

MULVANE ART MUSEUM OUTREACH PROGRAM
TEACHER RESOURCE PACKET

Multicultural Art

Artworks from the Mulvane Art Museum's Collection



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Mulvane Art Museum
Barbara Yoder and Kandis Barker (2001)
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OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW OF MATERIALS

Objectives:

- To provide students with a general appreciation of art.
- To provide students with a basic understanding of art concepts.
- To provide students with knowledge of the Mulvane Art Museum's collection.
- To provide students with knowledge of techniques used by artists.
- To provide students with the basis from which to analyze works of art.

Content:

- Images of works from the Mulvane's permanent collection.
- Text to accompany each image.
- Resources
- Glossary of art terms.

This unit meets the following Kansas Curricular Standards for Visual Arts:

Standard #2: Using knowledge of the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design.

Standard #4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Standard #5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of art.

Standard #6: Making connections between the visual arts and other disciplines.

Multicultural Art

Works of art from the Mulvane Art Museum Permanent Collection

Images

1. Anonymous artist, Mexico
Jalisco Warrior
Polychrome terra cotta
100 BCE – 250 CE
2. Utagawa Kuniyoshi
Snow at Tsukuhara, Sado Island
Woodcut
Mid-19th century
3. Elizabeth Terrell
Calico Cat
Gouache on board
1938
4. San Ildefonso Storage Jar in the style of Martina Vigil and Florentino Montoya
Storage Jar
Polychrome terra cotta
Before 1900
5. Yu Yu Yang
Interdependence
Stainless steel
1993

Looking at Art: An Introduction

This Curriculum Guide is designed to offer you ways to begin a dialog with your students about art. Using a variety of questioning strategies, we offer you some basic bulleted questions that will help you engage your students in conversation and lead them to further thought and discussion.

There are many good reasons to study art. We can enjoy an **aesthetic experience** by being aware of art's various properties. For example, we may notice the **sensory properties** – **color, line, shape, space, value, and texture**. Known also as the **elements of art**, these make up the basic vocabulary of the artist. While looking at art we may also note the **formal properties**, also called the **principles of design**. These refer to how the artist has used the elements of art and include the concepts of **unity, repetition, contrast, balance, movement (or direction), and emphasis (or center of interest)**. **Technical properties** address the artist's choice of **medium** and technique. For example, are we looking at a watercolor or a bronze sculpture? Did the artist use chisel or chalk? Lastly, **expressive properties** attend to the mood or meaning of the art based on the visual elements. What sort of feeling does the artwork create? What might the artist have intended to communicate? Attending to the properties of art - sensory, formal, technical, and expressive – helps viewers to experience works of art more completely.

Multicultural Art

From the beginning of time, human beings the world over have created art. Although not all cultures have a word for what we call “art,” they have, nonetheless, created objects for different purposes and decorated them in an attempt to beautify their world. In all cultures, what we understand to be art reflects the beliefs, experiences, and basic needs of the members of society.

The visual arts provide avenues for learning about various people, times and places. Exploring other cultures through art permits us to make direct connections to our own lives and experiences.

The five works from the Mulvane Art Museum’s collection that compose this unit on multicultural art range in age, media, function and origin. Each highlights a unique perception of reality informed by cultural factors. They include the figure of a pre-Columbian warrior, a Japanese woodcut of the mid-19th century, a painting by an American woman, a functional storage jar from the American Southwest, and a contemporary stainless steel sculpture by a Taiwanese artist.

Jalisco Warrior

100 BCE – 250 CE

Anonymous

Polychrome terra cotta



A Note About Anonymous Artists

Most artists today sign their works. They want to be credited with having made particular paintings or sculptures, so they add their names to their art. Some artists have become famous for their styles, and are revered in much the same way as Hollywood stars. Think of famous artists like Picasso, Rembrandt, Van Gogh, and Matisse – their names may be nearly as familiar to us as the Beatles or Michael Jackson.

However, we do not always know who created some works of art. In museums, some object labels bear the term “anonymous” because the artist is unknown.

The first object in this unit is a sculpted figure that was found in an ancient burial tomb in western Jalisco Province in Mexico. We do not know the name of the artist who created the artwork or about the artist’s life. Therefore, our Curators identified the art by where it was found, the approximate age of the sculpture, its style, and what material was used to create the artwork.



