



Foster Elementary

PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

Art Masterpiece

1st Grade Projects

Contents

October Project.....	2
Thanksgiving Food Collection Box.....	2
November Project.....	3
“Africa, Baga Tribe” - Wood & Metal Mask - AE159.....	3
December Project	7
Jackson Pollock - Action Painting	7
January Project.....	10
“Ground Hog Day” by Andrew Wyeth	10
February Project.....	13
"The Young Girl"	13
March Project.....	19
Egypt, "Sphinx and Pyramids" - AE193	19



Foster Elementary

PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

October Project

Thanksgiving Food Collection Box

The project will consist of decorating a box that will be placed inside each classroom for the collection of canned goods for the fall community service project benefitting Society of Saint Stephens.

Goal: To get the class to work together to come up with a theme and ideas on how to decorate your class box. Complete the project in class and show students how they can work together on a project.

Example: Box decorated as a turkey. Divide class into groups and have each group work on a body part. One group can paint and assemble the head, another, the body, another, the wings, another, the legs and the last group can create a poster with a slogan. “Flocking together to Feed our Friends in Need”

Supplies: The boxes will be supplied for the project. Any art supplies that in the art masterpiece cabinets on the bottom can be used as well as the butcher paper that is in the work area in the back half of the teachers lounge.

Theme ideas: could be...

Helping hands working together... Have the class put their handprints around the box with various pictures of people helping one another.

A Thanksgiving theme ...where each child puts something he or she is thankful for on the box.

A fall theme... with leaves and fall items around the box.

A school spirit ...theme with Foster bulldogs on the box.

Have fun with the kids on this and let them "own" the project!

Boxes should be displayed inside the classroom due to fire hazard in hallways.

This project will help the students feel more involved in the giving process and help them appreciate the difference they are making in the lives of people who are less fortunate in our community.

Boxes have been placed in the supply area..one per classroom.

For examples, please click on the photo gallery tab above!



Foster Elementary

PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

November Project

“Africa, Baga Tribe” - Wood & Metal Mask - AE159

QUESTIONS:

1. What is this? (a mask)
2. What is it made of? (wood)
3. What is it a mask of? (face, spirit, god)
4. What shapes are used in the mask? (circles, triangles, oval, rectangles)
5. What colors are used in the mask?
6. How can a mask change the way you look? (accept all answers)
7. What could a mask be used for? (party, dance, Halloween)
8. Who do you know that wears a mask? (clown, surgeon, nurse, bee keepers, firemen, skin diver, etc.)
9. Why do people wear masks? (germs, protection, to make people laugh, scare people, a party, a holiday, ritual celebration)
10. When during the year would you wear a mask? (Halloween, Mardi Gras)

SUMMARY:

The mask we are going to study today is an African mask, made by a man in the Baga African tribe. In African society, masks were the main artistic outlet. The masks became a central part in the Baga tribe's everyday life. Masks were created as a means to achieve their goals and celebrate their lives. Ex. Birth, Death, Protection, Hunting, Harvest. When the African tribe went to war they created angry, intimidating masks. When they wanted a good hunt they created masks to represent the animal they wanted to catch. And when they wanted to celebrate a persons life or death they created a spirit mask to help bring the person into this world or to help them pass into the next. When the Baga people wore their masks they actually believed that they transformed into they masks character. This mask was made by an African tribesman. It is very large and covers the head and upper body. The fringe covers the bottom part of the body. This mask represents a spirit that they used in ceremonial dance that told a story of something they needed. Possibly an antelope for a good bounty at an upcoming hunt.

ART:

Create an African mask. Use paper plates – black markers create the main designs and white paint can be used to add highlights. Use a hole punch to tie on the raffia, string the beads on the raffia and feathers to decorate.



Foster Elementary

PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

Materials:

feathers	glue	paper plates painted brown in advance
black markers	beads	raffia and/or pipe cleaners
white paint	whole punch	

Procedure:

1. Today we are going to make our own African Mask. Discuss African symbols and pass out symbol sheets provided in supply cabinets.
2. Have the students think about what they want their mask to represent (royalty, warrior, teacher) and incorporate symbols into their mask design.
3. Have students use black marker to make design on mask and use white paint to highlight. Use white paint sparingly; students tend to paint over everything!
4. Finish decorating by adding feather and raffia/pipe cleaners with beads. Raffia can be attached prior to lesson by using hole punch and tying it onto the mask. Students also love to string beads onto both the raffia and pipe cleaners. See example in cabinet.

This is a very busy project so be sure and get a few helpers. 1 helper per table is best.

* PAINT THE PAPER PLATES BROWN PRIOR TO THE CLASS TO SAVE TIME. YOU MAY ALSO WANT TO PUNCH A COUPLE OF HOLES IN THE PLATES AND TIE ON THE RAFFIA IN ADVANCE AS WELL.



Foster Elementary

PTA - Art Masterpiece - 1st Grade

Africa, Baga Tribe



Wood & Metal Mask

Wood and metal Banda mask, 19th Century Size of original: 54"
 Courtesy of The Brooklyn Museum, New York
 AE159

Only too often do we read into a work of art our own psychological reactions and afford it an interpretation which its maker would never consciously have striven to communicate.

Margaret Trowell

INTRODUCTION

On the occasion of the extensive and notorious exhibition, "Primitivism in 20th Century Art," in 1984 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, Calvin Tomkins wrote: "The elevation of tribal objects from ethnographical artifacts to the status of high art was brought about entirely by modern artists, and the repercussions of this process is still going on." Ever since Picasso "discovered" African primitive art and exchanged the once white faces of two of the women in his sensational large painting, "Les Femmes d'Alger" for the distorted and fearful countenances that so resemble African masks, these ritual objects have been sought after and collected, not only by museums, but by individuals who display them as "art." But, like the "art" of the Egyptians (see *Stela*), African sculptures such as the 'Banda' mask above were utilitarian objects connected to the culture; they were not meant to be primarily aesthetic or 'art' (as we

understand it) by the people who created them, least of all the high art into which the European culture transformed them. Rather, they were tribal arts. Masks such as this Simo society mask were ritual objects used in tribal rites, often worn with elaborate and colorful costumes in ceremonial dances which were performed for specific—often religious, always spiritual—purposes, tied to the everyday life of the tribe. One such well known mask is *Nimba*, which personifies fertility. And because the life of the tribe depends upon the fruitfulness, not only of crops and animals, but the proliferation of the members of the tribe, the arrival of *Nimba* before the harvest to lead the village in solemn ceremonial dance is a very important celebration in the ritual of the tribe. Margaret Trowell writes: "It is all important to remember that African sculpture is not designed to convey to the onlooker the character of the spiritual powers. The sculptures are ritual objects made to be

used in ritual acts, aimed to influence not the human beholder but the spiritual powers themselves.... We may find it difficult to understand because it speaks in the foreign language of a foreign culture.... Only too often do we read into a work of art our own psychological reactions and afford it an interpretation which its maker would never consciously have striven to communicate."

