

### Gesture and Movement

#### Grade Level

7-12

#### Theme

The artist as an individual  
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 explore various processes in 2 dimensional art

#### Common Curriculum Goals

The Arts – Create, Present and Perform, Aesthetics and Criticism, Historical and Cultural Perspectives  
English/Language Arts

#### Overview

Rick Bartow talks about the importance of gesture, and the urge to make marks. In his work there is much reference to gesture and movement. Bartow uses techniques that he has developed over time, and which deal with emotion. Bartow talks about a time when 'gesture became everything'. This was a crucial time when his work moved in a new direction, from smaller and more controlled imagery to more fluid movement and freedom to explore gesture.

#### Focus Questions

While watching the documentary on Rick Bartow, look for the following -

1. How did Bartow begin making art? What medium did he first use?
2. Listen for when Bartow talks about being given larger, more durable paper by a good friend, and how 'gesture became everything'. How did his medium and format develop, and how did this specific moment effect his artwork?
3. What techniques does Bartow use with charcoal and pastel that demonstrate gesture, motion, and movement?
4. As you look at Bartow's many artworks, where do you see these techniques come to play in the final pieces?

#### Materials

Copy paper	Large sheets of paper, 18x24 minimum
Charcoal	Pencil
Pastel	Eraser
Digital camera	Computer and Photoshop program

#### Vocabulary

Gesture  
Movement

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## Activities

### Black and White vs. Color

#### 1. Discuss

- Talk about how Bartow began making artwork, with graphite and charcoal, on small sheets of paper. As time passed he began using color pastel and larger, more durable sheets of paper. How did this effect his work?
- Talk about the emotions that Bartow mentions in the documentary. What emotions are conducive to being expressed on small sheets of paper. Which can be released within a larger format/size (i.e. anger)? Bartow stated 'gesture became everything'. What does he mean by this?

#### 2. Drawing Exercise (15 minutes)

- Talk about the techniques students noticed Bartow using to create gesture, motion, and movement.
- On a sheet of copy paper, using charcoal and/or color pastel, ask students to briefly explore the following –
  - Use a technique that expresses anger.
  - Use a technique that shows motion.
  - Use a technique that is a large gesture on the paper.
  - Use a line that shows movement.

#### 3. Photograph (45 minutes)

- Take color photographs with a digital camera. This can be done during class or as an outside assignment. Think about capturing gesture, motion, and/or movement in your imagery.
- Transfer your images into Photoshop. Each student is to choose three images that they feel captures the sense of gesture, motion or movement they were looking for. Play with black and white format on Photoshop. Talk about how the image changes when in black and white.
- Ask students to choose one photograph, in black and white, from which to make drawings. Print out the photograph.

#### 4. Draw (45 minutes)

Bartow talks about the 'terribly strong urge to make marks'. What does he mean by this in terms of his own experience?

- Using the chosen photograph in black and white, think about how that photograph expresses gesture, motion, and movement.
- Using large sheets of paper, at least 18x24, students will utilize the whole or part of the photographic image.
- Transfer the image onto the paper, drawing with graphite pencil or charcoal.
- Think about the 'terribly strong urge to make marks'. Using color pastel, add gesture, motion and movement to the image with chosen colors, either the same or different from the original image.

#### 5. Critique and Discussion (30 minutes)

Hold a kind critique of students' images.

- What techniques were used by students to demonstrate gesture, motion, and movement?
- What is the overall emotion of the artwork?
- Compare the digital photograph and the charcoal and pastel artwork. How are they different?

## Resources

Images of Rick Bartow's artwork

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

Froelick Gallery

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Artists who used gesture and movement in their artwork –

Wassily Kandinsky

Jacob Lawrence

Vincent Van Gogh

Jackson Pollock

Webmuseum, <http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/pollock/>

Guggenheim Museum, biography, [http://www.guggenheimcollection.org/site/artist\\_bio\\_129.html](http://www.guggenheimcollection.org/site/artist_bio_129.html)

Romare Bearden

Romare Bearden Foundation, biography, <http://www.beardenfoundation.org/artlife/biography/biography.shtml>

National Gallery of Art, images of Romare Bearden's artwork

<http://www.nga.gov/feature/bearden/img-list.shtm>

### **Vocabulary Definitions**

**Gesture** – the implication of motion in a shape

**Movement** - an illusion created by the artist to convey action in a piece of stationary art