



# Better Education Through the Arts

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Lesson Plans for Educators

March 11, 1999

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(This workshop was originally given for the BETA consortium at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts on March 11 and March 13, 1999.)

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Museums are great places for students to practice writing. They stimulate creativity, help students with research skills, and introduce them to different writing styles. This workshop will give teachers ideas for using the museum and visual imagery as creative inspiration for their students.
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Participants will explore paintings from the collection now hanging in the Utah Museum of Fine Arts at the University of Utah through the process of live theatrical performance. Using the theatre techniques of storytelling, creative movement, sound-scapes, and ritual building, participants will create short ensemble performances representing the perceived meaning of selected paintings as interpreted through the medium of live theatre.
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## *Sculpture, Hands and Rodin*

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Lessonplan for BETA workshop 3/11/99

Written by Melissa payne and Christina Sutherland

### **Objectives:**

1. To introduce students to the life and works of Auguste Rodin.
2. To demonstrate the importance of our hands as theatrical and communicative- nicative tools.
3. To experiment with modeling as Rodin did.

### **Materials:**

1. A Ziploc bag of modeling clay for each student and waxed paper to protect the desks.
2. Tools for modeling (such as skewers, scoops, wet sponges).
3. Books on Rodin, pictures of his hand sculptures.
4. CD's of Claude Debussy's piano music and a CD player.

### **Management:**

1. Whole Group - instruction about Rodin's life and hand pantomimes.
2. Individual - experimentation with modeling clay.
3. Whole Group - sharing and closure.

### **Procedure:**

Warm-up: Handiwork - How could you tell what these hands were pantomiming?

Instruction: [Use Rodin's biography (attached) and books of Rodin's works as aids]. In spite of opposition, Rodin never gave up. Rodin was a man of action and vitality. His sculptures reflect this attitude. Rodin saw hands as able to express the emotions of the entire body. Our hands are important tools and means of expressions. Hands are points of connection and passing between people. Pantomime is a way to communicate without using words.

### **Check for Understanding**

Activity: How do we use our hands to express ideas and communicate? Each student will pick something to pantomime with his/her hands. Go around the circle and try to guess what each student is acting out with his/her hands. What positions and actions demonstrate certain ideas? Why are we able to guess what the actions are, even though the actor isn't talking?

### **Examples:**

- Pantomime angry hands
- Pantomime surprise using your hands
- Pantomime hands in love
- Pantomime needing a drink using your hands
- Pantomime hands playing the piano
- Pantomime petting a dog or cat
- Pantomime putting a bandage on someone who is hurt
- Pantomime giving praise with your hands

**Modeling:** Rodin had a good eye for noticing then capturing the ways in which hands are used as tools of expression. By using sculpture which is three-dimensional, Rodin could capture the beauty and activity of hands (look closely at hand sculptures). Model possible sculpting strategies.

Check for Understanding

**Product:** Ask the students to experiment with the clay. Encourage them to sculpt a hand in an expressive position.

**Music Int:** In honor of Rodin's sculpture, "Hands of a Pianist", play the piano works of Claude Debussy, a contemporary of Rodin, while the students sculpt.

**Clean-up:** Modeling tools go in the center of each table. Wax paper goes in the trash. Clay goes back in the Ziploc bags (unless students want to share).

**Closure:** Would anyone like to share their product? Was it difficult to work with the clay? Why? Why do you think Rodin spent so much time on his sculpture? How long do you think it would take you to finish your sculpture? Do you agree with Rodin that hands can express all emotions of the body? Do you think you would recognize Rodin's work if you saw it again? How?