Jalisco Warrior

Anonymous artist, Mexico

Jalisco Warrior

100 BCE – 250 CE

Anonymous

Polychrome terra cotta



Historical and Cultural Information

Figures such as this are found in preclassic-era burial grounds in western Mexico. Although we do not fully understand their purpose, it is clear that they were buried along with other objects in the graves of important people. One theory is that such figures served as spirit companions for the dead. Note the warrior's protective gear and implements. These may have been intended for athletics or for warfare.

Sensory Properties

- Is the figure composed of mostly organic or geometric **shapes**?
- Name the places where the artist has used **lines** to imply detail.

Formal Properties

- Is this figure mostly **symmetrical** or **asymmetrical**?
- Does the figure appear to be **balanced** or unbalanced?

Technical Properties

- Does the figure appear to be made of metal or clay?
- Is the sculpture a **portrait** of an individual, or do you think it is a symbolic figure? Explain.

Expressive Properties

- Does this figure appear scary or friendly? Why?
- What **meaning** might this figure have held at the time it was created?



Utagawa Kuniyoshi
1797 – 1861

- Kuniyoshi was one of the last great masters of the Japanese color **woodcut** tradition in the nineteenth century.
- A master storyteller, Kuniyoshi interpreted ancient myths and legends for contemporary audiences.
- As a printmaker, Kuniyoshi embraced a wide range of subjects, including landscapes, decorative fans, and legendary heroes engaged in battle. He also created images of actors, beautiful women, witches, skeletons and sea animals.
- Due to increased communication and trade among nations, Kuniyoshi was influenced by European art. In turn, many European artists were influenced by Japanese woodcut artists, including Kuniyoshi.
- Kuniyoshi and other Japanese woodcut artists of the nineteenth century typically made huge editions of their prints. Therefore, the print that belongs in the Mulvane's collection is not the only one of its kind in the world.
- Kuniyoshi's works are known as **ukiyo-e** or *floating world* prints. These are colorful, popular depictions of subjects from the secular world of the nineteenth century.



Snow at Tsukuhara, Sado Island

Utagawa Kuniyoshi

Snow at Tsukuhara, Sado Island

Mid-19th century

Utagawa Kuniyoshi

Woodcut



Cultural and Historical Information

Snow at Tsukuhara, Sado Island depicts an event in the life of the legendary founder of Nichiren Buddhism, Nichiren (1222 – 1282). It belongs to a series of prints that chronicle his life. Nichiren was punished by exile for criticizing other religious groups and the politicians who supported them. In this print, Nichiren struggles against the cold wind, walking alone in a snowstorm. His struggle against the wind seems to symbolize Nichiren's struggle in life.

Sensory Properties

- How has Kuniyoshi used the **elements of art** to create a sense of a very cold day in winter?
- Name the **colors** that you see. Are they mostly warm colors or cool colors?

Formal Properties

- Besides the flakes of snow, what has the artist **repeated**?
- Is this print symmetrically **balanced** or asymmetrically balanced?
- What **contrasts** do you find?

Technical Properties

- Kuniyoshi used sharp tools to **carve** the image into a piece of wood. What other tools or materials did he need for the printing process?
- Why does a printmaker need to think backward, or in opposites?

Expressive Properties

- How does this image make you feel?
- Does the scene appear peaceful or chaotic?



Elizabeth Terrell
20th century (dates unknown)

- American artist Elizabeth Terrell painted during the Great Depression of the 1930s.
- Because American artists were suffering from high levels of unemployment, the Roosevelt government paid many of them to record scenes of American life.
- Elizabeth Terrell was employed by the Works Progress Administration to paint pictures for public places and for common people.
- According to President Franklin Roosevelt, American artists were “...native, human, eager and alive. All of it [their art] was painted by their own kind in their own country, and painted about things that they know and look at often and have touched and loved.” (Exhibition Catalog: *75 Years, 75 Treasures*. Mulvane Art Museum, Topeka, KS., 1999.)
- The Mulvane Art Museum has 97 WPA works on paper, including this painting by Terrell, *Calico Cat*.



Calico Cat

Elizabeth Terrell

Calico Cat

1938

Elizabeth Terrell

Gouache on board



Cultural and Historical Information

Elizabeth Terrell painted a scene from the daily life that she knew in the 1930s. If the people appear not to be busy working, perhaps that is because many Americans were out of work at the time. The people in this picture are African Americans, a group that suffered greatly during the Great Depression.

Sensory Properties

- Besides gray, what **colors** do you find in the painting?
- Are these colors mostly bright or are they subdued?
- Find examples of horizontal and vertical **lines**.

Formal Properties

- What is the **center of interest**? Where do your eyes go immediately?
- How has the artist created a sense of **depth** in the scene?

