

FANTASTIC

The Museum's Rural Arts Initiative

The Rural Arts Initiative began in 2003 with the North Dakota Museum of Art's first traveling exhibit *Snow Country Prison: Interned in North Dakota*. The Museum, recognizing the difficulty of bringing children to Grand Forks on the far eastern edge of the state, has made its goal to bring exhibits to rural communities. We invite each hosting community and its schools within a fifty mile radius to actively participate by attending the exhibition in their community, holding related events, and using the exhibit as a source for learning. *Fantastic* is the sixth traveling exhibit. Previous exhibits included *Snow Country Prison: Interned in North Dakota*, *Shelterbelts*, *Introductions: Artists' Self Portraits*, *Jim Dow: Marking the Land*, and *Animals: Them and Us*. Mary Lucier's video installation, *Plains of Sweet Regret*, and *Into the Tussock*, an Icelandic exhibit, have also traveled the State. To find out about the Rural program visit www.ndmoa.com or call the Museum at 701-777-4195.

About This Exhibit

Fantastic is an exhibition that opened in August 2010 at the North Dakota Museum of Art in Grand Forks and is now travelling throughout the region as part of the Museum's Rural Arts Program. It brings together works by several different artists from the United States, Canada, England, Iceland and Argentina. Most of the works are humorous, fantastic, weird, and just a little bizarre. Some works reference paintings done by earlier artists such as Leonardo DaVinci, Edward Hopper, Peter Breughel and Diego Velasquez.

The pieces in this exhibit help us bridge that part of us that is ordinary with that part of us that is imaginative. We can compare the paintings with fairy tales, myths, and legends; those oral and written cautionary tales that have been passed down and lived beyond their own time, repeating ideas that help us better understand ourselves. We invite you to look at and discuss these fantasy pieces and to make your own stories about what you see and think. Relate them to what has gone on before, or what might appear in the future. Dare to take a trip outside of yourselves and look beyond our normal ways of seeing so that we can be challenged to view the world in different and delightful ways.

Before You Visit the Exhibit

Teachers are urged to prepare students by reviewing the practice section before giving assignments to the students. Discussion can be generated by employing Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), a non-intimidating way in which many museums teach children to approach and question a piece of art. A handout of a simplified version of VTS can be found at the end of this document. To see all of the exhibition images refer to the Museum's website: www.ndmoa.com. Click on Exhibitions, Touring Exhibitions, Fantastic, then View Image Gallery.

While at the Exhibit

Taking photographs without a flash is permitted. You can meet at one image in the exhibit to discuss it using Visual Thinking Strategies. Please help the Museum and your community by taking part in the evaluation at the exhibit and by signing the guest book.

After Your Visit to the Exhibit

These materials are designed for older elementary children and middle/high school grades. The activities may be altered to accommodate different grades and ages of students as well as integrated into other curricula. You may duplicate or combine any information. For further assistance or to learn more about the artists, exhibit, museum or museum programs, please contact Matthew Wallace at the North Dakota Museum of Art.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY FOR ALL AGES

Looking Before your Visit

For images from the exhibition refer to the Museum website at: www.ndmoa.com, click on Touring Exhibitions, Fantastic, then View Image Gallery.

TEACHER'S NOTE: This is a sample activity with suggestions and explanations that you may wish to practice or use later with your students. A list of design terms are defined in the glossary at the end of these materials. Students should feel free to imagine anything about the meaning as long as they refer to the picture to point out specifics. The purpose of these exercises is to:

Teach children to closely observe

Practice and/or learn artistic terms and their usage

Learn how to discuss what they see and to let them know their opinions are valid

Develop comprehensive and conceptual thinking skills

As a practice let's take a look at Jamie Baldrige's lambda print: *Balancing Gibraltar*



Balancing Gibraltar: The Design

- Why do you think this work is called *Balancing Gibraltar*? Where is Gibraltar? What in this picture is balanced or not balanced?
- Would you say this is symmetrical balance (things are the same on the left as they are on the right side of the picture)? Or is it asymmetrical balance where something on the right side has the same feeling of balance as on the left? Explain and show on the picture why you think this way.

Discussion: The balance is asymmetrical, with the girl on the right hand side being balanced together by the window and the ship.

- What shapes do you see in this photograph? Are there geometric shapes (squares, triangles, circles, etc.) and are there shapes that are not geometric? How much of the picture do you feel is taken up with geometric shapes, and how much is taken up with other shapes? Do you see about half geometry and half other shapes, or one-quarter and three-quarters?

Discussion: Square and rectangular shapes tend to organize and ground a design, just as structures such as buildings, bridges and roads, organize the land. In this case, the shapes of the window frame and panes within it, the floor tiles, the rectangular blackboard and the girl's hat serve to give the picture some perspective. We know how the objects relate to the floor and the wall. We know the stool rests on the floor, and the blackboard is behind the girl, and the wall on which it hangs is a flat surface.

