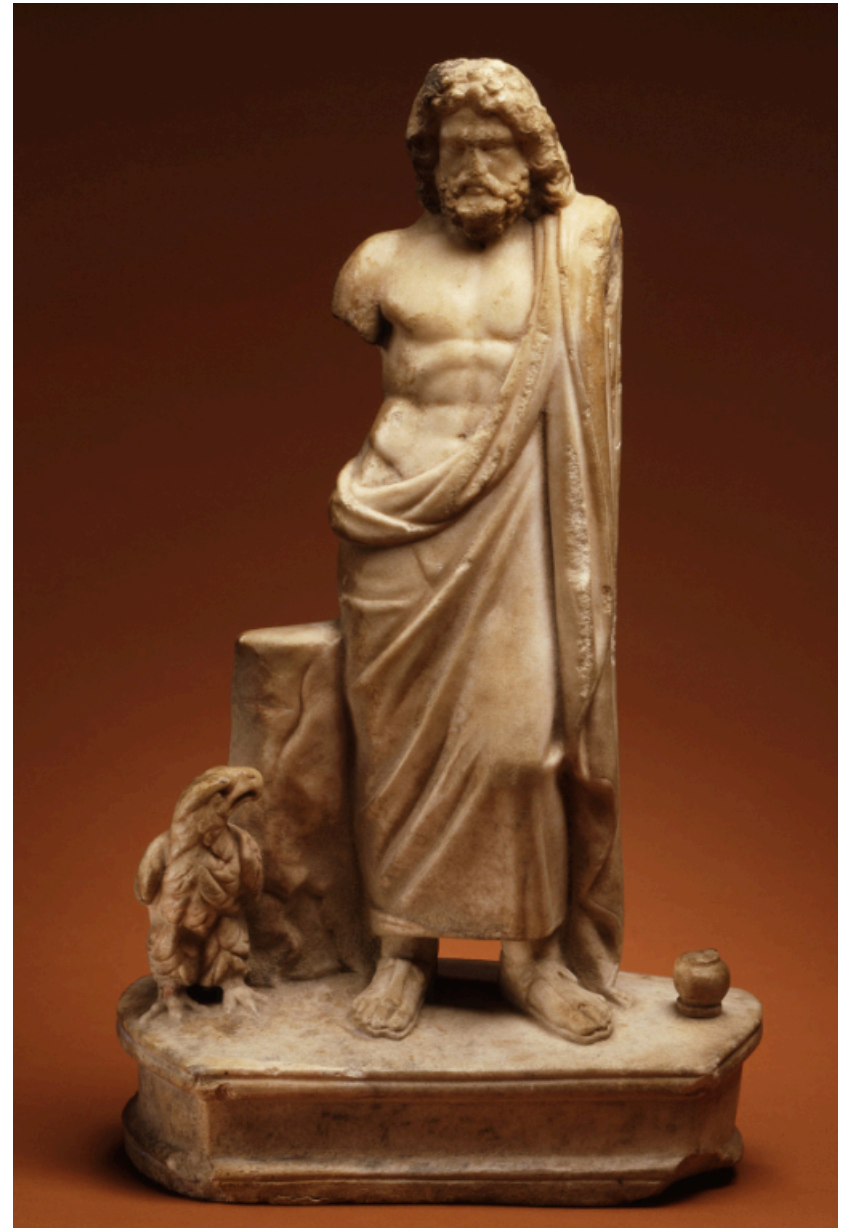
Youth goddess, Hebe is the daughter of Zeus and Hera, and the wife of Heracles in Greek mythology. She is the cupbearer of the gods in Mount Olympus



Antonio Canova (1757-1822)
Hebe, 1796
Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milano, Italy

Z is for Zeus

Zeus is the king of the gods in Greek mythology, often depicted with a lightning bolt in his hand and an eagle by his side



Roman
Zeus, c. 2nd century
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, US