



Interpretive Guide & Hands-on Activities
The Alberta Foundation for the Arts
Travelling Exhibition Program

Graham Peacock Collage

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The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

The Interpretive Guide

The Art Gallery of Alberta is pleased to present your community with a selection from its Travelling Exhibition Program. This is one of several exhibitions distributed by The Art Gallery of Alberta as part of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program. This Interpretive Guide has been specifically designed to complement the exhibition you are now hosting. The suggested topics for discussion and accompanying activities can act as a guide to increase your viewers' enjoyment and to assist you in developing programs to complement the exhibition. Questions and activities have been included at both elementary and advanced levels for younger and older visitors.

At the Elementary School Level the Alberta Art Curriculum includes four components to provide students with a variety of experiences. These are:

- Reflection:** Responses to visual forms in nature, designed objects and artworks
- Depiction:** Development of imagery based on notions of realism
- Composition:** Organization of images and their qualities in the creation of visual art
- Expression:** Use of art materials as a vehicle for expressing statements

The Secondary Level focuses on three major components of visual learning. These are:

- Drawings:** Examining the ways we record visual information and discoveries
- Encounters:** Meeting and responding to visual imagery
- Composition:** Analyzing the ways images are put together to create meaning

The activities in the Interpretive Guide address one or more of the above components and are generally suited for adaptation to a range of grade levels. As well, this guide contains coloured images of the artworks in the exhibition which can be used for review and discussion at any time. Please be aware that copyright restrictions apply to unauthorized use or reproduction of artists' images.

The Travelling Exhibition Program, funded by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, is designed to bring you closer to Alberta's artists and collections. We welcome your comments and suggestions and invite you to contact:

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Travelling Exhibition Program
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Email: shane.golby@youraga.ca

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Graham Peacock Collage

I started out, as most artists do, working 'realistically' from observation and my work gradually evolved into abstraction. ...As a painter and sculptor, my major commitment and invention lies in my abstract work. This does not detract, however, from my sincerity when working representationally. I must have a positive feeling about the spirit of any work in order to create it.

Graham Peacock, 1989

Graham Peacock has been a significant figure on both the Edmonton and International art scene since he moved to Edmonton in 1969. Over the decades he has developed unique ways of drawing with paint; manipulated the forms of his canvases; formulated his own paint mediums; spear-headed the formation of important art groups and assisted in fostering a climate favorable to abstraction in Edmonton. Through his teaching at the University of Alberta he has also shaped the artistic visions of countless students.

The exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage** celebrates the vibrant and diverse career of this Edmonton-based artist; a career characterized by experimentation and a relentless search for ways to express Peacock's love of colour, form and the world around him. Inspired by and featuring the artist's painted collage works, a primary focus of this exhibition concerns Peacock's major commitment to abstraction.

While inspired by the artist's collage paintings, however, the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage** also considers Peacock's studies in watercolour landscape painting. According to the artist...*Art reveals our spirit and humanity* and in his pursuit of his aesthetic goals he places no limitations on the types of

artistic practices he pursues, only questioning what...*the quality of the experience, as art, is*. Without narrowly defining his practice Peacock moves freely between representation and abstraction, demonstrating that the only limitations to painting are to be found in the material of paint itself. Regardless of the style explored, Peacock's artwork reveals that paint can be a constant source of innovation, wonderment and pleasure. In this disclosure he also illustrates that artists need not be bound by only one approach or concern but rather can be collage works themselves, proficient in various modes of expression and engaged in a multitude of aesthetic challenges.

As related by curator Roger Boulet in the Edmonton Art Gallery catalogue [Graham Peacock Paint, Process and Spirit](#) (1988), Graham Peacock views art as

...a celebration of life, of creation, (and) an affirmation of the freedom and the boundless creativity of the human spirit.

The travelling exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage** explores this sense of freedom as it is expressed in the creative work of this senior Edmonton artist. Through this investigation the viewer is invited to encounter both *...boundless creativity...* and artistic perceptions which seek to inspire and uplift the spirit.

*The exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage** was curated by Shane Golby and organized by the Art Gallery of Alberta for the Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program. The AFA Travelling Exhibition Program is supported by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.*

Visual Inventory - List of Works

Graham Peacock
Suite 111 #29, 2011
Painted canvas collage
14 inches X 11 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Suite 111 #16, 2011
Painted canvas collage
14 inches X 11 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Suite 111 #4, 2011
Painted canvas collage
14 inches X 11 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Suite 111 #12, 2011
Painted canvas collage
14 inches X 11 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Kris Cross Miniature #10, 2014
Painted canvas collage
8 inches X 6 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Kris Cross Miniature #12, 2014
Painted canvas collage
8 inches X 6 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Table Top Painting Miniature #16, 2015
Painted canvas collage
6 inches X 8 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Table Top Painting Miniature #19, 2015
Painted canvas collage
6 inches X 8 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Kris Cross Miniature #13, 2014
Painted canvas collage
8 inches X 6 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Table Top Painting Miniature #30, 2015
Painted canvas collage
6 inches X 8 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Table Top Painting Miniature #24, 2015
Painted canvas collage
6 inches X 8 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Veera Kerela Varnia, India Suite, 2012
Painted canvas collage, acrylic on canvas
24 inches X 20 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Narasimha Deva, India Suite, 2012
Painted canvas collage, acrylic on canvas
24 inches X 20 inches
On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock
Ravi Varma, India Suite, 2012
Painted canvas collage, acrylic on canvas
24 inches X 20 inches
On loan from the artist

Visual Inventory - List of Works

Graham Peacock

Pompei / Colosseum, Vico Equense, Italy, 2006

Watercolour

5 inches X 7 inches

On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock

Biarritz, France 1, 2006

Watercolour

5 inches X 7 inches

On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock

Oak Bay Marina, 1990

Watercolour

12 inches X 16 inches

On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock

James Island Rain, Victoria, B.C., 1989

Watercolour

12 inches X 16 inches

On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock

Vico Equense Italy, Sun Rays, 2007

Watercolour

9 inches X 12 inches

On loan from the artist

Graham Peacock

Bay of Naples, Italy, 2007

Watercolour

9 inches X 12 inches

On loan from the artist

Total Works:

20 - 2 Dimensional works

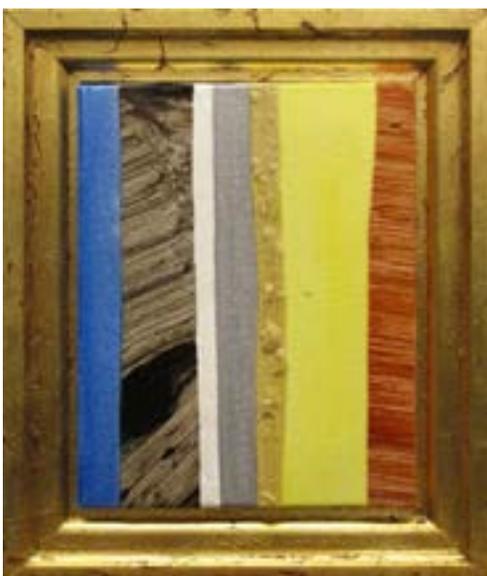
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Graham Peacock
Suite 111, #29, 2011
Painted canvas collage
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Graham Peacock
Suite 111, #16, 2011
Painted canvas collage
On loan from the artist



Graham Peacock
Suite 111, #4, 2011
Painted canvas collage
On loan from the artist



Graham Peacock
Suite 111, #12, 2011
Painted canvas collage
On loan from the artist

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Visual Inventory - Images



Graham Peacock
Kris Cross Miniature #10, 2014
Painted canvas collage
On loan from the artist



Graham Peacock
Table Top Painting Miniature #16, 2015
Acrylic with canvas collage
On loan from the artist



Graham Peacock
Kris Cross Miniature #12, 2014
Painted canvas collage
On loan from the artist

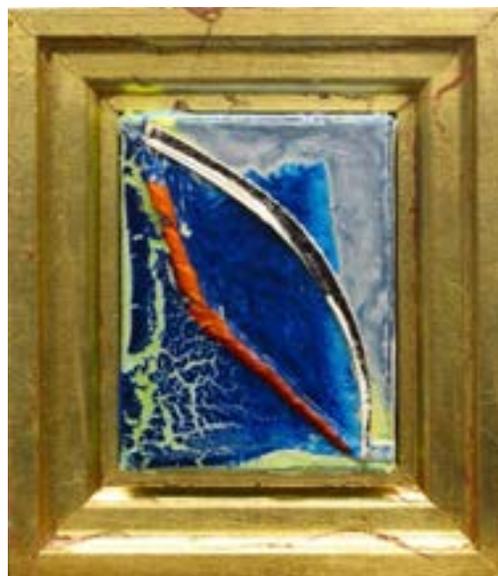


Graham Peacock
Table Top Painting Miniature #19, 2015
Acrylic with canvas collage
On loan from the artist

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Kris Cross Miniature #13, 2014
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Table Top Miniature #24, 2015
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Graham Peacock
Veera Kerela Varnia, India Suite, 2012
Painted canvas collage, acrylic on canvas
On loan from the artist

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Graham Peacock
Narasimha Deva, India Suite, 2012
Painted canvas collage, acrylic on canvas
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Graham Peacock
Ravi Varma, India Suite, 2012
Painted canvas collage, acrylic on canvas
On loan from the artist



Graham Peacock
Bay of Naples, Italy, 2007
Watercolour on paper
On loan from the artist



Graham Peacock
Biarritz, France 1, 2006
Watercolour on paper
On loan from the artist

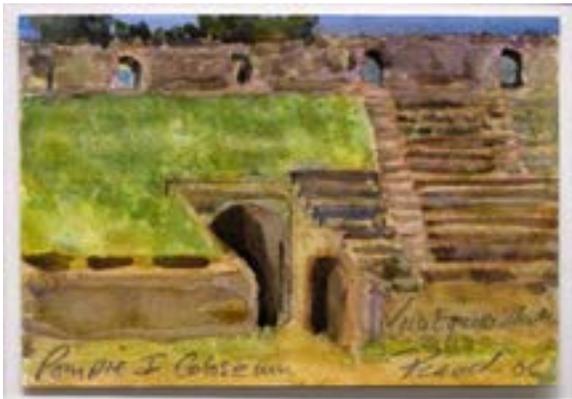
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Graham Peacock
James Island Rain, Victoria, B.C., 1989
Watercolour on paper
On loan from the artist



Graham Peacock
Oak Bay Marina, 1990
Watercolour on paper
On loan from the artist



Graham Peacock
Pompeii Coliseum, Vico Equense, Italy, 2006
Watercolour on paper
On loan from the artist



Graham Peacock
Vico Equense, Italy, Sun Rays, 2007
Watercolour on paper
On loan from the artist

Talking Art



Graham Peacock
Kris Cross Miniature #12, 2014
Painted canvas collage
On loan from the artist

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Art Curriculum Connections Grade 1-9

The following curricular connections taken from the Alberta Learning Program of Studies provides a brief overview of the key topics that can be addressed through viewing and discussing the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage**. Through the art projects included in this exhibition guide students will be provided the opportunity for a variety of learning experiences.

ART CONNECTIONS LEVEL ONE (Grades 1 and 2)

REFLECTION

Component 3 APPRECIATION: Students will interpret artworks literally.

Concepts

- A. Art takes different forms depending on the materials and techniques used.
- B. An art form dictates the way it is experienced.
- C. An artwork tells something about its subject matter and the artist who made it.
- D. Colour variation is built on three basic colours.
- E. Tints and shades of colour or hues affect the contrast of a composition.
- F. All aspects of an artwork contribute to the story it tells.

DEPICTION

Component 4 MAIN FORMS AND PROPORTIONS: Students will learn the shapes of things as well as develop decorative styles.

Concepts

- A. All shapes can be reduced to basic shapes; i.e., circular, triangular, rectangular.
- B. Shapes can be depicted as organic or geometric.
- C. shapes can be made using different procedures; e.g., cutting, drawing, tearing, stitching

Component 6 QUALITIES AND DETAILS: Students will represent surface qualities of objects and forms.

Concepts

- C. Primary colours can be mixed to produce new hues.
- D. Colour can be lightened to make tints or darkened to make shades. These tints or shades are also referred to as tone or value.
- E. Images are stronger when contrasts of light and dark are used.
- F. Details enrich forms.

Component 9 CRAFTSMANSHIP: Students will add finishing touches.

Concepts

- A. Finishing touches (accents, contrasts, outlines) can be added to make a work more powerful.
- B. Stepping back from a work helps in judging how it can be improved.

Art Curriculum Connections continued

EXPRESSION

PURPOSE 4: Students will express a feeling or a message.

Concepts

- A. Feelings and moods can be interpreted visually.
- B. Specific messages, beliefs and interests can be interpreted visually, or symbolized.

PURPOSE 5: Students will create an original composition, object or space based on supplied motivation.

Concepts

- A. Outside stimulation from sources such as music, literature, photographs, film, creative movement, drama, television and computers can be interpreted visually.

Component 10 (ii) SUBJECT MATTER: Students will develop themes, with an emphasis on personal concerns, based on:

- b. Environment and places
- C. Manufactured or human-made things

Component 10 (iii) MEDIA AND TECHNIQUES: Students will use media and techniques, with an emphasis on exploration and direct methods in ...painting

Concepts

B. Painting

- Learn simple brush skills: holding and unloading the brush, applying paint, cleaning the brush.
- Experiment with the medium to explore its possibilities.
- Mix primary colours and lighten and darken colours.
- Paint using experimental methods, including without a brush.
- Paint directly without preliminary sketching.

LEVEL TWO (Grades 3 and 4)

REFLECTION

Component 3 APPRECIATION: Students will interpret artworks by examining their context and less visible characteristics.

Art Curriculum Connections continued

Concepts

- A. Contextual information (geographical, historical, biographical, cultural) may be needed to understand works of art.
- B. Artistic style is largely the product of an age.
- C. Technological change affects types of art.
- D. Our associations influence the way we experience a work of art.
- E. Art is valued for different reasons; e.g., aesthetic, economic, symbolic, associative.
- F. Art serves societal as well as personal needs.

DEPICTION

Component 4 MAIN FORMS AND PROPORTIONS: Students will perfect forms and develop more realistic treatments.

Concepts

- C. Images can be portrayed in varying degrees of realism.
- E. Landscapes can show middle ground, background and foreground.
- F. Size variations among objects give the illusion of depth.

Component 6 QUALITIES AND DETAILS: Students will refine surface qualities of objects and forms.

Concepts

- B. Colour can be made to appear dull or bright.
- C. Gradations of tone are useful to show depth or the effect of light on objects.
- D. By increasing details in the foreground the illusion of depth and reality can be enhanced.

COMPOSITION

Component 7 EMPHASIS: Students will create emphasis by the treatment of forms and qualities.

Concepts

- A. The centre of interest can be made prominent by contrasting its size, shape, colour or texture from the other parts of the composition.
- B. Format can be adjusted and composition tightened by editing or cropping the unnecessary areas from the edges of a work, after it is completed.
- C. Details, accents and outlines will enhance the dominant area or thing.

Art Curriculum Connections continued

Component 8 UNITY: Students will create unity by interrelating the parts of a composition.

Concepts

- A. The parts can be arranged so that movement in the picture space leads the eye around and not out of the picture area.
- C. Every major area of a composition should be interesting in itself.
- D. Limited colours and materials tighten a composition.

LEVEL THREE (Grades 5 and 6)

REFLECTION

Component 3 APPRECIATION: Students will interpret artworks for their symbolic meaning.

Concepts

- A. Artistic style affects the emotional impact of an artwork.
- B. An artwork can be analyzed for the meaning of its visible components and their interrelationships.
- C. Artworks contain symbolic representations of a subject or theme.
- D. Artworks can be appreciated at many different levels, literal and symbolic.

DEPICTION

Component 4 MAIN FORMS AND PROPORTIONS: Students will modify forms by abstraction, distortion and other transformations.

Concepts.

- B. Shapes can be enhanced with complexities, embedded or extended forms.
- E. Shapes can be abstracted or reduced to their essence.

Component 6 QUALITIES AND DETAILS: Students will employ surface qualities for specific effects.

Concepts

- A. Colour harmonies affect the mood and feeling of the viewer.
- B. Tonal interchanges enhance a work.
- D. The character of marks is influenced by drawing or painting tools and methods.

COMPOSITION

Component 8 UNITY: Students will create unity by integrating the parts of a composition into the

Art Curriculum Connections continued

whole.

