

Untitled, Richard Basil Mock

Woodcut on paper



...About the artist



Richard Mock was a printmaker, painter, sculptor, and editorial cartoonist. Mock was best known for his linocut illustrations (*American Voter*, pictured above) that appeared on the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times* from 1980 through 1996. His work has been cited as an influence by a number of contemporary American printmakers. Mock died after a long illness in 2006.

Lesson Overview

Students will explore art work that is valued for both its aesthetic value and its ability to persuade and provide commentary about cultural beliefs, values and mores'. Additionally, students will investigate the relief printing process.

Objectives

1. Students will be able describe and interpret the untitled woodcuts shown them created by Richard Mock.
2. Students will be able to define and describe the process for creating and cutting a relief print block.
3. Students will be able to define and describe the process for inking and printing a relief print block.
4. Students will be able to describe how art can have aesthetic and social significance.
5. Students will be able to identify and describe works of art by Richard Mock, Kathe Kollwitz, Pablo Picasso, Angela Haseltine Pozzi and Albrecht Dürer.
5. Students will be able to create a print based on an issue of social importance at their school. The prints will emphasize contrast of value.

Vocabulary

- Relief printing
- Woodcut
- Contrast
- Value
- Printing Block
- U and V-Gouge
- Brayer
- Edition

Artists

- Richard Mock
- Kathe Kollwitz
- Pablo Picasso
- Angela Haseltine Pozzi
- Albrecht Dürer

Procedures: Part I - Comprehend and Reflect

1. Show students Richard Mock's untitled woodcut. (Slide 1) Ask them to carefully describe what they see. Ask students to be very specific in their descriptions. Ask students if any the objects in the print (bird, tree, sunglasses, chair, etc.) give them a clue about the Mock's. What do they think the art work is about? What is its meaning? Perhaps the print is about the importance of enjoying nature and keeping it safe? What do you think? Why?
2. In this untitled print (http://americanart.si.edu/images/1987/1987.74.3_1b.jpg) (Slide2) Mock is making a statement about how media (internet, newspapers, magazines, television, etc) may not always be truthful and can influence—or maybe tempt—the viewer/user of the media. How does the artist say this in the print? (flying book enticing the viewer; viewer can't keep his/her eye off the book; flying clocks—media causes us too lose track of time,) *Note to instructor: 21st century skill prepares students to be discerning consumers of technology/media.*
3. This sculpture by Angela Haseltine Pozzi (<http://agreenliving.org/tag/jordan/>) (Slide 3) is called *Washed Ashore*. What do you think this art work is about? (pollution affecting wildlife) How do you know? Hint: What is this sculpture made out of?
4. The art work of Richard Mock and Angela Haseltine Pozzi addresses issues of pollution, nature and the environment. These examples demonstrate that artists can make art that is important for reasons other than being beautiful and pleasing to the eye. Ask students about what kinds of (social) themes artists can make art about. Discuss that artists can make art about war, peace, friendship, honesty, respect, hunger, homelessness, etc. (Guide discussion as is age appropriate.)
5. Discuss works of art about:
 - Hunger: *Hungry Kids*, Kathe Kollwitz. (http://joedresch.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/kollwitz_hungery_kids.jpg) (Slide 4).
 - War: *Guernica*, Pablo Picasso. (http://www.crestock.com/uploads/blog/2009/famousartworks/Picasso_Guernica.jpg) (Slide 5)
 - Peace: *Choose, Restore, Peace, Uptown*, Chicago, IL mural. (<http://mosaicartsource.wordpress.com/2008/09/21/world-peace-mosaic-art-beit-sahour-berkeley-chicago-israel-japan-moscow-new-york-new-zealand-normandy-prague-san-diego-spain/>) (Slide 6)
6. Several years ago the United Nations Correspondents Association sponsored a contest for professional political cartoonists. The winning cartoons are chosen for their ability to enhance, explain and encourage the spirit and the principles of the United Nations.

In response to this contest, Mr. Mock asked 4th graders in the Art Club at PS (Public School) #6 in New York City to make their own political cartoons illustrating these United Nations ideals: ***respect for other people, friendship among nations and concern for the environment***. Each student made an illustration with a slogan—a drawing plus words to help explain the picture. (<http://www.biddingtons.com/ps6.html>)

"When you draw, you think," said Mr. Mock. So, he coached the children to use mostly black markers or soft pencils and not too much color so they would look similar to the woodcuts that Mr. Mock created. What do you think of these art works? Where these artists successful communicating their ideas? Why? How?

