

Agnes Etherington ART CENTRE

Teachers' Notes

Sculpture

Indoors and Out



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Teachers' Notes for School Programs 2010-2011

Sculpture: Indoors and Out

Produced by:
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Image on cover:

Tivi Etook
Kenutakjak (near Kangiqsualujjuaq, formerly George River) QC, 1928
Bear
Stone
Agnes Etherington Art Centre
Gift of John and Mary Robertson, 1995

Introduction

Our school programs develop critical thinking skills in your students. We ask questions and set tasks that call for:

- Observing
- Interpreting
- Comparing
- Flexible thinking and using one's imagination

The first half of the visit, which takes place in the gallery space, establishes key ideas. These ideas are developed in the second half of the visit through a creative hands-on project in the studio. We encourage you to use this booklet to prepare your students for their visit to the Art Centre, and to extend the experience in your classroom.

Program

At the Art Centre, our program in 2010–2011 focuses on sculpture through two exhibitions, *With Rasp and File: Inuit Sculpture and Stonecut Prints*, and *Collecting Visions: Selections from the Justin and Elisabeth Lang Collection*.

Beyond the Art Centre, we encourage you and your class to discover Kingston's outdoor sculpture (see pages 13-17).

Grades 1 to 4: *Shape Shift*

In the gallery we will establish such sculptural concepts as three-dimensionality and form. Our discussion also covers the environmental and cultural contexts of these works of art. In the studio, students create an Arctic animal from clay.

Note: Please ask each student to bring a box (shoebox-sized or smaller) with them on the day you visit the Art Centre, for carrying their clay sculptures home.

Grades 5 to 8: *Dimensions of Shape and Culture*

Students discuss the role of masks in traditional African societies, and what Inuit sculpture reveals about the life and values of Canada's northern people. They analyze the works in terms of geometric form, which leads into a sculpture project in the studio using varied materials, as seen in some African art.

Description of Exhibitions

With Rasp and File: Inuit Sculpture and Stonecut Prints

Curated by Alicia Boutilier, Curator of Canadian Historical Art

This exhibition highlights the natural materials used in Inuit art from the 1960s and 1970s, and considers how their availability, marketability, and intrinsic characteristics affected artists' aesthetic choices. Materials can differ in how they take a polish or yield to pressure, as well as in their colour and texture. Stone that is locally abundant can determine a distinctive regional style or characteristic, while aging requirements and export restrictions can limit the production of certain animal-derived carvings. From serpentinite to marble, walrus tusk to whale bone, the unformed shape of matter often inspires a sculptor more than any preformed idea.

The works in this exhibition are entirely drawn from the Art Centre's collection, and represent artists from communities in Nunavut and the region of Nunavik (in Québec), including Tivi Etook, Peggy Ekagina, Kananginak Pootoogook and Levi Qumaluk. Complementing the sculptures are stonecut prints by acclaimed Kinngait artist Pitseolak Ashoona. Mineral samples, kindly donated by the Miller Museum of Geology, Queen's University, will be on display in the exhibition as touchable objects.

Collecting Visions: Selections from the Justin and Elisabeth Lang Collection

Developed by Janet M. Brooke, Director, Pat Sullivan, Public Programs Officer, and Catherine Hale, Doctoral Candidate in African Art

In 1984, the Art Centre received the spectacular gift of almost 600 works of African art, from a wide and diverse range of cultures in West and Central Africa, including Nigeria, Mali, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Gabon, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Drawing from this outstanding resource, *Collecting Visions* presents 22 three-dimensional objects that were produced for a variety of purposes in traditional Central and West African societies. We shall discuss the context in which these works were created. For example, the six masks in the exhibition were only one element in rituals or ceremonies that included costumes, music and movement. Belief in an unseen, but powerful, spiritual world, motivated production of objects that were used to divine the future, or to guard the remains of the deceased. There are also sculptures that relate to daily life, such as drinking horns, a stool and a game board.

African art is highly innovative in form, often with an abstracted approach to depicting the human figure. Students will analyze the shapes used in the sculpture, and observe the various materials, as sculptors often added pigment, fibres, or metal to the basic wooden forms.