HISTORY

It is important to realize that an understanding of the spiritual and magical nature of African sculpture and masks is difficult not only for us, but even for young Africans of today. The beliefs of the African of the old world centered about a sense of oneness, with the individual as "only one small fragment of the fluctuating life of the tribe" and a belief in "a fluid spiritual force coursing through mankind." Trowell writes of these spiritual forces: "But this sense of oneness, of participation in the spirit went beyond the boundary of mankind. It included participation in the whole visible and invisible universe: the dead were still an intrinsic and powerful part of the family; indeed, in matters of the spirit they were more powerful than the living themselves. Furthermore, not only the living and the dead but also other forms of existence—the very rocks and stones, and, in fact, the whole cosmos—were included in the Africans' conception of this unified totality which they sought to participate in and to comprehend. The visible and the invisible world, the human and divine, the past and the present, formed one harmonious whole, and man had to fit himself into this unity." This would certainly explain the reason for the integration, in masks such as this, of human and animal forms. In this Simo society mask the forms of the human face are combined with the ears and horns of the antelope and the teeth of the crocodile. Since both animals and humans are equally part of the totality, then the spirits of both combine, as represented in the masks used in the ritual dances and ceremonies. These ritual acts are performed at appropriate times—at rites of initiation, of passage into manhood or womanhood or even death—by the often secret societies, such as the Simo, in order to assure such things as a successful passage from childhood to adulthood, from life to



death, or fertility, as personified by *Nimba* before the harvest.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

When we think of masks, we envision the Western concept of the mask, such as those of fancy dress balls or the mask worn by the bandits in the old West. This mask is generally worn over the face, primarily hiding the eyes, with slits or other openings through which the wearer can see. The African mask, on the other hand, like the *Nimba*, is often raised on the shoulders of the carrier, whose body is hidden by lengths of fiber. This Simo society mask of the Baga tribe, a 'Banda' mask or one of high rank in the society, is one of a group of large horizontal masks worn slanting on the top of the head by tribes of the coastal and lagoon areas from Guinea to Calabar. In order to visualize this mask as it would appear in the context of the ceremonial dance, we need to look at the illustration of the 'Banda' mask as worn by the carrier. Although it is carved of a light weight wood and hollowed out, it would still be quite a burden for the carrier as these masks are much larger than one might imagine. Some 'Banda' masks, in fact, are nearly six feet long. Picture this mask, then, in a horizontal position, slanted slightly forward, with the horns of the antelope towards the back of the head and, in the front, what seems to be the pointed chin of the human—the stylized human head actually appears on top of the head of the carrier—but which, when worn, becomes the jaws of the crocodile, showing a row of menacing jagged metal teeth. Because these are spiritual rather than realistic representations, they become abstract—they portray only the essence; in this case, the spirit of the portrayed persona. Yet we are able to identify the ears and the horns of the antelope and the human face, eyes, nose and mouth; and because the Baga is a coastal tribe, we recognize the representation of the water spirit, symbolized in this mask by the teeth of the crocodile. Whereas some African masks are simply carved from wood left in its natural state, the masks of the Baga are characteristically decorated with incised designs and painted in many colors or 'polychromed.' The colors in this mask, which have faded or have otherwise become altered in the more than one hundred years since it was

made, would originally have been primarily white, red, blue and black. The designs are traditional and can be found in decoration in masks, sculptures and fabrics from other tribes throughout Africa. How many different designs or patterns can be found in this mask? Find pictures of other African masks, sculptures and fabrics and identify these same patterns in the objects of other tribes. The overall design of the mask is prescribed by tradition and by ritual and in every 'Banda' mask, although they may be more or less elaborate, or more or less carefully or intricately carved, the elements remain the same.

STUDIO ACTIVITIES

Michel Leiris and Jacqueline Delange write: "Masks are believed not only to be symbolic, but to exercise actual



Baga, 'Banda' mask. Bemisches historisches Museum, Bern.

power. They lie at the heart of what it is convenient to call 'animism,' a mixture of beliefs and practices based on the assumption that spiritual beings fill all nature, animate and inanimate, and that all life is a continuous process and not a new life. The spirit of the dead passes into everything with which man is in contact, into every animal, every patch of ground, every river, pond, rock, tree, etc. The spirits can be benevolent or malevolent according to the way they are treated. Masks are essentially receptacles of these spirits and that is why they play an essential part in ceremonies connected with the dead and with the soil...." It would be difficult for those who are neither Africans nor members of the Baga tribe or the Simo society to try to create a mask such as this 'Banda' mask. Nor would it necessarily be possible, if we were all of those things, to be able to create a mask such as this. The carver of this mask would have been apprenticed at a young age to an older, more experi-

enced craftsman, and the craft would have been handed down from generation to generation of craftsmen. The carver would have been given instruction in the appropriate colors and patterns and the designated design of the mask, and he would have been given the secret knowledge of its sacred and magical powers. But students can recreate the experience of the mask-maker, and at the same time, gain a knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, the rituals and the customs of the tribes of Africa. The students would begin by creating their own secret society; they would need to decide the purposes of the society, whether it related to such primary necessities as does the *Nimba* for fertility, or whether it would be a more current concern for the cure of illness or the end of war, for example. They would decide on the form of the mask—it might be animal or human or a combination, as in the 'Banda' mask, or, bringing the society into the twentieth century, it might be a machine. What would the designs look like? They should not strictly imitate the African designs, but new designs could be invented to symbolize a particular object or function which would represent our own culture. How would the mask be worn? This might also depend on the size or function of the mask. What would be the materials; the colors? Would it be used as part of a ceremony or a dance? Would the body be covered as well as the head? Would it be designed to evoke a magical being? benevolent or malevolent? Given the same basic guidelines, different groups of students could create their own masks and a ritual could be performed with the resulting creations.

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REFERENCES

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- Calvin Tomkins. The Art World: Talismans. *The New Yorker*, October 29, 1984.
- Margaret Trowell. Form and Content of African Art. In Ferdinand Anton et al. (Eds.), *Primitive Art: Pre-Columbian, North American Indian, African, Oceanic*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1979.



Foster Elementary

PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

December Project

Jackson Pollock - Action Painting

QUESTIONS:

1. What is this a picture of? (paint splatters)
2. Does the painting look like a picture of something? (no)
3. How do you think the artist made this painting? (splattered and dripped paint from a paint brush)
4. Does the painting make you feel any certain way? (a firm all answers)
5. Does the painting have energy? (yes, the splatters create a feeling of movement and energy)
6. Is this art? (yes, it is called abstract expressionism - discuss the artist)

HISTORY:

Pollock, Jackson (1912-56). American painter, the commanding figure of the Abstract

Expressionist movement.

Jackson Pollock was an American abstract expressionist painter who was famous for innovative "action paintings". Instead of careful brush strokes, Jackson Pollock dripped, poured, and splattered paint. As Pollock experimented and developed his distinctive techniques, his paintings became ever larger and more dramatic. He would unroll large canvases onto the floor of his studio and work on them from all sides. Occasionally he would have to step carefully onto the canvas, or lean out over it. (Sometimes he even left handprints in the paint!)

Pollock had studied classical drawing and composition, and also American "regionalist" painting styles, but as he studied he found himself drawn to produce larger murals. In need of a steady paying job through the latter part of the Great Depression and the World War II years, he painted murals for the Works Progress Administration's "Federal Art Project". After eight years of painting murals, he quit to work full time in his own studio. Although he had experimented with dripping paint onto flat canvases as early as 1936, it wasn't until 1947 that this technique took precedence. Pollock described this technique as "direct" painting. He liked to compare it to American Indian "sand paintings", where colored or pigmented sand is methodically arranged on the floor in temporary ritual exhibitions.

