

### **Activity: Looking at Style**

Please note: These activities were originally designed for use in the Museum galleries. As written here, they reflect adaptations for classroom use.

Classroom resources related to India are available to local teachers for free loan.

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**Recommended grade level:** 5 – 12

**Use images of the following sculptures.** (These may be downloaded from this website.)

- **Vishnu and His Incarnations**  
Probably Uttar Pradesh, south of Kanpur, mid 10<sup>th</sup> century  
Sandstone; 69.11.1
- **Vishnu/Shiva**  
Tamil Nadu, Kaveri delta region, 11<sup>th</sup> century  
Granite; 82.6.1
- **Varaha**  
Possibly northeastern Rajasthan, southern Haryana, or Uttar Pradesh, Mathura region,  
Late 11<sup>th</sup> century  
Phyllite; 82.5.1
- **Vishnu**  
Probably Karnataka, Halebid region, 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century  
chloritic schist; 71.22.1

#### **Materials:**

- One worksheet for each small group
- Pencils
- Optional: Catalogue of the exhibition, *Fashioning the Divine*, available for purchase from the Ackland Art Museum (\$15)

**Time needed:** 45 – 60 minutes

#### **Objectives:**








- Recognize salient visual characteristics in a sculpture that can lead to identification.
- Recognize the impact of local styles/conventions upon a work.
- Determine (based on classroom study) which tenets of Hinduism are visible in the works under discussion and how those tenets are demonstrated.

#### **Instructions:**

1. Divide students into 4 groups and give each group a worksheet (see below).

2. Have each group look at a different image or reproduction of Vishnu.
3. Each group will note the title of the work, its date, and where it is from, and then look for as many visual characteristics about the figure as they can find. On a worksheet, one person will record the findings.
4. After about 10 minutes, each group will move to a different image. They will check characteristics that are the same as in the first figure, and note others that are absent or added.
5. After about 5 minutes, they change images again, repeat the exercise, and then again; so each group will view all 4 images.
6. Students will share their conclusions based on what they observed.

**Learning style(s) addressed:**

logical <b>123</b>	kinesthetic 	musical 	spatial 	linguistic <i>ABC</i>	interpersonal 	intrapersonal 	naturalistic 	existential 
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# Vishnu

<b>TITLE →</b>  <b>DATE →</b> <b>COUNTRY →</b>	<b>Vishnu and His Incarnations</b>  10 <sup>th</sup> century  Probably Uttar Pradesh	<b>Vishnu/Shiva</b>  11 <sup>th</sup> century  Tamil Nadu, Kaveri delta region	<b>Varaha</b>  Late 11 <sup>th</sup> century Possibly northeastern Rajasthan, southern Haryana, or Uttar Pradesh, Mathura region	<b>Vishnu</b>  12 <sup>th</sup> to 13 <sup>th</sup> century  Probably Karnataka, Halebid region
<p><b>Vishnu's personal and visual characteristics:</b></p> <p><b>Include words that you think describe Vishnu's appearance, his emotions, gestures and body position, clothing, etc.</b></p>				

In the column beneath the title of your first image, write down everything you notice about Vishnu (i.e. clothing, facial expression, pose, scale, etc.). With each succeeding image, check off characteristics that are the same and add others that are new or different.