The shapes also play against (balance) the softness and fluidness of the girl and her garment, the rounded shape of the chair and the ship.

- Repetition is an important element of this piece. What shapes are similar to each other in shape and size? Why does an artist use repetition?

Discussion: The panes of the window and the floor are repeated similar shapes. This helps keep some continuity to the scene so that we can focus on the main idea and figure.

- Why do you think the artist used the colors (hues) you see here? How would the feeling of the piece change if it were bright red, yellow and blue?

Discussion: Most the colors are greenish and grayish, not so noticeable. The girl's red hair is the most colorful part of the composition. The artist wants you first to focus on the girl, and on her face.

If the artist were to use bright circus colors, the meaning of mystery might be lost. When we think of mystery, we probably think of darker colors. Other colors might give the piece and entirely different feel or even meaning.

- There are light areas and dark areas (values) in this painting. Where is the light coming from? Point out other light areas in the photograph. Why do you think the artist chose to make some areas light? How does the artist direct the viewer to a main focus of the picture? What is the main focus?

Discussion: The light is coming from the window and casting on the floor. It so happens the place the light is cast is right where the girl's stool is set. The light also is cast on her hat, similar to focusing on the red hair (color or hue) we are also led to the girl by the

light patch on the floor. Another important part of this picture is that mysterious ship, which is also highlighted by a light patch.

- The girl is big; the ship is small. The girl is much bigger than the ship.

Discussion: When we talk of actual size, we talk about things such as big and little. When we talk about scale we talk about size in relation to another size. This artist may be purposely trying to question why this girl seems afraid of the ship since it is obviously so small – or is she a giant??

The Meaning:

- In your own words, tell us what you think is happening in this photograph. Make sure you point out and describe each item in the picture that makes you think this way.
 - Why is it so dark?
 - What is the glass doing there on the floor?
 - Why is the girl barefoot?
 - What is the ship doing in this picture?
 - Who is the girl?
 - What is happening here?
 - When and where is this taking place? 1500's, 21st century, future, or another time in history?
Is it winter, summer, night, or day? How do you know?
 - Now, make your story about this piece of art.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: VISUAL ART NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS (Fourth Grade)

Standard 1: Students understand and apply visual art media, techniques, and processes including interpretation

Students understand and apply visual art media, observations, research, reflection, interpretation

Standard 2: Students understand how works of art are structured and how visual art has a variety of functions

Know the differences among visual art structures and functions

Know expressive images cause different responses and communicate ideas

Use functions of works of visual art to communicate ideas

Standard 3: Students know a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas

Understand a variety of subjects, themes, symbols and ideas are incorporated in a work of art

Standard 4: Students understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture

Know that visual art has both a history and specific relationship to various cultures

Standard 5: Students understand the characteristics and merit of one's own work of art and the works of art and others

Know various purposes for creating works of art

Know that works of art can elicit different responses

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: LANGUAGE ART CURRICULUM STANDARDS (Fourth Grade)

Standard 3: Students engage in the writing process

Standard 4: Students engage in the speaking and listening process

Elementary Lesson Plans

Introduction to activities: Basics of Writing your Thoughts, Imagining and Telling a Story

Teacher's Note: The curriculum standards, listed after each activity, are only those that seem to most fit the activity. Teachers are encouraged to expand on the standards and benchmarks as you design the activities for your grade levels.

To make a good story we need a beginning, a middle, and an end. A good start is to decide on a theme by planning first what you want to happen at the end. The beginning sets the tone (e.g. mysterious, energetic, sad.) Here you should use descriptive words (adjective). The middle should have at least three "challenges" or "situations to conquer" to make the story more interesting. Fairy tales and books such as "The Three Bears" and "Pinocchio" contain several happenings that are resolved in the end.

To write a good story:

- Develop one clearly defined theme, for instance, a rabbit gets lost, she runs into three problems and finds her way home
- Explain what you see in the picture using vivid or descriptive words
- Use a minimum number of characters
- Remember drama. When something exciting happens, use action words (verbs)

Good story telling includes:

- Speaking slowly and loudly and look at the audience regularly
- Introducing pictures or props when possible
- Engaging your audience with a question or a descriptive beginning. Instead of "Once Upon a Time" try "Did you know that dreams can become real?"
- Practicing

ACTIVITY 1: COLLAGE

The artists in this exhibition want us to look at things in different ways. Some of the art works are funny and some are weird. When the artists put together two or more things that don't usually go together or whose meaning might be different, it is called *juxtaposition*. Find an artwork in the exhibit that doesn't make sense because things don't seem to fit. Can you think of a story to go with the picture?

Now, find pictures from a magazine or another source of two interesting animals and one interesting object, for instance a dinosaur, a chicken, and a tractor. *

Looking at these objects as a guide and using separate sheets for drawing, practice drawing the animals and objects (without any background) until you have one good drawings of each object.

Color and cut your drawings out. Cut the drawings into two or three pieces each by cutting off the heads, or tails, or appendages, or by cutting the object in half.