Curriculum Connections

Visual Art

Students will:

- understand the principles and elements of design
- produce three-dimensional works that communicate an idea
- describe and understand various tools and techniques used by artists
- demonstrate an awareness of a variety of works of art and artistic traditions from diverse communities, times, and places

Social Science/History

Students will:

- describe daily activities, traditions, and celebrations of different cultures
- understand that Canada is made up of many different cultures
- understand ways in which traditions are passed down through generations
- identify traits of various cultures
- identify myths and beliefs of civilizations and how they affect their daily lives

Social Studies/Geography

Students will:

- describe the physical features of provinces and territories of Canada
- describe how the natural environment shapes culture

- describe ways in which communities around the world meet their needs (e.g. food, shelter, clothing, etc.)

Science

Students will:

- describe changes in the appearance or behaviour of living things that are adaptations to seasonal changes
- describe how humans prepare for and/or respond to daily and seasonal changes
- identify examples of environmental conditions that may threaten plant and animal survival

Before the Visit

The following are suggested discussion topics and activities to help prepare students for their visit. We ask that students wear name tags during the visit.

Gallery Visit: Discussion Topics

Discuss the nature of a public art gallery with your class. Art galleries collect, research, protect, preserve and display original works of art for the benefit of visitors and future generations. Ask your class if they have been to an art gallery before. What did they see and do at the art gallery? What types of art did they see at the art gallery? Why is it important to visit original works of art, instead of viewing photographs or images on the Internet?

Expectations

Discuss proper behaviour and gallery etiquette with your class. The two main rules to remember are:

- Do not touch the art because oils on our hands can contain salt that can damage the surface of works of art
- No running

Other important rules to note are no photography, and no food or drinks (including gum).

Exploring Inuit/African History and Culture

Explore Inuit and African culture and history with your class. Possible topics to consider:

- oral traditions (legends, telling stories)
- Inuit/African media and materials

To help orient students geographically:

- show a map of Africa and compare it to one of Canada
- have students develop mapping skills by labelling and colouring northern Canada

New Vocabulary

additive sculpture: A three-dimensional object created with malleable materials which can be shaped or added to (e.g. clay sculpture).

balance: A state of equilibrium.

Inuit: A member of a group of peoples who inhabit the Arctic, especially Canada.

Inuktitut: The traditional language of the Inuit. Though originally only an oral language, Inuktitut syllabics (written symbols) have been developed.

inukshuk: A monument made of stones, used by the Inuit for communication and survival.

legend: An unverified story handed down from earlier times, especially one popularly believed to be true.

media: The materials and techniques used by an artist to produce a work (e.g. stone, clay, video, paper, ink).

motif: A distinctive and reoccurring form, shape, figure, etc., in works of art.

raffia: Fibrous fronds of the raffia palm that may be woven to make cloth.

relief: Type of sculpture in which the form stands out from a flat surface, and is viewed from one side.

Shaman: A spiritual leader of the Inuit people.

soapstone: A soft stone that is often carved into sculpture.

subtractive sculpture: A three-dimensional object created by removing excess material to reveal a form, as in stone carving.

three-dimensional: Existing in three dimensions; something having depth, width, and height.

two-dimensional: Existing in two dimensions: height, width.

After the Gallery Visit: Extending into the Classroom

Visual Art: Soap Sculptures

During the visit to the Art Centre, students saw Inuit sculpture and materials. A typical theme for Inuit artists were animals of the North. Artists also frequently used soapstone for their sculptures. With your class, explore these themes using unscented bars of soap (for example, 'The Soap Works' Pure Vegetable Glycerine Soap, \$2.25/bar, www.well.ca). Students research Arctic animals, then plan out and carve three-dimensional animals from their bars of soap using craft sticks.

Visual Art: Painting the Arctic Animals

The students in Grades 1 to 4 will bring their damp clay sculptures back to school in boxes. After a few days, the works will be dry and hard.