Jackson Pollock explained an important aspect of his technique:

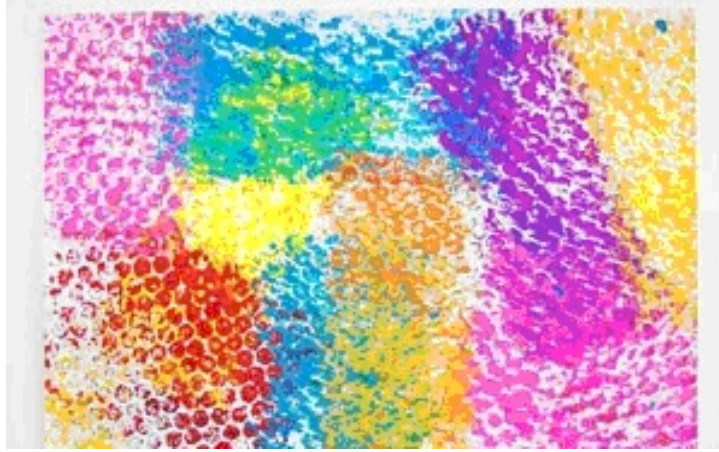
"When I am in my painting, I'm not aware of what I'm doing. It is only after a sort of get-acquainted period that I see what I have been about. I have no fears about making changes, destroying the image, etc., because the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through. It is only when I lose contact with the painting that the result is a mess. Otherwise there is pure harmony, an easy give and take, and the painting comes out well."



Foster Elementary

PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

ART:



Bubble Wrap Prints - All-over style of painting like Jackson Pollock

Materials:

Bubble wrap
Scissors
Poster paint
Paint brushes
White paper
Colored construction paper

Procedure:

1. Cut bubble wrap sheet into 6" squares prior to class along with white paper.
2. Cover your work area with a sheet of paper that is larger than the bubble wrap. Tape paper down. Put the bubble wrap at the center of the paper, bubbly side-up and tape corners down.
3. Apply paint to your bubble wrap sheet with foam brushes. As you paint, you will discover how the colors meet to make new colors: red and blue makes purple; yellow and blue makes green; and yellow and red makes orange. Too many colors mixed together make a brownish or greyish color.
4. Place the white paper on top of the painted bubble wrap. Press firmly down with your hands to transfer the print from the bubble wrap to the paper.
5. Remove the white paper from the bubble wrap and uncover the colorful bubble prints you've created.
6. Mount on a colorful sheet of construction paper and let each student "sign" their artwork!

Foster Elementary **PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade**

Jackson Pollock Action Painting

Pollock, Jackson (1912-56). American painter, the commanding figure of the Abstract Expressionist movement.

He began to study painting in 1929 at the Art Students' League, New York, under the Regionalist painter Thomas Hart Benton. During the 1930s he worked in the manner of the Regionalists, being influenced also by the Mexican muralist painters (Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros) and by certain aspects of Surrealism. From 1938 to 1942 he worked for the Federal Art Project. By the mid-1940s he was painting in a completely abstract manner, and the 'drip and splash' style for which he is best known emerged with some abruptness in 1947. Instead of using the traditional easel he affixed his canvas to the floor or the wall and poured and dripped his paint from a can; instead of using brushes he manipulated it with 'sticks, trowels or knives' (to use his own words), sometimes obtaining a heavy impasto by an admixture of 'sand, broken glass or other foreign matter'. This manner of Action painting had in common with Surrealist theories of automatism that it was supposed by artists and critics alike to result in a direct expression or revelation of the unconscious moods of the artist.

Pollock's name is also associated with the introduction of the All-over style of painting which avoids any points of emphasis or identifiable parts within the whole canvas and therefore abandons the traditional idea of composition in terms of relations among parts. The design of his painting had no relation to the shape or size of the canvas -- indeed in the finished work the canvas was sometimes docked or trimmed to suit the image. All these characteristics were important for the new American painting which matured in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Artist: Jackson Pollock

Year: 1948

Type: Oil on fiberboard

Dimensions: 2.4 m × 1.2 m (8 ft × 4 ft)

Location: Private collection





Foster Elementary

PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

January Project

“Ground Hog Day” by Andrew Wyeth

“Ground Hog Day” by Andrew Wyeth is the painting that tells us about the story of the ground hog looking to see if he can see his shadow. If he sees his shadow, then spring is around the corner and if not, then there’s more winter to come before spring. Like a book, if we look closely, we can read this picture.

QUESTIONS:

1. Let’s look at this picture. The artist is giving us more than just a picture - he is telling a story.
2. Let’s look for details that help us learn the story.
3. What time of year it? (winter)
4. How can we tell what time of year it is? (dried brown grass, fresh cut logs, looks cold, long shadows, a cold bleak day in February)
5. Is there a human present? (no)
6. Has there been one or will there be one? (yes)
7. Do you think it is a man or woman?
8. What do you think they are like?
 - strong to chop the wood
 - strung the barbed-wire fence
 - furnishings of the house - no curtains, plain dishes, no napkins
 - (maybe a woman once lived there because of the wallpaper but its faded now - so probably a man lives there now)

SUMMARY:

Andrew was born in 1917. His father was a famous illustrator of children books - that is to say he drew the pictures in the books. Andrew was trained to be an artist. He was taught **ONLY** by his father. He became an artist and a storyteller. His pictures all tell a story. The person he is trying to tell us about in this painting is; strong, simple, honest, hard working, modest, and rough.

ART:

Materials:

cups for water	watercolor paints
brushes	white paper
1” strips of	brown construction paper
glue	



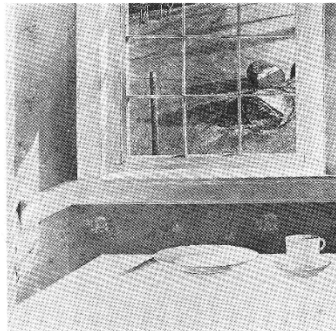
Foster Elementary

PTA - Art Masterpiece - 1st Grade

Procedure:

1. Discuss things to see in winter - trees without leaves except pine trees, snow, grass that's brown, grey skies, long shadows, animals, birds, etc.
2. Have the children paint a picture of winter.
3. Remind the children how to use watercolors - use a little water and drag it on the lip of the can to scrape off excess water - use one color at a time - rinse their brushes - never leave a brush in the water container because the paint bristles will bend and never be straight again.
4. Once the pictures are dry, then glue on the strips of paper to make a window frame over the children's paintings.

Andrew Wyeth



Ground Hog Day

Andrew Wyeth (1917-)
Egg Tempera on panel, 1959 Size of original 31 X 31 3/4"
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania
AE129

Of the illustrator's heritage he takes freely and consciously those components which may relate to painting: a strongly dramatic presentation...; an ability to establish vividly the quality of a certain moment in which he enfolds the observer and causes him to see, to hear and, above all, to feel.

Peter Hurd on N. C. Wyeth

INTRODUCTION

If there were popularity awards for artists akin to the "Miss Congeniality" award given annually to a contender for the Miss America title—never Miss America herself—Andrew Wyeth would win by acclamation. Arnason calls him "that master of impeccably observed, nostalgia-drenched, native-scene painting..." and therein lies his popularity. But the words "popular" and "realism" were out of favor with the image-makers of the art world of the Abstract Expressionists in which Wyeth worked and existed. Although he would also have won the award for the most "collectible" when abstract art was at its height, and although he is the first (and only) living American artist to have been shown at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., — "honored above Matisse or Picasso, above Miro, Chagall or Henry Moore, above Willem de Kooning, Jasper Johns, Richard Diebenkorn, or Georgia O'Keeffe..."—he is given little or no space in the written histories.