"LBFS Let's Be Friends" drawing by Jessica Sherrod (Slide 7)

"Save the Animals" drawing by Sebastian (Slide 8)

"No Wars! No Wars!" drawing by Emily Siegel (Slide 9)

"Keep Our Earth Clean" drawing by Danielle Lisbon (Slide 10)

"Why Can't We All Be Friends!!!" drawing by Joey Steigelman (Slide 11)

"Friendship in the World" drawing by Tess Law (Slide 12)

"We Deserve Respect, Too" drawing by Ken Siu (Slide 13)

"Friendship Society Takes over Brainwash" drawing by A.J. (Slide 14)

Procedures: Part II – Create and Transfer

7. Have students discuss issues that they encounter or would like to address about their school. Themes and concerns around: bullying, friendship, respect, cheating, waste, conservation of school resources, school physical environment, etc. can be explored. Have students choose a theme or concern they want to make a print about.
8. Show an example of Mock's print again. Discuss that a print is a work of art made up of ink on paper and existing in multiple examples. It is created not by drawing directly on paper, but through an indirect transfer process. The artist begins by creating a composition on another surface (block) and the transfer occurs when a sheet of paper, placed in contact with this surface, is run through a press. The advantage of this process is that multiple images of the same drawing can be created. This series of images is called an edition.
9. Briefly explain the history of relief printing; the earliest form of printmaking. The relief printing (woodcut) first appeared in China in the ninth century, It arose in Europe around 1400 and was originally used for stamping designs onto fabrics, textiles or playing cards. By the sixteenth century it had achieved the status of an important art form with the work of Albrecht Dürer (*Seven-headed Beast*, <http://danzink.wordpress.com/the-artists-i-admire/albrecht-durer/>) and other Northern European artists.
10. Have students prepare several sketches of their ideas. Discuss composition and that students need to keep the images fairly simple and should avoid small details (depending the age of students). Emphasize the expressive characteristics of value and contrast. Refer back to Mock's prints to explain this concept.
11. Sketch or trace the image that will be printed onto the block. (EZ cut works well for elementary aged children.) Remember that the image they print will be the reverse of what is drawn. Letters must be written and carved in reverse to print the correct way. Remind students that the part that is cut out will not have ink on it; the part that is cut out will appear the color of the paper. This is a relief print and the ink will be on the upper surface not in the grooves.
12. Begin cutting away small areas with a v-gouge. Larger areas to be cut away can be removed with a u-gouge.
13. Spread out the printing ink on a sheet of plexiglas using a roller called a brayer. Roll out the ink in multiple directions to get an even layer of ink. Ink the block with the brayer and lay a sheet of paper on the block and rub with a spoon or put the block and paper through a press.
14. Fit paper carefully from the block. Continue printing as many editions (copies) as determined by the student and teacher.

Discussing Student Work / Assessment

1. Have students work in pairs to answer the following questions about each others prints. The teacher may want to model this process before having students begin.
2. In pairs, have students answer (orally or in written form) the following questions. Include the prompts provided after each initial question to assist students in fully exploring the meaning of each print.
 - What do you see?** (Be very specific. Describe the objects in the print. Where are the objects located in the print? Are there different textures in the print? Can you describe them? Is the print influenced by the work of other artists? Mock? Dürer?)
 - What is the print about?** (Cheating in school? Bullying? Making friends? ...)
 - How do you know what the print is about?** (The artist used recognizable subject matter. "The artist shows two hands holding a baby bird." "The artist shows a student picking up garbage around school.")
 - Describe the relief printing process.**

Standards and 21st Century Skills

All lessons created using the University Art Museum's Permanent Collection align with the four Colorado Model Content Standards for Visual Art:

1. Observe and Learn to Comprehend
2. Envision and Critique to Reflect
3. Invent and Discover to Create
4. Relate and Connect to Transfer

Since lessons are written so that teachers can modify them for a variety of grade levels and learning objectives they are not aligned to grade level expectations. Lessons are aligned to Prepared Graduate Competencies. PGCs addressed in this lesson include:

--Analyze, interpret, and make meaning of art and design critically using oral and written discourse

--Explain, demonstrate, and interpret a range of purposes of art and design, recognizing that the making and study of art and design can be approached from a variety of viewpoints, intelligences, and perspectives

--Recognize, interpret, and validate that the creative process builds on the development of ideas through a process of inquiry, discovery, and research

--Develop and build appropriate mastery in art-making skills, using traditional and new technologies and an understanding of the characteristics and expressive features of art and design

--Recognize, compare, and affirm that the making and study of art and design can be approached from a variety of viewpoints, intelligences, and perspectives

--Critique personal work and the work of others with informed criteria

--Recognize, articulate, and implement critical thinking in the visual arts by synthesizing, evaluating, and analyzing visual information

Extensions

1. Introduce a "mini-lesson" on signing prints: Use a pencil. On the left edge, you put the print number and edition number. This is shown as a fraction. 1/3 would indicate that is it the first print in an edition of three. If the print has a title, it is placed in the middle of the space right under the picture plane, often in quotes. The artist's signature goes on the right side, usually followed by the year of the printing.
2. After prints are dry, consider having students hand color their prints with color pencils.
3. Create a book to give each classroom in the school. Have students make enough editions for the number of classrooms in the school. Put one of each of the completed prints together and bind them into a book.

Relevance and Application:

1. Visual arts provide an ability to discern the underlying intended and unintended purposes of art.
2. The critical process of observing, interpreting, and evaluating leads to informed judgments regarding the merits in works of art and reinforces cognitive skills such as concentration, perception, memory, and logical thinking - essential in all occupations.
3. Art is a vehicle for interdisciplinary communication related to the human experience.
4. Works of art reflect the artist's ideas, interests, and background.
5. Works of art reflect the influences of culture and community on the artist, leading to decisions about whether a rendering is appropriate.
6. A work of art's underlying structures can be identified through analysis and inference.

Colorado
State
University

University Art Museum

