

# A330 Tutorial 1

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# Icarus

- This tutorial will focus on representations of the Icarus myth: how they represent the myth itself, and what they can tell us about attitudes and beliefs.

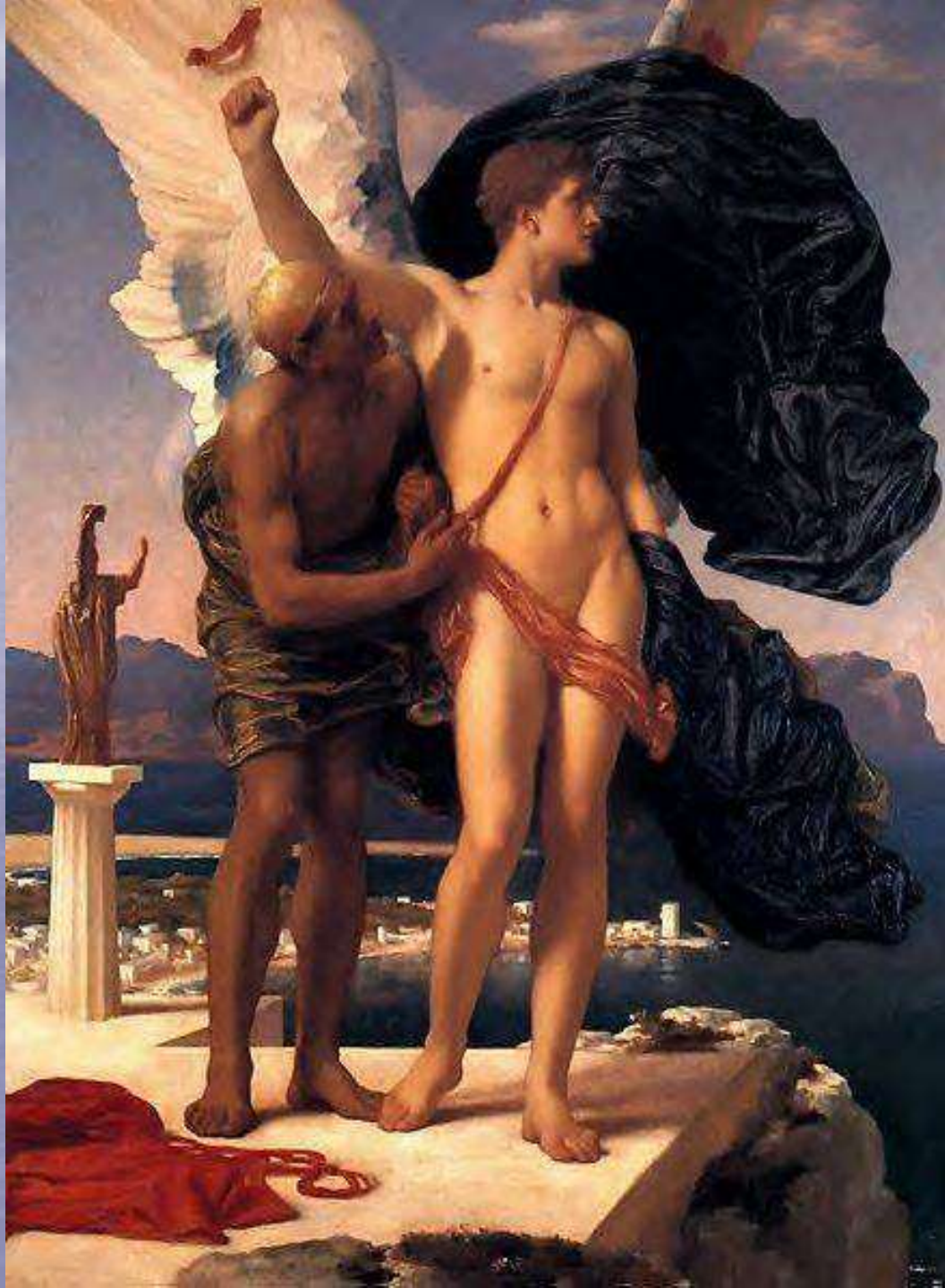
- If you were an artist, and wanted to paint the Icarus story, how would you do it?
  - Which episode of the story would you concentrate on, and why?
  - Do you think the story could easily be represented in an abstract way?



# Paintings

- In relation to each of the following paintings, please consider these two questions:
- 1) What choices has the artist made?
- 2) What message do you think he is trying to send?