HISTORY

Andrew Wyeth's father was the famous illustrator of children's books, N.C. Wyeth, who not only dominated a family of artists but decided early in his son's life that Andrew would be an artist, to be trained in the tradition of the apprentice artist, and rather than be sent to school, that Andrew would be taught only by his father. In a 1945 article in *American Artist*, N.C. Wyeth was quoted as saying: "[This painting] is painted in egg tempera on gesso ground, and the method used in painting strictly conforms, I believe, to directions handed down to us from the time of the Renaissance." This was the strict tradition in which Andrew Wyeth was trained and the one by which he continues to be guided. Following in his father's footsteps, his is the tradition and style of the illustrator and the storyteller, his technique the smooth, seamless clarity and precision of egg tempera, "carefully orchestrating every detail of a picture until he has achieved a calculated effect."

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Although one word often connected with both N.C. Wyeth and Andrew Wyeth is "human" or "humanity," many of Andrew Wyeth's paintings such as *GROUND HOG DAY* contain no human figure. In *GROUND HOG DAY* the human presence is only implied—by the existence of the plate, the cup and saucer, and the knife on the table inside, the marks left by an axe on the logs outside and by the signs of their having been dragged across the frozen ground. In true illustrative manner, Wyeth is telling a story. Our first clue is the title of the painting, *GROUND HOG DAY*. Perhaps we could tell by the dried brown grass and by the freshly-cut logs and by the nature of the light coming through the window that it is a cold bleak day in early February; there is little warmth in the painting—even the ray of sunlight which filters in through the window and rests on the windowsill and the small patch of wall in the lefthand corner of the painting is thin and grudgingly present. But with his title, Wyeth takes no chances that we might think it another time of year. How has Wyeth shown that he wants the viewer to know that the groundhog has seen his shadow, thus predicting that there will be six weeks more of this dismal, silent winter? Look at *GROUND HOG DAY*. What other clues does Wyeth give us to the narrative behind the work? The details in the painting are spare and minimal, but each detail is designed to contribute to the story; there is nothing extraneous here. Like the readers of the books that N.C. so painstakingly illustrated, we are asked to read the picture. We are asked to wonder about and to derive a vivid impression of the person or persons who live in the house. Like the Byzantine icons of saints, "an icon of a saint 'has him in it...' that image capturing his essence without showing his appearance." How do we know whether it is a man or a woman or both who live in the house? And what sort of people are they? We might know that a man lives there because of what Wyeth chooses to show us outside the window; we assume that it was a man who chopped the logs, a man who strung the barbed-wire fence. What about the things that Wyeth has chosen to show us of the inside—the stark nature of the furnishings; the absence of curtains at the



window? Is there a hint of female influence? The tiny faded flowers on the wallpaper might give the impression of a female—a wife, a mother—but is that presence faded as the wallpaper itself is faded? Or do you think that Wyeth is suggesting the dominance of the male? There is the unadorned and starkly white pottery, the knife alone, only one place set on the bare tabletop. Is the table set for the man coming in from his chores? For someone else? Did Wyeth mean to suggest that the person ate with only a knife? What sort of man lives in the house, on the farm? If Wyeth has carefully and precisely presented us with the circumstances of this man's life—a neighbor in Wyeth's native Brandywine Valley in Pennsylvania—then he has painted us a picture of Karl Kuerner as well. The following are words which might describe this man. Strong; simple; honest; hard-working; modest; rough; resolute; unwielding. Have students create their own word picture of Karl Kuerner from the cues Wyeth has suggested. His wife also lived with him on the farm. What might she be like?

What is the "calculated effect" that Wyeth has achieved in *GROUND HOG DAY*? It is a sentimental vision of an America which has been untouched by technology and the machine, a nostalgic reminder of a time when strong men hacked their way through the wilderness, where, with their own strong arms they felled the forests and made a better life for themselves and their children. It is a world which has little to do with the realities of today's world in general and the art world in particular. When, in 1921, John Marin painted the *Singer Building*, he was also presenting the viewer with a vision—of the energy and vitality of America, of New York City—and although it is a different city from the one which exists today, and although the reality of art is always filtered through the sensibilities of the artist, is it possible that Marin's abstract view of the world is more "real" than Wyeth's realism?

STUDIO ACTIVITIES

One of the most interesting devices employed by Andrew Wyeth in *GROUND HOG DAY* is the use of the window. Other artists have also used the window in their work—a frame within a

frame, giving the viewer at once a glimpse of both inside and outside. One work which would be exciting to compare with *GROUND HOG DAY* would be Pierre Bonnard's *The Breakfast Room*. Bonnard was called an *Intimist*, because of the small intimate glimpses of life he depicted in his paintings. Although Bonnard's purpose for painting was more likely to glorify color and pattern in his work, *The Breakfast Room* tells a no-less-eloquent story than does Wyeth's *GROUND HOG DAY*. The meal, the remnants of which are still visible in *The Breakfast Room*, is the opposite of Kuerner's evidently simple repast. Here, strewn in apparent disarray on the striped tablecloth, as though the diners had recently arisen from the table, are the remains of a long and leisurely French "brunch." There are breads and cakes and fruits on the table as well as empty bowls and a teapot and creamer, all in bright shades of yellows and orange. As in *GROUND HOG DAY*, the viewer is given a glimpse of the outside through the window, but instead of the chill somber colors of February, we see a warmly bright Summer day. Have students create a drawing in which they explore the subtleties of inside and outside, in which the window serves not only as something to look through, but to expand, through another dimension, the meaning of the picture. In *GROUND HOG DAY*, through the multiple views of the indoor and outdoor settings, Wyeth not only tells us about the time of day and the season of the year, but he tells us about the people who live in those surroundings—"that image capturing his essence without showing his appearance." Have students attend to the use of color to create not only a particular mood, but a setting as well. Have their pictures describe a person or persons through the objects with which they surround themselves inside and through the appearance of the landscape beyond the window. Have them try in this way to create a self-portrait without the use of figures. How could they present themselves to somebody else through the use of symbolic content alone? It would be interesting to place the finished unsigned portrait-less portraits in the center of the room and ask other students to try to identify the artist.

AESTHETICS

What is the reason for the disparity between Andrew Wyeth's popularity with the general public on the one hand and his neglect in the written histories of art on the other? Who is it that determines what is called *art*? Barthes is quoted as saying that "[the consequences of] an aesthetic based entirely on the pleasure of the consumer...would be huge." The aesthetic question asked by the critic and champion of *Abstract Expressionism*, Clement Greenberg, is relevant here:

One and the same civilization produces simultaneously two such different things as a poem by T.S. Eliot and a Tin Pan Alley song, or a painting by Braque and a Saturday Evening Post cover. All four are on the order of culture, and ostensibly, parts of the same culture and products of the same society. Here, however, their connections seem to end. A poem by Eliot and a poem by Eddie Guest—what perspective of culture is large enough to enable us to situate them in an enlightening relation to one another?

He continues to speculate how an answer might be found:

The answer involves more than an investigation in aesthetics. It appears to me that it is necessary to examine more closely and with more originality than hitherto the relationship between aesthetic experience met by the specific—not generalized—individual, and the societal and historical contexts in which that experience takes place.

This also suggests questions which may be asked and discussed in the classroom.