Then mix the pieces up and attach two or three items together gluing them on a larger sheet. The head of a chicken may end up on the body of the Stegosaurus and the tail of the dinosaur may end up on the front end of a tractor.

Fill in the background by drawing where it lives to fit your collage composition. Name your new animal or machine, and write a description of your animal or machine is by:

What is its name? (e.g. Chelsea the Chickosaurus, Davy the Dinotract, etc.)

How does it work, what does it do?

Where does it live and why?

Write or tell about a day in the life of your new animal or machine.

- Older children may use Photoshop, photography or other technology to manipulate their creations.

ACTIVITY 1: VISUAL ARTS CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 1: Students understand and apply visual art media, techniques, and processes including interpretation

Standard 2: Students understand how works of art are structured and how visual art has a variety of functions

ACTIVITY 1: LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 3: Students engage in the writing process

Standard 4: Students engage in the speaking and listening process

ACTIVITY 2: COLLAGE – THE SURREALIST IN ME

Though the work in this exhibit is not really Surrealist art, it reminds us of the movement in the early 20th Century where artists and writers created works that reflected the many of the disillusionments they felt at the time. Some Surrealist characteristics are:

Surrealists often made the edges of their objects very distinct.

Places seem ordinary but what is happening in the places seems strange

Items that don't usually go together are put together

After viewing the exhibit, and after looking at Surrealist artists such as Salvador Dali, if you choose to do so, follow up with this activity.

- Cut out magazine pictures, cutting away all the background.
- Draw your own background on a piece of paper. Make it up.
- Now take your pictures, plan first, then glue them around on your background to make a composition.
- Vary the scale. You might take a big apple and place it outside of a window or on a mountain top, while you take a little picture of a skyscraper and put it right in the foreground of your picture.
- You can be silly. You might replace a human torso for instance, with a picture of a guitar. Place things and objects that don't relate next to each other or in unexpected places. Make a fish grow on a tree, or a car with arms and legs.
- Repeat similar shapes, repeat textures and repeat colors to make a good design.

ACTIVITY 2: VISUAL ARTS CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 1: Students understand and apply visual art media, techniques, and processes including interpretation

Standard 4: Students understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture

ACTIVITY 3: LINE AND SHAPE

Las Meninas: Composition, Repetition, and Shape: Elements and Principles of Design.

The artist Sergio Fasola created the painting *Las Meninas* from looking at a painting of the same title by Diego Velasquez done in 1656. Fasola uses many elements of design that make his lambda print a good composition.

Shapes: The artist Fasola repeats shapes again and again in this composition. One of the shapes he uses is the half circle of the big skirt. The shape is repeated in the standing lady's head and hair, and also in the dog sitting on the table.

Repetition: Find as many circles and ovals as you can in the piece. Do not forget that a face or head may be an oval-like shape. There are some "hidden" ones. List all the ones you see. Why do you think the artist repeats this shape so many times? Why are the shapes placed where they are?

Lines and shapes. Observation practice. Teachers may want to practice using Fasola's *Las Meninas* and then use another art work for discussion with the students.

Fasola also uses a lot of lines or edges in his work. They have a purpose. For instance, there are lines in the bottom part of the big dress that go one direction (diagonal).

Another line stops our eyes so if we are looking at the dress pattern, our gaze does not fall off the bottom right edge of the picture. What line stops us? Is this the table leg? Can the table leg be a line?

Then where does the table leg lead our eyes? Is it to the head of the standing woman?

If so, once our eyes rest there, is there another strong line (or white shapes organized in a line) that leads our eyes towards the poodle? Which "line" is that? What happens when we get to the white poodle in the lower left corner? Do our eyes stop there?

Where is the poodle looking?

Now follow the "implied line" of the dog's gaze. There is no real line but we look where the poodle is looking.

Once your eyes rest on the subject the dog is looking at, notice that the lightest value in that corner of the painting is on the arms of the seated lady. Follow her left arm from the elbow through the dog's head, the table, the hand.... Where eventually do our eyes rest again? If we are at the standing woman's head again, notice the curvy braid across her chest. If we let our eyes follow the curvy braid, we will be taken through her hand and to another curvy line on the back of the chair.

Can you see the "Triangle" made from the white poodle in the left corner to the seated woman to the head of the standing woman?

What two or three major shapes do you see in this picture?



