

Elephants Painting

Painting Elephants

My Elephant Could Paint That

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLxO7MPUKH8>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoCvLIdXS8U>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7meBvOEyuzQ> (9 mins)





Mahout: Elephant Keeper

A **mahout** is an [elephant](#) rider, trainer, or keeper.^[1] Mahouts were used since antiquity for both civilian and military use. Traditionally, mahouts came from ethnic groups with generations of elephant keeping experience, with a mahout retaining his elephant throughout its working life or service years.^[2] Mahouts would often ride on a [howdah](#) placed on the back of their elephant.

This film is about connection, about love and about taking care of each other. Meet the Mahout Wun, 22 years old & Elephant Choosri, 47 years old. They spend their life together at the Phang Nag Elephant Park, informing visitors about the situation of domestic elephants in Thailand.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2ScNhVxeSE> (8:51)



Painted Elephants of Jaipur

Held in high esteem, elephants have played an outsized role in India's history and culture.

The royalty of India—Hindu and Muslim—understood long ago that power was best wielded from the back of an elephant. Kings appeared before their dazzled subjects on elephants whose ivory tusks glittered with gold and silver and whose bodies shimmered in silk and velvet. “An elephant mounted by a king is radiant; a king mounted on an elephant is resplendent,” proclaims one historical manuscript.

Tourists are now king, and so at the Elephant Festival in Jaipur, Rajasthan, instead of pomp there are elephant polo, elephant tug-of-war, and an elephant beauty contest. The participants in the festival are working animals, which spend most days ferrying tourists up to the Amber Palace, a historic site above the city that attracts visitors from all over the world. For the annual festival the elephants are garbed in their finest costumes. Last spring photographer Charles Fréger traveled to Jaipur to capture the elephants in their glory—bright with paint, bangles, and drapes. He was drawn to the elephants because in India they are “sacred sometimes and being used sometimes.” But they also have strong personalities, he says, “playing and moving all the time.” He got the pictures, but then the festival was canceled, reportedly because animal rights groups raised concerns about how the animals were treated.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEpXgNe0Lto> (subtitles 6 mins)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spJqj_RtDwc (no words)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6Eaiv4SREI>







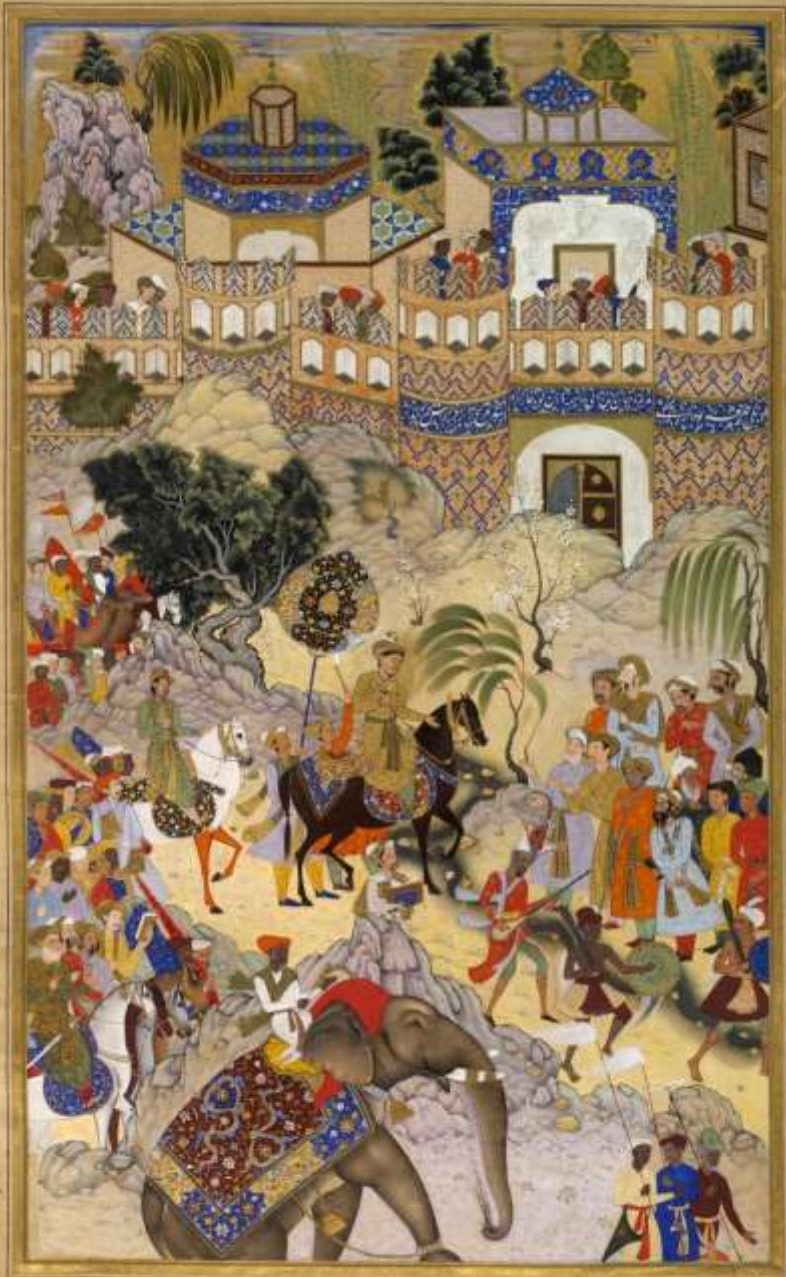








شبه عالم گمان کجراج
قیمت یک لک روپیه



Akbar's Triumphal Entry into Surat
Akbarnama is a [Mughal Oil on Paper Painting](#) created by [Farrukh Beg](#) from [1590](#) to [1595](#). It lives at the [Victoria and Albert Museum](#) in [London](#).



Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II Riding His Prized Elephant Atash Khan is a [Mughal Oil on Paper Painting](#) created by [Farrukh Beg](#) in [1600](#). It lives in a private collection.