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Foster Elementary

PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

February Project

"The Young Girl"

QUESTIONS:

1. What do you see in this picture? (girl)
2. What do you see in the background? (trees, lines)
3. Does this picture remind you of a doll? (yes)
4. What kind of lines do you see? (straight-trees, curve-skirt and sleeves, vertical and horizontal lines, and lines in patterns)
5. What shapes do you see? (triangles-skirt, collar and rocks, a variety of shapes are in the rocks, cylinders-trees)
6. How would you describe the background? (detailed, busy)
7. What do you notice about the leaves on the trees? (all are the same size, shape)

*The artist drew what he knew to be there rather than what he saw!

SUMMARY:

Henri Rousseau was born in 1844 in France. He never had any formal art training or lessons. In other words, he was never taught HOW to draw! He drew in the primitive style. People laughed at his work but the great artists looked upon his work as great, with fresh visions, unspoiled by academic style and technique. He painted from the heart. He especially liked painting exotic jungle paintings. Let me repeat that in his paintings, he didn't paint what he saw but rather what he knew was there.

ART:

This is a 3-step project yet it can be done in one lesson provided you have 30 minutes for just the art lesson part!

Materials:

leaf stamps
stamp pads in yellow, red, orange, brown & green
9 x 12 manilla or white paper
crayons, scissors, glue
magazines with animal pictures in them - old National Geographies are great or printed pictures at the end of the art work information



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PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

Procedures:

Step #1

1. Give students leaf stamps. Next, using the construction paper, stamps, and stamp pads, have the students stamp several leaves on their paper in random places. Keep the stamps with the same stamp pad & rotate sets so the inks don't get mixed and muddled.
2. Now have the children trade stamp pad color sets and repeat #1. Students should have 1/2 of the paper covered with leaf prints after trading all the stamp pad sets- they can overlap leaves and use different colors
3. The students can trade stamps 4 times and give them a couple of minutes with each stamp pad set.
4. This dries almost instantly, so now onto step 2.

Step #2

1. Have the student decide if the picture is horizontal or vertical and then have them draw vertical trunks/lines for tree trunks. Some of the lines can angle up where blank spaces allow.

Step #3

1. Have the magazines or printed photo pages available for the students to use and cut up.
2. Have the students cut out several animals 3-6 depending on the availability of the pictures you have or the magazines. Let them know that if they can only find pieces of animals, to use them and put them in next to something so that it looks like the animals are hiding in the jungle -because they do! Glue animals onto paper and VOILA! They have created their own Jungle Art!
3. May want to show a couple examples of Rousseau's jungle art series and the finished artwork example so they have a better idea of what they are working towards. Display print available with Young Girl Print in workroom.



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PTA - Art Masterpiece - 1st Grade



THE YOUNG GIRL

HENRI ROUSSEAU

(on ree roo so)

(1844-1910)

Oil Painting

AE114

THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART, PA.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Henri Rousseau was one of the greatest of primitive, or untaught painters, and one of the most engaging artists of the last decade of the nineteenth, and the first of the twentieth century. He was born in Laval, France. It seems that it was the poverty of his family which prevented him from studying for an art career, but he must have had a musical education as he was able to play the violin, clarinet, flute, and mandolin. The title, "Le Douanier," (doo AHN yay) often seen before his name, stems from the fact that he was employed at the customs house in Paris. He retired from this position at forty to devote his time to painting, supporting himself by giving a few music lessons to children. He was a charmingly simple man with a powerful, creative imagination and a flawless sense of composition. The general public greeted his paintings with amusement, but some other contemporary artists, like Gauguin, Redon, and Picasso recognized in him a true artist who explored painting with fresh vision unspoiled by academic notions of style and technique. He painted from his heart. Familiar things were often his subjects: the suburbs of Paris, weddings, his friends. But it was his exotic jungle and desert scenes which manifested his genius at its height.

THE YOUNG GIRL is an expression of Rousseau's love for two worlds: the world of reality, and that of imagination, fantasy, and symbolism. The "real" young girl seems to be towering out of the canvas in a stiff sort of way, but this is because he wanted to put down everything possible about her. He had a bit of trouble with proportion but this adds, strangely, to the charm of this old-

fashioned child. She reminds us of those dolls our grandmothers have put away in their treasure chests; dolls with china heads, hands, legs and feet, but whose stuffed bodies are covered with kid. Each tuck and fold of her dress is precisely drawn, just as every leaf and red berry have been lovingly attended to. Because the sheep seem to be little more than profiles, they seem more symbolic than real. This is not an uncommon thing in Rousseau's work.

Other things in this picture reinforce the feeling that it is symbolic: the girl is standing upright in a forest; one sheep is white and one is black; the white sheep is on her right hand, the black on her left. The ground seems to be covered with objects the color of stone, and yet they are evidently not all stones—the triangle shape in the lower left-hand corner looks like the corner of a picture frame. Many interpretations of THE YOUNG GIRL are possible; therefore, it should prove stimulating to children's thought and discussion.

Strong verticals give a sense of strength to this composition, but the triangle formed by the young girl and the sheep breaks any monotony that might be caused by them. The bright green of the branch which the black sheep is nibbling saves the picture from too much symmetry. The design and organization of all the elements show us how great was Rousseau's intuitive gift. Interestingly enough, we find this gift echoed in the work of many other primitive painters, such as Joseph Pickett, Edward Hicks, "Grandma" Moses, and Camille Bombois.



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PTA - Art Masterpiece - 1st Grade

IDEAS FOR LEARNING

Henri Rousseau was a "folk artist." He had no art lessons at all, but he could weave a kind of magic spell with his paint brush. He put down everything which interested him with great care and feeling. Often he would add something to this from his own imagination or his dreams. Perhaps you have seen his painting, *THE SLEEPING GYPSY*, or some of his jungle pictures. If you have, you have known this magic and have wondered about its meaning.

THE YOUNG GIRL can open a window in your own mind. It can awaken new thoughts in you about the wonderful thing it means to "grow up." At first, the girl appears strange to us; a bit old-fashioned perhaps, because she is dressed the way girls did when the artist was living. She is probably one of his neighbor's children, or one of his music pupils—he was fond of all the children he knew, and of people generally. It was a matter of great importance to him that he put everything about her down on the canvas. Notice how each finger shows, and also every feature of her face, every tuck in her frock. Yet every single line in the painting is beautiful in itself, from the curves in her skirt and sleeves to the triangle of her collar; from the vertical (straight up and down) lines of the trees to the outline of the smallest leaf. All the lines in the painting, together with the colors (light colors against dark colors) make this an interesting composition as a painting. But Rousseau has also intended it to be interesting as a picture which "communicates," or tells us something. The vertical lines make the little girl look tall and, she is tall for a reason; she is growing-up. Just now she is in the forest we know about from fairy tales; she has obstacles to overcome and choices to make if she is to come out of the forest as a truly grown-up person.

Perhaps you can find another meaning to this picture—you should have some thoughts of your own about any work of art you are considering. But if you follow through the idea of growing-up, what do you think the other things in the picture symbolize, or, stand for? Couldn't the white sheep on her right hand, and the black on her left stand for good and evil, right and wrong? The black sheep is nibbling at the fresh green leaves as bad habits nibble away at our character and prevent us from truly growing-up. The choice of the good strengthens character and gives courage to overcome obstacles; the little girl has already overcome the highest of the stonelike objects around her feet. She still has some to surmount. What do you think the remaining stones could represent? Selfishness or vanity, perhaps? Don't things like that prevent people from being really grown-up no matter how tall, or old they are? But see, the little girl is standing upright; the sun is coming through the trees; the sky is blue above them. In the fairy tales, the sun shines on the good and darkens on the bad. So don't you think Rousseau wanted us to know that she grew into a strong person, a real woman?