Activity 3: Line and Shape

Sergio Fasola, *Las Meninas*

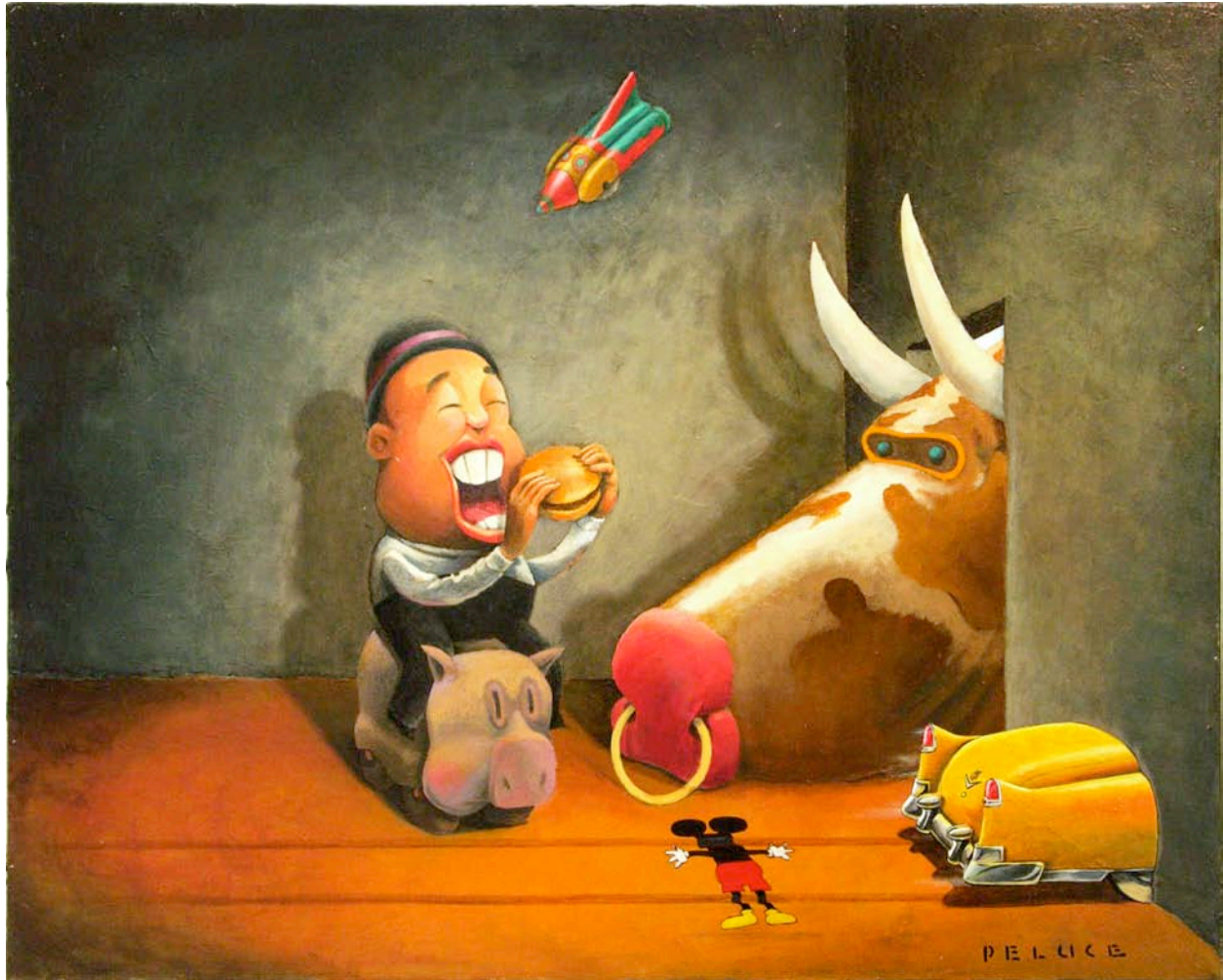
ACTIVITY 3: VISUAL ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 2: Students understand how works of art are structured and how visual art has a variety of functions.

Standard 4: Students understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

ACTIVITY 4: MEANING AND DISCUSSION
USING *ROADKILL* OR *FROGHOUSE* AND *SEAL AND STRAW*

You are asked to come up with some ideas to write about. You might be thinking, "Where do I begin?" Look at one of the two paintings below *Roadkill* or *Froghouse* by the artist Peluce.



Peluce, *Roadkill*

Activity 4: Meaning and Discussion



Peluce, *Froghouse*

Activity 4: Meaning and Discussion

Begin writing and write for ten minutes only. Anything you are thinking about the picture or about things that the picture helps you think about. When your teacher asks you to put down your pencil, read what you wrote. Did your creative mind give you some ideas of stories? You probably have more than one idea in this writing. Take just one of the ideas or stories, concentrate on making it better with good spelling, grammar, and punctuation, making sure the story makes sense with a beginning, a middle and an end.



Helgi Porgils Fridjonssen, *Seal and Straw*

Activity 4: Meaning and Discussion

The Icelandic artist, Helgi Porgils Fridjonssen, painted *Seal and Straw*. Take some time to look at it and ask yourself some questions.:

- There is only a white background without anything in it, why?
- What is the seal resting on? Why?
- Where is its mother?
- What does this painting say about our environment or global warming, if it does?
- Why do you think the seal has a straw in its mouth?
- Where did the straw come from/how did it get to the Arctic where the seal lives?
- Have you ever been to a zoo where they do not let visitors have plastic straws? Why?
- What do you think the painting is about? Explain it. Tell or write a story about this seal.

