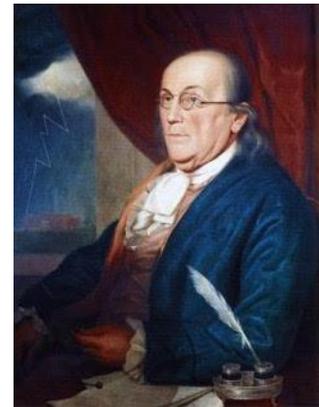


A Silhouette Duet

Welcome to the fifth in the children's series offered by the Hammond-Harwood House. The title, ***A Silhouette Duet***, refers to two men and a machine that made silhouettes. The first man, Charles Willson Peale, was a famous artist of the American Revolution. The second man, Moses Williams was an enslaved servant in Peale's household in Philadelphia. What brought these two very different men together was a silhouette-making or "face-tracing" machine. How this happened is the subject of our program. Some of you may remember Charles Willson Peale when we did a program on making a jigsaw puzzle of ***George Washington at the Battle of Princeton***. Peale is known especially for his portraits of many famous men. Below are three he painted. **Do you recognize them?**



The second man, Moses Williams, joined the household of Peale's family in Philadelphia as an enslaved child of nine. Peale had given Moses' parents their freedom, but Moses was not yet of the age when he too could be freed. Peale considered Moses a member of his household and like his children, he taught Moses the art of making portraits.

But unlike his children, Moses did not use paints but rather scissors and paper. Later Peale taught Moses how to create a silhouette of a person's profile using the "face-tracing" machine. This "face-tracing" machine brings us to the third element of our story. Here is a silhouette of Charles Willson Peale that Moses Williams made using this machine.

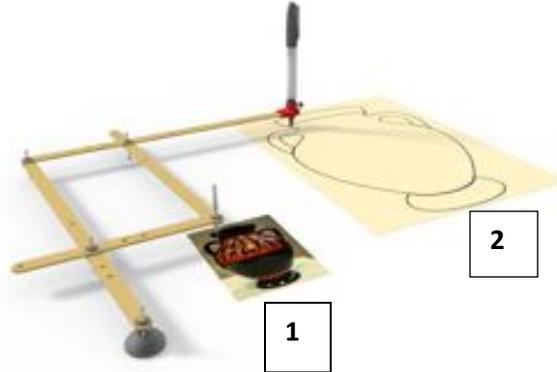


How this machine worked is intriguing. We have silhouette software programs, cameras, Photoshop, and other ways to make a silhouette today. This machine is not as accurate as those, but it is still fun to watch.

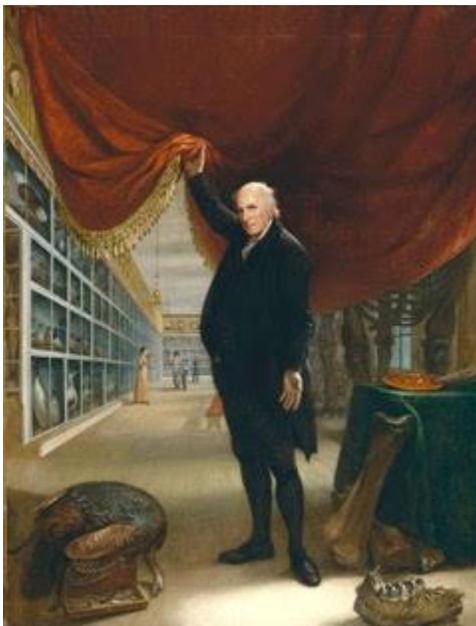
Here is a picture of a lady sitting in the device. A candle projects her shadow and the profile maker uses a special pen to enlarge her silhouette.



Below is an image of the special pen that was used. Notice the actual image (1.) and the enlarged image (2.).



In the mid 1780's in Philadelphia, Peale started the Philadelphia Museum of Natural History and Art. This portrait shows Peale lifting a curtain to enter his museum.



When Moses was freed by Peale in 1802, he set up his shop on the second floor of the museum.

In the first year he became so skilled that he made 8000 silhouettes and charged 6 to 8 cents each. He soon had enough money to marry and buy a two-story house.

Here is a silhouette of Moses Williams. This may be a self-portrait or done by an unknown artist.



Today you are going to make a self-portrait but since we do not have a face-tracing machine we have to come up with another way of doing it.

Here are some materials you will need:

1. A camera
2. A printer
3. Tracing paper
4. Sharp scissors or manicure scissors
5. Glue
6. Black and white construction paper

1. Have someone take a picture of you against a blank wall. This picture will be a profile of you. This is what your picture may look like.



Have the camera person stand as close as possible so that the image fills the screen.

2. Now put tracing paper over the image and carefully trace the profile.



3. Then put the tracing paper with the outline facing you on black construction paper. Either paste the tracing paper to the black paper or staple it. Remember the image must be facing you so you can cut it.



4. Using manicure scissors, carefully cut out the tracing paper and the black paper.

5. Paste the black silhouette to a larger piece of white paper.



You now have a silhouette of your profile. ***Does it look like you?***

Two years ago, these students came to the Hammond-Harwood House. They were in a program called ***Seeds for Success*** located in Eastport. They made their silhouettes in the same way you just did. They then framed them and wrote on small pieces of paper words that described their personality. You may wish to do the same.



We would love to see your silhouette. Ask your folks if it is O.K. to do that.

Please send an image to Rachel Lovell at hhhcurator@gmail.com.

Place your name on your silhouette.

Have fun!

Miss Judi

Volunteer Educator