Materials:

Paint brushes
Acrylic paint in small containers
Newspaper
Paper towel
Toothpicks

Method:

1. Divide paint up so that there is an assortment of colours available to all students.
2. Put students into groups of about 4-6 with pots of a variety of colours.
3. Each paint pot should have one brush that stays with that colour to keep paints from being mixed with one another.
4. After the first layer of paint has dried, students can add smaller details (eyes, buttons, etc) with the tip of a toothpick that has been dipped in paint.
5. Use warm water and soap to clean brushes as acrylic paint can be tough to clean once dried.
6. Let painted figures dry thoroughly before students take them home.

Language Arts, Visual Art: Inuit and African Legends

For Grades 1 to 4: Using engaging storytelling techniques, a teacher or performer reads an Inuit or African myth or legend to the class. Allow the students to draw and doodle while you perform the story – encourage them to imagine illustrating the tale. Allow the class time to create a good copy from their sketches using markers, pencil crayons, pastels, or a printmaking technique.

Visual Art: African Masks

While touring *Collecting Visions*, students in Grades 5 to 8 will have the opportunity to see varied materials used in masks.

Materials

Thick paper, such as Bristol board
Aluminum foil
Masking tape
Acrylic paint
Brushes
Scissors
Glue, staplers
Beads, raffia, string and other items for embellishment

Method:

1. Fold paper vertically (for symmetry) and cut a demi-face shape. The shape can be oval, irregular, or may resemble an animal. Cut out eye holes.
2. Cut a 4cm slot at the top, bottom, and/or sides of the paper. Overlap the leaves of paper and staple in place to create the convex shape of the mask.
3. Use crumpled aluminum foil to define three-dimensional features on the face, such as eyebrows, cheekbones, a nose, and a chin. Tape the foil down using small squares of masking tape. Continue to cover the entire mask with these small squares; the tape adds texture and a more paintable surface.
4. Limit the colour palette of paints and markers to red, white, and black to emphasize texture rather than colour.
5. When paint is dry, add three-dimensional elements like cardboard, beads, feathers, raffia, string, rice, beans, and shells to complete the mask.

Visual Art, Social Studies: 3-D Design in Your Pocket

The same elements and principles of art that fine artists employ are also used by those who design objects that have both visual appeal and function. We looked at sculptures “in-the-round” of polar bears on the tour. The Canadian two-dollar coin shows images of polar bears, in low relief and in various designs, on its “tails” side. How does the Canadian mint choose images and symbols for our currency? Who are the artists who design them? Have students research these questions by going to www.mint.ca. What other symbols are on our currency? Why? How are the two-dimensional designs transformed into three-dimensional coins? The Mint helped the Canadian Olympic Committee make the medals for the Vancouver Olympics. How was that done?

Social Studies, Geography: Explore an African Country

Using library resources, newspapers and the Internet, students collect current and historical information about one of the African countries represented in the exhibition *Collecting Visions*: Nigeria, Mali, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Gabon, or the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They can create posters that display images and texts about their country, including information about the climate, geography, people, religions, economy, government and cultural life.

Music

African and Inuit ceremonies are often accompanied by music and include dance elements. Students research traditional African and Inuit music and dance, then share their findings with the class with audio and video media.

Contemporary African and Inuit artists often look to their roots for inspiration. Research the following artists to learn about their traditional roots and contemporary expression:

Susan Aglukark (Inuit from Arctic Canada)
Njacko Backo (from Cameroon, now lives in Canada)
Ismaël Lô (Senegal)
Salif Keita (Mali)

Additional Resources

Museums – General

Video

How to Visit an Art Museum. Evanston, IL: Tellens, Inc., 1993

This video helps make the most of every visit to an art museum. Beautifully produced at the Art Institute of Chicago, this program will show you how to: see more of what's in a painting, develop your imagination, prepare for your visit, make new discoveries and feel more at home in museums (28 minutes).

N410.H68 1993 VHS Faculty of Education Library, Duncan McArthur Hall, Queen's University.