Concepts

- C. Transitions of colour, texture or tone relate the parts of a composition to a unified whole.
- E. Interesting negative space complements and binds the positive areas into an harmonious whole.

EXPRESSION

Component 10 (iii) MEDIA AND TECHNIQUES: Students will use media and techniques, with an emphasis on more indirect complex procedures and effects in painting

Concepts

B. Painting

- Continue to paint, using experimental methods including without a brush
- Mix and use colour tones to achieve perspective
- use analogous colours, colours close to each other on the colour wheel, to harmonize the colours of the composition
- Use washes under and over painted images to indicate colour value from light to dark, and simulate depth of field.

Grade 7

COMPOSITIONS

Components 1: Students will experiment with colour effects on compositions.

Concepts

- A. Primary colours combine to create secondary and tertiary colours.
- B. Colour schemes create certain moods in images.
- C. Colour schemes direct attention.

Components 2: Students will experiment with techniques and media within complete compositions of two and three dimensions.

Concepts.

- B. Relief compositions can be assembled or formed using materials in additive...ways.
- C. Two-dimensional materials can be used to make compositions demonstrating simple pictorial space.

Art Curriculum Connections continued

Grade 8

DRAWINGS

Investigate: students will employ space, proportion and relationships for image making.

Concepts

- A. The size of depicted figures or objects locates those objects in relationship to the ground or picture plane.
- B. Overlapping figures or objects create an illusion of space in two-dimensional works.
- C. The amount of detail depicted creates spatial depth in two-dimensional works.
- F. The principles of repetition or emphasis can be applied to achieve unity in two-dimensional works.

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Cross Curricular Connections

This exhibition is an excellent source for using art as a means of investigating topics addressed in other subject areas. The theme of the exhibition, and the works within it, are especially relevant as a spring-board for addressing aspects of the Science program of studies. The following is an overview of cross-curricular connections which may be addressed through viewing and discussing the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage**.

ELEMENTARY SCIENCE

1–5 Students will identify and evaluate methods for creating colour and for applying colours to different materials.

- i. Identify colours in a variety of natural and manufactured objects.
- ii. Compare and contrast colours, using terms such as lighter than, darker than, more blue, brighter than.
- iii. Order a group of coloured objects, based on a given colour criterion.
- iv. Predict and describe changes in colour that result from the mixing of primary colours and from mixing a primary colour with white or with black.
- v. Create a colour that matches a given sample, by mixing the appropriate amounts of two primary colours.
- vi. Distinguish colours that are transparent from those that are not. Students should recognize that some coloured liquids and gels can be seen through and are thus transparent and that other colours are opaque.
- vii. Compare the effect of different thicknesses of paint. Students should recognize that a very thin layer of paint, or a paint that has been watered down, may be partly transparent.
- viii. Compare the adherence of a paint to different surfaces; e.g., different forms of papers, fabrics and plastics.

Artist Biography

Graham Peacock

Graham Peacock was born in London, England, in 1945. He studied at the University of London Goldsmith's School of Art from 1962 to 1966 and did post-graduate work at the Leeds College of Art in 1966 and 1967 after which he became a lecturer at the Newport College of Art in England. In 1968 he worked in Rome, Italy, at the British School on a British Council/Italian Government Scholarship.

Peacock emigrated to Canada in 1969 and joined the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. He attended the Emma Lake Artists Workshops in 1979, 1980 and 1981, and the inaugural Triangle Workshop in New York in 1982. In September of 1987 he was invited to lead the Thupelo Project, a workshop in South Africa for black artists hosted by the Johannesburg Art Foundation.

Graham Peacock was been represented in a number of exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Alberta (formerly The Edmonton Art Gallery) as well as in national and international exhibitions.

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Artist's Statement

I have always painted and built things. I always knew what I wanted to do and fortunately was always encouraged to pursue Art.

My art school studies in London included Painting and Sculpting from the Model in the Classical Tradition together with Modernist approaches to invention and the medium as an expressive vehicle. I began my first abstract work in 1961 and continue to work abstractly because I find it exciting to pursue ideas beyond those I know. The experience of my past and present paintings, intuition and logic guide me in the hypothesis of the next painting. The pursuit of originality, quality and the expressive strength in art comes by the invention, choice and creative use of form (a visual language). All work, despite its expressive, social or psychological value must, I feel, be resolved visually if it is to constitute art. This resolution being obtained by the visual unification of the form itself. This is, I believe, the essence of artistic activity, yet it does not in any way prescribe what the art is to be or how the resolution of form can be obtained. Rather by continued experiencing, we are shown what is indeed whole, unified and what is not.

Personal taste will vary, style and social value may differ but the visual relationships, the life and unity or lack of it, in a work of art, are a good indication of a work's quality. Despite ones personal likes or dislikes, and given the opportunity to experience work over time, our taste often changes and we can grow to appreciate that which is perhaps at first off putting. Looked at historically, invention and originality can be seen to go against accepted and existing tendencies but by comparisons we can give support to our judgments, and with time, our senses grow.

Originality in art often requires substantial re-evaluation by the viewer of what is good, but if quality, unity and expressive strength have been maintained, time will show its true value.

Graham Peacock, 2015



Graham Peacock
Table Top Painting Miniature #19, 2015
Acrylic with canvas collage
On loan from the artist

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Introducing Graham Peacock - notes from Graham Peacock: A Retrospective and interviews with the artist

Graham Peacock was born in London, England, on July 26, 1945. According to the artist, he grew up painting and drawing. His mother loved to draw and paint and Peacock spent many hours at her side doing the same. Then, while in primary school, he was content to paint for hours at the school easels. This love of art continued into his teenage years. At the age of eleven he began to attend Tulse Hill Comprehensive School where art became his major subject. From his third year on he began working from life, doing clothed studies, still lifes and imaginary compositions. At the age of 16 he was accepted into Goldsmiths College of Art, London University.

When he entered University Peacock was painting in a representational manner. By his second year of studies, however, he was also investigating abstraction, influenced by the painting of the Russian constructivist painter Malevich and the Dutch artist Piet Mondrian.



Kazimir Malevich
Black Square, 1915
The Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow



Piet Mondrian
Composition II in Red, Blue, and Yellow, 1930s

By his post graduate program at Leeds College of Art, Peacock had moved from these influences into exploring shaped canvases and illusionistic shapes inspired by the work of the American artist Richard Smith (1931-2016) and the English artist John Walker (1939 -).

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Introducing Graham Peacock continued -
notes from Graham Peacock: A Retrospective and
interviews with the artist continued



Richard Smith



John Walker

After graduation Peacock received a teaching position at Newport College of Art but after a year applied for and was accepted for an Italian Government Scholarship to study in Rome. While there he made the acquaintance of Jonathan Knowlton, a painting instructor on leave from the University of Alberta, who recommended Peacock to the Chair of the University's Art and Design program, Ronald Davey. Davey offered Graham Peacock a two-year position at the University and in 1969 he moved to Edmonton. Peacock remained at the University of Alberta until his retirement in 2008.

Upon moving to North America Peacock became inspired by the works of such American abstract artists as Kenneth Noland (1924-2010) and Larry Poons (1937 -) while throwing himself into experimentation, looking for a direction for himself and hoping to come up with something he had not done before..



Kenneth Noland
Naatsiliid

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Introducing Graham Peacock continued -

notes from Graham Peacock: A Retrospective and interviews with the artist continued

Graham Peacock's artistic career has been characterized by a sense of continual experimentation: a search for new ways to express his love of colour, form and the world around him. In this search he moves back and forth between representation and 'abstraction'; has developed unique ways of drawing with paint (crazing); manipulated the forms of his canvases; formulated his own paint mediums; spear-headed the formation of important art groups (Edmonton Contemporary Artists Society; the New New Painters) and, through his teaching at the University of Alberta, influenced countless art students.

For Peacock, *...Art reveals our spirit and humanity.* (Graham Peacock: A Retrospective, pg. 374) In this quest the artist places no limitations on the types of artistic practices he pursues and only questions what *...the quality of the experience, as art, is.* (Graham Peacock: A Retrospective, pg. 378) Without narrowly defining his practice Peacock is free to move between styles and media in pursuit of his aesthetic goals. This 'freedom' has often caused both the public and critics to question his practice. Undeterred by such questioning Peacock has stated:

People have asked me how it is that I can paint both abstractly and representationally. I started out, as most artists do, working 'realistically' from observation and my work gradually evolved into abstraction.

Art, by its very nature, is an abstract phenomenon. A painting of a landscape is not 'real', but rather is an expression of how the artist sees and feels, and how well he is able to articulate his vision through the use of the medium.

As a painter and sculptor, my major commitment and invention lies in my abstract work. This does not detract, however, from my sincerity when working representationally. I must have a positive feeling about the spirit of any work in order to create it.
(Graham Peacock 'Paint, Process and Spirit', Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch, Mid-Winter Meeting, 1989)

Peacock describes himself as a 'naturalist' whose aim is to create visual perceptions which should inspire and uplift the spirit. Believing that *...one can not separate abstraction from representation or representation from abstraction*, he can thus explore naturalistic watercolours, which harken back to his earliest experiences with painting, while maintaining a more public practice focused on non-representational abstract works.

While generally categorized with Edmonton's abstract Formalist School of painters, in his work Graham Peacock embraces modes of expression which set his work apart from these other practitioners. One such method utilized or explored by the artist is collage. As discussed in the section concerning art processes, collage is a technique of art production where the artwork is made from an assemblage of two dimensional forms to create a new whole. In essence, collage involves attaching two dimensional pieces of material from other sources onto a surface to create a new work.

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Introducing Graham Peacock continued - notes from Graham Peacock: A Retrospective and interviews with the artist continued

Peacock began experimenting with collage in 1982. At that time he was creating paintings composed of layers of colour which, as the layers dried, confronted each other in bright, intense and contrasted colours side by side on the picture's surface. Initially these paintings began with a 'limited' pallet of only two contrasting colours being used. Gradually, however, the artist began using more and more intense and contrasting colours in his works. He also began to use collage elements added to the surface. At first this involved adding cut painted canvas to the surface in order to create a shift and disruption in the patterning created by the layering of paint and so reveal the shape of the work and create compositional tension. By the 1990s he was also adding glass beads, glitter and other reflectors to the surface. As expressed by the art writer Roald Nasgaard:

Throughout the 1990s these shapes became thicker, wilder and more eccentric, to a point where they verged on transgressing into relief-sculpture....Aggressively opulent, texturally excessive, flashy, the paintings walk a daringly fine line between vulgarity and beauty....With their rich and gaudily marbled surfaces, like strange and exotic topological landscapes, studded with glitter and glass, they skitter close to jewelry if not to kitsch. 'Not so', said Peacock. "I may be taking things from the realm of kitsch, but I am turning it into high art.'

Graham Peacock: A Retrospective, pg. 14

Collage served as an element in Peacock's paintings throughout the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century. In 2011, however, he took this element and made it the primary subject of a new group of paintings. In this year he created a group of works entitled *Retrospective Painted Canvas Collage Miniatures*; a series of small collage paintings created by cutting up past canvases, some dating as far back as 1976, and attaching the cut strips to a new canvas backing. The colour, surface and drawing in the cut pieces suggest other colours which the artist painted alongside the collage strips to enhance the unity and spatial activity between the bands.

Peacock has continued such collage projects since 2011. As expressed by the artist, he will do a series of collages every so often as they are like studies: they are quick and a way for him to release creative energy and do something very immediate. As stated by Peacock:

I do them because I can and I like them.

The collages, however, are more than just 'fun and games'. For Peacock they are a means for him to explore colour pallets and serve as mementoes of experiences. As indicated by Peacock, his collage suites are often created after his travels to a place and the title and colours of the works are related to a sense of place and the colours and textures of the place he visited. As expressed by the artist:

Whether I am painting land or seascapes from observation or working 'abstractly' I am always responding via the sensations I receive from observation.

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Introducing Graham Peacock continued: Notes on specific collage suites

***Note: The following information is drawn from Graham Peacock's website at <http://grahampeacock.com/water.html>.**

Suite 111

The Suite 111 collages are composed with pre-painted canvas pieces, offcuts and remainders from 45 years of making paintings. I refer to these as 'retrospective' collages' as they may contain pieces of collages from any past year. I choose pieces I was inspired to place together and painted bands of colours alongside to compliment and bring alive what had initially inspired me to make the work. The colours, texture and character of these collages is wide and diverse. Each work has and will develop its own character which I hope to have given its own voice and brought to a pictorial conclusion. I work on many pieces at any one time, responding to my impulses as and when they occur and individual pieces develop quickly and reach conclusion, or as some do, over many months. On conclusion I arranged them in a numerical order which I choose as I would have lost all track of the order of their start and finish.

The Suite was made in 2011 and concluded in November, the eleventh month and when totaled coincidentally numbered one hundred and eleven. And were so titled Suite 111.

Suite 111 is the largest suite of individual collage I have made to date.

The Kris Cross Collages, 2014

The 'Kris Cross Collages' are, as the title suggests, based on a diagonal cross compositional theme and involves an under-over spatial play between the areas which is characteristically different than the vertical compositions found in the majority of my collages. This new freedom, if it really is that, rather offers different possibilities. The illusionistic geometry and colour of the shapes offers a more iconographic character than the neutrality of the vertical banding and is exciting to explore, although I see these collages leading me back to the under-painting and collage of my past and current paintings. Collage is an impasto demarcation for compositional drawing in my work, which appears in the all over crazed fields of paint with the bold colour showing through the crazed separation in the paint.

The colour and graphic character of these Kris Cross Collages recalls for me the boldness of the 1960s New York Colour Field School and the Canadian, Jack Bush, whose works I greatly admire.

Miniature Collages

In the Miniature Collages (of 2014), I continue with my use of a retrospective of previously painted canvas pieces as the inspirational starting point for my colour and composition. I paint colours alongside the chosen canvas strips, which have been positioned and attached, in order to compliment the unique character and unity of each piece. I refer to these collages generally as Retrospective Collages, since some pieces of collage may date from as early as the 1970s

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Introducing Graham Peacock continued: Notes on specific collage suites

and may contain a historical sampling from a pervious work. This assortment of collage allows me to choose of a rich range of colour and drawing which is unique to my work.

The colour in these collages, as in much of my collage works, is inspired by Matisse and particularly that of the Canadian painter Jack Bush, but my work generally has a more pronounced tonality. I choose mostly uplifting colours and I respond to the work of the New New Painters, the Fauves and the New York Colour school, and particularly the paintings of Kenneth Noland, Morris Louis, Friedel Dzubas, and the early stain paintings of Jules Olitski, all artists who I much admire.



Graham Peacock
Kris Cross Miniature #13, 2014
Painted canvas collage
On loan from the artist

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Introducing Graham Peacock continued

While the focus of the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage** concerns Peacock's abstract collage works, the exhibition also features examples of Peacock's work in watercolour landscape painting. The following information on this aspect of Peacock's oeuvre is drawn from his website at <http://grahampeacock.com/water.html>. As expressed by the artist:

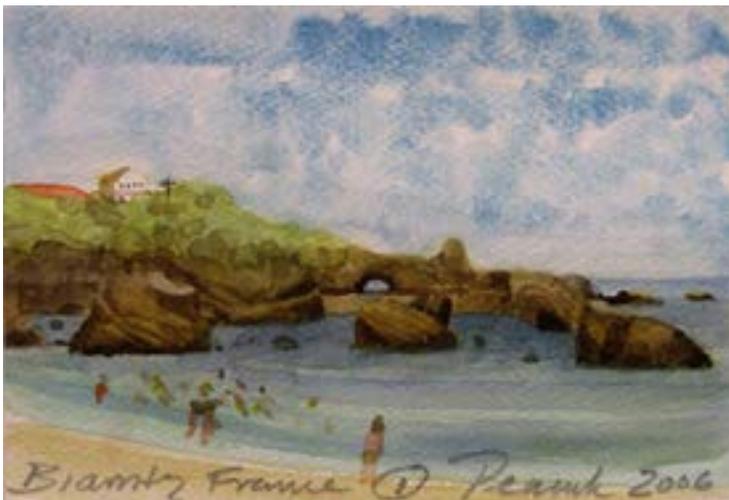
I have painted with watercolours since I was a child. My mother liked to paint and draw and I followed her interest. I would have my paint box and paper along on our holidays in the South of Devon, where I painted the cliffs and the sea in the late 1950's.

The activity dropped away when I attended art school and did not return until the 1980's. On vacations with young children, wanting to create during stays at Grandma's house on Bazan Bay on Vancouver Island, I returned to watercolour seascapes. Since then I have periodically made groups of work while traveling....

