

Lesson 1: The Michael Project

RELATIONSHIP TO THE UNIT: Who am I as Artist?

LENGTH OF UNIT: 2 Classes

RELATIONSHIP TO LIFE: Artists and students often work towards assignments and tasks producing pieces to get the grade. As students reach the Advanced Placement level it is time for them to begin finding their voice as artist. Students in the AP class must come up with conceptual ideas, ideas that will help them tell their story about how they view the world.

In art, visions will/may change. As outside influences penetrate their minds, and images provoke them in new directions, students need to pick up and move on, make it work, and accept that something may/will come from nothing.

As artists and students it is important to learn from each other, not everyone comes from the same place as you so they will have a different interpretation on your work. Be open to another opinion, perhaps your piece can be stronger than it already is.

Be ready to be in a submissive role if you are normally a leader. Playing a different role in group exercises will allow you to see things from a different perspective. Creativity happens when you are on the edge of discomfort.

Often a theme will allow you to lead into a different direction, but also be wary of staying within a box. Be ready to change with the theme if that piece of art takes you in that direction. Do not be afraid of refining your theme more than once as the project evolves.

I. PROBLEM/ACTIVITY: Who are you as artists? Students will participate in a group activity and learn about each other as artists. Students will begin to work in 2D design through paint and paper; a mixed media project.

II. GOAL(S)

Students Should:

- Learn how to work with a new medium in 2D design, (1a)
- Learn how to brainstorm effectively in a group (1b, 1c)
- Visualize ideas through different sets of eyes (1b, 1c)
- Learn how to begin again when one idea doesn't work. (1a)
- Work outside their comfort zone. (1b, 1c)

III. OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will:

- Understand how working in groups can help artists to work in a new direction. (1b, 1c)
- Learn to question their directions and work with peers to change the vision in their directions. (1b, 1c)
- Begin from scratch a few times, allow new directions to take place. (1a)

- Understand the importance of group critique and listening and learning from others. (1b, 1c)

IV: RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- Large Room
- White paper at least 4 feet in diameter and 6 feet long
- Black Paint
- Small Black paper at least 20"x30"
- Glue
- Paintbrushes
- Large cups for water
- Tacks or tape for hanging final pieces

V. MOTIVATION

Overarching Questions:

- How important is reflection in art?
- How important is it to adjust and work with unexpected change in art?
- How does feedback (giving and receiving) help you as an artist grow?

Association Questions:

- How does working and brainstorming in a group allow students to grow as artists?
- How does listening to the opinions of peers allow work to grow in a different way than it would have with only the insight of the artist.
- When your group was asked to rip up your artwork, what was your process in reevaluating where you wanted to begin again?
- In the group discussions/deciding process were your ideas accepted or denied? How did you react to this and how did it allow you as an artist to grow?
- Was there an obvious leader to the group?
- How did you decide what to create, who decided that?
- Did your visions change as your project grew?
- How did you feel when it was time to tear your project?
- How did it feel to commit to a vision knowing that at any time you'd be forced to begin all over again?
- Did a theme to your project develop?
- If a theme developed did it change as the project changed?
- Was the final project representational of one person in the group, or the entire group combined?
- Did communication change throughout the artistic process?

Visualization Questions:

- Have you ever seen work like this completed before?

- Does a final piece such as this speak to you as an artist, or do you receive more out of the process of creating it, than the final product?

Transition Questions:

- What other multi-media artists inspire you and the art that you create?
- How could you integrate this process into your photography?
- How could you integrate a final product like this into your photography?

VI. PROCEDURES

Discussion

The teacher groups the students in the class into groups of three. It should be random, (having the students count off by the number of groups that you will need is the best way to get random groups. The teacher should be vague in expectations, and explanations to allow for pure reflection throughout the process. The teacher should explain to the students that they are going to explore the world of basic 2D design, so that students get used to the fact that this is not purely a photography class, but explores all of 2D design. Students should then break into their groups and proceed to their designated area.

Distribution & Work Period:

Teacher should then proceed with the following process.

The Process: To be performed in groups of 3

Stage #1

Self- Reflection (*stream of consciousness*)

Each student will receive 1 large piece of paper 20x30 inches and black paint (Charcoal) with a paintbrush and should create shapes/patterns that represent something personal. (Who are you as an artist?- or similar question)

Stage #2

Destruction

After committing to a design, ask the student to rip their piece into 3 pieces (2 major rips). “How do you take that design and allow it to grow into something new?”