Ganesha

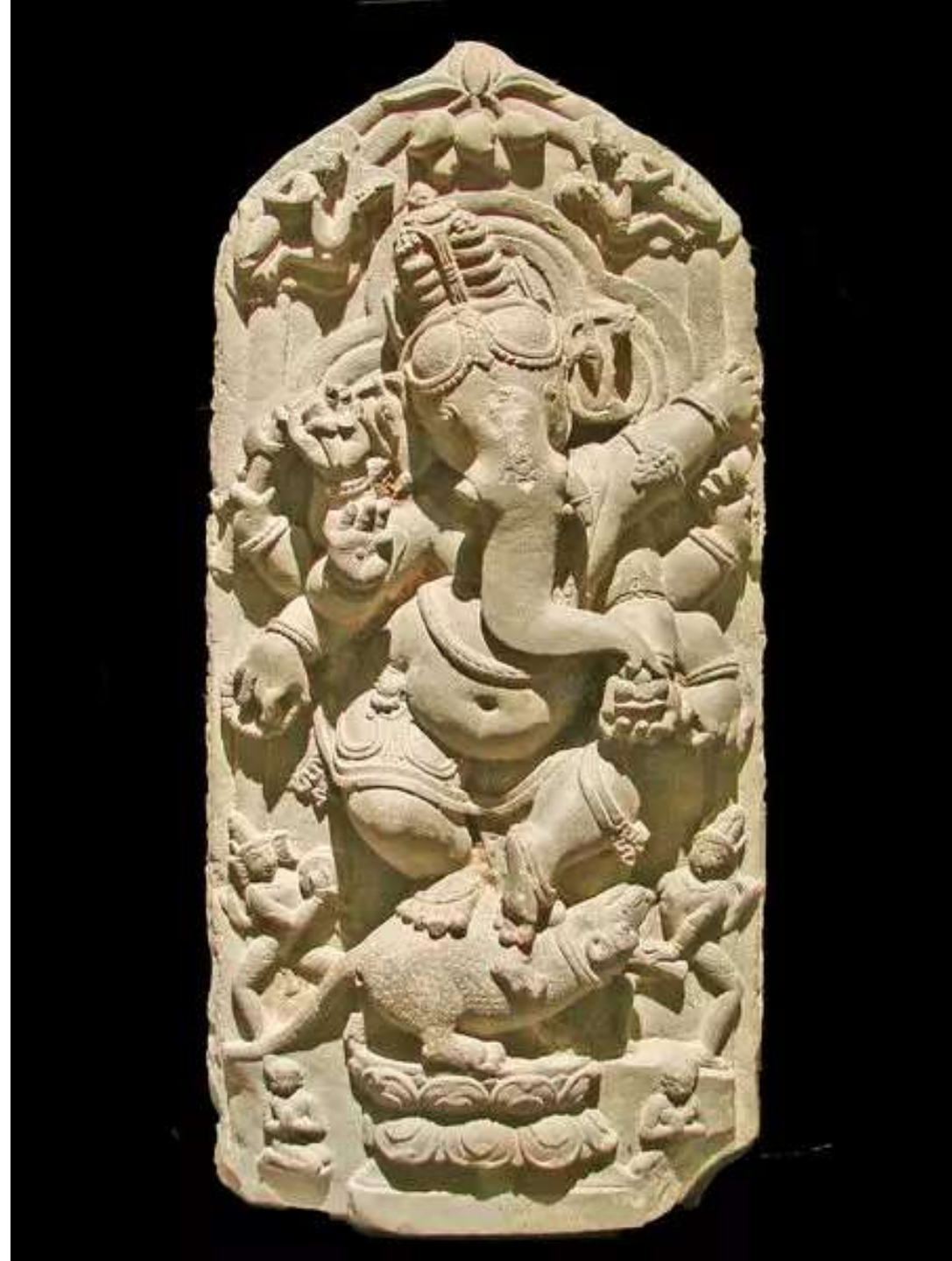
Ganesha also known as **Ganapati**, **Vinayaka** and **Pillaiyar**, is one of the best-known and most worshipped [deities](#) in the [Hindu pantheon](#).^[4] His image is found throughout [India](#).^[5] [Hindu denominations](#) worship him regardless of affiliations.^[6] Devotion to Ganesha is widely diffused and extends [to Jains and Buddhists](#) and also in [Nepal](#), [Sri Lanka](#), [Thailand](#), [Indonesia](#) ([Java](#) and [Bali](#)), [Singapore](#), [Malaysia](#), [Philippines](#), and [Bangladesh](#) and in countries with large ethnic Indian populations including [Fiji](#), [Guyana](#), [Mauritius](#), and [Trinidad and Tobago](#).^[7]

Although Ganesha has many attributes, he is readily identified by his [elephant](#) head.^[8] **He is widely revered, more specifically, as the remover of obstacles and thought to bring good luck;**^{[9][10]} **the patron of** [arts and sciences](#); **and the** [deva](#) **of intellect and wisdom.**^[11] As the god of beginnings, he is honored at the start of rites and ceremonies. Ganesha is also invoked as a patron of letters and learning during writing sessions.^{[2][12]} Several texts relate [mythological anecdotes](#) associated with his birth and exploits.