I taught a class in Watercolour for the University of Alberta in 2006/07 and 2008 in Vico Equense, in Southern Italy and figurative work was always part of my instructional spectrum in the 42 years I taught painting and drawing as a professor at the U. of A. So in that way I have been continually involved in looking at and considering representational work.

Watercolour painting for me remains a vocation which, when I embrace it from time to time, I do so with the same degree of involvement as I do in my 'abstract' paintings. Responding directly to a motif of nature before me, or from what I have experienced, as an inspirational source, both stimulate me to respond creatively. I am a naturalist, I am stimulated by the behavior of 'matter', be it a landscape or the topographic landscapes I create in pouring paint in my abstract painting process. They both involve the same painting principles.

I greatly admire the watercolour paintings of the English watercolour school, especially John Constable's skies and J.M. Turner's atmospheric land and seascapes.



Graham Peacock
Biarritz, France 1, 2006
Watercolour on paper
On loan from the artist

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Art History: The Landscape Tradition: Realism and Romanticism in the Visual Arts

The focus of Graham Peacock's watercolour painting is on representational landscapes. The following pages provide a summary of the landscape genre in both European and Albertan art.

Academic painting in the 19th century was dominated by two styles, Realism or Naturalism, and Romanticism. The differences between these two styles is clearly expressed through an examination of the genre of landscape painting of the time.

In the 16th century landscapes were not particularly realistic in nature but by the 17th century this had changed and 'real' Dutch landscapes became prevalent. Drawings were made on site and horizons were lowered in order to emphasize the impressive cloud formations of the region and to capture the quality of light.

The paintings of the French painter Claude Lorrain and Dutch artists such as Jacob van Ruisdael found a ready market in England and had a profound influence on English painters of the 1700s. One of the most important British painters influenced by these artists was **John Constable** (1776-1837). Constable combined objective studies of nature with a deeply personal vision of the countryside around him. He rejected the accepted hierarchy of art genres, which ranked idealized landscapes that told historical or mythological tales above views observed in nature, and sought recognition for humbler scenes of cultivated land and agricultural labour.



John Constable
The Hay Wain, 1821
Oil on canvas
National Gallery of London, U.K.

In 1824 Constable exhibited *The Hay Wain* at the Paris Salon. His strikingly fresh, apparently spontaneous transcription of the landscape, caused a sensation among French painters and influenced some of the younger artists of the time to abandon formalism and to draw inspiration directly from nature.

One artist inspired by Constable's work was Jean-Francois Millet, who extended Constable's focus on nature to include peasant figures, scenes of peasant life and work in the fields. Millet settled in the Barbizon region of France in 1849 and his new works marked a transition from the depiction of symbolic imagery of peasant life to a depiction of contemporary social conditions.

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program
Art History: Landscape Painting continued



Jean-Francois Millet
The Gleaners, 1857
Oil on canvas
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

One of the most famous of Millet's works was *The Gleaners*, submitted to the Salon in 1857. This painting portrays the ancient right of poor women and children to remove the bits of grain left in the fields following the harvest. The work was received with hostility as the middle and upper classes viewed it as an unpleasant reminder that French society was built on the labor of the working classes. Despite initial rejection, however, Millet later achieved financial success, was even elected to the Salon jury, and was an important source of inspiration for other artists such as Vincent van Gogh.

The second major trend in the visual arts (and also in architecture, literature and music) during the 18th and 19th centuries was that of Romanticism. Romanticism refers not to a specific style but to an attitude of mind. The declared aim of the Romantics was to tear down the artifices barring the way to a 'return to nature' - nature the unbounded, wild and ever-changing; nature the sublime and picturesque.

Romanticism in the visual arts incorporated both the imaginative and the ideal, rather than the real, and embraced concepts of nobility, grandeur, virtue and superiority. In British painting of the late 18th and 19th centuries, Romanticism was most clearly expressed in landscape gardening and in the development and elevation of **landscape painting** where artists came to emphasize the **sublime or the picturesque** in their rendering of the landscape. To achieve these ends artists used vibrant colours and loose, gestural brushstrokes and often sacrificed reality for the sake of emotion.



J.M.W. Turner
Rain, Steam and Speed - The Great Western Railway, 1844.
Oil on canvas

Art History: Landscape Painting continued



Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840)
The Abbey in the Oakwood, 1808-1810
Oil on canvas
Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin



Otto Jacobi
The Falls at Sunset, 1886
Oil on canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

Realism and Romanticism in landscape painting came together in the 18th century in the development of concepts of the sublime and the picturesque in landscape painting.



Homer Watson
Meadow Stream, Doon, n.d.
Oil on linen
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

As described by John Ruskin, **THE LANDSCAPE** was the ‘chief artistic creation of the nineteenth century’, with the result that in the following period people were ‘apt to assume that the appreciation of natural beauty and the painting of landscape is a normal and enduring part of our spiritual activity’.

With the development of the landscape as a legitimate subject for artists to pursue came a theoretical discussion concerning what constituted or made a ‘good’ landscape painting. From the late 18th century through to the early 20th century art critics and theorists devised a set of ‘rules’ which artists were required to follow if their work was to be accepted by the art institutions of the day.

The Landscape in Alberta Art: A Brief Survey

The landscape has been a prime subject for Alberta artists since Euro-North American artists first entered what became the province of Alberta in the 1800s. While on the national and international art stage landscape painting has come to be viewed as a passive art form and ‘....an irrelevant purely descriptive activity with... overtones of conventionalism and nostalgia’ (Mary-Beth Laviolette, *An Alberta Art Chronicle*, pg. 20), there is a continuing tradition of landscape painting in Alberta and it is a practice which embraces a variety of 20th century artistic styles.

Early practitioners of landscape painting in Alberta generated a diverse legacy of landscape art. **One avenue of exploration was the English landscape tradition**, expressed in the work of A.C. Leighton (1901-1965) and W.J. Phillips (1884-1963). Influenced by the works of John Constable, J.M.W. Turner and the great British watercolourists, this tradition emphasized naturalism, the pastoral and romantic views of the landscape. This approach dominated prairie painting before World War II.

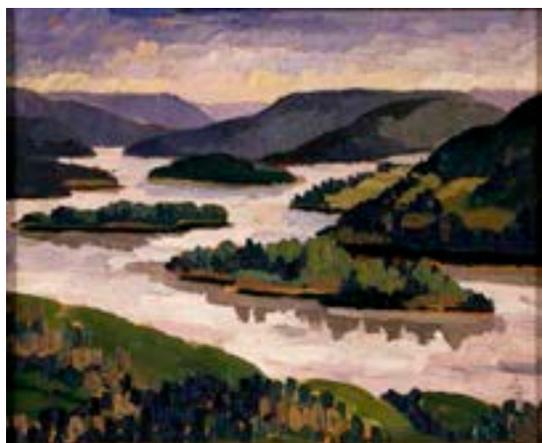


A.C. Leighton
Kananaskis Valley, n.d.
Watercolour on paper
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta



Left: W.J. Phillips
Morraine Lake, 1928
Watercolour on paper
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

Bottom: Euphemia McNaught
Junction of the Peace and Smoky Rivers, 1949
Oil on board
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta



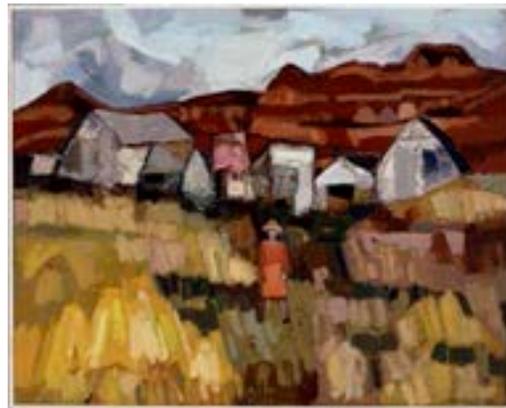
A second vein of exploration in landscape painting was work which was inspired by the **Impressionistic-influenced paintings of the Group of Seven**. Such a direction was expressed in the works of Euphemia McNaught (1902-2002) in the Peace River area and Calgary artist Illingworth Kerr (1905-1989).

A third and final approach to the landscape developed before WW II was the **darker, more European expressionist landscapes** of W.L. Stevenson (1905-1966) and Maxwell Bates (1906-1980).

The Landscape in Alberta Art: A Survey



Illingworth Kerr
O'Hara Night, n.d.
Silkscreen
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta



Top Right: Maxwell Bates
Eroded Land, n.d.
Oil on canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta



Bottom Right: W.L. Stevenson
Autumn Bushes, n.d.
Oil on masonite
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

By the 1960s and 1970s American influenced Abstraction was added to the Alberta landscape traditions and a second generation of landscape painters came to the fore. Whether influenced by Abstract Expressionism or modernist theories such as Colour Field Painting, **the emphasis for this generation is on the expression of the artist's ideas about the subject, rather than the subject itself.** As described by curator Kate Davis in speaking about the work of artist Ken Christopher:

*The real challenge is when we begin to appreciate the picture beyond illustration. We can experience the pleasure not only of recognition, but of discovery: the discovery that the canvas is not a window but a flat, two-dimensional surface....the discovery that the manipulation of paint upon that flat surface is the 'stuff' of art; the discovery of not only what is told, but **how** it is told.*

(Mary-Beth Laviolette, [An Alberta Art Chronicle](#), pg. 29)



Ken Christopher
Reclining Field, 1983
Acrylic on canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

The Landscape in Alberta Art: A Survey



Les Graff
Untitled, n.d.
Acrylic on masonite
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

The **how** of what is being told became the major preoccupation of many second-generation landscape artists, some of the most notable being the prairie modernists influenced by New York abstraction and colour-field painting. The main characteristics of this landscape are:

- 1/ the surface is flat and there is little or no illusion of depth in the work
- 2/ the surface is composed of uninterrupted fields of paint
- 3/ colour is of primary importance

Modernist approaches to the landscape held sway throughout the 1960s and 1970s but in the 1980s a new generation of landscape painters began to emerge and post-modern attitudes towards the role of art began to overtake the goals of modernism. No longer preoccupied with the 'how' of art making, this third generation began to examine more closely the content of their subject matter and what they wanted to say about it. Some of these artists concentrate on the symbolic or emotional content of the land; others react to 19th century romantic traditions; while others are concerned with ecological issues.



Jim Davies
The Broken Bridge, 1988
Acrylic on canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta



Peter von Tiesenhausen
Icefield, 1994
Oil on canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

What is Abstract Art? An Introduction

Of all the arts, abstract painting is the most difficult. It demands that you know how to draw well, that you have a heightened sensitivity for composition and for colours, and that you be a true poet. This last is essential.

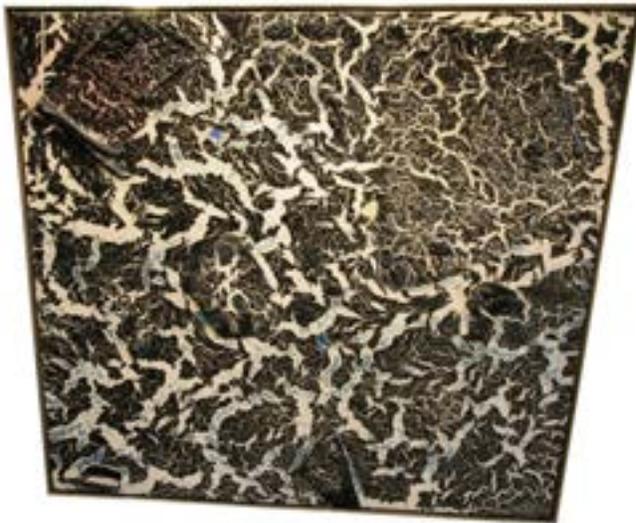
Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944)

I sense life in abstraction and it is where I feel most able to innovate.

Graham Peacock, 2001

Abstract Art is a term applied to 20th century styles in reaction against the traditional European view of art as the imitation of nature. Abstraction stresses the formal or elemental structure of a work.

Like all painting, abstract painting is not a unified practice. Rather, the term 'abstraction' covers two main, distinct tendencies. The first involves the **reduction** of natural appearances to simplified forms. Reduction may lead to the depiction of the essential or generic forms of things by eliminating particular and accidental variations. Reduction can also involve the creation of art which works away from the individual and particular with a view to creating an independent construct of shapes and colours having aesthetic appeal in their own right.



Graham Peacock
Black Jack, 1982
Acrylic on canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

The second tendency in abstraction involves the construction of art objects from non-representational basic forms. These objects are not created by abstracting from natural appearances but by **building up with non-representational shapes and patterns.** In other words, in this mode, abstract works are ones without a recognizable subject and do not relate to anything external or try to 'look like something'. Instead, the colour and form (and often the materials and support) are the subject of the abstract painting. As expressed by the artist Theo van Doesburg in 1930:

...nothing is more real than a line, a colour, a surface.

Whatever the tendency in abstraction, it is characteristic of most modes of abstraction that they abandon or subordinate the traditional function of art to portray perceptible reality and emphasize its function to create a new reality for the viewer's perception. As described by Roald Nasgaard in his work Abstract Painting in Canada:

The first message of an abstract work is the immediate reality of our perception of it as an actual object in and of themselves, like other things in the world, except that they are uniquely made for concentrated aesthetic experience. (pg. 11)

The History of Abstraction: A Survey

European Beginnings



Wassily Kandinsky
Composition VII, 1913
The Tretyalov Gallery, Moscow

Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) is usually credited with making the first entirely non-representational painting in 1910. **The history of abstraction in the visual arts, however, begins before Kandinsky in the later decades of the 19th century with the work of French Impressionist artists** such as Claude Monet, Paul Cézanne and Georges Seurat. While the work of these artists was grounded in visible reality, their methods of working and artistic concerns began the process of breaking down the academic restrictions concerning what was acceptable subject matter in art, how art works were produced and, most importantly, challenged the perception of what a painting actually was.



Paul Cézanne
Maison Arbies, 1890-1894
The Tretyalov Gallery, Moscow



Claude Monet
Haystacks (sunset), 1890-1891
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



George Seurat
A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte, 1884-1886

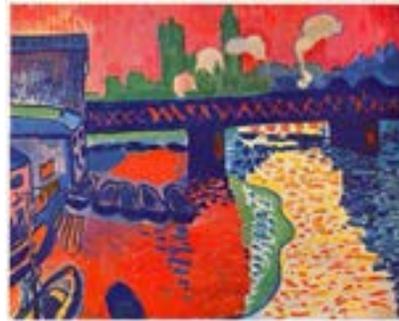
Radicals in their time, early Impressionists broke the rules of academic painting. They began by giving colours, freely brushed, primacy over line. They also took the act of painting out of the studio and into the modern world. Painting realistic scenes of modern life, they portrayed overall visual effects instead of details. They used short “broken” brush strokes of mixed and pure unmixed colour, not smoothly blended or shades as was customary, in order to achieve the effect of intense colour vibration.

The vibrant colour used by the Impressionist artists was adopted by their successors, the Fauve artists. The Fauves were modern artists whose works emphasized painterly qualities and strong colour over the representational or realistic values retained by the Impressionists. This group, which basically operated from 1905 to 1907, was led by Henri Matisse and André Derain.

The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

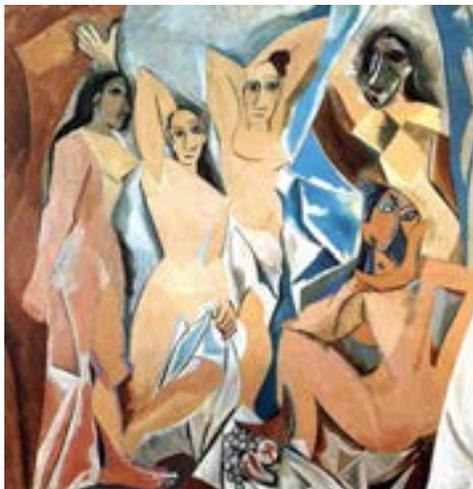


Henri Matisse
Harmony in Red, 1908



André Derain
Charing Cross Bridge, London 1906
National Gallery of Art, Washington

The paintings of the Fauve artists were characterised by seemingly wild brush work and strident colours and, in their focus on colour over line and drawing, the subjects of their paintings came to be characterized by a high degree of simplification and abstraction.