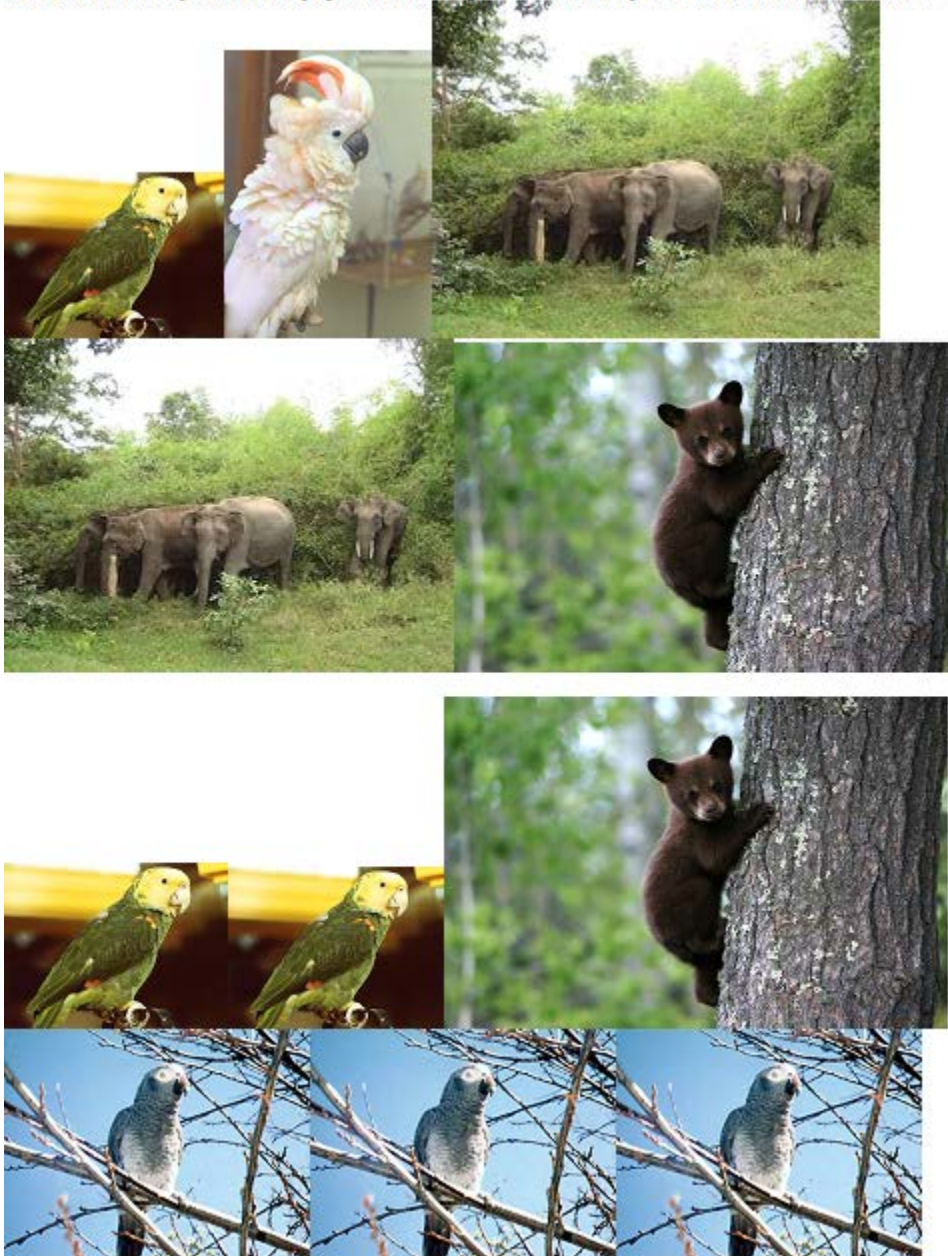
We have been wondering what Rousseau wanted us to know about the young girl he painted. Now, can you imagine a person who is unusual in some way . . . very wicked, very sly, very greedy, very comic, very brave, very magical? Invent a character and write a story about him. Then draw or paint his picture to illustrate your story. Think carefully about the way he will look, what he will be doing, and how you are going to show his unusual character. It will help if you imagine that you, yourself, are that character. Keep your character a secret until you have finished your picture. Then see who can guess the kind of person he or she is.



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These animals can be printed out for project or collect magazines with animal photos for students to cut out and use.





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March Project

Egypt, "Sphinx and Pyramids" - AE193

QUESTIONS:

1. What is this? (pointing to the Sphinx) Does anyone know the name of this? (Sphinx)
2. What is a Sphinx? (a make-believe animal)
3. What is this? (pointing to the pyramid) Does anyone know? (pyramid)
4. Can anyone describe a pyramid? (a pyramid has a large square base and four triangular sides that join at the top.)
5. Who would build a pyramid and why? (Ancient Egyptians would build these tombs to protect and preserve their great kings - The Pharaohs)
 - Egyptians believed that when you died your soul "BA" came back to into your body at night. They believed that death was the beginning of a new life. They also believed that the Pharaohs' had a spiritual double called "KA". Upon death, this spiritual double became a god.
6. What do you think was placed into the tomb with the pharaohs' body? (treasures, food, pots, jars, servants, favorite belongings because they believed that they needed these in the afterlife)
7. Why do you think the pyramids were this shape? (The peak symbolized the sun god "RA" spreading his rays down each side of the building protecting what was inside)

SUMMARY:

The pyramids were very large! They were 481 feet tall and their bases were as big as 10 football fields. The pyramids are about 4 1/2 THOUSAND YEARS OLD. They were built between 2500 BC and 2400 BC. They have survived this long because of the hot dry climate and the precision work of the engineers that designed them.

The construction of a single pyramid took approximately 20 years. Therefore, the pharaohs had to plan ahead. The large limestone and granite blocks were quarried upstream and transported by boats down the Nile River to the construction site. Pyramid construction could only happen for 3 months out of the year during the flood season because only then was the river deep enough to transport these enormous blocks. The blocks would then be rolled on logs to their destination. Laborers would use mortars to make the final cuts so that the blocks fit tightly together. These laborers were actually paid worker and not slaves which is contrary to popular belief. Once a Pharaoh died, they had their bodies preserved through mummification. Hieroglyphics, the term used for the writings on the tombs, told about the pharaoh, his life, his belongings and also foretold of what his life would be like in his "after life".



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PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

Guarding the entrance to the complex of pyramids at Giza is one of the most compelling structures known to man, The Great Sphinx. The Sphinx is part lion, part human and combines the best qualities of each. It is a combination of the most noble of beasts and the royal pharaoh. It is strong and powerful and seemingly eternal. The enormous crouching lion body of the Sphinx was carved from a hill of rock left from the construction of the Great Pyramid. It extends 240 feet from paws to haunches. Subject to wind, weather and natural erosion for almost 5000 years, the Sphinx has suffered considerable damage which is apparent in its deteriorating paws and chest areas.