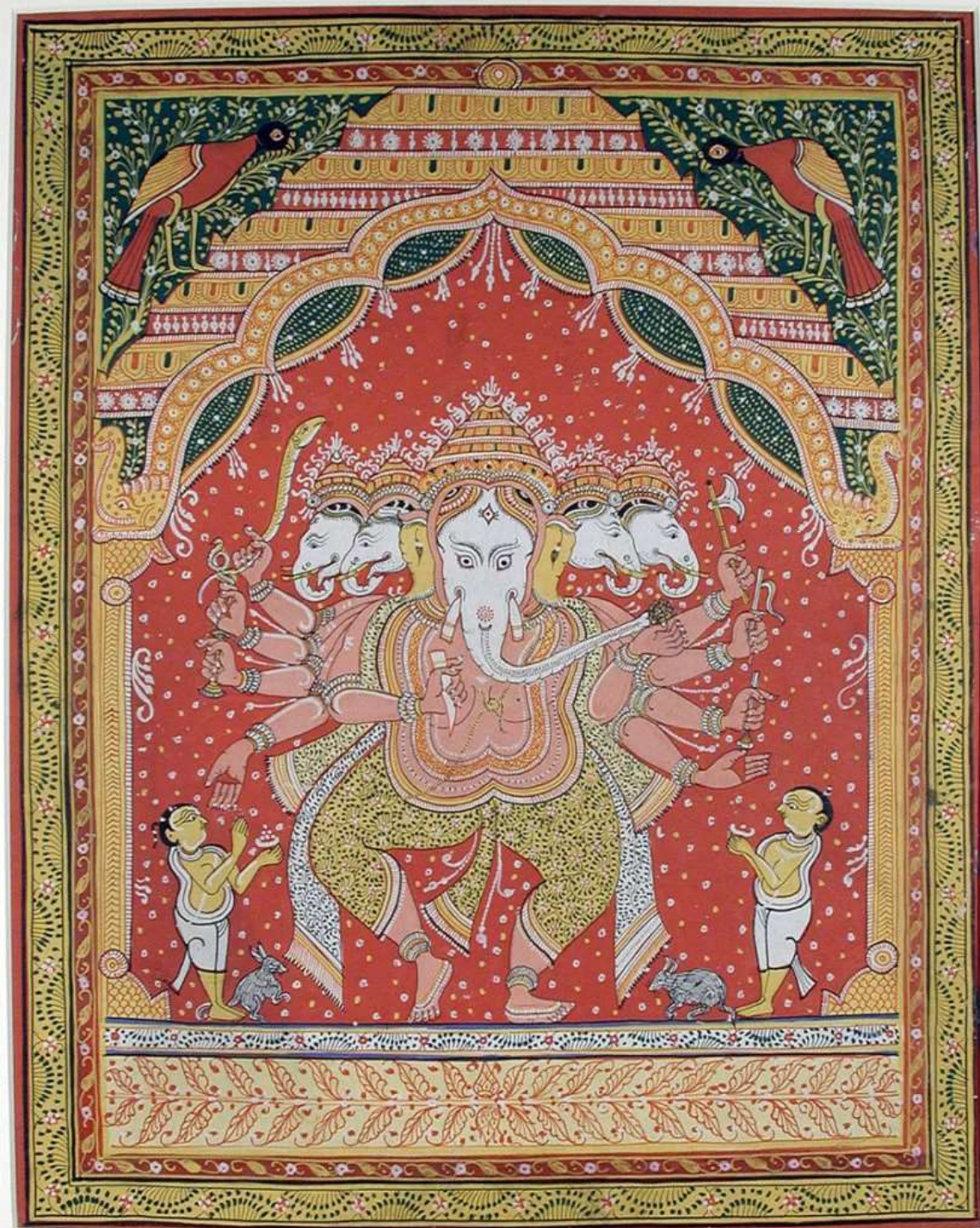
While scholars differ about his origins dating him between 1st century BCE to 2nd century CE, Ganesha was well established by the 4th and 5th centuries CE, during the [Gupta period](#) and had inherited traits from [Vedic](#) and pre-Vedic precursors.^[13] Hindu mythology identifies him as the son of [Parvati](#) and [Shiva](#) of the [Shaivism](#) tradition, but he is a pan-Hindu god found in its various traditions.^{[14][15]} In the [Ganapatya](#) tradition of Hinduism, Ganesha is the [Supreme Being](#).^[16] The principal texts on Ganesha include the [Ganesha Purana](#), the [Mudgala Purana](#) and the [Ganapati Atharvasirsha](#).

<https://www.worldhistory.org/Ganesha/>

<https://smarthistory.org/the-making-and-worship-of-ganesha-statues-in-maharashtra/>













Bokhara: Elephant Footprints

The name Bokhara originated from the city of Bokhara, in today's Uzbekistan, which was one of the main towns along the famous Silk Road, where the original Turkman rugs were sold in its local Bazar and soon became known as Bokhara rugs. Today, Bokhara carpets are mainly made in Pakistan with a Turkmen Philpa (Elephant foot design) in soft wool lusters using the same tradition design and weaved as the original Bokhara rugs. The most common color is red, and the softness in its textures comes from repeatedly combed wool which is washed several times to give a silkier feel to the rug.

- <https://www.abc-oriental-rug.com/bokhara-oriental-design.html>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVsTJ8APwcA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTV-hRe9VBo> (use this)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_mDnO9cMYY
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6MFWviwZxE> (good)