ACTIVITY 4 VISUAL ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 6: Students make connections between the visual arts and other disciplines

ACTIVITY 4 LANGUAGE ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 3: Students engage in the writing process

Standard 4: Students engage in the speaking and listening process

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL

Refer to the entire body of artwork by checking the Museum website at: www.ndmoa.com, Click on Exhibitions, Touring Exhibition, Fantastic, then View Image Gallery.

Teacher's Guide: The curriculum standards listed after each activity are only those that seem to most fit the activity. Teachers are encouraged to expand on the standards and find benchmarks as they design the activities for specific grade levels. Much of the middle school and high school activities revolve around research and comparison of artists and their times. It is almost as if the artists have set a stage for us, and it is up to the viewer to make our own "story" of what is happening.

Much of the artwork in this exhibition resembles Surrealism, although it is important to see a distinction. Dada lasted only six years from 1916 to 1922, but its bizarre and contradictory associations started a movement called Surrealism. Surrealism (beyond real) might have been a response to the rapid changing of society globally, changes in industrialization, travel, communication and the outcome of World War I. Artists, always the recorders, were disillusioned with society that seemed to make no sense. In addition, psychoanalysis, made more mainstream by people like Sigmund Freud, who embraced dream analysis and free association of thoughts, led artists to make the meaning of their work's meaning more open-ended and sometimes even bizarre. So the Surrealists sometimes put images together, images that don't usually go together, such as a melting clock (*Salvador Dali*) or a Floating Bride (*Marc Chagall*) or a Tree with a Crescent Moon (*Rene Magritte*). Their work was shocking for its time, and many people did not understand or like that the artists did not follow "regular rules" of making art.

What makes the Surrealism of the 1920's similar or different from these works done in the early 21st century?

**Surrealists often made the edges of their objects very distinct.
There is a sense of loneliness or disassociation in their pieces
The places depicted are familiar yet not
Items that don't usually go together are included in the works
The artists say that their works have no meaning or story**

ACTIVITY 5: RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Research the Surrealism movement.

Name at least two characteristics of Surrealism

Find a picture in the Fantastic exhibition that is similar to Surrealism, explain why.

What do you think the picture you chose is about?

How is this picture like Surrealism and how is it not? Can we still do Surrealist Art in the 21st Century?

Make a painting or drawing using at least two characteristics of Surrealism.

If you are able to tell a story about the meaning of your piece, is this Surrealism?

If it is not truly Surreal, what would you call your new art style and why?

ACTIVITY 5: VISUAL ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 1: Students understand and apply visual art media, techniques, processes and interpretation.

Standard 2: Students understand how works of art are structured and how visual art has a variety of functions.

Standard 4: Students understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

ACTIVITY 6: COLLAGE A DREAM (Michael Madzo)

NOTE: A collage is NOT just a collection of pictures glued on to another sheet of paper. It is the reorganization of design elements and images, often to make a different meaning. Cutting out pictures and words about puppies, for instance, is not nearly as interesting or challenging as cutting out random shapes with colors from different magazine pictures that feature the color brown, and using pieces of dog pictures, then reorganizing them to make a new big brown dog all together. (See Michael Madzo's *Of that Wide Water* or *A Composing of Senses*.)

Create a dreamlike scene using startling combinations by cutting up pictures from a newspaper or magazine and arranging them together. Before attaching your pieces to a larger sheet of paper or surface, find at least three different materials and different ways you can attach the pieces together. For instance, as with Michael Madzo's collages, perhaps paint some different colors and sew them together, or instead of painting part of the piece, use fabric, string or perhaps corrugated cardboard and some magazine collage parts as other materials to make a "mixed-media" piece. You might build your collage outwards to make it a relief. Using the elements and principles of design, vary edges by tearing copies and pictures of original artworks done by famous artists in the past. Then rearrange into new and exciting compositions.

ACTIVITY 6: VISUAL ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 1: Students understand and apply visual art media, techniques, processes and interpretation.

Standard 2: Students understand how works of art are structured and how visual art has a variety of functions.

ACTIVITY 7: COMPOSITION AND ABSTRACTION – MAPPING AN ARTIST'S WORK

Choose one of the art works in the exhibit such as Brian Paulsen's watercolor, *Variations* (which references works done by the artist Edward Hopper); Sergio Fasola's print *Las Meninas* (which references Diego Velasquez's *Las Meninas*), or Constanza Piaggio's and Res's print, *La Dama* (which references Leonardo DaVinci's *Lady with an Ermine*.) You may wish to use Jamie Baldrige's prints, *Balancing Gibraltar*, *The Annals of Steam*, *Dainty Phyletic* or *Babylon*. Or you might research the historical works by DaVinci, Hopper and Velasquez to use in this exercise.