The Sphinx and the Great Pyramids are considered one of the “Seven Wonders of the World”.

ART:

The art project for this lesson is to tell the children that they are to pretend that they are a pharaoh and it is time for them to plan their pyramid.

Materials:

- Booklets (already copied and in supply cabinets)
- Goldenrod card stock pyramid copies (you may want to have these already cut)
- crayons
- scissors
- glue
- sequins

Procedures:

Option1 - takes 2 class periods

This lesson can be done in two ways. It can be broken up into 2 class sessions if you choose to spend a little more time learning about the pyramid and how it was built. If you choose to break it up into two lessons the first lesson will be to have your teacher pull up the art masterpiece website by accessing it through the Foster site under PTA. The students will watch the video then you can spend about 5-10 minutes talking about the art print and then hand out the photocopied booklet.

CLICK [HERE TO GO TO VIDEO LINK TO SHOW THE CLASS!](#)

Then proceed with the following:

Explain that the pyramids were built to protect the burial chamber of the pharaoh. After a pharaoh died the first step was to embalm the body. Tell the students that is what we need to do with them!



Foster Elementary

PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

"First we will put your liver, lungs, stomach and intestines into four canopic jars so that you can use them in the after life. Draw your body parts in the jars. As for your brains, go ahead and throw those out. You won't need those anymore".

Next, decide what you want to take with you. Your burial chamber will be filled with objects you want in your next life. Draw pictures of your favorite things, favorite food, favorite book, favorite toy, favorite clothes, favorite transportation and one extra thing of your choice.

At this point you will have everyone put their names on their packets and turn them back into you.

During the second lesson hand the booklets back out. Allow students to finish anything they didn't get to during the first lesson. Then proceed with:

"Now it's time to decorate your sarcophagus. Color in your sarcophagus cover anyway you like. You may want to decorate the base by gluing on sequins like jewels. You are royalty after all"!

Now, pass out the pyramid golden rod card stock and have the students cut out the pyramid and all their canopic jars, items they are taking with them and sarcophagus. Have them place everything in the pyramid then glue them down. They may want to lay it all out first before they glue so they can figure out how to fit everything. Show example.

Finally allow the children can draw lines on the back side to look like the big blocks that make up the pyramid.

Congratulations! You have buried yourself like an ancient pharaoh!

Option 2 - takes 1 class period

Discuss artwork with discussion questions as you normally would. Spend about 10-15 minutes tops. Then move onto the project.

Handout the booklets and explain that the pyramids were built to protect the burial chamber of the pharaohs. After a pharaoh died the first step was to embalm the body. Tell the students that is what we need to do with them!

"First we will put your liver, lungs, stomach and intestines into four canopic jars so that you can use them in the after life. Draw your body parts in the jars. As for your brains, go ahead and throw those out. You won't need those anymore".

Next, decide what you want to take with you. Your burial chamber will be filled with objects you want in your next life. Draw pictures of your favorite things, favorite food, favorite book, favorite toy, favorite clothes, favorite transportation and one extra thing of your choice.



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PTA – Art Masterpiece – 1st Grade

Now it's time to decorate your sarcophagus. Color in your sarcophagus cover anyway you like. You may want to decorate the base by gluing on sequins like jewels. "You are royalty after all"!

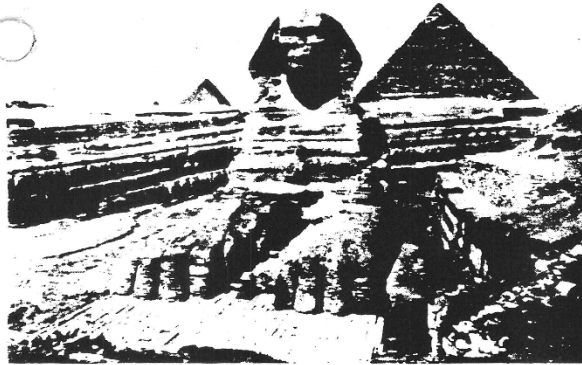
Now, pass out the precut pyramids and have the students put all the things from the packet that they want to take with them in the pyramid. Students will need to cut out the canopic jars, favorites items and their sarcophagus. They may want to lay it all out first before they glue so they can figure out how to fit everything. Show example.

If time allows, children can draw lines on the back side to look like the big blocks that were used to build the pyramids. You can also add a few hieroglyphics for fun.

Congratulations! You have buried yourself like an ancient pharaoh!



Sphinx and Pyramids



Egypt, (3rd Millenium, B.C.)
Limestone
Bettmann Archive/New York, N.Y.
AE 193

... built nearly five thousand years ago as tombs, mostly for the rulers of the Old Kingdom, 2780-2300 B.C., these sepulchres, set in the limitless space of the desert, are truly the first great works of abstract art. —Robin Fedden

INTRODUCTION

Rising majestically out of the desert sand, the Great Pyramids of Giza and their protecting Sphinx have awed all who have surveyed them for almost five thousand years. In the 2nd century B.C., the Roman philosopher Antipater of Sidon listed what he felt to be the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. Of these seven wondrous ancient architectural structures, the Pyramids were the oldest and are, today, the only surviving structures from that famous compilation. It was the stark beauty of these stone constructions which dazzled the ancient world, and that same beauty continues to impress the modern world.

Built during the IV Dynasty of the Old Kingdom around the year 2500 B.C., the three great pyramids of Giza are the most famous of all remaining Egyptian pyramids. The Pharaohs of the Old Kingdom for whom these magnificent tomb structures were built are most frequently known by their Greek names: Cheops (2575 B.C.); his successor Chephren (2550 B.C.); and then, Mykerinus (2525 B.C.). The Pyramids continue to present modern scholars with as many questions as answers. Their geometric purity and mysterious presence continue to dominate the great desert behind them as well as modern Cairo, located within sight of Giza.

HISTORY

Egypt's history is divided into periods called dynasties. These dynasties are generally grouped into three major periods. The Old Kingdom, during which the Great Pyramids and Sphinx were constructed, began around 3100 B.C. and continued until the Middle Kingdom (2133B.C.-1786 B.C.). The last great period of Egyptian dynastic history, the New Kingdom, ran from 1580 B.C.- 1085 B.C.

The Egyptian Pharaoh was considered to be not only a king but a god. His kingship was both absolute and divine. As an outgrowth of the Egyptian belief in the divinity of the Pharaoh, burial customs developed into an important aspect of Egyptian culture, in which each man was responsible for insuring his own happiness in the after life. This was accomplished by supplying his tomb with the things which were considered necessary for living well. Often actual objects such as furniture, gold, or food would be placed in the burial tombs. In other cases, pictures on the wall would supply those amenities which could not be placed in the tomb. By the Fourth Dynasty (2500 B.C.), Egyptians believed that at death, the human spirit (the *ka*) required a body in which to dwell in the after life. The practice of mummification evolved to preserve the body for the *ka*. Realistic statues of the deceased

were also placed in many tombs to insure a proper home for the *ka* should the mummy become destroyed.

In modern times the discovery of tombs containing the many necessities, and often luxuries, of daily ancient Egyptian life has allowed modern day social and cultural experts to learn enormous amounts about life in ancient Egypt. Little is known of the burial practices of the average non-aristocratic Egyptian, but because of the elaborate tomb decorations and rituals of the royal class, much can be deduced about the life of the elite and those who served them.