Technical Properties

- Terrell used a **medium** called **gouache** to make this painting. How does gouache appear different from or similar to oils?
- Has Terrell included a lot of **detail** in the work? Name some of the details you find.
- What details has the artist left out?

Expressive Properties

- Do the people in the painting appear to be interacting or do they seem isolated from one another?
- What words best describe the **mood** of the particular day depicted here?



Storage Jar

Pre-1900 (date unknown)

In the Style of

Martina Vigil and Florentino Montoya

Polychrome terra cotta

A Note About “In the Style of”

Like the Jalisco Warrior, this vessel is unsigned. Sometimes, however, we can find clues to the possible origin of an artwork and identify it as being “in the style of” a particular artist.

To determine the possible artist(s) or creator(s), Appraisers and Curators look at many factors such as where was the art object found or acquired, when the artwork was created, what materials were used to make it, the shape of the artwork and the style of its decoration.

Our Curators determined that this vessel is *in the style of* Martina Vigil and Florentino Montoya.

How did they do that?

- The vessel is from the San Ildefonso Pueblo.
- The pot is identified as having been made and painted before 1900 because of the red-painted lip of the vessel; later pots from the San Ildefonso Pueblo were painted black. Therefore, the Curators know it was made before 1900.
- Martina Vigil and Florentino Montoya were a team of ceramic artists who worked in the San Ildefonso Pueblo, along the banks of the Rio Grande near Santa Fe, New Mexico.
- The husband-wife team of artists created sturdy pots in traditional forms and shapes.
- Following a tradition common in their Pueblo, the wife, Martina, made the pots and her husband, Florentino, decorated them.
- Florentino’s polychrome surface designs often combined both geometric and organic motifs, as seen on this vessel.



Storage Jar

Martina Vigil and Florentino Montoya

San Ildefonso Storage Jar

Before 1900

In the style of Martina Vigil and Florentino Montoya

Polychrome terra cotta



Cultural and Historical Information

Jars and other pottery vessels such as this are found in abundance in the pueblos of New Mexico. They have been produced since prehistoric times. Although there are similarities among all of the pottery, each individual pueblo has its own style and decorative motifs.

Sensory Properties

- Where do you find **lines** in the jar's surface design?
- Describe the **shapes** you see in the surface design. Are the shapes organic (such as shapes found in nature) or are the shapes geometric (such as those used in geometry)?
- How do you think the jar would feel if you could touch it? What is its **texture**?

Formal Properties

- Is the **form** of this pot symmetrical or asymmetrical?
- Is the surface decoration symmetrical or asymmetrical?

Technical Properties

- Is the jar made of clay or wood?
- Do you think it was formed by hand or by a mold? Explain.

Expressive Properties

- What makes the design of this jar pleasing to the eye?
- Do the designs look like anything we find in nature or are they abstract?



Yu Yu Yang 1926-1998

- Yu Yu Yang was born in Taiwan and educated in Tokyo and Beijing.
- The sculptor became famous when he was commissioned by the architect, I.M. Pei, to create a work for the Osaka World Expo in 1970.
- His sculptural works, called “lifescapes,” decorate public spaces in numerous countries throughout the world.
- Based on the Chinese concept of unity of humans and their universe, Yu Yu Yang’s abstract sculptures reflect his belief in the zodiac.
- Yu Yu Yang blends the old and the contemporary, looking to the past 5000 years of Chinese culture for artistic inspiration and mixing it with the new.



INTERDEPENDENCE

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DEDICATED 1996

Interdependence

Yu Yu Yang

Interdependence

1993

Yu Yu Yang

Polished stainless steel



Cultural and Historical Information

Interdependence graces the front lawn of the Mulvane Art Museum. A Museum Board member who was familiar with the artist brought the large sculpture to the Museum. In contrast to the building – one of the oldest art museums in Kansas – *Interdependence* reveals the on-going spirit and changing nature of art.

Sensory Properties

- Which seems more important in the sculpture, **line** or **color**?
- Describe the **texture** of the work. What are some words to describe how it might feel to touch?

Formal Properties

- How does your eye travel as you look at the sculpture?
- The piece seems to convey a lot of movement, doesn't it?

Technical Properties

- What might the effect be if *Interdependence* were made from wood instead of stainless steel? What if it were made of bright red plastic – or another medium?
- Notice the reflective surface of the artwork? What might be mirrored on the surface (the viewer, nature, the sky)?

Expressive Properties

- What mood do the curving lines of the sculpture convey?
- Which word best describes *Interdependence*: whimsical, dynamic, or still? Why?