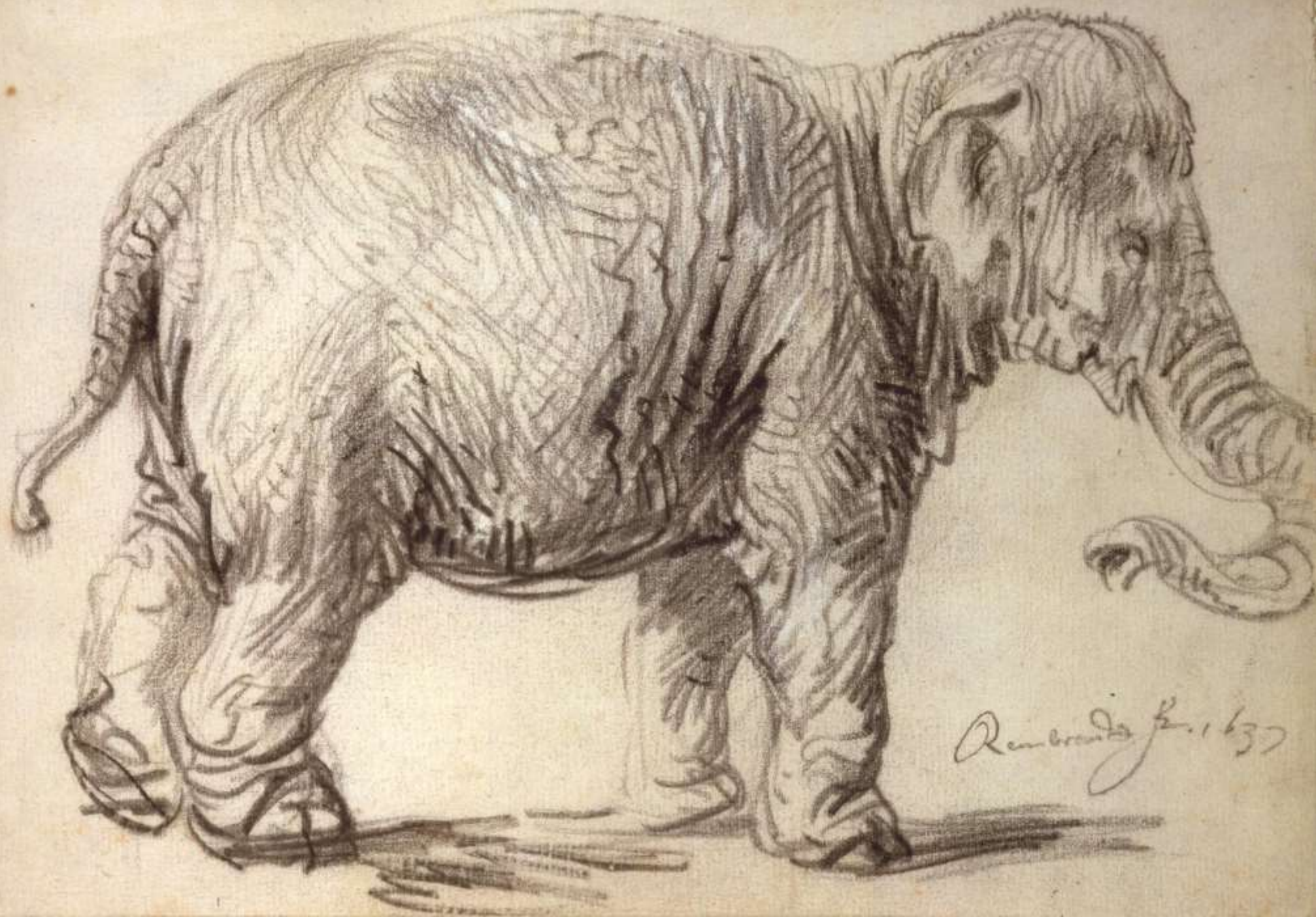
Rembrandt's Elephant

["Hansken, Rembrandt's Elephant,"](#) at the Rembrandt House Museum in Amsterdam tells the story of a female Asian elephant, taken to the exhibition, running e Netherlands in the 17th century, who spent the rest of her life in Europe and became a popular and famous spectacle.

"She was brought to a world where she didn't belong," van Sloten added, "but she became a kind of window onto how life was at that time."

The female elephant Hansken was brought from Ceylon to Amsterdam by a ship of the VOC, the Dutch United East-Indies Company. Hansken learned a variety of tricks and toured all Europe. People paid willingly to see her firing a pistol, handling a sword or lifting her hat. The intelligent animal raises the interest of Vondel, Barlaeus, Rembrandt and other celebrities of those days. 'Rembrandt's elephant' is a very special book which brings the Dutch Golden Age to life.

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/hansken>



Bernini's Elephant

The Elephant was designed by [Lorenzo Bernini](#) in 1667 and most likely sculpted by his assistant Ercole Ferrata. Upon his back sits a tall Egyptian obelisk which was unearthed nearby, left over from an old Egyptian temple to the goddess Isis. It is located opposite the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome and was commissioned by the then Pope Alexander VII.

Why an elephant?

Elephants in the 17th century were seen as fascinating and curious creatures, even exotic. The fact that he balances an 'exotic' foreign monument on his back might then seem quite fitting. An elephant, being rather large and strong, also provides an innovative support for the obelisk. Again we are witness to the ingenuity and playfulness of Bernini.

There is a legend that Bernini was playing a little joke by positioning the elephant the way it is today. The elephant's behind is directed at a whole monastery of Dominican monks housed next to the church. It even looks like he is waving his long trunk in their direction! Who knows if this was really Bernini's intention, but we like the idea that he was trying to make us chuckle at this charming and intriguing creature.

So all in all, Bernini's elephant probably best embodies all we stand for. Something deeply steeped in Art History whilst at the same time is fun and engaging!

<https://www.worldhistory.org/video/1981/bernini-obelisk---ancient-rome-live/> (1 min)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8LwDieQmes> (