Pablo Picasso
Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.), 1911-12
Museum of Modern Art
New York, New York



Pablo Picasso
Portrait of Ambroise Vollard,
1910

While the Impressionists and Fauve artists are the direct ancestors of the abstract movement in 20th century art, the real ancestor of modern abstraction was Pablo Picasso. Picasso used primitive art from Africa and Oceania as a 'battering ram' against the classical conception of beauty.' Picasso made his first cubist paintings, such as *Les Femmes d'Alger*, based on Cézanne's idea that all depiction of nature can be reduced to three solids: cube, sphere and cone. Together with Georges Braque, Picasso continued his experiments and invented facet or **analytical cubism**. As expressed in the *Portrait of Ambroise Vollard*, Picasso created works which can no longer be read as images of the external world but as worlds of their own. Facet cubism, however, was still not pure abstraction as, though fragmented and

The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

redefined, the images preserved remnants of Renaissance principles of perspective as **space lies behind the picture plane** and has no visible limits. By 1911 Picasso and Georges Braque developed what is known as **Synthetic Cubism** which introduced collage into art making. Through this process these artists introduced a whole new concept of space into art making.

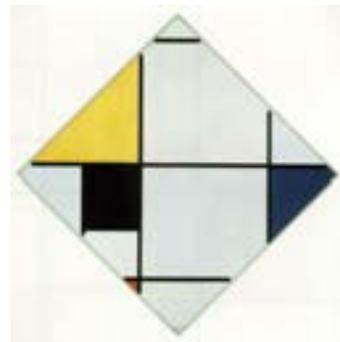


Pablo Picasso
Three Musicicians, 1921
Museum of Modern Art,
New York

In synthetic cubism, the picture plane lies in front of the picture plane. This re-definition of space, so different from the Renaissance principle of three-dimensional illusion that had dominated academic teaching for centuries, would have a profound effect on the development of abstraction in art and was a true landmark in the history of painting.



Wassily Kandinsky
Composition X, 1939



Piet Mondrian
Lozenge Composition with Yellow, Black, Blue, Red and Gray, 1921

Influenced by the practices of Impressionism, Fauvism and Cubism, artists gradually developed the idea that colour, line, form and texture could be the actual subjects of a painting and form the essential characteristics of art. Adhering to this, Wassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian developed the first pure abstract works in 20th century art.

The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

For both Kandinsky and Mondrian, abstraction was a search for truths behind appearances, expressed in a pure visual vocabulary stripped of representational references.

Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) was born in Moscow. Originally trained in law and economics, Kandinsky started painting at the age of 30 and, in 1896, moved to Germany to study art full-time. After a brief return to Russia (1914-1921) Kandinsky returned to Germany where he taught at the Bauhaus school of art and architecture until it was closed by the Nazis in 1933. He then moved to France where he remained for the rest of his life.

Kandinsky's creation of purely abstract work followed a long period of development and maturation of theoretical thought based on his personal artistic experience. At first influenced by both pointillism and the Fauve artists, by 1922 geometrical elements had taken on increasing importance in his paintings. Kandinsky was also extremely influenced by music as he considered music abstract by nature as it does not try to represent the exterior world but rather to express in an immediate way the inner feelings of the human soul. He was also influenced by the theories of Theosophy expressed by H.P. Blavatsky. These theories, which had a tremendous influence on many artists during the 1920s, postulated that creation was a geometrical progression beginning with a single point. Kandinsky's mature paintings focus on geometric forms and the use of colour as something autonomous and apart from a visual description of an object or other form and through relinquishing outer appearances he hoped to more directly communicate feelings to the viewer.

The most radical abstractionist of the early 20th century was Piet Mondrian (1872-1944). Born in Amersfoort, the Netherlands, Mondrian began his career as a primary teacher. While teaching he also practiced painting and these early works, while definitely representational in nature, show the influence various artistic movements such as pointillism and fauvism had on him. Mondrian's art, like Kandinsky's, was also strongly influenced by the theosophical movement and his work from 1908 to the end of his life involved a search for the spiritual knowledge expressed by theosophist theory.



Piet Mondrian
Composition with Yellow Patch, 1930
Kunstammlung Nordrhein-
Westfalen, Dusseldorf

In 1911 Mondrian moved to Paris and came under the influence of Picasso's cubism. While cubist influences can be seen in his works from 1911 to 1914, however, unlike the Cubists Mondrian attempted to reconcile his painting with his spiritual pursuits. In this pursuit he began to simplify elements in his paintings further than the cubists had done until he had developed a completely non-representational, geometric style. In this work Mondrian did not strive for pure lyrical emotion as Kandinsky did. Rather, his goal was pure reality defined as equilibrium achieved through the balance of unequal but equivalent oppositions. By 1919 Mondrian began producing the grid-based paintings for which he became renowned and this subject motivated his art practice for the rest of his life.

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The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

Abstract Expressionism

Modern art was introduced to the United States with the New York Armory Show in 1913 and through the arrival of European artists who moved to the U.S. during World War I and World War II. After World War II the U.S. became the focal point of a number of new artistic movements, the first of which was **Abstract Expressionism**. This movement, also known as **Action Painting**, made its impact felt throughout the world during the 1950s. Represented most clearly in the work of **Jackson Pollock** (1912-1956), the essence of Abstract Expressionism may be summed up as imageless, anti-formal, improvisatory, dynamic, energetic, free in technique, and meant to stimulate vision rather than gratify established conventions of good taste. In this movement, **emphasis was placed on the physical act of painting** and the 'existential' attitude that the artist 'grasped authentic being' through the act of creating rather than through a finished product.



Jackson Pollock, Action Painting



Jackson Pollock
No. 8, Oil and enamel paint on
canvas

The idea of the unconscious mind was extremely important to Pollock. Undergoing Jungian analysis, he attempted to communicate directly from the depths of his psyche. To do so he developed his own method of painting. Partly derived from the automatic drawing methods of the French Surrealists of the 1920s and Kandinsky's non-representational Expressionism, Pollock created his works by mainly pouring and splattering his colours instead of applying them with a brush.

Pollock's technique may also have resulted from a belief that paint itself was not a passive substance to be manipulated but a storehouse of pent-up forces to be released.

Any actual shapes visible in his paintings are largely determined by the internal dynamics of the paint and his process where the viscosity of the paint, the speed and direction of its impact on the canvas, and its interaction with other layers of pigment worked together to create the image.

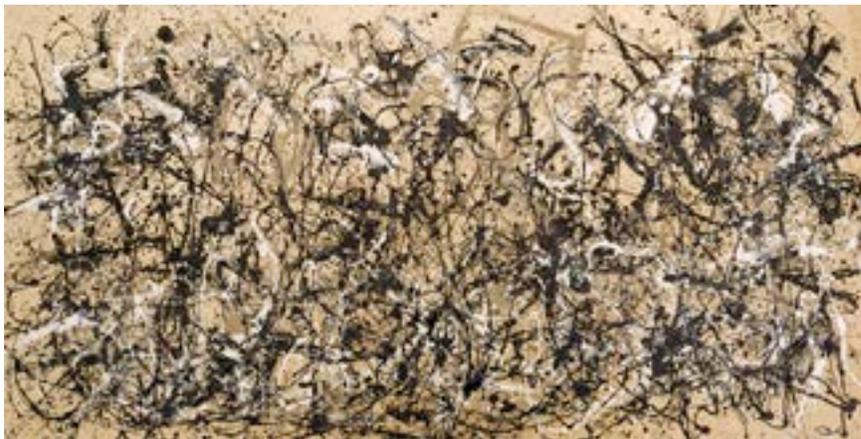
Pollock's most famous paintings were made during his 'drip period' between 1947 and 1950. In creating these works he used hardened brushes, sticks, and even basting syringes as paint applicators. The 'drip' technique allowed Pollock to achieve a more immediate means of creating art and in the process of making paintings in this way he moved away from figurative representation and challenged the Western tradition of using easel and brush.

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

Abstract Expressionism continued

Jackson Pollock's radical approach to painting revolutionized the potential for all contemporary art that followed him. His move away from easel paintings and conventionality was a liberating signal to the artists of his era and to all who came after. Artists realized that Pollock's process essentially blasted artmaking beyond any prior boundaries and expanded and developed the definitions and possibilities available to artists for the creation of new works of art.



Jackson Pollock
Autumn Rhythm

Today painters do not have to go to a subject matter outside of themselves. Most modern painters work from a different source. They work from within.

Jackson Pollock

After the 1950s Action Painting gradually lost its dominant position and a number of other 'isms' came to the fore. Among these were Colour-Field painting, Hard-edge painting, Geometric Abstraction, Minimal art, Lyrical Abstraction, Pop art, Op art and various other movements. In the second half of the 20th century the process of abstraction was most persuasively argued through the art criticism of the New York art critic, Clement Greenberg. Greenberg's 1960 essay 'Modernist Painting' expressed that the history of modernism was the story of a process where each of the arts slowly purged itself of everything that was not particular to it. By the early 1960s abstract painting was defined by what it was not: **abstract is not figurative, not narrative, not illusionist, not literary etc.** Flatness was a key Greenbergian concept whereby he argued that abstract artists emphasized the two-dimensionality of the picture plane and situated their pictures, not as magic windows into another world, but as real things 'in the same kind of space as that in which our bodies move.'

Despite the variety of movements and theoretical programs of the later 20th century, abstraction has remained a force into the 21st and its main themes of ***the transcendental, the contemplative, the timeless***, and the idea of ***art as object - of a painting as a handmade material and physically real*** - have continued to influence the production of many contemporary artists.

Modernism according to Clement Greenberg

Clement Greenberg (1909-1994) was an influential American art critic closely associated with Modern art in the United States and Canada. He helped to articulate a concept of medium specificity and championed abstraction in the visual arts. In 1940, in an influential piece in *Partisan Review*, Greenberg argued that the value of art was located in its form, which is inseparable from its content. In his first essay on modernism, written in 1960, Greenberg gave what has been described as what may be the most elegant definition of modernism in existence. In the essay Greenberg defined modernism as:

...the use of characteristic methods of a discipline to criticize the discipline itself, not in order to subvert it but in order to entrench it more firmly in its area of competence.

According to Greenberg's essay, all the arts, in order to not be devalued in society, had to demonstrate that the kind of experience they provided was valuable in their own right and not to be obtained from any other kind of activity. As a result, what had to be exhibited was not only that which was unique and irreducible in art in general, but also that which was unique and irreducible in each particular art.

In this process it quickly emerged that the unique and proper area of competence of each art coincided with all that was unique in the nature of its medium. In criticizing itself, it became art's task to eliminate from the specific effects of each art any and every effect that might be borrowed from or by the medium of any other art. Through this each art would be rendered "pure" and in this "purity" it would find the guarantee of its standards of quality.

In painting, the limitations that constitute the medium of painting - the flat surface, the shape of the support, the properties of the pigment - were traditionally treated as negative factors that could be acknowledged only implicitly or indirectly. In an Old Master painting, for example, one tends to see what is in the painting before one sees the picture - the paint itself, the works format - itself. Traditionally artists attempted to create an illusion of space in depth that the viewer could imagine oneself walking into. Modernism in painting reversed this. Through stressing the flatness of the surface, the flatness of the picture plane being the only thing unique and exclusive to pictorial art, Modernist artists created a situation where the viewer sees a Modernist picture as a picture first. In a modernist painting, the illusion created can only be seen into and can only be traveled through, literally or figuratively, with the eye. In other words, **the painting is an object itself, not merely a vehicle for a story or an illusion.**

Modernism in the visual arts is closely linked to the concept of formalism. **Formalism** is the concept that a work's artistic value is entirely determined by its form - the way it is made, its purely visual aspects, and its medium. Formalism emphasizes compositional elements such as colour, line, shape and texture rather than realism, context and content. **In visual art, formalism posits that everything necessary to comprehending a work of art is contained within the work of art.** In formalist theory, the focus is on the aesthetic experience gained from the piece.

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The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

Colour Field Painting

Abstraction in the visual arts has taken many forms over the 20th century. One of these is Colour Field Painting.

Colour Field painting emerged in New York City during the 1940s and 1950s. Inspired by European modernism and closely related to Abstract Expressionism, colour field painting is characterized primarily by large fields of flat, solid colour spread across or stained into the canvas (or board, in the work of Jim Corrigan), creating areas of unbroken surface and a flat picture plane. The movement places less emphasis on gesture, brushstrokes and action in favour of an overall consistency of form and process.



Henri Matisse
View of Notre Dame, 1914
Oil on canvas
Museum of Modern Art, New York

The use of large opened fields of expressive colour applied in generous painterly portions, accompanied by loose drawing, was first seen in the early 20th century works of Henri Matisse and Joan Miró. These artists, along with Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian directly influenced the Abstract Expressionists, the Colour Field painters and the Lyrical Abstractionists. **During the late 1950s and 1960s Colour Field painters emerged in Great Britain, Canada, Washington, D.C. and the West Coast of the United States. Using formats of stripes, targets, simple geometric patterns and references to landscape imagery and to nature these artists began to break away stylistically from abstract expressionism; experimenting with new ways of making pictures; and new ways of handling paint and colour. The artists associated with the Colour Field movement moved away from the violence and anxiety of Action Painting toward a new and 'calmer' language of colour.**

An important distinction that made colour field painting different from abstract expressionism was the paint handling. Colour Field painters revolutionized the way paint could be effectively applied as they sought to rid art of superfluous rhetoric. In this aim they used greatly reduced formats with drawing essentially simplified to repetitive and regulated systems, basic references to nature, and a highly articulated and psychological use of colour. In general these painters eliminated overt recognizable imagery and sought to present each painting as one unified, cohesive, monolithic image often with series of related types. Unlike the emotional energy and gestural surface marks and paint handling of abstract expressionists, colour field painters sought to efface individual marks in favour of large, flat, stained and soaked areas of colour.

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

Colour Field Painting continued



Helen Frankenthaler
Mountains and Sea, 1952
Oil stain on canvas

One of the reasons for the success of the colour field movement was the technique of staining. In this method artists would dilute their paint in containers, making a fluid liquid and then pour it onto raw unprimed canvas. The paint could also be brushed on or rolled on or thrown on and would spread into the fabric of the canvas and artists would often draw shapes and areas as they stained. Many artists, such as Helen Frankenthaler, found that pouring and staining opened the door to innovations and revolutionary methods of drawing and expressing meaning in new ways.

Colour field became a viable way of painting at exactly the time that acrylic paint, the new plastic paint, came into being. Oil paints, which have a medium quite different, are not water based and so leave a slick of oil around the edge of a colour whereas acrylic paints stop at their own edge. Acrylics were first made commercially in the 1950s with water soluble artist quality acrylic paints becoming commercially available in the early 1960s. These proved to be ideally suited for stain painting as water soluble acrylics made diluted colours sink and hold fast into raw canvas.

Abstract Painting in Edmonton: A Brief History

The full impact of New York abstraction was not felt in the Canadian West until the 1950s. These influences were first expressed at the Emma Lake Workshops and Regina in the 1950s, then Saskatoon in the 1960s, and finally in Edmonton in the mid to late 1960s and the 1970s. The affect was to put the prairies on 'the map' of Canadian art and marked the first time in Canada's cultural history that artwork from the prairie region was deemed worthy of national attention.



Douglas Haynes
Emma Grecho II, 1988
Acrylic on Canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

The push of the Edmonton abstract art scene to the forefront of national attention was the result of a number of factors which came together in the late 60s and early 70s. The first of these was the construction of the new Edmonton Art Gallery (replaced by the new Art Gallery of Alberta in 2010) in 1968 and the directorship of the gallery by Terry Fenton (director: 1972-1987) and the gallery's chief curator Karen Wilken (1971-1978). The EAG under Fenton and Wilken was eager to nurture a coherent art scene that coalesced with its own views on art. In 1973 Fenton invited New York artist Michael Steiner to appear at the EAG to jury an exhibition of abstract art and lead a workshop. At this very popular event Steiner encouraged local artists to be freer with materials and methods of paint application. Steiner's visit was followed by frequent visits to Edmonton by New York art critic Clement Greenberg and other American abstract artists which reinforced this direction.