Find or cut a piece of paper or surface that is proportional to the work you have chosen. Approximate original measurements are listed below.

Velasquez's original *Las Meninas* painting is 9 feet wide by 12 feet high.

Sergio Fasola's *Las Meninas*, in this exhibit measures 37 inches wide by 24 inches high.

DaVinci's original painting *Lady with an Ermine* is 26 inches high x 13 inches wide.

Constanza Piaggio's *La Dama* print in this exhibit is 29 inches wide by 37 inches.

Hopper's watercolor, *Western Motel*, 1957, is 40 inches wide by 28 inches high.

Brian Paulsen's watercolor *Variations* in this exhibit is 13 inches wide 9 inches high.

In this exhibit Jamie Baldrige's pieces measure:

A Dainty Phyletic and *Babylon* are 23 inches wide by 28 inches high.

The Annals of Steam is 23 wide inches by 22 inches high.

Balancing Gibraltar is 24 inches wide by 20 inches high.

Make an abstract composition by copying the piece you have chosen but replacing the subjects in the original by using shapes and lines only. Include composition elements that you see in the art work. Where there is a shape, such as an oval face, draw an oval shape. Where there is a rectangular window, draw a rectangle. You may want to eliminate some elements, however, you must not change the composition of the original artwork. Be able to explain your piece and how you came about making what you did.

Your final piece will likely be a composition of squares, triangles and other designs. Depending upon the outcome of your final piece, this could be called non-objective or abstract art. Sometimes abstract and non-objective (no objects) art resembles things, such as a feeling of a season, or the suggestion of an inside room. Title your piece and be able to explain why you chose that title.

ACTIVITY 7: VISUAL ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 1: Students understand and apply visual art media, techniques, processes and interpretation.

Standard 2: Students understand how works of art are structured and how visual art has a variety of functions.

Standard 3: Students know a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.

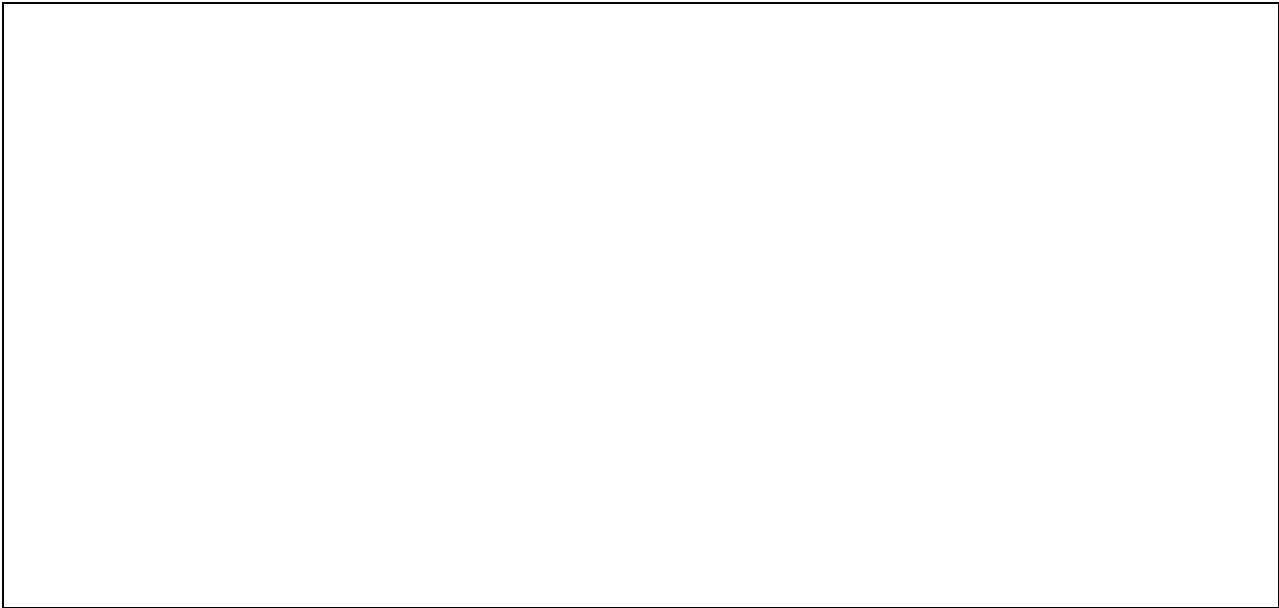
Standard 4: Students understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

Standard 6: Students make connections between the visual arts and other disciplines.



Brian Paulsen: *Variations*

Activity 7: Composition and Abstraction



Practice making your composition above

ACTIVITY 8: COMPARE AND CONTRAST: ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

Res and Constanza Piaggio created a lambda print entitled *La Dama* after studying Leonardo Da Vinci's 1489 painting of *Lady with An Ermine*. Look up Leonardo DaVinci's painting of this noblewoman who is holding an ermine, a symbol of elegance and wealth.