### **Resources and Works Cited:**

- *The Rodin Museum of Paris*, Nicolai Canetti and Monique Laurent
- *Rodin*, Ludwig Goldschneider et. al.
- *Auguste Rodin*, Ionel Jianou & C. Goldschneider
- *Rodin Sculpture & Drawing*, Catherine Lampert
- *Rodin In His Time*, Mary Levkoff
- *Rodin the Hand of Genius*, Helene Pinet
- *Rodin, A Biography*, Elizabeth Ripley (biographical information)
- *Triumphant Satyr: The World of Auguste Rodin*, Denys Sutton
- *The Sculpture of Auguste Rodin*, John L. Tancock
- *Rodin at the Musee Rodin*, Jacques Vilain et. al.
- Possible Hand Pantomime Ideas

### **Auguste Rodin: A Man of Action**

Francois-Auguste Rene Rodin was born in Paris on November 12, 1840. By scrimping and saving, Rodin's family was able to send him away to school, but Rodin was teased by his classmates because he was poor and scolded by his teachers because he was nearsighted. Rodin, however, loved to draw and dreamed about becoming an artist. With encouragement from his sister, Maria, (and in spite of skepticism from his father), Rodin left school in Beauvais and returned to Paris to study art.

From the beginning, Rodin was inspired by the human body. He spent hours in the Louvre studying the life-like works of Michelangelo, and he was drawn to sculpture so he could better understand and re-create the human form. Always a supporter, Maria was impressed by Rodin's early attempts. They were bold, vital, and realistic, and she prompted Rodin to show his work and apply to the Fine Arts School of Paris. When Rodin's bold new style was rejected once, then twice, then three times by the school, Rodin's father wanted him to stop sculpting and earn a living, but Rodin refused to quit.

Working at odd jobs casting and modeling for other artists during the day, Rodin continued to sculpt at night.

When his sister died in her convent in 1862, Rodin was devastated and decided to take vows, follow in his sister's path, and dedicate himself to religion. Soon, however, it was obvious to everyone at the convent that Rodin was meant to sculpt. He went home to Paris and began to create his first masterpieces.

Soon his work caught the attention of Carrier-Belleuse, one of the best known sculptors in France, and Rodin went to work in the Carrier-Belleuse studio. After some time in Brussels and a few other professional collaborations, Rodin's bold, rugged, life-like work was finally recognized. The poor, nearsighted boy from Paris was now forty-one, and he was noted as an influential sculptor - even by those who had rejected him in his youth.

Rodin continued to sculpt for the remainder of his life. Eventually he received commission after commission and was renowned for the realism and vitality of his work. Some of these important works include "the Thinker", "The Kiss", "The Burghers of Calais", and "The Shades". He was so busy with these works and other commissions that his life-work, "The Gates of Hell" based on Dante's Inferno was left unfinished at his death. Today he is considered to be one of the great, if not the greatest, sculptors of the human form.

By paying special attention to the extremities of his forms, Rodin brought clay, plaster, and marble to life. He was particularly concerned with hands, feet, limbs, and heads, and he would often mix and match his many fragments to achieve the perfect effect on his sculptures. Hands were especially important to Rodin. He made about 150 small hands out of plaster and succeeded in making them seem alive by sculpting real life positions and by letting his small hands remain unmounted and free, as real hands are. Rodin felt that the emotions and thought of the whole body could be concentrated and expressed in hands. His 150 small hands had no other purpose than to be picked up and examined, and he never threw one away. His large hand sculpture such as "The Cathedral", "The Secret", "Lovers' Hands", "Hand of a Pianist", "The Hand of God", and "Hand Holding a Bust of a Lady" are further evidence of Rodin's ability to capture everyday life and the beauty of hands in action.

As he approached seventy, Rodin was as active as ever, in spite of failing health. He became fascinated by dancers and spent much time sketching and using dancers as models, and he continued to sculpt portrait busts. In 1916, Rodin suffered a stroke which partly paralyzed him. Rose Beurel, a lifelong friend and supporter of Rodin and his family, cared for him and nursed him during this time. In January of 1917, Rodin and Rose were married. Rose died two weeks later and Rodin himself died in November of that year.

Rodin once said of "The Thinker", "He thinks not only with his brain but with every muscle of his arms, back, legs, with his clenched fists and gripping toes". Appropriately, a marble model of "The Thinker" was used as Rodin's headstone. After a life-time of passion and dedication to his art, Rodin was remembered as alive, bold, and vital as his work. He truly was a man of action.