A second factor which led to the flowering of abstraction in the city was the revitalization of the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta. A number of new instructors trained in England, the United States and elsewhere began their teaching careers at the U of A in the late 1960s and their influence, coupled with the curatorial interests of the EAG, would have a major influence on a younger generation of Edmonton artists. Among these important instructors were artists such as Graham Peacock, Phil Darrah, Ann Clarke, Douglas Haynes, and David Cantine. **Many of these artists, influenced by the work of the Americans Jules Olitski and Larry Poons, began putting an emphasis on the physical qualities and surface activity of paint itself, applied in a relatively all-over manner.**



Jules Olitski
Cythera 6, 1977
Acrylic on canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

Larry Poons
Nagra, 1983
Acrylic on canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta



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Abstract Painting in Edmonton continued



Ann Clark
Ariadne #2, 1975
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta



Phillip Darrah
Canastota Grey, 1982
Acrylic on Canvas
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

The process of these artists was aided by the on-going transformation of acrylic paint technology. Because of Olitski, the use of acrylic gel became ubiquitous as the sign of advanced modernist painting. Gel permitted painters both to reiterate the flatness of the surface and to build up a substantial surface texture where literal depth and relation to the surface remained transparently visible. The addition of a number of additives to acrylic paint and gel also made a huge variety of paint colours available for these artists to choose from.

Final factors which fostered the proliferation of abstract art in Edmonton during the 70s and 80s were the Commercial Galleries and corporate clients who supported the sophisticated New York style and the fact that a number of local artists were generally interested in the practice of abstraction.

In the 1980s the predominance of formalist abstraction on the Edmonton scene ended and abstract artists were re-positioned on the margins of the art world. According to some, however, this marginalization has had its positive aspects. First, it has led to more distinctive styles. Abstract artists now use recent developments in contemporary art like metaphor and external references which give the practitioners the freedom to abandon the self-referential and a strict 'art for art's sake' attitude. Edmonton's abstract painting is no longer simply a tale about 'close-valued, subtle colour compositions and heavy textured surfaces' but an open-ended exploration of abstract concerns.

Secondly, being placed on the side-lines of the art world has 'forced' Edmonton's abstract artists to look for or develop other venues to support their work. In 1993 twenty-two Edmonton artists formed the Edmonton Contemporary Artists Society (ECAS) in order to create new exhibition opportunities and to show art in whose presence the viewer '...has an experience rather than an idea...art that should move you emotionally.' (Abstract Painting in Canada, pg. 308) As expressed by Mary-Beth Laviolette, '...persistent throughout this apparently non-objective art is a strong current of romantic energy where a work is defined as 'an expression of feeling and personality...essentially the product of an independent vision'. (An Alberta Art Chronicle, pg. 165)

Art Processes: Collage



Graham Peacock
Kris Cross Miniature #10, 2014
Painted canvas collage
On loan from the artist

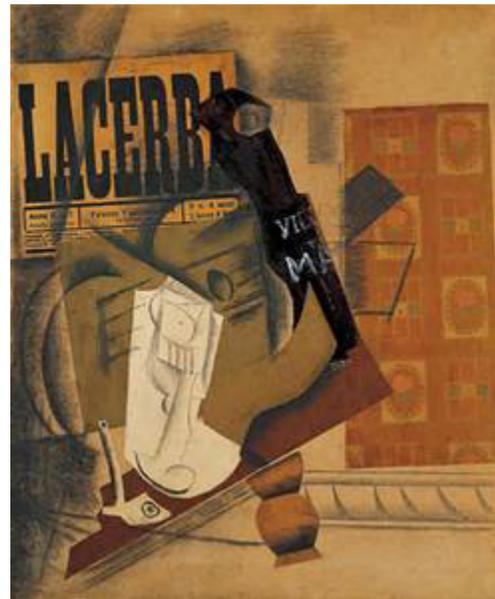
In addition to strict painting, a technique of art production seen in the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage** is that of Collage. **Collage is a technique of art production where the artwork is made from an assemblage of two dimensional forms to create a new whole.** The origins of collage can be traced back hundreds of years, but this technique made a dramatic reappearance in the early 20th century as a distinctive part of modern art.

The term *collage* derives from the French 'coller' meaning 'glue'. Such works may include newspaper clippings, ribbons, bits of coloured or handmade papers, portions of other artwork or texts, photographs and other found objects, which are glued to a support.

Techniques of collage were first used at the time of the invention of paper in China, around 200 B.C. The technique appeared in medieval Europe during the 13th century when gold leaf, gemstones and other precious metals were applied to religious images, icons, and also to coats of arms. Despite these earlier uses, however, many art historians argue that collage did not emerge until after 1900 with the early stages of modernism.

Collage in the modernist sense began with cubist painters Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso.

According to the Guggenheim Museum's glossary, collage is an artistic concept that entails much more than the idea of gluing something onto something else. The glued-on patches which Braque and Picasso added to their canvases offered a new perspective on painting when the patches 'collided with the surface plane of the painting'. In this perspective, collage was part of a re-examination of the relation between painting and sculpture and Braque and Picasso's works 'gave each medium some of the characteristics of the other'. These chopped-up bits of newspaper also introduced fragments of externally referenced meaning into the collision. This juxtaposition of signifiers, both serious and tongue-in-cheek, was fundamental to the inspiration behind collage.



Pablo Picasso

Art Processes continued - Watercolour

Watercolour painting is a process used in some of the works by Graham Peacock featured in the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage**. What follows is a general list of watercolour terms and techniques for use with beginner watercolourists.

Techniques:

Washes

The most basic watercolour technique is the flat wash. It is produced by first wetting the area of paper to be covered by the wash, then mixing sufficient pigment to easily fill the entire area. Once complete the wash should be left to dry and even itself out. A variation on the basic wash is the graded wash. This technique requires the pigment to be diluted lightly with more water for each horizontal stroke. The result is a wash that fades out gradually and evenly.



graded wash

Wet in Wet

Wet in wet is simply the process of applying pigment to wet paper. The results vary from soft undefined shapes to slightly blurred marks, depending on how wet the paper is. The wet in wet technique can be applied over existing washes provided the area is thoroughly dry. Simply wet the paper with a large brush and paint into the dampness. The soft marks made by wet in wet painting are great for subtle background regions of the painting such as skies.



wet in wet

Art Processes continued - Watercolour

Dry Brush

Dry brush is almost opposite to wet in wet techniques. Here a brush loaded with pigment (and not too much water) is dragged over completely dry paper. The marks produced by this technique are very crisp and hard edged. They will tend to come forward in your painting and so are best applied around the centre of interest.



Dry Brush

Lifting off

Most watercolour pigment can be dissolved and lifted off after it has dried. The process involves wetting the area to be removed with a brush and clean water and then blotting the pigment away with a tissue. Using strips of paper to mask areas of pigment will produce interesting hard edged lines and shapes.



lifting off

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Watercolour Terms & Techniques continued

Dropping in Colour

This technique is simply the process of introducing a colour to a wet region of the painting and allowing it to blend, bleed and feather without interruption. The result is sometimes unpredictable but yields interesting and vibrant colour gradations that can't be achieved by mixing the pigment on the palette.



dropping in

Tips when painting:

- Always mix more paint than you need.
- Normally, the lighter tones are painted first and the dark tones last.
- When applying washes have all your colours ready mixed and keep the brush full and watery.
- Work with the largest brush that is practical for each part of the painting.
- When working wet in wet, don't have the brush wetter than the paper or ugly "runbacks" will result.
- Have tissue handy to lift off wrongly placed colour.
- Test for tone and colour on a scrap piece of paper before committing it to your painting. If things go wrong and colour can't be mopped straight with a tissue, it's usually better to let the work dry before attempting a rescue.
- When lifting off a colour, gently wet the area and immediately dab with a tissue. Do this four or five times then let the area dry again before lifting off any more.
- Do lots of doodles—simple watercolour sketches such as trees, skies and rocks. This will build up confidence and get you looking at subjects to study their form.
- Copy parts of a painting that appeal to you until you can get the effect.
- When practicing a passage for a painting, use the same paper that the finished work will be painted on.

*credit: theresacerceo.wordpress.com/2009/03

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Visual Learning and Hands-On Activities



Graham Peacock
Narasimha Deva, Inida Suite, 2012
Painted canvas collage, acrylic on canvas
On loan from the artist

CONTENTS:

- Visual Learning and Elements of Design Tour
- Perusing Pictures: An Art-full Scavenger Hunt
- Reading Pictures Activity - Grades 4 - Adult
- Abstract Art Projects
- Watercolour and Landscape Art Projects

What is Visual Learning?

All art has many sides to it. The artist makes the works for people to experience. They in turn can make discoveries about both the work and the artist that help them learn and give them pleasure for a long time.

How we look at an object determines what we come to know about it. We remember information about an object far better when we are able to see (and handle) objects rather than by only reading about them. This investigation through observation (looking) is very important to understanding how objects fit into our world in the past and in the present and will help viewers reach a **considered response** to what they see. The following is a six-step method to looking at, and understanding, a work of art.

STEP 1: INITIAL, INTUITIVE RESPONSE The first 'gut level' response to a visual presentation. What do you see and what do you think of it?

STEP 2: DESCRIPTION Naming facts - a visual inventory of the elements of design.

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

What colours do you see? What shapes are most noticeable?

What objects are most apparent? Describe the lines in the work.

STEP 3: ANALYSIS Exploring how the parts relate to each other.

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

What proportions can you see? eg. What percentage of the work is background? Foreground?

Land? Sky? Why are there these differences? What effect do these differences create?

What parts seem closest to you? Farthest away? How does the artist give this impression?

STEP 4: INTERPRETATION Exploring what the work might mean or be about

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

How does this work make you feel? Why?

What word would best describe the mood of this work?

What is this painting/photograph/sculpture about?

Is the artist trying to tell a story? What might be the story in this work?

STEP 5: INFORMATION Looking beyond the work for information that may further understanding.

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

What is the artist's name? When did he/she live?

What art style and medium does the artist use?

What artist's work is this artist interested in?

What art was being made at the same time as this artist was working?

What was happening in history at the time this artist was working?

What social/political/economic/cultural issues is this artist interested in?

STEP 6: PERSONALIZATION What do I think about this work? (Reaching a considered response).

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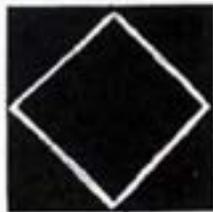
Elements of Design Tour

The following pages provide definitions and examples of the elements and principles of art that are used in the images found in the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage**. Teacher/facilitator questions for inquiry are in **bold** while possible answers are in regular type.

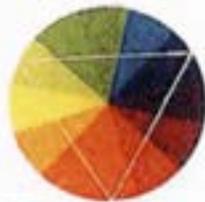
The elements of art are components of a work of art that can be isolated and defined. They are the building blocks used to create a work of art.



LINE !



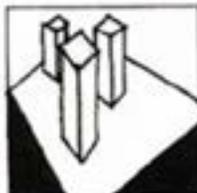
SHAPE!



COLOUR!



TEXTURE!



SPACE!

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Elements and Principles of Design Tour

LINE: An element of art that is used to define shape, contours and outlines. It is also used to suggest mass and volume.

See: *Oak Bay Marina* by Graham Peacock



What types of lines are there? How can you describe a line? What are some of the characteristics of a line?

Width: thick, thin, tapering, uneven

Length: long, short, continuous, broken

Feeling: sharp, jagged, graceful, smooth

Focus: sharp, blurry, fuzzy, choppy

Direction: horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curving, perpendicular, oblique, parallel, radial, zigzag

Now, describe the lines you see in this image. Follow the lines in the air with your finger. What quality do the lines have? Are they thick or thin?

A variety of lines are used in this work - a thin, long, jagged horizontal line to define the mountains; shorter, thin, vertical and horizontal lines to form the buildings; thin vertical lines to form the boat masts; thicker horizontal and curved lines to form the boats; and thin and thick curved horizontal lines to show the waves of the sea.

What direction do lines appear to be going? How are the lines similar and different from each other? How does line in this image help your eye travel within the composition?

Most of the lines are horizontal and lead the eye from one side of the picture to the other.

The vertical lines in the middle of the scene - the boat masts - direct the viewer's eyes up to the buildings and then to the mountains

The mountains, made up of a single horizontal line, reflect the waves by moving the eye across the picture plane.

Through the combination of horizontal, vertical and curving lines the viewer's eye is moved throughout the composition.

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Elements of Composition Tour continued

SHAPE: When a line crosses itself or intersects with another line to enclose a space it creates a shape. Shape is two-dimensional. It has height and width but no depth.

See: *Kris Cross Miniature #13* by Graham Peacock



What kind of shapes can you think of?

Geometric: circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. We see them in architecture and manufactured items.

Organic shapes: a leaf, seashell, flower. We see them in nature with characteristics that are freeflowing, informal and irregular.

Static shapes: shapes that appear stable and resting.

Dynamic shapes: Shapes that appear moving and active.

What shapes do you see in this image? How would you describe them?

This image is composed of geometric shapes. The shapes are rectangular and are repeated - the large rectangle of the frame; the smaller rectangle of the complete collage image; the four smaller rectangles of the image itself; the long thin vertical/horizontal collage rectangles dividing the central image.

What quality do the shapes have? Are they active/energetic or static? If they are active, how is this created?

While the shapes may appear rather static they are activated due to colour treatment - the paint treatments of the frame and the long thin vertical and horizontal strips are very vibrant and give the work more energy than its geometric structure would normally have.

The shapes are also activated because of their changing sizes. Each successively smaller rectangle pulls the viewer deeper into the overall composition and so serve to give the composition a great deal of energy.

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Elements and Principles of Design Tour

COLOUR: Colour comes from light that is reflected off objects. Colour has three main characteristics: Hue, or its name (red, blue, etc.) Value: (how light or dark the colour is) and Intensity (how bright or dull the colour is)

See: *Suite 111, #29* by Graham Peacock



What are primary colours? Do you see any? Point to them in the painting. What secondary colours do you see? Do you see any white added to colour to form a tint or black to form a shade?

Colour is made of primary colours, red, blue and yellow. Secondary colours are created from primary colours and include green, orange and purple. We see primary colours of red and blue and the secondary colour, purple.

Where is your eye directed to first? Why? Are there any colours that stand out more than others?

Warm colours tend to stand out more than cool colours and therefore, within this work, the viewer's eye may be directed to the red areas on both sides of the work.

The blue strips, however, are such a contrast to the overall pink/red colour scheme, that the viewer may be drawn to these areas first.

Finally, the large pinkish center area may be seen first, primarily because of its position and size but also because it is bound by the two bluish areas which contrast it.

How does colour move the eye throughout the composition?

This is a very vibrant work and its structure makes the eye 'jump' around the composition. The placement of tints and tones of a colour beside each other draw the eye in a left to right fashion. However, the use of contrasting blue strips causes the eye to 'jump' between these two areas. Also, the purple on the left is repeated in a strip on the right which causes the eye to jump across from the left to the right.

What do the colours used in the artwork remind you of? How might these ideas create meaning?

Based on individual responses, everyone will connect to the work in different ways 'opening the doors' to create meaning.

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Elements of Composition Tour continued

TEXTURE: Texture is the surface quality of an object that can be seen or felt. Texture can also be implied on a two-dimensional surface.

See: *Narasimha Deva, India Suite* by Graham Peacock



What is texture? How do you describe how something feels? What are the two kinds of texture you can think of in artwork?

Texture can be real, like the actual texture of an object. Texture can be rough, smooth, hard, soft, glossy, etc. Texture can also be implied. This happens when a two-dimensional piece of art is made to look like a certain texture.

Allow your eyes to “feel” the different areas within the work and explain the textures.

This work was created using both implied and actual texture. While the frame is actually smooth, the ‘broken’ application of the gold leaf makes it appear rough and jagged. Implied texture is also seen in the center green area of the painting. The black circle patterning has very dark centers surrounded by a lighter grey areas which give a sense of depth to these ‘spots’ but there is no real depth.

Real texture, on the other hand, is seen in the green area as the surface is very rippled and there are actual raised areas - this section, then, is actually rough to the touch and contrasts the very smooth pink and orange coloured sides.

How was this work created? What makes you think this?

*Answers will vary but please refer to notes on Graham Peacock for information on his painting techniques.

What do you think this work is about?

Because we don’t see anything immediately recognizable, this work may be about the physical presence of the paint and the nature in which it was created.

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Elements and Principles of Design Tour

SPACE: The area between and around objects. It can also refer to the feeling of depth in a two-dimensional artwork.

See: *Biarritz, France 1* by Graham Peacock



What is space? What dimensions does it have?

Space includes the background, middle ground and foreground. It can refer to the distances or areas around, between or within components of a piece. It may have two dimensions (length and width) or three dimensions including height or depth.

What may be represented in this work? How do you know this?

What is being represented is a landscape/seascape. We can reference the horizontal lines in the image to be the horizon line dividing land and water, water and sky and land and sky.