Stage #3

Collaboration

Combine all the pieces (9) together and apply them to a larger canvas (paper) and create something new from all of your images. Brainstorm how they will best go together and where they should be glued down. Created something new together. This is no longer about the single artist but about the group. Give and take, listen and share. Are three insights and ideas better than one?

Stage #4

Change

After about 15 minutes of working, switch projects. Allow the groups to move from one piece to another and add something new to the existing piece. Allow fresh eyes to look at the work and see something new that the original artists may not have seen. Allow the idea to be flexible and adjust to unforeseen changes that may take place.

Stage #5

Reflection

Have students return to their original project and reevaluate where the piece is going, and does it need to take on a new idea? How does seeing your new piece with a new perspective push you to see new things/ something new you didn't expect? Is this new change a positive one, or a negative one? How can you take something and make it your own again?

Stage #6

Uncommitting

Make two final major rips in your project. Question, how are the rips determined. Is a final idea of the project present when the rips are performed. Are the rips deliberate or accidental? Can you see a vision before ripping that will determine where the rips are made.

Stage #7

Growth

Reattach those pieces together to create a new vision. Allow yourself to let go of the artwork you've created and be open to new possibilities. Work 2 black pieces of paper and 2 white pieces of paper into your piece. Allow others to help you with your vision. How do three different minds see the same piece differently? Use the new materials to push your project to where you didn't think it would go.

Stage #8

Evolution

Finish your piece with painting, paper and glue and allow your group vision to be melded into one piece of artwork. Add finishing touches with paint and paper, and be sure to secure loose pieces and any 3-D artwork that was created.

Clean Up:

The students should wash their brushes (glue and paint), and dump the paint water in their cups. Students should clean up any paint that was on the floor and throw away any scrap paper. Large pieces of scrap paper can be saved for future projects.

Closure:

After finishing the group piece of art, have the students reflect alone for homework on the questions. Discuss the answers and process in the following class. When finished, hang the final, dried project.

VII. EVALUATION

Teacher observations:

- * Did students communicate effectively with one another?
 - * Did students embrace change and grow throughout the project?
 - * Did students participate equally?
 - * Did all students share ideas or did one student take on the leadership role?
 - * Did students take risks?
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- * Did students work well together, share responsibilities, push each other in new directions?

Formative Assessment:

- Students used all and only the material provided
- Students all participated in project
- Students all participated in class discussion following project
- Students all answered the reflective questions required for homework.

THE MICHAEL PROJECT: HOMEWORK QUESTIONS

Please answer the following questions:

Write 1 paragraph answering the following questions and reflecting on the process you experienced during this project.

1. Was there a leadership role, how was that determined?
2. How did you decide what to do? Who decided that, what did you decide to do?
3. Did your visions change of where your project would go?
4. How did you feel when it was time to destroy your piece?
5. How did you feel when committing to your piece knowing it could be destroyed?
6. What was the process of going from a single piece of work to a combined piece of work?
7. Did a theme develop over time?
8. How did you work with that theme?
9. Did your theme change?
10. Did communication change as your project evolved?

11. Did your original vision change as your project evolved?
12. Does your final piece relate to the first question/reflection of “what did you do this summer?”
13. Did you keep in 2d or did you add 3d?
14. How does this project teach you to collaborate as artists?
15. Did this project teach you to listen and learn as artists instead of always going with your first idea or instinct?
16. How do you think this process taught you to grow as an artist?

Teacher and Student examples of The Michael Project



AP, 2010 Class cut and glue



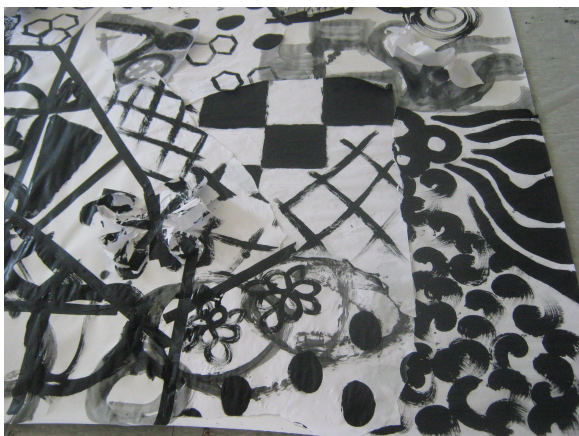
AP Class 2010, initial paintings



AP 2010 Group reassign and add



AP 2010 Final product



BU MA Art Ed: 2010 Work in Progress



BU MA Art Ed: 2010 Final Product















