

Lesson Plan

Surrealism: Visions of the Mind

Title: Exquisite Corpse

In response to Robert Ernst Marx's *Janus and Goat*, Frederico Castellon's *Mask of the Red Death*, Jorge Castillo's *Vegetable Consciousness*, and Wendy Thon's *Foundry Reflections* with possible reference to other images in the exhibition *Surrealism: Visions of the Mind*.

Please discuss students' regular curriculum with the Artmobile Educator, for possible referential connections to material with which the students are already familiar. This lesson incorporates writing components that align with the Common Core State Standards. This lesson may be adjusted and adapted to suit the physical limits and time restraints of the hosting venue. This lesson is adaptable to be appropriate for the developmental abilities of any audience. Please discuss your needs with the Artmobile Educator.

Lesson Overview: Students will observe the work in the exhibition *Surrealism: Visions of the Mind*. After the initial viewing, students will discuss what they saw, and then return to the exhibit. Students will be directed to the images listed above and asked to describe the human forms in each work of art.

Observe: Students will initially experience the exhibit while taking notes and making sketches of their observations. Students will be asked to study what they think is important, and then to share their observations. Students will be directed toward the images listed above and asked to describe the human form in each work of art. Students will likely notice the distortion of form, and the combination of the human form with non-human entities.

Question: Students will ask questions and engage in a dialogue about the work and the elements they have observed.

Guiding Questions:

- What does it mean when the body is combined with a non-human form?
- How do you think the artist came up with the idea to make that combination?
- What components of each figure tell us that this is in fact, a human form?

Explore: A.) Students will be introduced to the history of the Exquisite Corpse.

B.) Students will be given instruction on how to align their drawings through modeling.

Create: A.) Students will be given drawing paper and a drawing tool. Students will be asked to draw a top and fold so only the bottom lines are showing. Then, students will pass their drawing to the right. Students will be asked to draw a middle that connects with the lines left visible from the top, then fold so only the bottom lines are showing and pass their drawing to the right. Finally, students will be asked to draw a bottom that connects to the lines of the middle. Before revealing, the drawings will be folded completely and passed back to their original artists.

B.) In a follow-up lesson, students may be asked to use their Exquisite Corpse drawings as the basis for a magical creature.

C.) Students may be given the opportunity to write a story about their character.

Reflect: Students will be given the opportunity to share their artwork, explain their processes and choices, and discuss the unexpected results of blind collaboration. Students will be asked:

- “What happens when you have to relinquish control of your image?”
- “What place does chance have in art making?”
- “Why do our brains turn these non-sense creatures into figures?”

Suggestions for Teachers:

K-4

- Read “The Jabberwocky” by Lewis Carol aloud.

Possible Vocabulary: Imagination, Monster, Figure, Collaboration

5-8

- Read “The Jabberwocky” by Lewis Carol and discuss as a group.

Possible Vocabulary: Imagination, Figure, Collaboration, Personification

7-12

- Read “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird” by Wallace Stephens. Discuss the formation of reality based on external and internal experience. Ask: How does personal experience shape our interpretations of the world?
- Read the June 22, 2010 article “Surrealist Art Form, Exquisite Corpse, Still Fascinates Artists and Collectors” by Richard Friswell (website below) NOTE: This article contains nude images of the human form. If this is not appropriate for your students, copy the text of the article into a word document without the images to share.

<http://www.artemagazine.com/2010/06/surrealist-art-form-exquisite-corpse-still-fascinates-artists-and-collectors/>

Possible Vocabulary: Imagination, Figure, Collaboration, Personification, Anthropomorphism, Chimera

Suggested Use in the Curriculum: The study of *Surrealism: Visions of the Mind* ties into multiple curricular areas including visual arts, performing arts, music, language arts, philosophy, history and social studies, science, math, engineering, and business.

Specific Connections to the Wyoming State Standards for Visual and Media Art

K-4

S1: Creative Expression Through Production: FPA 4.1.A.1; FPA 4.1.A.2; FPA 4.1.A.3; FPA 4.1.A.4; FPA 4.1.A.5; FPA 4.1.A.6

S2: Aesthetic Perception: FPA 4.2.A.1; FPA 4.2.A.2; FPA 4.2.A.3; FPA 4.2.A.4

S3: Historical and Cultural Context: FPA 4.3.A.1; FPA 4.3.A.2; FPA 4.3.A.3

S4: Artistic Connections: FPA 4.4.A.1; FPA 4.4.A.4

5-8

S1: Creative Expression Through Production: FPA 8.1.A.1; FPA 8.1.A.2; FPA 8.1.A.3; FPA 8.1.A.4; FPA 8.1.A.5; FPA 8.1.A.6

S2: Aesthetic Perception: FPA 8.2.A.1; FPA 8.2.A.2; FPA 8.2.A.3; FPA 8.2.A.4;

S3: Historical and Cultural Context: FPA 8.3.A.1; 8.3.A.2; FPA 8.3.A.3

S4: Artistic Connections: FPA 8.4.A.1; FPA 8.4.A.3; FPA 8.4.A.4

9-12

S1: Creative Expression Through Production: FPA 11.1.A.1; FPA 11.1.A.2; FPA 11.1.A.3; FPA 11.1.A.4; FPA 11.1.A.5; FPA 11.1.A.6

S2: Aesthetic Perception: FPA 11.2.A.1; FPA 11.2.A.2; FPA 11.2.A.3; FPA 11.2.A.4

S3: Historical and Cultural Context: FPA 11.3.A.1; FPA 11.3.A.2; FPA 11.3.A.3

S4: Artistic Connections: FPA 11.4.A.1; FPA 11.4.A.3; FPA 11.4.A.4

Inherent connections to the Common Core State Standards for Speaking and Listening exist within the lesson, along with possible connections to the Common Core State Standards for Writing.