Space can be positive or negative. What would you say is the positive space in this work? What is the negative space and why?

The positive space represents the subject matter and the negative space represents the open space around it. Within this painting we might say the positive space is represented by the landscape elements of rocks, hills, the house and the people. The negative space would be the area surrounding these and provide balance to the positive space. Areas of a picture that contain “nothing” are important visual elements that provide balance in the work and should always be considered as important as the positive elements.

Do you think there is space in this work? If so, how has the artist created a sense of space?

Space may be created by the dividing horizontal lines that divide the composition between the land, water and the sky.

Space is also created by the size of objects in the work - the figures of people in the foreground are larger than the rocks or the house on the hill and so these figures appear closer to the viewer. The sizes of the rocks also varies giving the impression of distance.

How does the way the composition is divided create tension or visual interest in this work?

While the horizontal line dividing water from sky is straight, the jagged diagonal line creating the rocks/hills is very active and dynamic. This line, which draws the viewer's eye 'up' to the left of the composition creates a lot of visual interest and energy in the work.

Perusing Paintings: An Art-full Scavenger Hunt

In teaching art, game-playing can enhance learning. If students are engaged in learning, through a variety of methods, then it goes beyond game-playing. Through game-playing we are trying to get students to use higher-order thinking skills by getting them to be active participants in learning. *Blooms's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, which follows, is as applicable to teaching art as any other discipline.

1. *knowledge*: recall of facts
2. *comprehension*: participation in a discussion
3. *application*: applying abstract information in practical situations
4. *analysis*: separating an entity into its parts
5. *synthesis*: creating a new whole from many parts, as in developing a complex work of art
6. *evaluation*: making judgements on criteria

A scavenger hunt based on art works is a fun and engaging way to get students of any age to really look at the art works and begin to discern what the artist(s) is/are doing in the works. **The simple template provided, however, would be most suitable for grade 1-3 students.**

Instruction:

Using the exhibition works provided, give students a list of things they should search for that are in the particular works of art. The students could work with a partner or in teams. Include a blank for the name of the artwork, the name of the artist, and the year the work was created. Following the hunt, gather students together in the exhibition area and check the answers and discuss the particular works in more detail.

Sample List:

Scavenger Hunt Item	Title of Artwork	Name of Artist	Year Work Created
someone wearing a hat			
a specific animal			
landscape			
a bright red object			
a night scene			
a house			

*This activity was adapted from *A Survival Kit for the Elementary/Middle School Art Teacher* by Helen D. Hume.

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Reading Pictures Program

Grades 4-12/adults

Objectives:

The purposes of this program are to:

- 1/ Introduce participants to Art and what artists do – this includes examinations of art styles; art elements; the possible aims and meaning(s) in an art work and how to deduce those meanings and aims.
- 2/ Introduce visitors to the current exhibition – the aim of the exhibition and the kind of exhibition/artwork found.
 - the artist (s) - his/her background(s)
 - his/her place in art history
- 3/ Engage participants in a deeper investigation of artworks.

Teacher/Facilitator Introduction to Program:

This program is called **Reading Pictures**. What do you think this might involve?

-generate as many ideas as possible concerning what viewers might think 'Reading Pictures' might involve or what this phrase might mean.

Before we can 'read' art, however, we should have some understanding what we're talking about.

What is Art? If you had to define this term, how would you define it?

Art can be defined as creative expression - and artistic practice is an aspect and expression of a peoples' culture or the artist's identity.

The discipline of Art, or the creation of a piece of art, however, is much more than simple 'creative expression' by an 'artist' or an isolated component of culture.

How many of you would describe yourselves as artists?

You may not believe it, but everyday you engage in some sort of artistic endeavor.

How many of you got up this morning and thought about what you were going to wear today? Why did you choose the clothes you did? Why do you wear your hair that way? How many of you have tattoos or plan to get a tattoo some day? What kind of tattoo would you choose? Why.....? How many of you own digital cameras or have cameras on cell phones? How many of you take pictures and e-mail them to other people?

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Reading Pictures Program continued

Art is all around us and we are all involved in artistic endeavors to some degree. The photographs we take, the colour and styles of the clothes we wear, the ways we build and decorate our homes, gardens and public buildings, the style of our cell phones or the vehicles we drive, the images we see and are attracted to in advertising or the text or symbols on our bumper stickers – all of these things (and 9 billion others) utilize artistic principles. They say something about our personal selves and reflect upon and influence the economic, political, cultural, historical and geographic concerns of our society.

Art, therefore, is not just something some people in a society do – it is something that affects and informs everyone within a society.

Today we're going to look at art - paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures – and see what art can tell us about the world we live in – both the past, the present and possibly the future – and what art can tell us about ourselves.

Art is a language like any other and it can be read.

Art can be read in two ways. It can be looked at **intuitively** – what do you see? What do you like or not like? How does it make you feel and why? – or it can be read **formally** by looking at what are called the Elements of Design – the tools artists use or consider when creating a piece of work.

What do you think is meant by the elements of design? What does an artist use to create a work of art?

Today we're going to examine how to read art – we're going to see how art can affect us emotionally... and how an artist can inform us about our world, and ourselves, through what he or she creates.

Tour Program:

–Proceed to one of the works in the exhibition and discuss the following:

- a) The nature of the work - what kind of work is it and what exhibition is it a part of?
- b) Examine the work itself
 - What do visitors see?
 - How do you initially feel about what you see? Why do you feel this way? What do you like? What don't you like? Why?
 - What is the work made of?
 - How would you describe the style? What does this mean?

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Reading Pictures Program continued

–What is the compositional structure? How are the shapes and colours etc. arranged? Why are they arranged this way?

–How does the work make them feel? What is the mood of the work? What gives them this idea? Discuss the element(s) of design which are emphasized in the work in question.

–What might the artist be trying to do in the work? What might the artist be saying or what might the work ‘mean’?

c) Summarize the information.

• **At each work chosen, go through the same or similar process, linking the work to the type of exhibition it is a part of. Also, with each stop, discuss a different Element of Design and develop participants visual learning skills.**

At the 1st stop, determine with the participants the most important Element of Design used and focus the discussion on how this element works within the art work. Do the same with each subsequent art work and make sure to cover all the elements of design on the tour.

Stop #1: LINE

Stop #2: SHAPE

Stop #3: COLOUR

Stop #4: TEXTURE

Stop #5: SPACE

Stop #6: ALL TOGETHER – How do the elements work together to create a certain mood or story? What would you say is the mood of this work? Why? What is the story or meaning or meaning of this work? Why?

Work sheet activity – 30 minutes

•Divide participants into groups of two or three to each do this activity. Give them 30 minutes to complete the questions then bring them all together and have each group present one of their pieces to the entire group.

Presentations – 30 minutes

•Each group to present on one of their chosen works.

Visual Learning Activity Worksheet * Photocopy the following worksheet so each participant has their own copy.

Reading Pictures Program continued

Visual Learning Worksheet

Instructions: Choose two very different pieces of artwork in the exhibition and answer the following questions in as much detail as you can.

1. What is the title of the work and who created it?

2. What do you see and what do you think of it? (What is your **initial reaction** to the work?) Why do you feel this way?

3. What colours do you see and how does the use of colour affect the way you 'read' the work? Why do you think the artist chose these colours – or lack of colour – for this presentation?

4. What shapes and objects do you notice most? Why?

Reading Pictures Program continued

5. How are the shapes/objects arranged or composed? How does this affect your feelings towards or about the work? What feeling does this composition give to the work?

6. How would you describe the mood of this work? (How does it make you feel?) What do you see that makes you describe the mood in this way?

7. What do you think the artist's purpose was in creating this work? What 'story' might he or she be telling? What aspects of the artwork give you this idea?

8. What do you think about this work after answering the above questions? Has your opinion of the work changed in any way? Why do you feel this way?

9. How might this work relate to your own life experiences? Have you ever been in a similar situation/place and how did being there make you feel?

Abstract Art Projects: An Introduction

To **abstract** something means to simplify or distort it in some way. In art, abstraction involves the taking away, simplification or distortion of the elements of line, shape, colour and texture. Abstraction allows the artist to express inner feelings, sensations, and ideas through the process of art making in ways that realism may not allow for. Abstraction reveals the practice of art making and offers an openness of meaning which, in turn, allows more interaction between the art object and the viewer.

Abstractions come in many variations. An abstract image can be grounded in an object, or it can give visual form to something nonvisual, like emotions or sensations.

Ways in which artists have abstracted their images or objects are:

- by *recreating* and *enlarging* everyday objects in a crude industrial material
- by *manipulation* and re-exposing images to the forces of nature
- by *simplifying* shapes and *limiting* variations of colour
- by *representing*, enlarging and neutralizing images
- by the *presentation* and the *transformation* of familiar objects
- by *monumentalizing* a found object into an anonymous background and by *exaggerating* the detail

The art projects which follow investigate many of these methods of abstraction and address processes and concerns expressed in the work of Graham Peacock in the exhibition [Graham Peacock Collage](#) .

Cord and String Painting K-3

Objectives:

Through the studio activity students will:

- 1/ experiment with the **mixing of colours** and the effects created by overlapping of colours
- 2/ experiment with the **movement of colour** to create a design

Materials:

- 50cm lengths of string (three or more strips for each student)
- tempera paint in a tray or shallow dish
- paper

Methodology:

1. Distribute two pieces of paper and at least three strings to each student.
2. Have students drop one end of first string into one colour of paint, keeping hold of the dry end.
3. Have students pull the string out of the paint and lay it onto paper until the paint-covered string is on the paper and the dry end of the string is over the edge of the paper.
4. Have students lay a clean piece of paper over top the first piece of paper.
5. Have students press down on the paper covering and pull the paint string out.
6. Have students remove the paper covering to see the results and then have them repeat the process with a new coloured string over the first design.

* for a different design, drag the strings around the paper before pulling them off.



credit: Childrens Art & Crafts, [The Australian Women's Weekly](#), Nancy Lewis Bartlett, Published by Australian Consolidated Press, Sydney, Australia

Random Patterns K-6

Random patterns

THICK BRISTOL OR WATERCOLOR PAPER



1. Mix different colors of watercolor paint. Make them quite watery. Paint them in patches close to each other.



2. Before the paint has dried, cut a piece of plastic foodwrap larger than your painting. Then, lay it over the paint.



3. Use your fingers to move the paint under the foodwrap, to make patterns and blend the colors together.

Random Patterns continued



To get a speckled effect like this, sprinkle sea salt onto the wet paint when you're filling in the patterns. Brush the salt off when it's dry.



4. Leave the foodwrap on top of the paint and let the paint dry completely. Then, carefully peel off the foodwrap.



5. Use watercolor paints to fill in lots of the patterns left by the foodwrap. Leave a space around each shape.



6. Continue filling in the patterns using some strong colors and some paler ones. Leave some of the patterns unfilled.

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Take A Line for a Walk K-6

Background:

A line is an element of art that is used to define shape, contours and outlines. It is also used to suggest mass and volume.

Materials:

12-inch x 18-inch white drawing paper or watercolour paper
black crayons or sharpies
coloured crayons or pencils
watercolour paints and brushes



Procedure:

1. What are some of the characteristics of a line? What types of lines are there? How can you describe a line?

Width: thick, thin, tapering, uneven

Length: long, short, continuous, broken

Feeling: sharp, jagged, graceful, smooth

Focus: sharp, blurry, fuzzy, choppy

Direction: horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curving, perpendicular, oblique, parallel, radial, zigzag

2. Look at the work by Nicole Galellis. Now, describe the lines you see in this image. Follow the lines in the air with your finger. What quality do the lines have? Are they thick or thin? Draw imaginary lines in the air. Add sounds to the lines as you draw them.

3. Hand out paper and black crayons. Explain to students they are going to take their crayon on a wonderful adventure all over the paper. They can start on any edge and curl, twirl, curve, zig-zag on the paper until you say "Stop!". Students should freeze and end their lines keeping their crayon on the paper. Don't extend this section of the lesson for too long to avoid crowded lines and messy work.

4. Have students carefully fill in areas where the lines have created shapes with colour. Demonstrate a variety of lines and marks they could use such as dots, hatching, cross-hatching, etc.

5. Finish the artwork by adding watercolour to selected areas or overlapping the wax crayon to create a resist.



<http://artlessonsforkids.wordpress.com/2008/12/03/lines-go-walking-in-kindergarten/>

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Listen and Draw K-6

Objectives

Students will follow one set of directions and produce very different and unique works of abstract art.

Vocabulary

shapes	unique	images
listen	sound	different/similar
colour	curve	straight line
identify	triangle	square
circle	imagine	arrange
design		



Supplies

construction paper (light colours)
markers (fine and thick tip)
crayons, pencil crayons or pastels can be substituted

Procedure

- Teacher will give directions to students on how to proceed with their drawings.**
- Students will draw what they hear and be encouraged not to look at others work in the process.**
- Students should be encouraged to listen carefully to the directions given.**
- Teachers can use the following prompts or make up their own.**

For younger students:

1. Draw four straight lines from one edge of your paper to the other.
2. Draw five circles anywhere on your paper.
3. Draw one curved line that starts at one edge of your paper and ends somewhere in the middle of your paper.
4. Colour in two of the circles any colour you like.
5. Fill in three areas of your paper however you like. i.e lines, squiggles, etc.

For older students:

1. Draw four straight lines from one edge of the paper to the other.
2. Draw two or more straight lines from one edge of your paper to the other– only this time make sure the lines cross over the lines you have already drawn.
3. Draw five circles, any size, anywhere on your paper.
4. Draw two curved lines beginning at the edge of the paper and ending up somewhere in the middle of the paper.
5. Fill in three of the five circles.
6. Fill in four areas of your paper however you would like.

***Add more challenging vocabulary such as organic and geometric shapes, warm and cool colours, etc.**

<http://www.kinderart.com/drawing.html>

Abstract Art inspired by Wassily Kandinsky

Background:

Wassily Kandinsky, a Russian artist from the late 1800s, was inspired by the loose painting style of the Impressionists and ended up pioneering the abstract art movement. This project is a copy of one of his most popular paintings, and can easily be adapted for larger or smaller classrooms. It is an excellent project to practice basic cutting and gluing skills and can be easily adapted for larger classrooms to create murals.

Materials:

glue stick, pair of scissors, pencil

Instructions:

Hand out a sheet of black construction paper.

Tip: If you have only a little time to do this project, consider making the paper size small than the regular 12" x 18". It'll go much faster and the effect will be the same.

1. To reduce the amount of paper waste with this project (we all know that the kids will cut the tiniest circle from the middle of the largest piece of paper), you'll need to provide paper in stages.
2. Give each student a plastic container with a 5" diameter (yoghurt, salsa, sour cream containers).
3. Have students trace and cut out 6 circles. Provide paper that is just the size for the container.
4. Glue the circles onto the black paper.
5. Do the same but use a small plastic cup and smaller pieces of paper. Have them cut out 6 medium sized circles. Glue the medium circles to the large circles.

*Note: Talk about contrasting colours to avoid having yellow medium circles glued to yellow large circles.

6. Repeat steps, but this time, the kids can use the scraps of paper from steps one and two to make smaller and smaller circles.



28 *From Realism to Abstraction*

Observing and Thinking Creatively

Abstract art usually uses bright colors, sharp edges, geometric shapes, and interesting contrasts to create a mood. Sometimes abstract art simply shows an artist's emotional response to an object or idea. Details may be minimized, proportions **distorted**, and unusual color schemes used. **Nonobjective** art occurs when abstraction departs completely from realism.

Henri Matisse was a French artist who enjoyed changing the usual form of an object. His versions emphasized the pure idea of the object, and are a type of abstract

art. To create the cutouts for the snail shown here, he first picked up a real snail and examined it closely. Then he drew it from every angle possible, noting its texture, color, and construction.

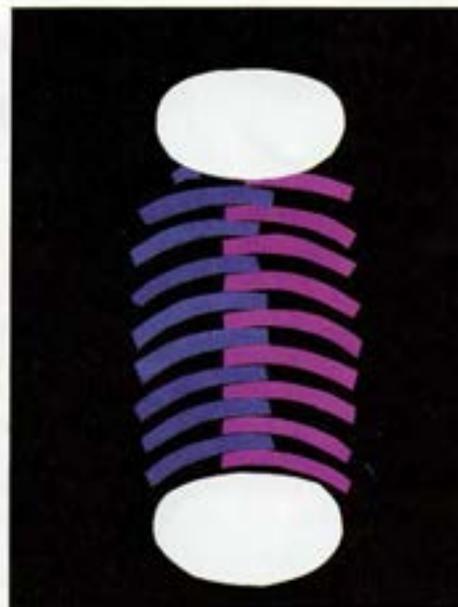
Observe the cut out paper shapes Matisse used in his snail of many colors. Can you see how the simple blue rectangle represents the foot of the snail? Notice which parts of a snail Matisse omitted, and which parts he thought were essential.