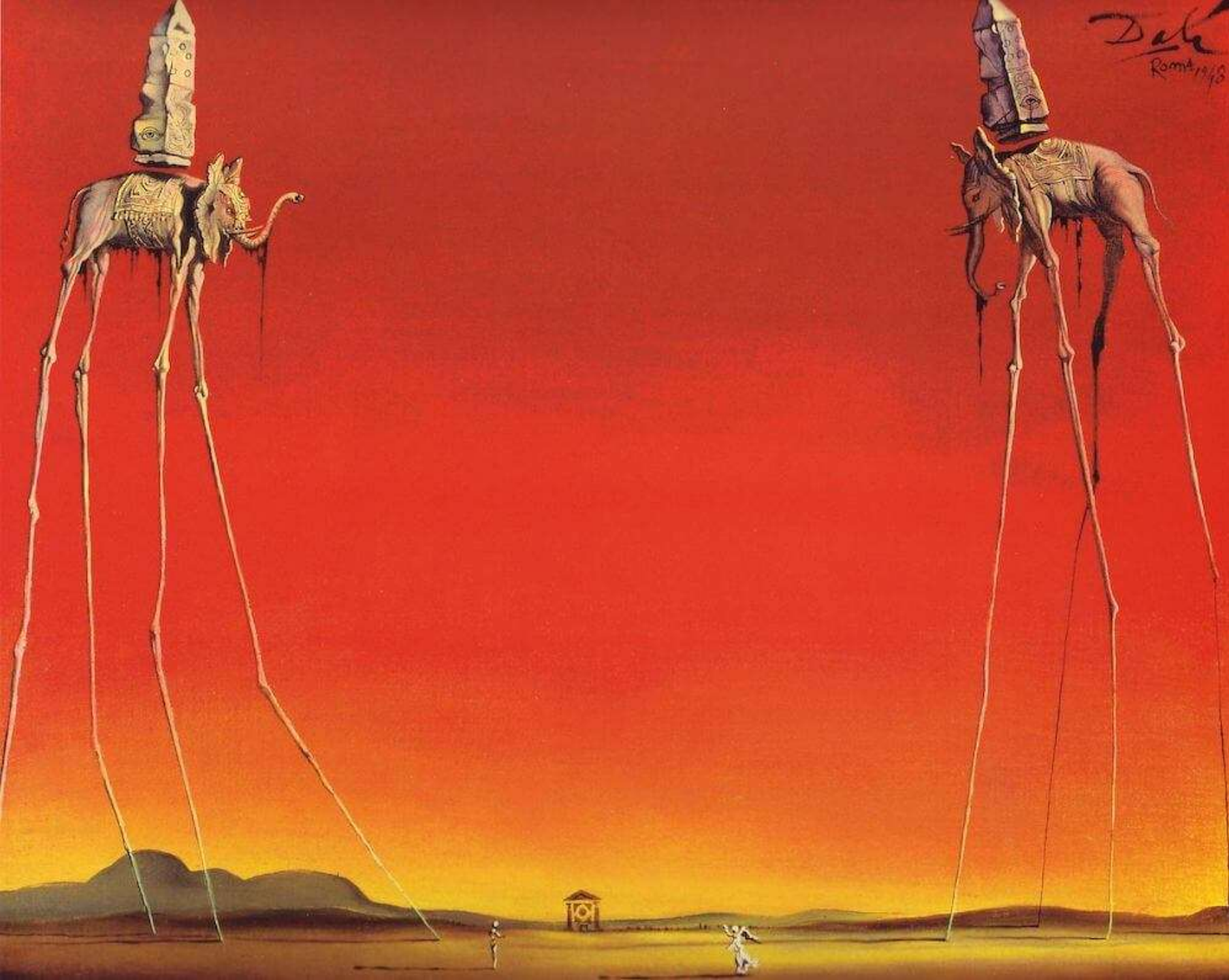
Dali's Elephants

Elephants, along with [melting clocks](#), are the two best known objects from Dali's Surrealist periods. Dali made use of elephants on several occasions, with their inclusion in this painting best known for their elongated limbs.

Closer attention also reveals that the animals are carrying heavy obelisks on the backs, and these are believed to have been inspired by the work of [Gian Lorenzo Bernini](#). This Italian had produced sculpture base in Rome where an elephant carries an ancient obelisk.

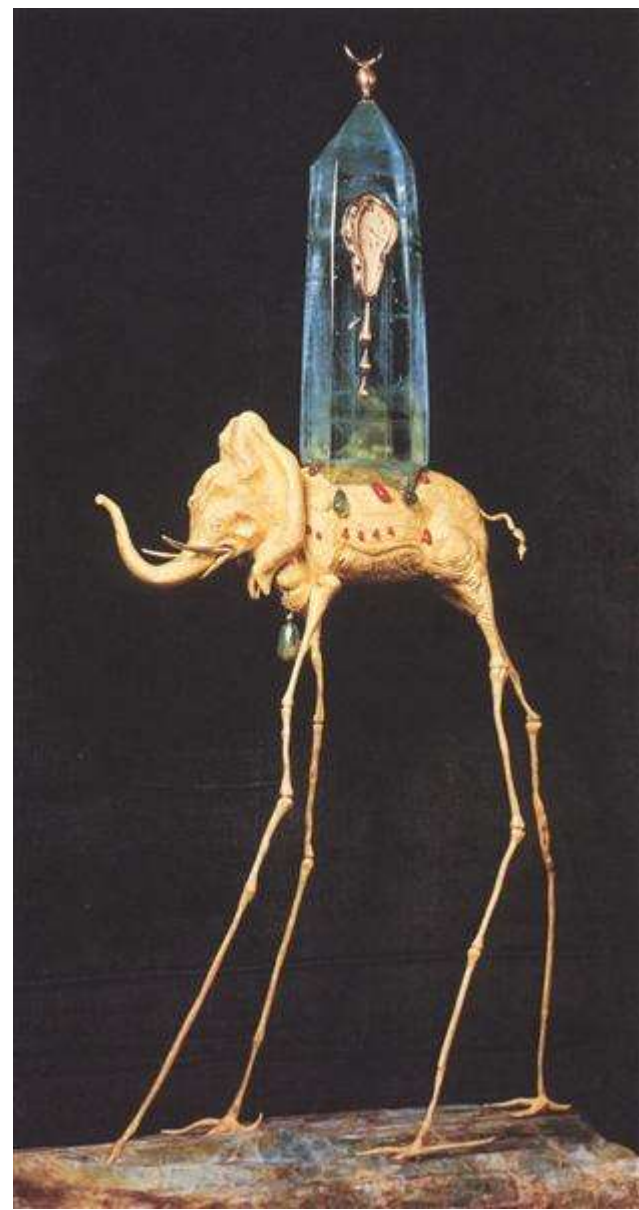
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5N6S7RLFbwY> (1 min)

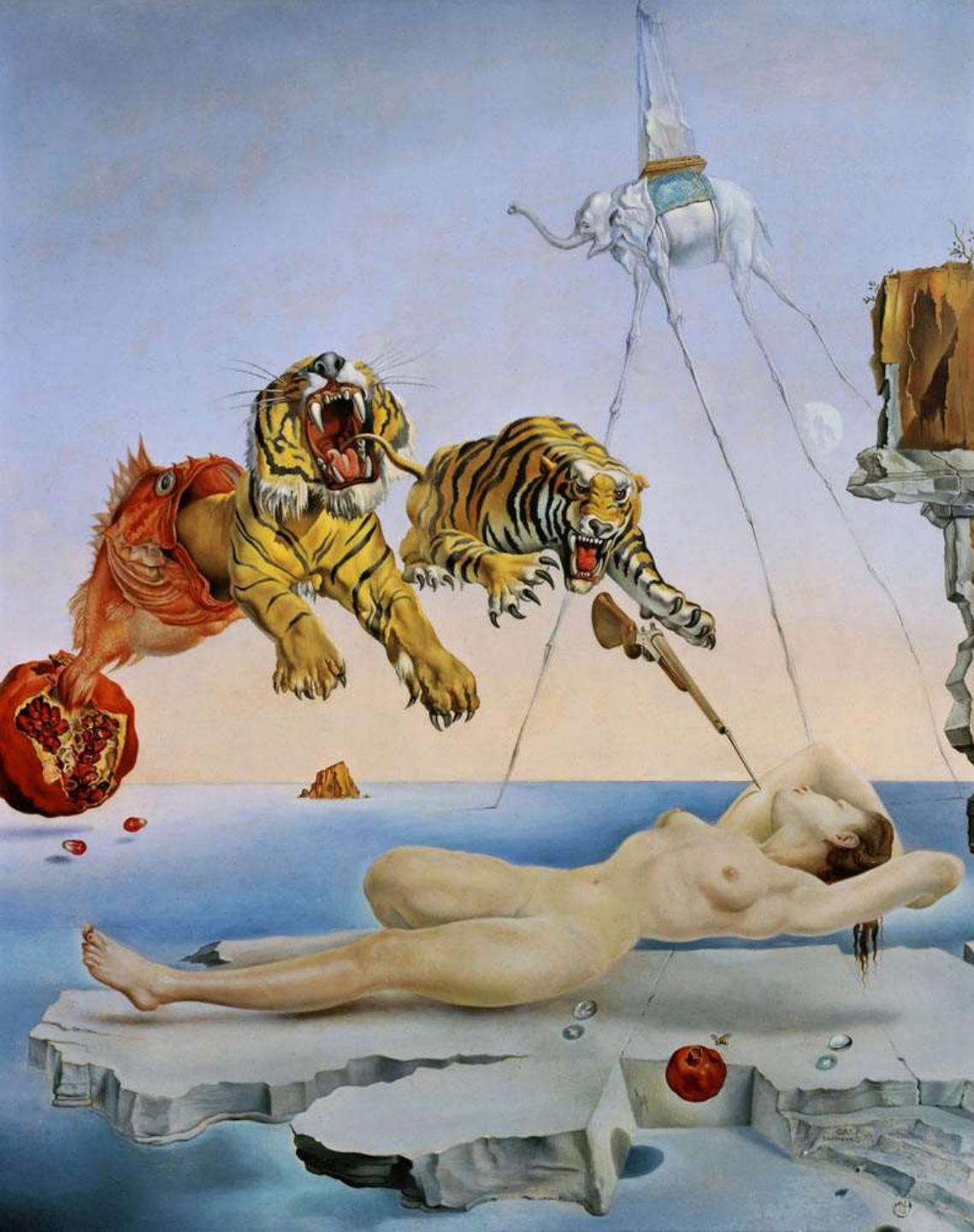
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PV6uxaOQIK4> (4 mins)



