

Found Materials

Grade Level

7-10

Theme

The artist as an individual
The artist and society
Art communicates ideas
Materials and Processes

Objectives

Students will gain an awareness of important Oregon artists
Students will increase their understanding of different artistic processes
Students will analyze the relationship between an artist, his or her work, and the societies in which they have participated
Exploration of 3-dimensional art

Common Curriculum Goals

The Arts – Aesthetics and Criticism, Historical and Cultural Perspectives, Create, Present, and Perform
Language Arts – Speaking and Listening
Social Sciences – Geography, History

Overview

Rick Bartow utilizes a wide range of materials in his artmaking process. Throughout history, found materials have served a valuable purpose for artists and various important cultural practices, both in reflecting values and identity. How does an object made with local materials reflect a culture's values and express its identity?

Focus Questions/Objectives

While watching the documentary about Rick Bartow, consider the following
List some of the materials Bartow uses when creating 3-dimensional pieces.
What might be the relationship between animal and spirit in Bartow's 3-dimensional artwork?
What are some differences between Bartow's 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional artworks?
Listen to Bartow carefully when he speaks about his family history. Think about the relationship between his history and his 3-dimensional artwork. How do his choices reflect his family's geographical location, and his Native and European identity?

Materials

Recycled materials such as paper, pieces of wood from local wood shop, cardboard, string, nails, plastic, metal materials, ceramic pieces, wire, etc.
Glue, or other method of fastening materials together, depending on which materials are being used.
Newspaper for covering tables.

Vocabulary

Form	Balance
Sculpture	Found objects/materials
Assemblage	Marcel Duchamp
Readymades	

Activities 1. Sculpture with Found Objects

Collect

Ask students to spend a week or so collecting materials for the project. Think about gathering a variety of materials, including hard and soft, dark and light, rigid and flexible.

Look (45 minutes)

Look at images of several other artists' work (see resource section for ideas).

- a. Ask each student to research one aspect of African, Native American, or European/American art, either looking at available books or using the internet. Consider –
 - a. What is the role of 3 Dimensional art in the culture, both historically and currently? What were the materials used for creating them? Where were those materials found/gathered?
 - b. Ask students to choose one 3 Dimensional object from one specific culture, print out the image, and develop a paragraph that addresses the following –
 - i. The specific culture and geographic location
 - ii. Level of importance of object in culture
 - iii. Who the artist is, if known
 - iv. Role of object in daily life
 - v. Role of the artist in that culture
 - vi. What the materials used are, as well as where they were gathered

Present (15-30 minutes)

Each student briefly presents his/her findings to each of the above questions to the whole group.

Compare/Contrast (20 minutes)

Students may also talk about the differences between various cultures. Comparing European and African objects (for example) made with found materials may lead to very interesting discussion. Consider –

- a. What interested the student about a given object?
- b. If you were an artist in this culture, what would your role be?
- c. Is there a spiritual importance the objects play? Discuss.
- d. How do these objects, and their purposes, differ from one another?

Create (2 hours)

Students should listen carefully to each other during presentation, and think about how the objects are/were used in everyday life. What might be a parallel kind of object for life today?

- a. Students consider themselves as an artist in one particular culture. Create a work of art that would fit into the context of the culture, using found materials. How would the object function in everyday life?
- b. Combine all materials students brought in and lay them out on one table.
- c. Ask students to consider the following -
 - a. In your mind, what kind of object would you like to create? What will you use it for? Or will you?
 - b. Will the object have moving parts?
 - c. How will the object rest on a table, or on the ground?
 - d. How will you attach one part to another?
 - e. What materials will you need to create the object?
 - f. What size does the object need to be?
 - g. Think about the object in the round, or is there a front and back?
- a. Students choose materials from the table.
- b. Create an object that is meant to fulfill a purpose in daily life.

View and Critique (45 minutes)

View

Students place their object on their desk, or on a long table.

1. Ask students to quietly walk around and view all the artworks.
 - a. Notice what the purpose of each object might be.
 - b. Notice what materials were used.

Hold a kind critique

Students comment about one another's artwork.

1. Ask the following questions –
 - a. Which object did you notice that you might use every day? How would you use it?
 - b. Which object might be used for special occasions?
 - c. What piece do you think utilized an ideal combination of materials for its proposed use? Why?

Resources

Rick Bartow

Froelick Gallery, <http://www.froelickgallery.com/Artist-Detail.cfm?ArtistsID=227>

Rick Bartow: My Eye by Rebecca J. Dobkins, Rick Bartow, Barry Lopez, and Hallie Ford Museum of Art

The Yurok Tribe

<http://www.yuroktribe.org/>

Artists who work with recycled materials -

Edgar Heap of Birds

http://www.heapofbirds.com/hachivi_edgar_heap_of_birds.htm

Robert Rauschenberg

Baltimore Museum of Art, Robert Rauschenberg and Combines <http://wmbc.umbc.edu/~mark/artwork/art323/paper1.html>

<http://www.tfaoi.com/aa/2aa/2aa398.htm>

Robert Rauschenberg: Combines, by Robert Rauschenberg, Paul Schimmel, Steidl Publishing, 2006

Louise Nevelson

Art 21, <http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/bourgeois/index.html>

Vocabulary Definitions

Form - In its widest sense, total structure; a synthesis of all the visible aspects of that structure and of the manner in which they are united to create its distinctive character. The form of a work is what enables us to perceive it. Form also refers to an element of art that is three-dimensional (height, width, and depth) and encloses volume.

Balance - A principle of design, it refers to the way the elements of art are arranged to create a feeling of stability in a work; a pleasing or harmonious arrangement or proportion of parts or areas in a design or composition. Portions of a composition can be described as taking on a measureable weight or dominance, and can then be arranged in such a way that they appear to be either in or out of balance, or to have one kind of balance or another. Balance can be symmetrical, or formal; or it can be asymmetrical, or informal. It can also be radial.

Sculpture - A three-dimensional work of art, or the art of making it. Such works may be carved, modeled, constructed, or cast. Sculptures can also be described as assemblage, in the round, and relief, and made in a huge variety of media.

Found objects - An image, material, or object, not originally intended as a work of art, that is obtained, selected, and exhibited by an artist, often without being altered in any way. The cubists, dadaists, and surrealists originated the use of found images / materials / objects. Although it can be either a natural or manufactured image / material / object, the term readymade refers only to those which were manufactured.

Assemblage - A three-dimensional composition made of various materials such as found objects, paper, wood, and textiles.

Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968), created 'readymades', which took found objects a step further. By taking everyday objects and exhibiting them as art, Duchamp was challenging the nature of what makes something art in the first place - calling everyday objects pieces of art.

Readymades - An object manufactured for some other purpose, presented by an artist as a work of art. Between 1914 and 1921, Marcel Duchamp (French, 1887-1968), who originated this concept, selected and signed, among others, a snow shovel, a comb, and a urinal.