Art

Publications

Allen, Jan and Steven Stowell, *Outdoor Sculpture at Queen's.* Kingston: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 2002

This pamphlet is available for free at the Art Centre. Some information from it can be seen at www.queensu.ca/pps/siteart/

Websites

Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston, ON

www.aeac.ca

In the Collections section, you can explore images and brief descriptions of over 300 works of art.

AGORA

www.agora.virtualmuseum.ca

This section of the Virtual Museum of Canada website can be used by teachers or students, in English or French.

CyberMuse

cybermuse.gallery.ca

This is the art education research site of the National Gallery of Canada.

Inuit Art

Videos

The following videos can be found at the Faculty of Education, Queen's University, unless otherwise indicated.

Eskimo artist: Kenojuak

E99 .E7 .E66 1992 VHS

Peoples of the Tundra – The Eskimo

E99.E7 P355 1992 VHS

Life on the Land (National Film Board of Canada)

E99.E7 L522 1999 VHS

Inuit arts Vol. 1, 2 and 3 (National Film Board of Canada)

E99.E7 I5365 1999 VHS V.001

E99.E7 I5365 1999 VHS V.002

E99.E7 I5365 1999 VHS V.003

Websites

The Virtual Museum

www.virtualmuseum.ca/English/Teacher/inuit_history.html

This Virtual Museum has a brief history of Inuit people, their art, land, and pastimes (games).

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ach/lr/ks/cr/pubs/disc-eng.pdf

Discover Inuit Art Information sheet for children discusses Inuit art, sculpture, carving tools, and biographies of some Inuit artists.

McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg, ON

www.mcmichael.com

The McMichael boasts a collection of 6,000 art works exclusively by Canadian artists.

Canada's Digital Collections

collections.ic.gc.ca (link: settlements/kids)

This site links to over 400 web sites. It has an educational resources section with lesson plans.

Houston North Gallery

houston-north-gallery.ns.ca/

This gallery is based in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia and is linked with James Houston, who introduced printmaking in the Arctic. The site is a great resource for educational information and images of prints.

African Art

Books

, Monica Blackmun, Robin Poynor, Herbert M. Cole and Michael D. Harris. *A History of Art in Africa*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001

This is an extensive textbook with a range of images from across the African continent. This textbook is most suited to teachers looking for in-depth content or a variety of images.

Websites

British Museum, London, UK

www.britishmuseum.org/

Explore the museum collection online through slideshows of images accompanied by text. The museum offers a broad history of African art, beginning with tools from about 2.4 million years ago, touching on a vast range of traditional art, and concluding with African diaspora pieces from today.

Musées Barbier-Mueller, Geneva/Barcelona

www.musees-barbier-mueller.org

This museum's website shows a large collection of African works. Each piece has a detailed description, available in French and in English.

Museum of African Art, New York, NY

www.africanart.org/

This website offers a number of education resources for teachers, including PDFs with Teachers' Notes devoted to specific topics, e.g. Masks in African Culture. The museum is dedicated to historical as well as contemporary African diaspora art.

National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

africa.si.edu/

The Smithsonian National Museum of African Art website is a valuable resource for teachers looking for quality visuals and a depth and breadth of research on African art. The 'collection' database is organized into categories, and is searchable.

Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, ON

images.rom.on.ca/public/

The ROM offers an extensive searchable database of artefacts from Africa. Navigate to Collection Areas > World Cultures > Africa for a visual listing of a sampling of the Museum's collection.

Legends and Stories

Books

Gordon, Marguerite (editor). *Nelson Mandela's Favorite African Folktales*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2002

This collection features a selection of African folktales from around the continent by Nobel prize laureate Nelson Mandela. Each story (there are thirty-two in all) is illustrated with one full-page colour illustration, often by an African artist. The collection can also be found in audiobook format, which was produced to great acclaim. Actors performing the readings include Don Cheadle, Matt Damon, Whoopi Goldberg, Sean Hayes, Samuel L. Jackson, Debra Messing, Alan Rickman and Charlize Theron.

Websites

PBS Africa

www.pbs.org/wnet/africa/explore/

To access the texts, click on one of the regions in this section, click on 'People,' and then choose 'Folklore.' The website also offers information about the ecology, history and culture of each region by focusing on a representative people.