The Space Elephant

The Space Elephant embodies the Dalinian symbol that was born in 1946 when the artist painted one of his most famous pictures 'The Temptation of St. Anthony'. Dalí created the image of an elephant in the Egyptian desert carrying an obelisk, a symbol of the presence and progress of technology in the modern world. Four elephants stand on spider like legs of desire, and offer art, beauty, power, pleasure and knowledge. For this sculpture, based on the elephants in the painting, Dalí maintains the almost invisible spindle like legs emphasizing the contrast between robustness and fragility, and contrasting the idea of weightlessness with structure. This fantastically surreal creature, moving through space towards the heavens, symbolizes a flight of fantasy to a mesmerizing and surrealistic universe.





Calder's Elephants

From October 16, 2008 through February 15, 2009, the Whitney Museum of American Art presents "Alexander Calder: The Paris Years, 1926-1933," a new look at the artist's early years when his radical innovations included open-air wire sculptures, his beloved and important miniature "Circus," and the creation of a new art form, the mobile. This video excerpts scenes of Calder performing the "Circus" from a 1955 film by Jean Painlevé.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6jwnu8lzy0> (circus)







Tal R

The Elephant Behind the Clown

Tal Rosenzweig, known as Tal R, is a Danish artist based in Copenhagen.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLWMe_tGfuA











Daniel Firman



French artist Daniel Firman and his team install 'Loxodonta,' a life-size sculpture of an African elephant suspended in mid-air from a single rope grasped by its trunk. Behind the scenes at MSU Broad, Firman talks about how his work appears to defy gravity. ART BUILD | MSU BROAD is an original series from WKAR Public Media at Michigan State University.

The *Elephant* trilogy positions the body of the animal in three impossible or improbable postures and movements, touching one of the three architectural planes, the synthesis of the cube: the ground, the wall and the ceiling. It suggests the confrontation of a dynamic principle and a static situation, a paradoxical condensing of powerful movement and body. Daniel Firman's performative sculpture suspends a moment in time and pauses a gesture.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tqw3KyNHI2U> (use this)

The Elephant Series

The *Elephant* series – one of the most emblematic artwork series by Daniel Firman – is a specific interpretation of space, not as physical reality but as the support of a vision. The body by its nature has gravity; it is fixed to the earth. The elephant is the heaviest of the land mammals, but here it is a counterpoint that interrogates the sticky surface of the ground. Indeed, it anticipates a world that exists in another space, like this one but without gravity.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pk4YEEMnnNA> (installation 2 mins)





Jeff Koons

An inflatable elephant was one of the first inflatables Jeff Koons worked with when he first moved to New York as a young artist in the late Seventies. In 2003, Koons referenced the inflatable in his sculpture, Elephant.

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/jeff-koons-2368/jeff-koons-banality-decadence-and-easyfun>