In this lesson, you will create an abstract cutout design of an object.



Henri Matisse, *The Snail*, 1952, Tate Gallery, London.

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program
From Realism to Abstraction continued



Instructions for Creating Art

1. Choose an object with an interesting shape and study it. Sketch it from several angles. Examine how it is built. Does it have a center? What basic shapes compose it? Observe the texture and colors of your object.
2. Now draw the general outer shape of your object. What idea does it give you? Next, draw only the inside parts of your object, without any outside lines. Think about what color reminds you of the feeling or idea of the object. Notice curved and straight lines, light and dark values, and small and large shapes.
3. When you find a shape that seems to capture the idea of your object, practice distorting or changing it to make a more pure, simple shape.
4. Choose one or more colors for your shape, and cut it out of colored paper. Mount the shapes on a sheet of a different

color, and display your abstract cutout design. Can your classmates guess what the real object was?

Art Materials

A variety of objects such as a shell, spoon, corn cob, flower, leaf, model, toy, piece of fruit, etc.
Sketch paper
Pencil and eraser
Colored construction paper
Scissors
Glue or paste



Learning Outcomes

1. Name two ways of making *abstract* art.
2. Describe how you distorted the shape you made of an object.
3. What parts of your object did you leave out of your cutout design? How did you decide which parts to keep and which parts to omit?

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Abstract Mondrian Map Art 7-9

Background

Students look at the work of Piet Mondrian to create a Mondrian-like artwork that focuses on organic shape and primary colours. Students use a map to explore Mondrian's ideas in a unique way. Students copy the lines in a section of the map, excluding numbers and letters. They are then asked to combine Mondrian's ideas with their map drawing.

Materials: (There are many different options for materials that can be used for this project.)

Option #1: Black sharpie, acrylic paint or watercolour

Option #2: Black glue or squeeze paint with tempera paint or acrylics.

Option #3: Black acrylic paint with oil pastels.

Option #4: Black oil pastel lines with watercolour.

Option #5: White glue on black construction paper with oil pastel.

Option #6: Black sharpie or ink with tissue paper or collage. Students cut to fit shapes.

Vocabulary:

primary colour
geometric
organic
abstract
non-objective
focus
Piet Mondrian



Grade 3 student example

Procedure:

1. Review primary colours and present works by Mondrian. Discuss the meaning of abstract art and non-objective art. Look at maps of local regions and review how to read the map. Demonstrate how to simplify and focus on interesting areas of the map.
2. Students start with an interesting area of a map. Draw the main lines using pencil onto a large drawing paper or watercolour paper.
3. Go over the lines with pen or paint.
4. Colour in selected areas with choice of media, repeating colours for balance and unity but leaving some areas white.



Composition with Red, Blue and Yellow
1921; Oil on canvas, 39 x 35 cm

Action Painting: Painting without a Brush 7-12

American artist **Jackson Pollock** created a style of painting called *action painting*. In his method, Pollock used items other than brushes to create his work. Usually he laid the canvas on the floor and moved quickly around and into the work, dripping paint from cans with holes in the bottom. Sometimes he would just throw the paint at the canvas.

Pollock's style of painting is also called *Abstract Expressionism*. Artists who paint this way are not interested in making pictures that look real. Rather, they care more about expressing their feelings and emotions, and to do this they use the art elements of colour, value, shape, line and texture as ends in themselves. While Pollock was interested in the finished product, he thought the process of making the painting was also an important part of his work.



Jackson Pollock
Number 31, 1950
The Museum of Modern Art,
New York

Pollock's method of artmaking had a tremendous influence on artists who followed him, providing artists with a freedom of expression and in the use of materials and processes never experienced before.

In the following project students will experiment with action painting and the use of other materials besides brushes to create an abstract piece of art.

Materials:

- old bed sheet
- liquid acrylics or watercolours
- acrylic matte medium
- newspapers or a plastic painter's tarp
- variety of painting tools

Action Painting: Painting without a Brush continued

Methodology:

1/ Prepare your painting tools - look for things such as empty plastic glue bottles with nozzles, liquid dishwashing detergent bottles, mustard dispenser's medicine droppers, turkey basters etc. You can also poke holes in the bottoms of empty food cans or use sticks and dowel rods. Any container or object which will hold paint will do, so use your imagination.

2/ Fill each container with a different colour of acrylic paint

3/ Lay newspaper or a plastic painter's tarp on the floor or large open area

4/ Tear a large bedsheet in half and use half for your canvas - lay this on the tarp or newspaper and weight the corners with weights such as bricks, rocks etc.

5/ Apply the first colour of paint by moving around and into your canvas.

6/ Apply the next colour and so on until the painting is completed.

Tips and Ideas:

- Students could paint to music, noticing how different kinds of music affect their moods, the colours they choose, and the rhythm of their painting

- This is an excellent group activity because students can take turns painting. After everyone has had an opportunity to apply a colour or layer of paint, each student can take one area of the canvas to add his or her own touch to the work. When everyone is finished and the painting is dry, it can be cut apart and the sections given to each student. These smaller canvases can be dry mounted or framed individually.

credit: <http://www.kid-at-art.com/htdoc/lesson27.html>

Hard Edge Painting 9-12

Background

Hard-edge Painting is a term first used in the 1950s to distinguish styles of painting in which shapes are precisely defined by sharp edges, in contrast to the usually blurred or soft edges in Abstract Expressionist paintings. A recent innovation that originated in New York and was adopted by certain contemporary painters. Forms are depicted with precise, geometric lines and edges. Among the most well known artists using this technique include Ellsworth Kelly and Kenneth Noland.

Procedure:

1. Present a variety of fonts/type faces and discuss lettering. Present a number of abstract works that use a hard edge technique. Present works of art with text.
2. Using note cards, cut out a 1-inch square in the middle for a viewfinder.
3. In magazines, find a section of an ad lettering you like.
4. Use the view finder to find a balanced arrangement.
5. Transfer design by quadrants onto a pre-cut square of large cardboard about 30-inches x 30-inches.
6. Plan colours and paint composition. Use removeable masking tape for straight hard edges.

Extensions: Digital Manipulations

Create a composition using a digital photograph of finished painting.

1. Photograph finished work
2. Sharpen contrast
3. Enlarge canvas size
4. Copy and paste– rotate
5. Enhance hue and saturation



Student example <http://www.princetonal.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/HardEdgeMS.html>

Kenneth Noland
Trans Shift
Acrylic on canvas 254 x 288,3 cm.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Materials:

1-inch viewfinders (card stock)	brushes
masking tape	magazines
pencils	tempera paint or latex paint
poster board or matboard	rulers
Optional: computer photo software	

Collage Constructions Grades 4-12

Objective: Students will create a collage in the manner of Graham Peacock.

- Focus is on colour composition and use of analogous and complementary colours and analysis of tone.
- Through this project students will engage in compositional planning, forecasting, colour mixing and artistically responding to previous actions.

Materials:

- scissors
- assorted fabric samples and papers
- white glue or acrylic gel
- mat board or heavy Bristol board for base
- acrylic or tempera paint
- paint brushes
- water
- masking tape or painters tape

Procedure:

1. Visit works in the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage** and discuss with students the intent and actual construction of various collage works in the exhibition. Refer to the Elements of Design tour in this Education Guide for insights into various works.

Define for students various art terms such as complementary colours, analogous colours, tints and tones, repetition and balance.

2. Provide students with one mat board/bristol board each - approximate size: 10 inches x 12 inches
3. Provide each student with a pair of scissors, brushes, and access to white glue or acrylic gel.
4. Direct students to fabric samples/paper samples and instruct students to choose 3-5 pieces of fabric/paper. Instruct students to consider colour matching; complementary colours; patterning when making their choices.
5. Have students project how they want their finished project to look.

- Where is the focus in the work? - center? left side? right side?
- What do you want to be the focus? - a piece of fabric or paper or a paint colour?

Have students start with this idea and either cut the required strip of fabric/paper to fit the dimensions of their base or paint the required strip.

*** in the example shown, the artist wanted the work read from left to right and so**



Collage Constructions Grades 4-12 continued

started with the 'busiest' fabric strip to draw attention to that side.

6. Have students glue their choice of fabric/paper or paint their strip of colour according to their plan.

7. Once this first section/strip is securely in place, have students respond to it with a second strip (either of paint or fabric - dependent on what the first choice was) and create a second strip beside the first. Students should consider colour, tone, complementary or analogous colour when creating this second strip.

*** in the example shown, the artist focused on the dark red/black colour scheme in a piece of fabric and so played with tints and tones of these colours and their complements when creating the work. For example, the second strip created - a painted pale green - is the complement of the dark red stripe in the first patterned fabric piece used and also repeats a green stripe in the fabric.**



8. Have students continue building their collage, alternating paint and paper/fabric strips and having each strip respond to the one before it and to an overall plan.



Collage Constructions Grades 4-12 continued

9. When collages are completed, display on a wall and
- have students explain/evaluate what they have done and why
 - discuss how the elements of design operate in selected student works



Completed Collage Construction

Graham Peacock and Landscape Painting

While the focus of the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage** is on the artist's abstract collage works, the exhibition also provides insights into Peacock's watercolour landscape endeavors. The following activities address aspects of this practice and provide students with practical experience in watercolour painting, landscape subjects and collage.



Graham Peacock
James Island Rain, Victoria, B.C., 1989
Watercolour on paper
On loan from the artist

Techniques for skies

On the next four pages you will find different techniques and tips for drawing and painting skies and clouds. Watercolor paints are very good for creating atmospheric skies.

This picture, called *Rain, Steam and Speed*, was painted in oil paints by J.M.W. Turner in 1844. The sky is stormy, but Turner painted bright areas on some of the clouds, which makes it look as if the sun is about to break through.



Watery clouds



1. Brush clean water onto a piece of watercolor paper. Then, use the tip of a brush to blob on patches of blue watercolor paint.



2. The paint will run. Then, press the brush a little bit more firmly in some places to make darker patches of sky.



Watercolour Painting continued

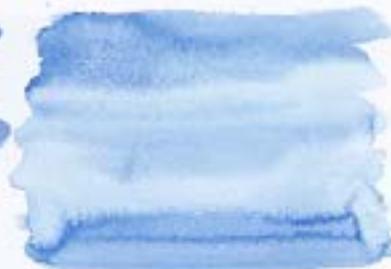
Summer sky



1. Mix enough cobalt blue watercolor paint to cover a piece of watercolor paper. Paint a stripe across the top.



2. Paint another stripe below the first one before it has had a chance to dry. Paint quickly and make the stripes overlap.



3. Continue painting overlapping stripes all the way down the paper. This technique is known as 'painting a wash'.



4. Before the paint has dried, scrunch up a paper towel and dab it in several areas on the paper to lift some paint off.



5. When the paint has dried, mix some darker blue. Paint it along the bottom of each cloud to make shadows.

Watercolour Painting continued

More techniques for skies



Rainy sky



1. Wet some watercolor paper with clean water. Then, mix Prussian blue watercolor paint with brown to make dark gray.



4. Before the paint has dried, swipe a cotton swab across the paint so that the bottom is almost white. Leave it to dry.



2. Paint overlapping stripes across the top of the paper. They don't need to be even or to start in the same place.



5. While it is drying, practice painting some fine lines for the rain, using gray paint on a piece of scrap paper.



3. While the paint is still quite wet, add blue stripes across the middle, then gray ones at the bottom of the paper.



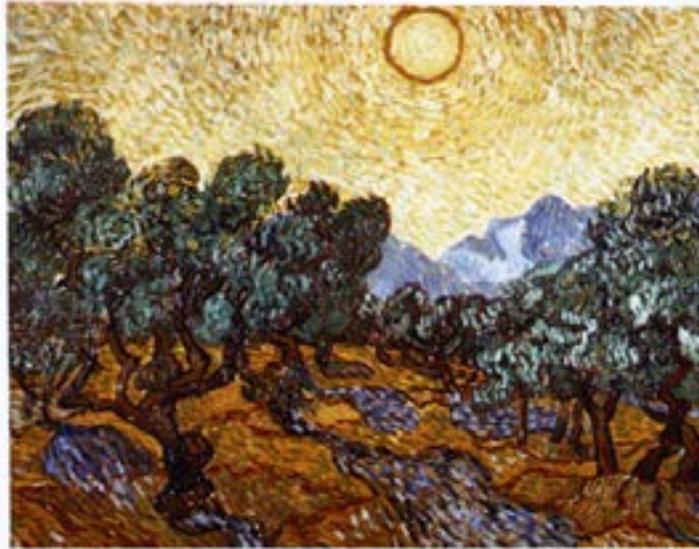
6. When your painting is completely dry, paint fine lines for the rain, coming from the gray area near the top of the paper.

Concerning Trees

Techniques for trees

The next four pages show you lots of different ways of drawing, painting and printing trees. When you try any of these techniques, you will get a better result if you make your tree bigger than the ones shown.

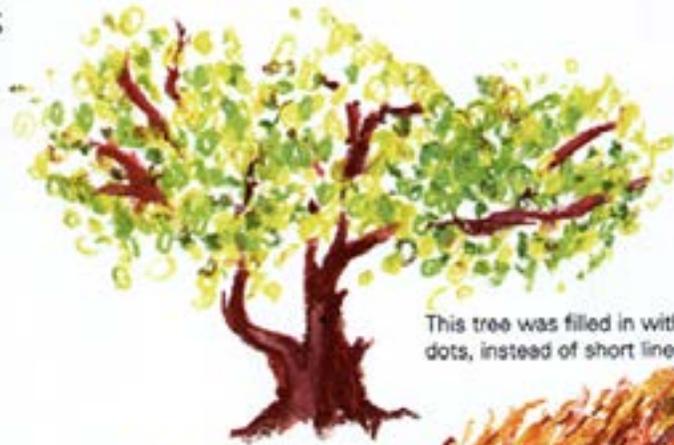
This oil painting of olive trees, by Vincent van Gogh, was painted in 1889. Van Gogh used lots of short lines to build up the shape and color of the trees and the sky.



Oil pastel trees



1. Draw a twisted tree trunk using dark brown oil pastels. Add several short branches.



This tree was filled in with dots, instead of short lines.



2. Draw lots of short diagonal lines with a green oil pastel, overlapping the branches.



3. Add more diagonal lines for the leaves, using a lighter green and a lime green pastel.



Use orange, brown and rusty pastels for fall leaves on a tree.