The royal tombs were constructed to last forever. There are many theories as to how the distinctive pyramidal shape came to be utilized for tombs such as the ones at Giza. There is clear progression from the early First Dynasty above-ground rectangular tombs (Mastabas) to the Third Dynasty's Stepped pyramid structures, and then to the Fourth Dynasty's smooth-sided geometrically pure pyramids. The motivating theories behind this progressive development are less clear.

One possible explanation put forth for the evolution of the pyramidal shape suggests that when the Third Dynasty kings moved their residence to the city of Memphis, they came increasingly under the influence of the cult of the Sun-god *Re*. A fetish (an object believed to have magical powers) associated with *Re* was a pyramid-shaped stone. The Pharaohs were believed to be the earthly incarnation of the sun god, and a pyramid would, therefore, be a logical association. Whatever the derivation, the beautifully calculated geometric shapes of the pyramids remain a source of wonderment for all who encounter them.

The blocks of limestone and granite used in constructing the pyramids of Giza are believed to have been transported by boat from quarries to the south of the Nile River. Transporting these large stones, which weighed up to two tons each, could be accomplished only during the annual three month flood period. Each stone was dragged from the Nile landing area up ramps which were built to facilitate the pulling of the stones to the final resting place in the Pyramid construction. Smoothing and shaping the stones (called dressing the stones), took place at the site. The close fit of the final cut blocks was accomplished with mortar which was used more for ease in sliding the stones themselves than as a cement to hold them together. Laborers for these massive projects are believed to have been paid workers (rather than slave), and to have lived in housing complexes at the site.

The pyramids were only part of the royal funerary complex. Many additional temples, walkways, and smaller burial structures com-



pleted the burial and ritual areas. Guarding this entire complex at Giza is one of the most compelling sculptures known to man, the Great Sphinx. The Sphinx, part lion, part human, combines the attributes of both the most noble of beasts and of the Royal Pharaoh. It is strong, powerful, stately, and seemingly eternal.

The lion had been represented in Egyptian art since the Pre-Dynastic times. Its fierce strength made it an appropriate image as a protective symbol. Lions were frequently carved into paired guardians of temples, or as decorative parts of a royal throne. In this case, the lion serves as a representation of the Pharaoh as Sun God protecting the Pyramids.

CRITICISM

The enormous crouching lion body of the Sphinx was carved from a hill of rock left from the construction of the Great Pyramids. It extends two hundred and forty feet from paws to haunches. Subject to wind, weather, and natural erosion for almost five thousand years, the Sphinx has suffered considerable damage which is apparent in its deteriorating paws and chest areas. Compelling in its gaze, the head looks forward in a proud and noble manner.

The head of the Sphinx is carved wearing the striped royal headdress, the cobra on the brow, and was originally adorned with the plaited chin beard associated with the Pharaoh's. Despite considerable facial damage, the uniquely Egyptian mixture of timelessness, idealization and specific representation can be appreciated. This ability to combine the idealized and the realistic remained constant in Egyptian art throughout centuries of change and development. The focus on the eternal god-like qualities of the Pharaoh encouraged an art form which could depict a face both specific and eternal.

Between the lion's paws can be seen a small votive temple and a stela, or upright engraved marker. These small shrines were placed at the Sphinx during the New Kingdom by sun god worshippers. Directly in front of the Sphinx have been unearthed remains of a Fourth Dynasty temple with a large central courtyard which formed part of the large complex of ceremonial buildings associated with the Pyramids and their elaborate burial rites.

Rising behind the Sphinx are the three towering Pyramids of Giza. The largest all stone buildings the world has ever known, the height of the largest of the Pyramids is topped only by the late nineteenth century spires of Cologne Cathedral in Germany. The Pyramids were built with square bases and smooth sides which form an isosceles triangle. All sides meet

at an apex. Each of the three Giza Pyramids is oriented to the four points of the compass. Each of the structures was once covered with an outer casing of finely smoothed white limestone. These coverings had subsequently been taken for other building projects. The largest of the three, the Pyramid of Cheops, was originally four hundred and eighty two feet high, but now with its outer coating gone, it reaches a height of four hundred and fifty one feet. Each of the four sides is seven hundred and fifty five feet long. The whole area occupied by the Pyramid of Cheops covers about 13 acres.

The paws of the Sphinx show repair work which has been undertaken in recent years. There continues to be much scientific discussion as to the most appropriate manner in which to treat and preserve this most ancient world monument. Twentieth century problems of tourism and air pollution have added to the on-going problems of wind and erosion. Located just miles from the metropolis of Cairo, tour buses are no longer allowed to park in the immediate vicinity of the monuments in an attempt to protect the sensitive limestone from additional pollution damage.

Compare the monumental Sphinx and Pyramids with an example of smaller Egyptian art-work, such as would have been found in tomb paintings and relief sculptures. *The Stela of the Lector Priest of Amun, and His Mother, The Chantress Amun-Hotpe (AE 107)* was carved in limestone during the Eighteenth Dynasty, ca. 1420 B.C. Executed nearly one thousand years after the Great Pyramids of Giza, the stela maintains the earlier interest in portraying qualities of the eternal and unchanging. The three central figures are shown, not as observed in nature, but as each part is most easily understood. Shoulders and eyes are depicted frontally; faces and legs in profile. The scented oil jars on the heads are depicted to clearly show their shapes and thereby be recognizable. This was a convention used throughout Egyptian art to ease communication in "reading" a painting or bas relief sculpture. The hieroglyphics, or symbol writing, used by the ancient Egyptians, can be seen framing the figures. Although from a later period in Egyptian history, this stela is similar to the one which can be seen between the paws of the Sphinx.

AESTHETICS

For twentieth century admirers, there is an abstract beauty to the Great Pyramids that relates to much of modern art. The precise, clean lines of the Pyramids silhouetted against the desert skyline present a breathtaking spectacle. The lack of ornamentation highlights the beauty of the proportions and mammoth scale of these purely geometric shapes. Even today

the eternal stability sought by the architects of ancient Egypt continues to affect the viewers of these awe-inspiring monuments.

The Egyptians built the Pyramids to reflect upon their ideas about the pharaohs, about the after-life, and about their gods. Discuss ways in which societies express their ideas. How do the arts help present an idea visually. Can beauty be appreciated for many reasons? Would the Pyramids be less impressive if they were not burial sites? Consider the impression one receives from seeing the St. Louis Arch rising against the skyline. How do these two monuments differ? How are they alike? These questions can help direct a class discussion about the many ways in which beauty is perceived by different societies.

STUDIO ACTIVITIES

Building on the experiences of studying the Pyramids and Sphinx, use plastilene or clay for a three dimensional activity. A lesson focusing on geometric shapes is well suited to work in plastilene. Building a pyramid of clay helps to reinforce the concepts of geometric design in the Pyramids. Starting with square bases, students should build equal sided triangles on each of the four sides. Continue manipulating the clay into the triangular sides which meet at an apex. Plastilene will easily allow cutting the finished shapes with wires to indicate interior chambers would have been allowed for in the building of the stone structures.

Once the structure of the pyramids has been understood, re-use the plastilene clay for an exercise in modeling an animal / human combination form. Pictures from magazines can provide models for the creative invention of fantasy animals, such as the Sphinx. A fun drawing exercise at the completion of the modeling exercise is to have students display finished products, and to draw additional combinations using each other's examples as models.

Mary Ellen Maxwell & Rebecca S. Johnson
Carnegie Arts Center, Leavenworth, Kansas

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