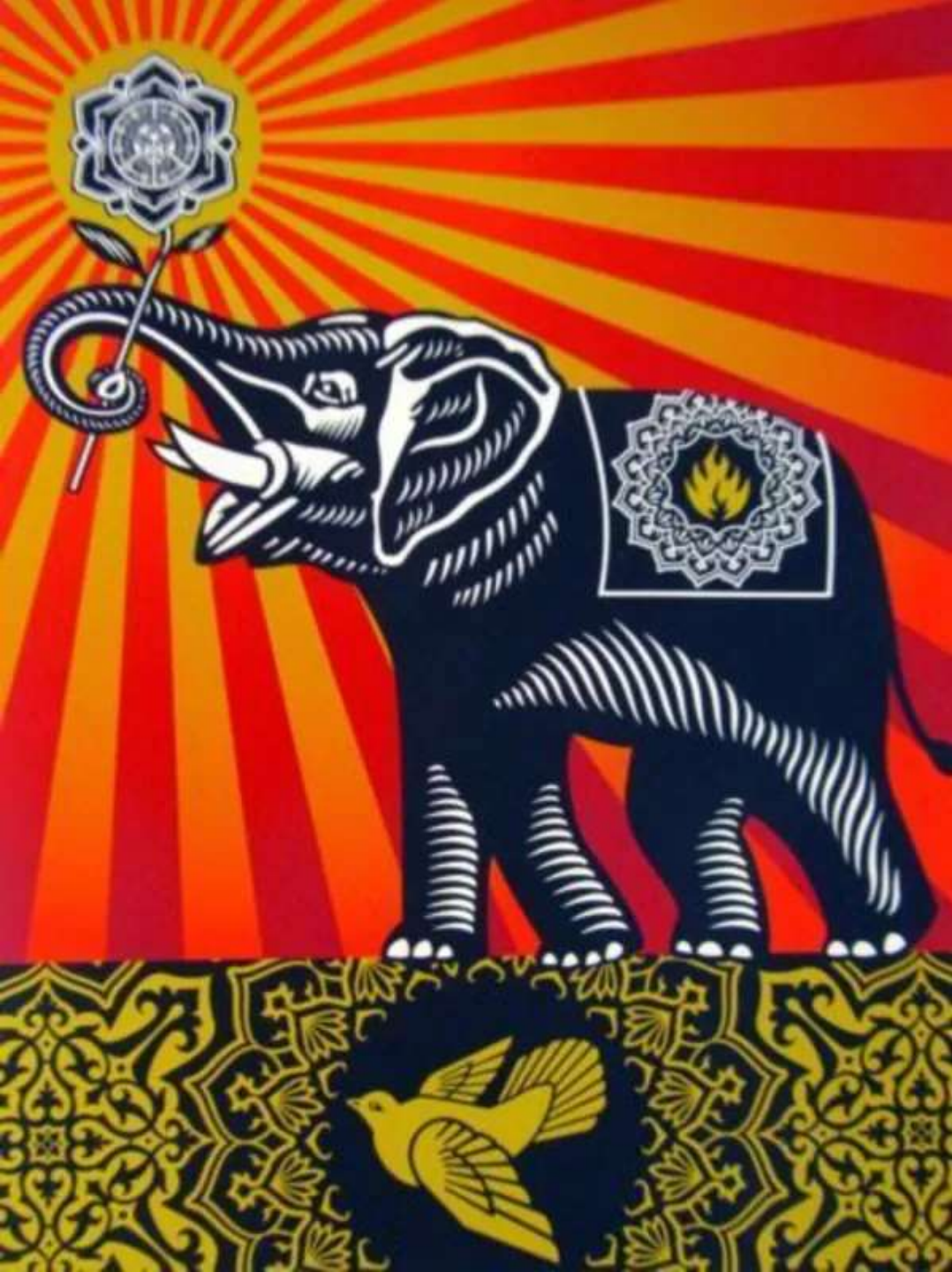


Shepherd Fairey's Elephant

The West Hollywood Library has a huge mural by artist [Shepherd Fairey](#), called "West Hollywood Peace Elephant," dominating a huge wall of the building. The enormous artwork measures 70 by 106 feet and features a large elephant holding a flower from which red and gold rays of sun emanate. A large dove also figures in the piece.

Shepherd Fairey: The core values of West Hollywood were something I did research on. I wanted the work to be appropriate for the philosophy of the city. Peace, freedom, creativity, tolerance. I might be paraphrasing slightly, were all general ideas that came up. So I decided that peace would be a big theme of the mural that I did inside and I carried that to what I did outside. An elephant holding a flower is a pro-peace image.

<https://www.themarginalian.org/2014/06/11/shepard-fairey-capitalism-selling-out/> (11 minutes)



Los Angeles Zoo

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1UPiaMwVCU> (Thailand)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_moKPnqkqM (Phung—China)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5--jFnJtjt4> (Cambodia)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A02eT4DX1ww> (China)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0lhB0LYPG0> (Thailand)





Photo by Elko Weaver
© rangoli 2010



Photo by Elko Weaver
© rangoli 2010

Banksy—Barely Legal

The British artist [Banksy](#) has been criticized by officials in California for the "frivolous abuse" of an elephant which he had painted to look like pink wallpaper.

The elephant, Tai, was the main attraction at Banksy's first US exhibition, which opened last week in Los Angeles, drawing celebrities including Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie.

Tai was painted to blend in with a set-up of a living room, and was supposed to symbolise how the problem of world poverty is ignored.

Los Angeles's Animal Services Department (ASD) had given a permit for the 38-year-old female elephant to appear at the exhibition, titled "Barely Legal".