Use the pictures below of DaVinci's *Lady with an Ermine*. Compare the design and possible meanings of Leonardo DaVinci's painting with Res and Piaggio's lambda print, *La Dama*.

Discussion and Practice: In the contemporary picture, the noblewoman holds a pig's head. How strange. What is she thinking? Why do you think the artists chose DaVinci's work to copy? If they were making a comment on the two pieces, DaVinci's and the Res/Piaggio pieces, what do you think they were saying and why? How does this print differ from Da Vinci's in form and meaning? Point out things in the painting that make you say this. In the new *La Dama* the young woman is, "cuddling" a pig's head; do you think that is freakish? How does this differ from the ermine? What is strange about the woman? Look closely at her expression, at what she is holding, and look closely at her hand. Why do you think the artists used DaVinci's picture as a guide?

Res and Piaggio, in this print, use **line** in many different ways. Lines are artist's ways of leading our eyes to the objects on which they most want us to focus. Lines also give a sense of energy and texture. Let's find the different "lines" that were used in *La Dama*. What do you think were the artists' intentions for the lines and why? Are they directional clues to lead us to the focus? Are they textural to give us a sensation of a feeling? Are they emotionally charged to cause us to react with great feeling?

Teachers practice guide for Res and Piaggio's work: *Find the lines. The braid forms a line, as does the headband, the necklace and the trim on the sleeves. There are lines that are the edges of the form, for instance where her left shoulder as it meets the background – this is really an edge, not a drawn line, but a line nevertheless. The trim on the cuffs of her sleeves consists of swirly lines, bringing a little activity into the picture.*

The upper part of the pig's head is curved from ears to snout in a cup sort of edge. The snout stops right on her sleeve edge. If we follow the curve at the top of the pig's head with our eyes it tends to follow the braid on the woman's left arm then on to her shoulder. At this point our eyes have been brought up to look at the girl's face where the line has led us. Is this the emphasis of the picture? From there, where does our eye travel? What things does the artist do to keep our eyes moving, and yet to stop at the most important subjects? What keeps our eyes from not traveling off the top, sides or bottom of the picture?

Shape plays an important part in the Res/Piaggio's and DaVinci's compositions. The main shape is a circle or oval. Find a repetition of shapes throughout the art works. They do not have to all be exactly the same. Can you find at least three major circular/oval shapes in this piece? What keeps our eyes from traveling off the page?

ACTIVITY 8: VISUAL ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 1: Students understand and apply visual art media, techniques, processes and interpretation.

Standard 2: Students understand how works of art are structured and how visual art has a variety of functions.

Standard 3: Students know a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.

Standard 4: Students understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

Standard 5: Students understand the characteristics and merit of one's own work of art and works of art of others.



Activity 8: Compare and Contrast Design
Leonardo DaVinci, *Lady with an Ermine*



Activity 8: Compare and Contrast Design
Res and Constanza Piaggio , *La Dama*

ACTIVITY 9: RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

The painting, *Las Meninas*, was completed in 1656 by the Spanish artist and court painter for King Philip IV. The artist's name was Diego Velasquez. The Impressionist artist, Manet, claimed Velasquez was the greatest painter of all time who had more influence on European art than any other, while other artists regarded him as a very important painter as well. Some of those artists include Corot, Courbet, Whistler, Goya, Sargent, Millet, Degas, Renoir, Francis Bacon and Picasso who actually made over 40 studies of *Las Meninas*.

Writers, critics and teachers have puzzled over its meaning – for the time in which it was painted, and also for the narrative (story). Velasquez's painting was not typical for his time both in composition, subject and how he dealt with the subjects a characters. Critics and viewers ask "What is happening here? Who are these people?" Why do you think artists have copied Velasquez's work?

Compare Fasola's *Las Meninas* work with Velasquez's *Las Meninas*. (See activity 3 for image.) What elements and principals of design can you find that are the same? Which are different?

Research Velasquez's *Las Meninas*. This is a painting of the five year old daughter of the King of Spain, Philip IV. You will find that Velasquez ignored many of the normal ways of painting royalty, which was to have the main subject in the middle, larger and more forward than all other parts of the painting. In this painting we might think the dogs and the ladies in waiting are even more important than the princess in the middle. The artist paints himself in the picture, but only puts the queen and king in the little mirror in the background.

How does Velasquez's use of color, value, line, shape help us find the main emphasis (focus point) of the picture, if they do? Is there a story here? Can you tell us about court life or about the personalities in the picture? Point out what the artist did to make you think these things.

Two of the characters in Velasquez's artwork, and two in Fasola's are dwarves. Can you tell us about the personalities in the picture? How were ladies in waiting and dwarves treated in Velasquez's time? What are these paintings about? Painted over 300 years apart, are they even about the same subject matter? What clues show you that there is a relationship between the two paintings. If not, why would Fasola use Velasquez's painting for a reference? Be specific.

ACTIVITY 9: VISUAL ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 2: Students understand how works of art are structured and how visual art has a variety of functions.