Concerning Trees continued

Pen and ink



1. Use brown ink to paint a very simple trunk with three thick branches coming from it.



2. Use green ink to paint a wavy line for the top of the tree. Then fill it in, leaving some small gaps.



3. Use a felt-tip or an ink pen to draw loopy lines around the edge of the tree and around the gaps.

Brushed branches



1. Paint a patch of green and brown watercolor paint. Splatter it by flicking the bristles of your brush.



2. Leave it to dry, then use different shades of brown watercolor paint to paint the trunk.



3. While the trunk is still wet, paint the branches by brushing the paint up onto the leaves.

Chalk pastel leaves



1. Paint a trunk with yellowy-brown watercolor paint. Add some branches, too.



2. Draw lines using a light green chalk pastel. Add some darker green lines on top.



3. Gently rub the tip of your little finger down the lines to smudge the chalks together.

Concerning Trees continued

More techniques for trees

Sponged leaves



1. Use the tip of a brush to paint the trunk and twisted branches of a tree, using watercolor paint or ink.

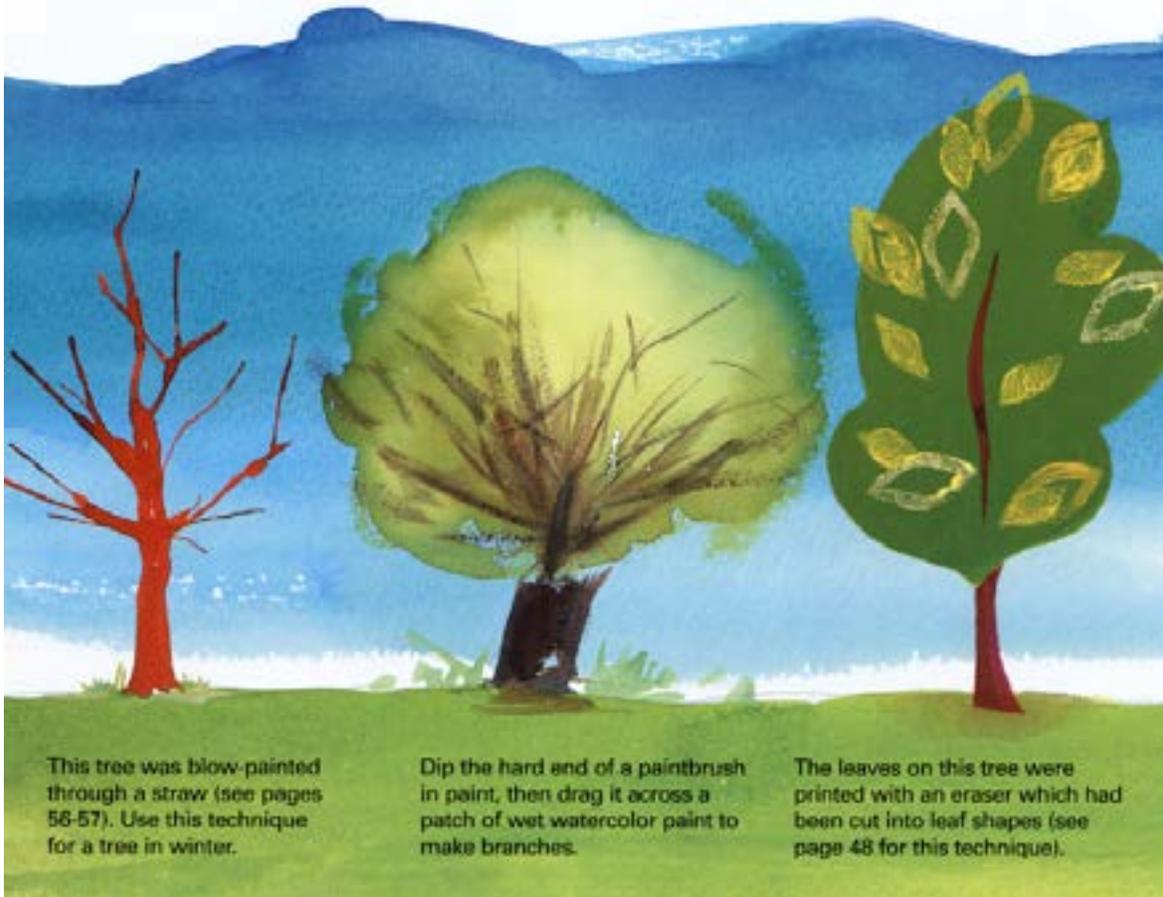


Use a natural sponge if you have one.

2. Dampen a piece of sponge, then dip it into some red paint. Dab it gently around the tops of the branches.



3. Wash the sponge, then squeeze as much water out as you can. Dip it into purple paint, then dab it around the branches.



This tree was blow-painted through a straw (see pages 56-57). Use this technique for a tree in winter.

Dip the hard end of a paintbrush in paint, then drag it across a patch of wet watercolor paint to make branches.

The leaves on this tree were printed with an eraser which had been cut into leaf shapes (see page 48 for this technique).

Concerning Trees continued

Zigzag trees



Use the tip of the brush.

1. Paint three tree trunks using green watercolor paint. Make them get thinner toward the top. Add some ground.
2. Put the tip of your brush at the top of a tree and paint a zigzag down the trunk. Make it get wider as you paint.
3. Continue painting, but leave part of the trunk showing at the bottom. Then, zigzag some clean water over the top.



1. Draw a trunk with brown chalk pastels. Scribble pastels for the leaves. Smudge them in a few places.
2. This stylized tree was drawn with chalk pastels. The leaves were drawn first then the trunk was added.
3. These leaves were painted first in dark green acrylic, then lighter green was added on top.

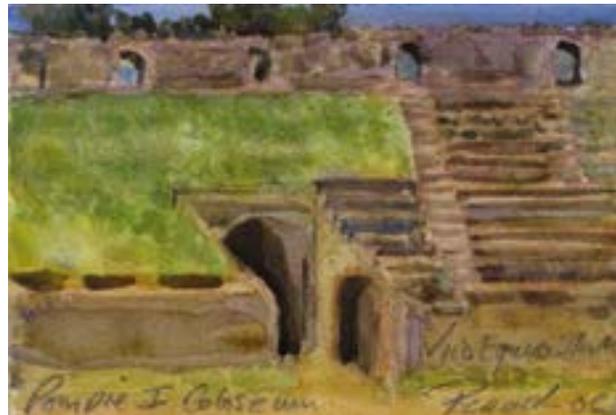
Expressing Nature Grades 3-12

The watercolour landscapes of Graham Peacock found in the exhibition **Graham Peacock Collage** are based on direct observation of nature/natural objects and an intuitive rendering of this visual stimuli. In the following activity students will create a work of art based on a similar process. If weather permits, this activity can be done out of doors directly from nature. If this is not possible, a still-life arrangement in the classroom can be substituted.

PLEASE NOTE: *Use the preceding activity as motivation for this lesson.

Materials

White paper/drawing boards or prepared stretched canvas
tempera or oil paints
paint cups and water (for tempera paints)
paint pallets (for oil paints)
assorted brushes - 2 or 3 per student
viewfinders



Graham Peacock
Pompeii / Colosseum, Vico Equense, Italy, 2006
Watercolour on paper
On loan from the artist

Process

1. Using artworks from the exhibition for inspiration, discuss with students the use of **complementary colours** and black and white to create various values in colours.
2. Distribute viewfinders (for young children these can be prepared before hand using the supplied template whereas older students can prepare their own using white cardstock/bristol board) to students and instruct concerning their use.
3. Distribute painting surface - either prepared stretched canvases or heavy white paper taped to drawing boards can be used - one per student
4. Distribute paint supplies - oil or tempera paints, brushes, water, paint pallets
5. Instruct students that they are to go outside and, using viewfinders, focus on a patch of yard/nature. In their search they should consider overall composition, emphasis/focus, and movement within the picture plane.
6. Without sketching before hand students to paint the scene before them. *If a still life setting is used in the classroom have students use viewfinders to focus in on a section of the setting. Students are to paint only what they see within the viewfinder.

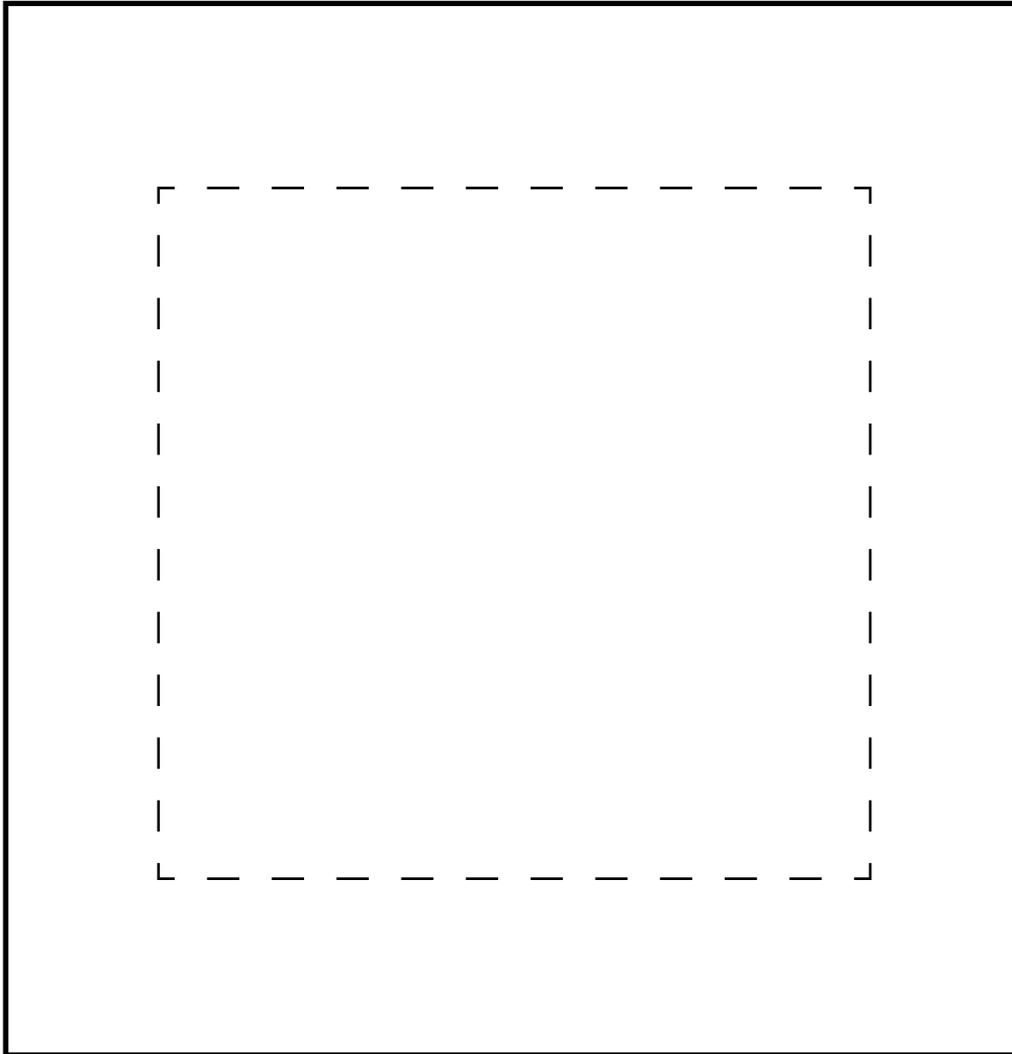
Expressing Nature continued

* Have students limit their paint choices to **two complementary colours** (example: red and green; blue and orange; purple and yellow; and white and black and, through colour mixing of complements and the addition of white/black, create various hues of their primary choices.

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Viewfinder Template

*Cut along the inside dotted line to create a open center area in the form below.



Fabric Landscape Collage

Objectives

Students will use a variety of materials and simplify basic shapes and spaces. Overlapping figures or objects create an illusion of space in two-dimensional works. Repetition of shape in nature can suggest patterns and motifs.

Vocabulary

foreground midground

intensity background

texture horizon line

Methodology

1. Make some preliminary sketches of a landscape creating a foreground, midground and background. Define where your horizon line will be located within your landscape.
2. Cut out your fabrics and lay them out and arrange them on your board. Think about creating a definite foreground, midground and background. Use brighter, more intense colour and texture for the foreground and duller, less detailed fabric for the background in order to create an illusion of space in your landscape.
3. Glue down your fabric collage – putting glue on top of the fabric helps to keep the fabric flat.
4. Use the yarn or rope to create outlines around your shapes as linear elements to create more detail within your landscape collage.



Materials

–board (cardboard, masonite, plywood) 8 x 10 in.

note –a lot of glue makes the cardboard pucker and bend

–a variety of fabric scraps – heavy and light weight fabrics

–patterned fabric

–yarn

–rope

–cord

–white glue

–popsicle sticks for glue

–scissors



<http://bkids.typepad.com/bookhoucraftprojects/page/2/>



Graham Peacock
Suite 111, #29, 2011
Painted canvas collage
On loan from the artist

GLOSSARY

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Glossary

Abstract art: Abstract art is defined as art that has no reference to any figurative reality. In its wider definition, the term describes art that depicts real forms in a simplified or rather reduced way— keeping only an illusion of the original natural subject.

Abstract Expressionism: First used to describe some of Kandinsky's early abstract paintings but the phrase is more usually associated with painters working in New York in the 1940s and 1950s such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. Its distinguishing features are (a) self expression on a grand scale and (b) using the language of abstraction.

Action painting: Involves dripping, dribbling or throwing paint onto the surface of the canvas, as a way of mediating the workings of the unconscious mind in an unplanned way. Jackson Pollock is the best-known example.

Colour field painting: The application of colour across the entire canvas which when viewed close-to, gives the impression of being engulfed in a 'field' of colour. Some New York artists from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s were its most famous practitioners. Also seen in the work of Jim Corrigan, an artist in the exhibition *Abstract Thinking*.

Complementary colour: Colours that are directly opposite each other on the colour wheel (for example, blue and orange). These colours when placed next to each other produce the highest contrast.

Composition: The arrangement of lines, colours and form so as to achieve a unified whole; the resulting state or product is referred to as a composition.

Contemporary artists: Those whose peak of activity can be situated somewhere between the 1970s (the advent of postmodernism) and the present day.

Cool colours: Blues, greens, and purples are considered cool colours. In aerial perspective cool colours are said to move away from you, or appear more distant.

Cubism: An artistic movement in the early 20th century characterized by the depiction of natural forms as geometric structures of planes.

Elements of Design: The basic components which make up any visual image. These are line, shape, colour, texture, and space.

Exhibition: A public display of art objects including painting, sculpture, prints, installation, etc.

Fauvism: An art movement launched in 1905 whose work is characterized by bright and non-natural colours and simple forms.

Formalism: In art theory, formalism is the concept that a work's artistic value is entirely determined by its form—the way it is made, its purely visual aspects, and its medium. Formalism emphasizes compositional elements such as colour, line, shape and texture rather than realism, context, and content.

Glossary, continued

Geometric shapes: Any shape or form having more mathematical than organic design. Examples of geometric shapes include: spheres, cones, cubes, squares, circles, triangles.

Hard-edge painting: American painting of the late 1950s and 60s, with surfaces treated as a single flat unit of colour with hard or sharp edges: as distinct from the lumpy, asymmetrical, random gestures of Abstract Expressionists. Best-known practitioners Ellsworth Kelly and Kenneth Noland.

Impressionism: An art movement of the 19th century and is about capturing fast, fleeting moments with colour, light and surface.

Medium: The material or technique used by an artist to produce a work of art.

Non-objective art: Artworks having no recognizable subject matter (not recognizable as such things as houses, trees, people, etc.) Also known as **non-representational art**.

Op Art: A genre of abstract art that uses geometric shapes and vivid colours to create optical illusions, such as an illusion of movement. A style of abstraction developed during the 20th century, expressed in the work of Allen Ball, an artist in the exhibition *Abstract Thinking*.

Organic shapes: An irregular shape; refers to shapes or forms having irregular edges or objects resembling things existing in nature.

Pattern: A principle of art, a pattern means the repetition of an element in a work. An artist achieves a pattern through the use of colour, line, shape or texture.

Positive shapes: Are the objects themselves. They are surrounded in a painting by what are called the negative shapes.

Primary colours: The three colours from which all other colours are derived - red, yellow and blue.

Realism: Realism in the visual arts and literature is the depiction of subjects as they appear in everyday life, without embellishment or interpretation.

Representational art: Art with an immediately recognisable subject, depicted (or 'represented') in ways which seek to resemble a figure, landscape or object; also called 'figurative' art and contrasted with Abstraction.

Rhythm: A principle of art indicating movement by the repetition of elements. Rhythm can make an artwork seem active.

Rule of Thirds: The basic principle that the key elements or objects in a composition should fall on one of 2 lines that divide the composition in thirds. The viewers' eye should fall on one of these lines where both a horizontal and a vertical line come to rest.

Glossary, continued

Value: The range of lightness or darkness in a colour; the relationships of tone in a painting.

Warm colours: Yellows and reds of the colour spectrum, associated with fire, heat and sun.

Credits

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Graham Peacock <http://grahampeacock.com/>

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts
Art Gallery of Alberta

SOURCE MATERIALS:

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- Colour and Dimension the recent paintings of Graham Peacock** - by Graham Peacock with essays and interviews by Roger H. Boulet, Lelde Muehlenbachs, Russell Bingham, 1992
- Graham Peacock 'Paint, Process and Spirit', Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch, Mid-Winter Meeting**, 1989

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Credits continued

This exhibition was developed and managed by the Art Gallery of Alberta
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Shane Golby – Program Manager/Curator
AFA Travelling Exhibition Program, Region 2
Sherisse Burke – TREX Technician

Front Cover Images:

Top Left: Graham Peacock, *Kris Cross Miniature #12*, 2014, Painted canvas collage, On loan from the artist

Bottom Left: Graham Peacock, *Table Top Painting Miniature #19*, 2015, Acrylic with canvas collage, On loan from the artist

Right: Graham Peacock, *Vico Equense, Italy, Sun Rays*, (Detail), 2007, Watercolour on paper, On loan from the artist