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
Geography of the Plains
Multicultural Art
Narrative Art

abstract – Having little or no reference to the appearance of natural objects, but instead a generalized form based on reality.

aesthetics – Visual properties by which a work is critiqued.

alla prima – Italian term meaning “at first.” A technique of painting directly onto a surface without using under-painting or under-drawing.

aquatint – A form of intaglio printing in which the artist uses resin dust to resist the biting action of the acid. Works well for producing tonal areas.

armature – Framework made of materials such as wood, wire, etc. to support material being modeled.

Art Students League, NYC – Founded in 1875. First independent art school in the U.S. and a major force in 20th century art movements.

assemblage – Technique of creating 3-dimensional works of art by combining a variety of elements, such as found objects, into a compositional whole.

balance – A visual feeling of weight.

B.C.E. – Before the Common Era.

blind contour method – A process for drawing that requires artists to focus solely on the subject rather than the surface on which they work.

C.E. – Common Era.

chiaroscuro – Italian, meaning “light/dark.” Refers to the use of value contrasts to represent light and shadow.

circa/ca. – About/around.

collage – An artistic composition made up of various materials (e.g., printed matter, photographs, and cloth) attached to a flat surface.

color – The character of a surface that is the result of the response of vision to the wavelength of light reflected from that surface. A visual phenomenon that is made of light and depends on light.

composition – In an artwork, the arrangement of the elements of art using the principles of design.

conte – Crayon-like drawing material; pigment suspended in wax.

contrast – An abrupt change such as one sees when placing two dissimilar colors or objects side by side. Contrast creates variety within a work of art. Some examples of contrasts are large/small, rough/smooth, cool/warm, and opaque/transparent.

cross-hatching – A system of parallel or perpendicular lines drawn to create tonality.

elements of art – Line, shape, color, value, texture, and space. Also called “sensory properties.”

emphasis – That which directs attention to a particular part of a work. This may be the *focal point*, or *center of interest*. There may be several areas of emphasis in one artwork.

etching – A printmaking process in which a metal plate is covered with an acid-resistant substance called “ground.” The surface of the ground is removed where the point of the scribe makes contact with the plate. The image is drawn into the ground. The plate is then immersed in an acid bath and the acid cuts, or “bites” the image onto the plate. Because the acid etch creates a clear and precise cut in the plate, the image that results after the plate is inked and run through the press is a sharply defined line.

expressive properties – The mood or meaning of a work of art.

focal point – (See “emphasis.”)

formal properties – Principles or properties by which artists use the elements of art. These include balance repetition/rhythm, movement, contrast, emphasis, unity. Also called “principles of design.”

gouache – An opaque water-soluble medium.

Harlem Renaissance – A significant 20th century African American cultural movement in Harlem, New York City.

icon – An image or symbolic representation that frequently has sacred significance.

impasto – An Italian word meaning “in paste.” In impasto, oil paint is applied thickly to a surface to create texture.

intaglio – Any printmaking technique in which lines and areas to be inked and transferred to paper are recessed below the surface of the printing plate. For example, etching, engraving, drypoint and aquatint are intaglio processes.

landscape – The depiction of an outdoor scene.

line – A mark created by a pointed tool such as a pencil, pen, or brush moving across a surface.

lithography – A printing process that does not involve engraving. Instead, a crayon or other greasy medium is used to draw on a smooth surface such as a stone or plate. Lithography is based on the fact that grease and water repel one another.

medium/media (singular/plural) – The material with which an artist works such as ink, bronze, oil paint, or watercolor.

montage – A composition made up of pictures or parts of pictures previously drawn, painted, or photographed.

movement – The direction the viewer’s eyes take when looking at a work of art. Sometimes it refers to the depiction of actual movement or action within the work.

organic shape – An organic shape is one that is natural or derived from nature (in contrast to a geometric shape).

patron – A supporter of an artist. Patrons might commission an artist to create a work especially for them.

perspective – The illusion of depth in a two-dimensional work.

polychromatic – Having many colors; random or intuitive use of color combinations.

portrait – A work of art showing a likeness of an individual.

pre-Columbian – Latin American art created before the 1492 arrival of Christopher Columbus in the western hemisphere.

principles of design – Principles by which artists use the elements of art. These include balance, repetition/rhythm, movement, contrast, emphasis, and unity. Also called “formal properties.”

realism – In art, the depiction of something as it appears in true life. In contrast to abstraction, realism closely resembles actual reality.