- *Daedalus and Icarus*
- 1869 Lord Frederic Leighton



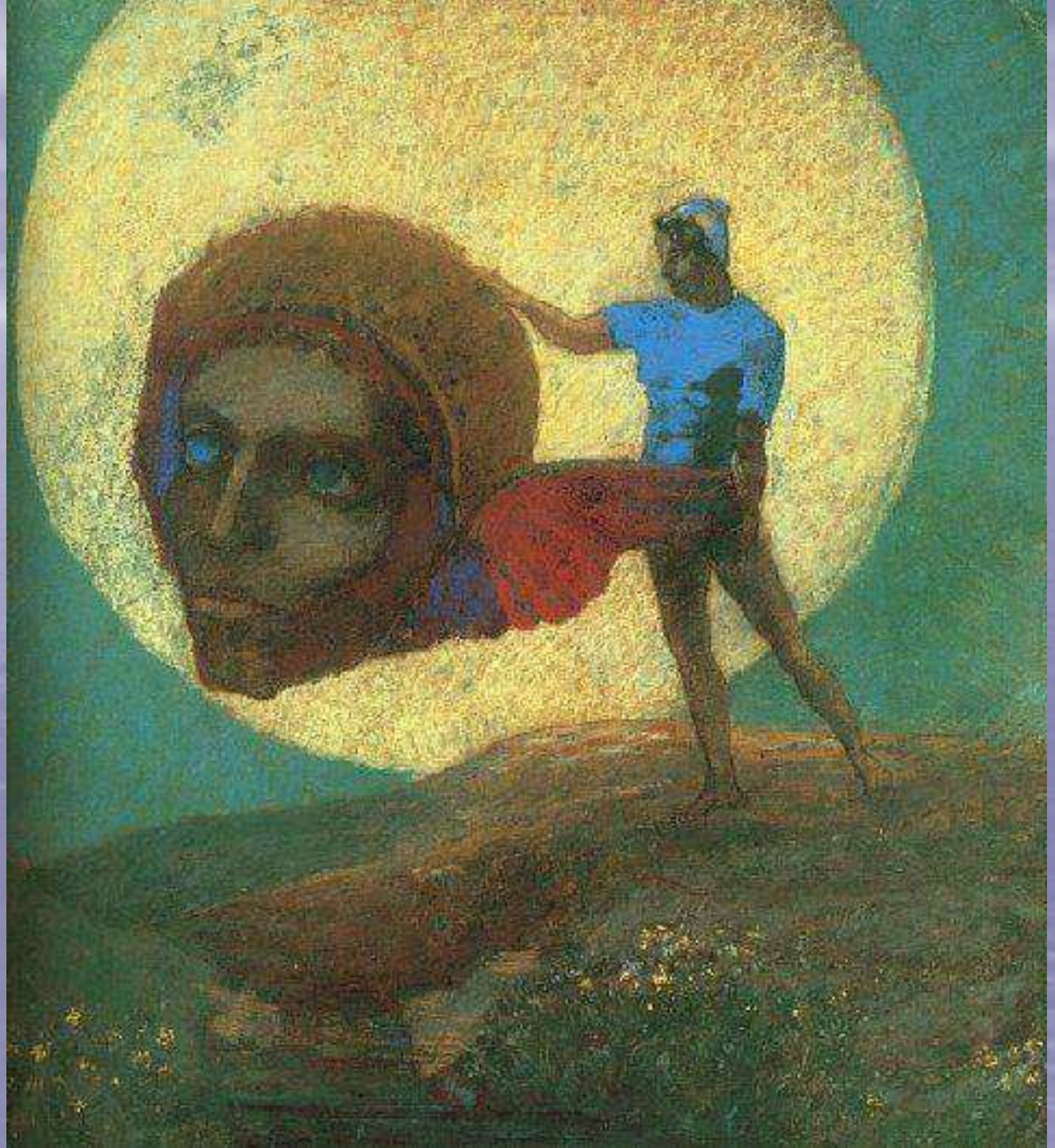


- *The Lament for Icarus*
- 1898 Herbert James Draper





- *The Fall of Icarus*
- 1876 Odilon Redon



- *Icarus*
- 1947 Henri Matisse





# Poems

- Take a look at these poems. In each case, ask yourself the same two questions:
- 1) What choices has the poet made?
- 2) What message do you think he/she is trying to send?

# To a Friend whose work has come to Triumph

By Anne Sexton (1928-1974)

Consider Icarus, pasting those sticky wings on,  
testing this strange little tug at his shoulder blade,  
and think of that first flawless moment over the lawn  
of the labyrinth. Think of the difference it made!  
There below are the trees, as awkward as camels;  
and here are the shocked starlings pumping past  
and think of innocent Icarus who is doing quite well:  
larger than a sail, over the fog and the blast  
of the plushy ocean, he goes. Admire his wings!  
Feel the fire at his neck and see how casually  
he glances up and is caught, wondrously tunneling  
into that hot eye. Who cares that he fell back to the sea?  
See him acclaiming the sun and come plunging down  
while his sensible daddy goes straight into town.



# ICARUS

by Edward Field (1924-)

Only the feathers floating around the hat  
Showed that anything more spectacular had occurred  
Than the usual drowning. The police preferred to ignore  
The confusing aspects of the case,  
And the witnesses ran off to a gang war.  
So the report filed and forgotten in the archives read simply  
Drowned, but it was wrong: Icarus  
Had swum away, coming at last to the city  
Where he rented a house and tended the garden.  
That nice Mr. Hicks the neighbors called him,  
Never dreaming that the gray, respectable suit  
Concealed arms that had controlled huge wings  
Nor that those sad, defeated eyes had once  
Compelled the sun. And had he told them  
They would have answered with a shocked,  
uncomprehending stare.

No, he could not disturb their neat front yards;  
Yet all his books insisted that this was a horrible mistake:  
What was he doing aging in a suburb?  
Can the genius of the hero fall  
To the middling stature of the merely talented?

And nightly Icarus probes his wound  
And daily in his workshop, curtains carefully drawn,  
Constructs small wings and tries to fly  
To the lighting fixture on the ceiling:  
Fails every time and hates himself for trying.

He had thought himself a hero, had acted heroically,  
And now dreamt of his fall, the tragic fall of the hero;  
But now rides commuter trains,  
Serves on various committees,  
And wishes he had drowned.



# The Meaning of Myth

- Does the Icarus myth have a single meaning?