Qikiqtani Inuit Association

www.inuitmyths.com

In partnership with the Canadian federal and Nunavut provincial government, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association offers this online resource for anyone interested in the Inuit storytelling tradition. There are some myths available in printable illustrated PDF document-form (currently only available in Inuktitut syllabics), and many more in a searchable database (available in Inuktitut and in English). Each myth is accompanied by a coloured illustration.

(Note: Many of the Inuit myths feature violent actions. Be sure to read any myths before presenting them to a class to judge suitability.)

Outdoor Sculpture in Kingston

After visiting our exhibitions in the Art Centre, explore the outdoor sculpture of Kingston (more suitable for Grades 5 to 8). We provide:

- An observation sheet that can be photocopied for students to use for writing and sketching.
- A list of the works with small photographs and basic information.
- A map showing the locations of 14 sculptures.

Here are some coaching points to help students look closely at sculpture:

Description:

Consider the elements of design (line, colour, texture, shape, shape, light and shadow) and principles of design (contrast, repetition, variety, emphasis, proportion, balance, unity, movement) while you are looking. Which ones are dominant?

Balance and tension:

Sculptors create balance or tension in their works through these opposing qualities: vertical/horizontal; static/moving; light/heavy; negative space/positive space. Choose which pair applies to each sculpture and say why.

Scale:

Is the sculpture life-size, slightly under or over? Can you walk into it? If so, how does that space feel to you?

Pedestal:

Is the sculpture on a pedestal or base, or does it sit directly on the ground? How is your experience of the sculpture different if it is on the ground?

Free-standing vs. relief:

If a sculpture is mounted on a wall, we call it relief. Even though it still has sculptural form, we can only view it from one direction, unlike free-standing sculptures that we can view from all sides. Consider where a relief is placed: can you look at it straight on, or is it up high? How does the position affect your experience? What role does light play in how you perceive the relief?

Materials:

Outdoor sculpture must be weather-resistant. What material has the artist used? How has the artist made the sculpture secure and durable?

Realism vs. Abstraction:

Does the sculpture resemble something from the real world? Or did the shape come from the artist's imagination?

Setting:

Does the sculpture blend in with its surroundings or stand out in contrast? Why or why not?

Title:




Is there a plaque nearby with the name of the sculpture? If not, consult our list to find the title. Are there words on it? How does the title or the words help you develop your own idea of the sculpture's meaning?

Outdoor Sculpture in Kingston Observation Sheet

Title of Sculpture Name of Artist Material	Description (5 key words)	What does it mean to you?	Sketch

Outdoor Sculpture in Downtown Kingston and on Queen's Campus

1		MacDonald Park Kosso Eloul, <i>Time</i> , 1973
2		MacDonald Park Yvon Cozic, <i>Pollution</i> , 1974
3		MacDonald Park <i>Lion</i> , donated 1901
4		Theological Hall Peter Kolisnyk, <i>Ground Outline</i> , 1978
5		Agnes Etherington Art Centre Micah Lexier, <i>A Minute of My Time (September 29, 1998 15:04-15:05)</i> , 1999
6		Agnes Etherington Art Centre William Vazan, <i>The Three Observed</i> , 1992
7		Jeffrey Hall Alan Dickson, <i>Five Sculptures on Topological Themes</i> , 1972
8		Jeffrey Hall Victor Tolgesy, <i>Pyramidal Structure - Sakkarah</i> , 1971
9		Harrison-LeCaine Hall Henry Saxe, <i>Thataway Again</i> , 1979
10		Frontenac County Courthouse <i>Sir Charles Airey Kirkpatrick Memorial Fountain</i> , 1931
11		City Park <i>Leapfrog</i>

12		<p>City Park <i>Sir John A. Macdonald Memorial Statue, c. 1891</i></p>
13		<p>Brock Street Commons <i>Four Sculptures</i></p>
14		<p>Rochleau Courtyard Barry Blunden, <i>Laundry, 2000</i></p>