repetition/rhythm – A regular flow created by actual or implied connections between various parts of an artwork. Uniform rhythm results in a pattern while alternating patterns provide interest and help to move the viewer’s eye through the work.

sensory properties – Line, shape, color, value, texture, and space. Also called “elements of art.”

serigraph (also called “screen printing”) – A printmaking technique in which stencils are applied to a screen (fabric stretched across a frame). Paint or ink is forced with a squeegee through the unblocked portions of the screen onto paper or another surface beneath.

shape/form – Area contained between implied lines. (Shape refers to height and width. Form refers to height, width and depth.)

space – The interval between pre-established points.

symbol – An object or sign that stands for something else.

technical properties – The medium and technique used to create a work of art.

terra cotta – Italian for “baked earth.” A porous, reddish ceramic-ware fired at low temperatures; also called earthenware.

texture – The tactile or surface quality of an object or material.

three-dimensional – In art, this refers to a work in the round. For example, a sculpture is three-dimensional. It may be measured up and down (height), across (width), and front to back (depth). In some cases, viewers may walk all the way around a three-dimensional object.

Tokaido – A highway that runs along the Pacific coast of Japan. An especially significant transportation artery during the 19th century.

ukiyo-e – A type of colorful Japanese woodblock printing. Means “floating world” in Japanese.

unity – That which makes all parts of an artwork work together to create a unified, harmonious composition.

value – The relative lightness or darkness of a surface created by the amount of light reflected from it.

wash – A highly diluted color used over a broad area.

woodcut – Oldest method of printmaking. Involves artists cutting away the surface of the block upon which they do not want the ink to adhere. The desired image remains as the printing surface.

RESOURCES

Some Resources for Art Materials:

United Art & Education
P.O. Box 9219
Ft. Wayne, IN 46899-9219
1-800-322-3247
<<http://www.unitednow.com>>.

Sax Art Education/School Specialty
P.O. Box 1579
Appleton, WI 54912-1579
1-888-388-3224
<<http://www.saxarts.com>>.

Triarco Arts & Crafts
2600 Fernbrook Lane, Suite 100
Plymouth, MN 55447
1-800-328-3360
<<http://www.triarcoarts.com>>.

Dick Blick Art Materials
P.O. Box 1267
Galesburg, IL 61402-1267
1-800-828-4548
<<http://www.dickblick.com>>.

Nasco Arts & Crafts
901 Janesville Ave.
Ft. Atkinson, WI 53538-0901
1-800-558-9595
<<http://www.enasco.com>>.

Discount School Supply
P.O. Box 6013
Carol Stream, IL 60197-6013
1-800-627-2829
<<http://www.discountschoolsupply.com>>.

Some Resources for Posters and Reproductions:

Crystal Productions

P.O. Box 2159

Glenview, IL 60025

1-200-255-8629

<<http://www.crystalproductions.com>>.

Davis Publications

50 Portland St.

Worcester, MA 01608

1-800-533-2847

<<http://www.davisart.com>>.

Shorewood Fine Arts Reproductions

129 Glover Ave.

Norwalk, CT 06850

1-800-677-6947

<<http://www.nygs.com>>.

Some Resources for Periodicals:

Arts and Activity Magazine. (Series). Publishers Development Corp.

<<http://www.artsandactivities.com>>.

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<<http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/classmags/art.htm>>.

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Art Connections: Integrating Art Throughout the Curriculum by Kimberly Boehler Thompson and Diana Standing Loftus. Glenview, IL: GoodYearBooks, 1995.

Children and Painting by Cathy Weisman Topal. Worcester, MA: Davis, 1992.

Emphasis Art: A Qualitative Art Program for Elementary and Middle Schools by Frank Wachowiak and Robert D. Clements. New York: Addison, Wesley, Longmen, Inc., 1997.

Teaching Meaning in Artmaking by Sydney Walker. Worcester, MA: Davis, 2001.

A Handbook of Arts and Crafts by Phillip Wigg, et al. Madison: Brown & Benchmark, 1997.

Teacher Questionnaire and Evaluation

1. Did you present all of the 5 works to your students or did you select from among them?
2. How would you evaluate your students' interest in the presentation?
3. Which particular works of art most appealed to your students?
4. Which particular works of art least appealed to your students?
5. Did you find the glossary of terms helpful for your presentation of the materials?
6. What suggestions for change or modification do you have? (You may write on the back of this page.)

Please send completed questionnaire to:

Mulvane Art Museum, Education
1700 SW College
Topeka, KS 66621.