Standard 3: Students know a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.

Standard 4: Students understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

Standard 5: Students understand the characteristics and merit of one's own work of art and works of art of others.

ACTIVITY 9: LANGUAGE ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 1: Students engage in the research process.

Standard 2: Students engage in the reading process.

Standard 4: Students engage in the speaking and listening process.

ACTIVITY 10: SURREALIST GAME – EXQUISITE CORPSE

The Surrealists enjoyed the poetic effects of chance combination in a game called Exquisite Corpse.* To play form a group of 4 – 6 people. Cut blank sheets of paper lengthwise and give each player one of the half sheets. Each person writes a few word at the top and folds down just enough to hide the words. The paper is passed on to the next person who write more words without looking at what was written before. Keep passing the paper around until all have written words on each sheet. Once you have your original paper back, unfold and read your “Poem” out loud. Discuss. Do you automatically put some meaning to the “poem”, even if it is bizarre? Can you conjure up images in your mind? Many critics say it is impossible not to put meaning to an image, though the Surrealists tried hard to create work they said had no meanings What do you think?

* Activity borrowed from the Minneapolis Institute of the Arts.

ACTIVITY 10: LANGUAGE ARTS NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Standard 1: Students engage in the research process.

Standard 3: Students engage in the writing process

GLOSSARY

Principles of Design: balance, repetition, space and variety, unity, emphasis. These are those things that are achieved by the use of the Elements of Design. **Elements of Design:** color, line, shape, value and texture are the tools artists use to create a piece of art. Another way to look at it is that Principles are those basic standards that are part of all works, and Elements are those things that attain the standards. Different sources may list these principles and elements differently.

Abstract: Often this comes from an original subject matter, but is changed to become unrecognizable, with the artist intending it to create the essence or feeling of a time or place.

Balance: Balance is arranging parts of a composition so that no one part takes on more importance than another. Balance can be symmetrical or asymmetrical.

Color (hue): Color can suggest various moods. The three primary colors (hues) are red, blue and yellow. The mixture of any two of these makes green, violet and orange, which are secondary colors. A color with white added is a tint, and a color with black added is a shade.

Emphasis: We think of this as focus. It is the place in a work of art that is the most important. The artist uses many ways to bring the viewers eye to the main point of emphasis of the piece.

Line: Line is often how we see the world as we see the difference between objects as edges. They can imply laziness, emotion, aggressiveness, boldness and more. They can be thick or thin, straight or curved. They can be implied or actual. Actual line is a line or edge that can be seen, or is drawn. Implied line is a line that is not drawn, but suggested. It can be an arrangement of shapes in a linear way, or it could even be following the gaze or direction of a subject in the painting.

Non-Objective: This could be shapes and forms that do not represent any specific subject.

Repetition: (also rhythm) Rhythm is the effect of repeating forms, colors, or other elements. When we repeat a shape, color, texture or something else in a work, it helps unify it.

Shape: Shape is two dimensional and defined by line, that is, when lines surround an area and then that area becomes a shape, either geometric or organic. Shapes can define positive space (such as the edges of an object) or negative space (such as the area around the outside of the shape that is drawn.)

Size: Size is how big or how small an object is.

Scale: Scale is the size of an object in relation to another object.

Space: Space is three dimensional and is the area that envelopes something – it is everything around a person or object. It does not have to be solid.

Texture: Texture is the tactile quality of a piece, how it feels when we touch it, or how it is perceived to be felt. In other words, texture can be implied by marks made on paper that look rough, scratchy or smooth.

Value: Value is the light or darkness of a surface. It is often defined by light, for instance if sunlight is cast one side of an object, it will be light on one side and dark on the other. An example would be black, dark gray, medium gray, light gray and white.

Unity: This is what artists strive for in a piece of art. It can be achieved by using some or all of the elements and principles of design, and helps make a work of art feel organized.

VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

Looking at Art with a Friend for Elementary Students

What is the title of this piece?

Who is the artist?

What is happening in this art?

What does this remind you of?

What else?

What things do you see that make you think this?

If the art has a title, why do you think the artist chose this title?

Visual Thinking Strategies

Middle School and High School

Look at one artwork for a while. When answering these questions, try to point out specific things in the artwork that make your opinion.

1. What kind of things do you see in this work? What is happening?
2. Point out the specific things in the painting that make you say this.
3. What words would you use to describe this? Think of other ways to describe it?
4. Does this remind you of something, and if so, what?
5. What actual parts in the work of art remind you?
6. What title would you give this work and why?
7. Is there a sound that you could relate to the work? If so, what sound would it make and why?
8. What do you think is the focus or the main idea of the piece?
9. How does the artist help us focus on the main idea?
10. What do you think is the main intention of the artist in this work?

Visual Thinking Strategies for Middle School (Continued)

11. What do you think is the theme of the piece?

12. Should other people should see this work? If so, why?

13. What title would you give the work?