<https://banksyexplained.com/barely-legal-los-angeles-2006/>

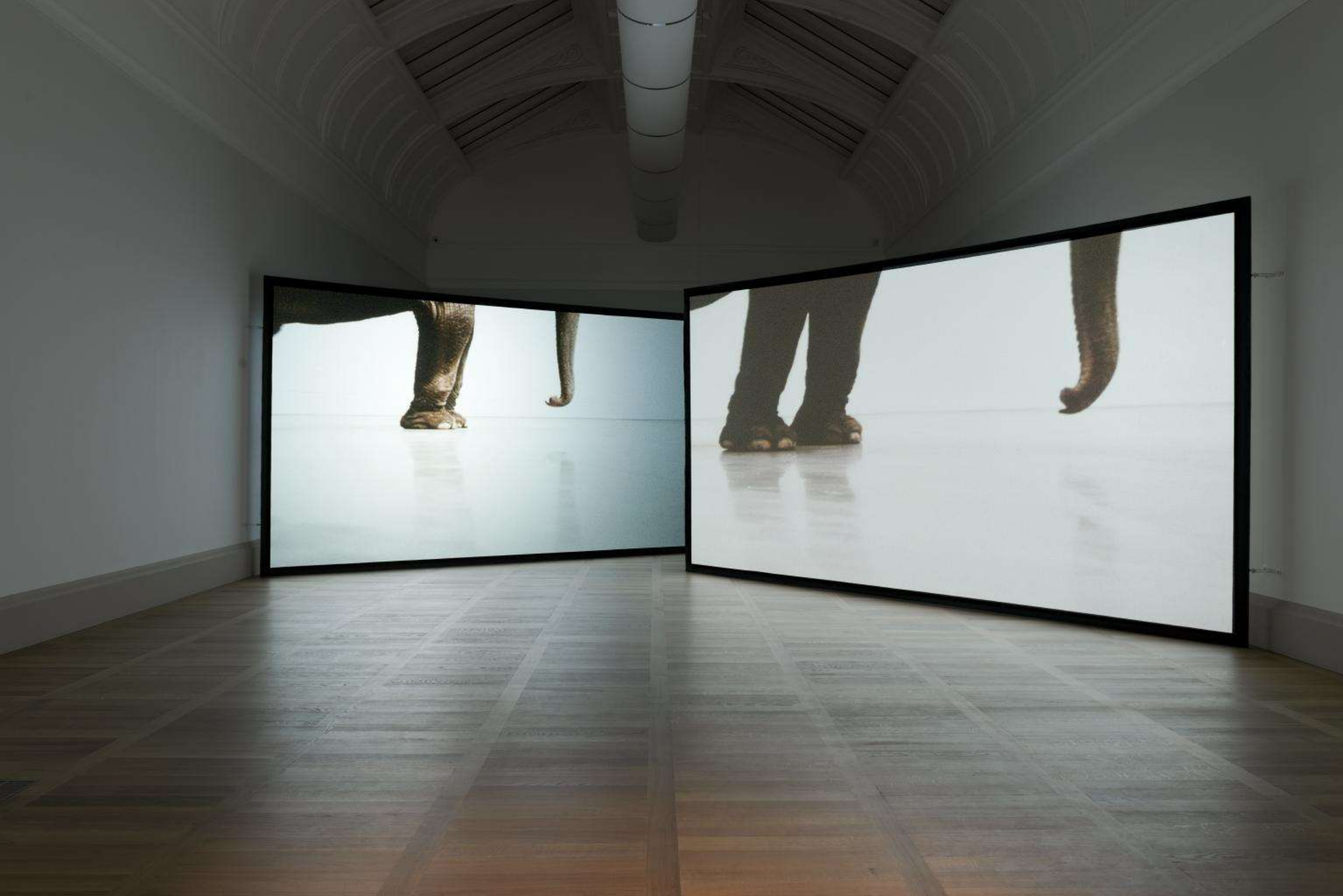


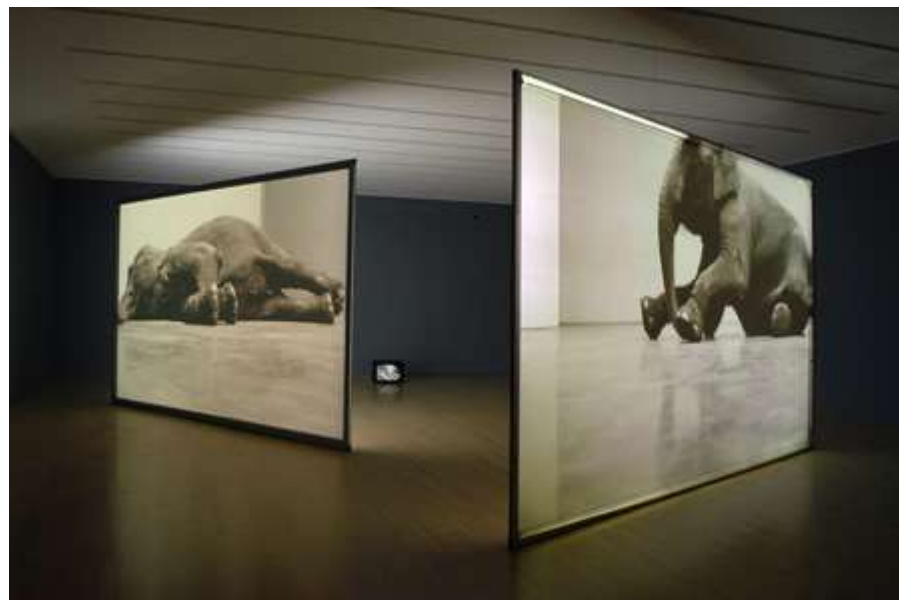
Douglas Gordon

Douglas Gordon is a Scottish artist. He won the Turner Prize in 1996, the Premio 2000 at the 47th Venice Biennale in 1997 and the Hugo Boss Prize in 1998. He lives and works in Berlin, Germany.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vR07wSggs7k>









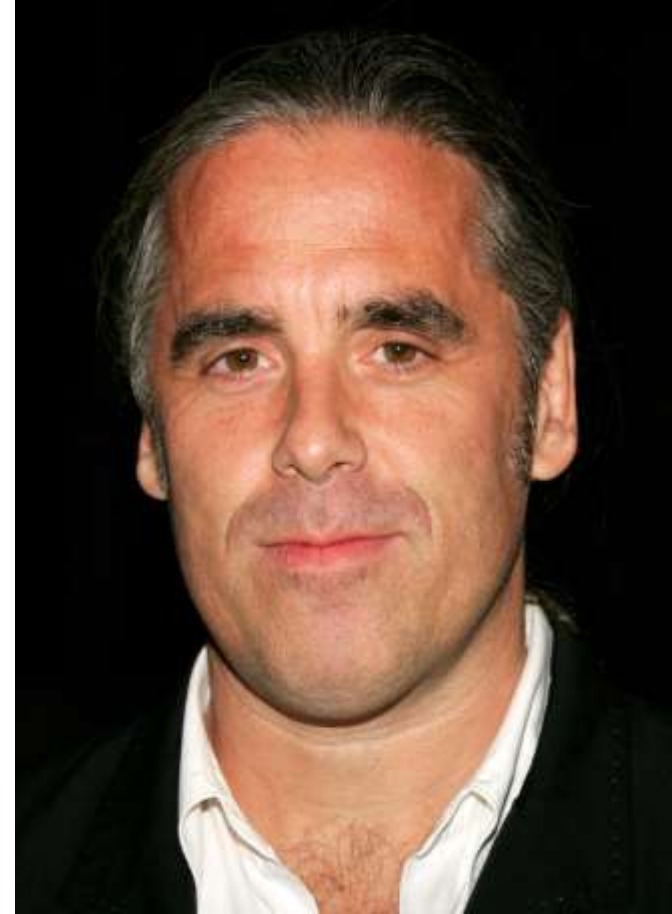
David Shepherd

- <https://davidshepherd.org/wildlife-art/david-shepherd/originals-circle/>

Gregory Colbert

Gregory Colbert is a Canadian filmmaker and photographer best known as the creator of Ashes and Snow, an exhibition of photographic artworks and films housed in the Nomadic Museum. Colbert sees himself as an apprentice to nature.

<https://theforestmagazine.com/2014/01/gregory-colbert/>



Gregory Colbert: Ashes and Snow

Gregory Colbert's Ashes and Snow feature film captures extraordinary moments of contact between people and animals as seen through the lens of the artist's camera on more than thirty expeditions to some of the earth's most remote places. Written, directed, produced, and filmed by Gregory Colbert, it is a poetic field study that depicts the world not as it is, but as it might be—a world in which the natural and artificial boundaries separating humans from other species do not exist. The viewing experience is one of wonder and contemplation, serenity, and hope.

<https://vimeo.com/29498902>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Dde5b_q2Hk (8 mins)













Assignment Suggestions...

- Think about Elephant as symbol: what images or ideas does it conjure? (For example, the mover of obstacles, the elephant in the room, the elephant behind the clown). Create an abstract or representational artwork based on your ideas
- Create an artwork based on the contours of an elephant
- Create a humorous work inspired by elephants
- Use an elephant shape(s) as a canvas for pattern.