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Lesson Plans for Educators

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## ***Dance and Art***

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Lessonplan for BETA workshop 3/11/99

Written by Mary Ann Lee

### **Create a Dance Environment**

Create a space for moving by pushing back furniture. To provide an environment for dancing, collect scarves, streamers, beautiful fall leaves, etc. with which to dance and provide music with different qualities. Look for instrumental music rather than music with lyrics which might be distracting. Listen to all different kinds of music and talk about why one selection is different from another. Ask, "How does the music make you feel? How does it make you move?" Dance with your children. Ask them to find a way to begin the dance and a way to finish the dance when the music is over. Recycle household materials to make instruments to accompany movement. Tupperware, oatmeal boxes, and coffee cans can work well for drums. Wooden dowels make excellent wood blocks or claves. Look for bells chimes, and whistles to provide different qualities of sound.

Help your children notice textures, shapes, and colors in the city and in nature. Respond to what you see and encourage your children to do the same. Use the shapes, lines, textures, sounds, smells, and colors to inspire movement. Use literature, both prose and poetry, as springboards for movement. Below are some ideas for exploring the formal properties or elements of dance: space, time and energy, and how to combine them using the elements of form: variety, repetition, contrast, harmony, unity, balance, and sequence.

### **Ideas for Moving: Making shapes with the body and traveling through space.**

When working on the idea of space, look at the space or shape of the body or the space that a person takes up as he or she travels through space. To inspire investigation of shape ask, "Can you make a circular shape, a triangular shape, a symmetrical or asymmetrical shape?" To create more unusual shapes, suggest that a child design the space with his/her arms and freeze the shape. Add the head, the legs, and the back. Ask, "Can you take that shape slowly turning or moving through space?"

Create a sequence of three shapes that are low to the ground, in the middle level, and a tall stretching shape. Look for differences or contrasts in the shapes. Create a shape with the body that is in balance, i.e. with two feet on the ground and one that is off balance, one foot on the ground. "Give the shape a lot of energy so that I could take a picture of it or pick it up." Make a shape with your child or ask two students to make a shape together that is harmonious. Ask your child to make a shape and you mirror that shape. Notice that the two of you have created unity and repetition. Ask students to make shapes in pairs. The first student makes the shape and the second student mirrors the shape.

Using the concept of a little or a lot of space, select two numbers that add together to equal eight: for example, four plus four. Begin in a small shape and take four counts to stretch the body open as large as possible, then return to the closed shape in four counts. Choose any two numbers that add together to make eight and use the same movement rule. Each different combination of numbers will create variety.

Use the same concept but select three numbers that add together to equal twelve: for example, four plus four, plus four. The movement rule is stretch the body open for four counts, move through space--say, skip, slide, or gallop--for four counts, and close the body up into a small shape for four counts. Add music that is in four four time.

Some books that are good "space" springboards for dance exploration include:

- *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins, ISBN 0-02-043750-1
- *The Secret Birthday Message* by Eric Carle, ISBN
- *The Drawer in a Drawer* by David Christiana, ISBN 0-374-41881-0
- *The Graphic Alphabet* by David Pelleier, ISBN 0-590-12199-5

### **Explore the Elements of Time:**

To explore the element of time, use a rhythm instrument to play along with different selections of music and find the basic beat. Dance to the music and make the feet stay in time with the underlying beat. Notice that walking, running, leaping, jumping, and hopping all have even rhythms and skip, slide, and gallop have uneven rhythms.

Create a simple rhythm pattern by using the syllabification of words. Any category will work. Use names, vegetables, colors, or the names of cities or towns. Put words into a sequence that can be spoken, sung, and danced.

- Peas, carrots, celery, corn
- Peter, John, Joshua, Ben
- Magenta, Purple, yellow, red
- Salt Lake City, Utah

Clap the rhythms and move them in the feet. Dance them with the entire body. Dance a simple rhyming phrase like tone from the book *Jamberry* by Bruce Degen:

"One berry, two berry, pick me a blueberry."

To explore rhythms that are not metric, or not countable, observe rhythms in our own bodies like a sneeze, a sigh, a tickle, a breath, and rhythms in nature like the wind, the ocean, a snowstorm, leaves falling, etc. Mirror that movement with a part of the body or with the entire body. "Can the sneeze begin in the back and explode with a giant jump throughout the entire body?" "Can you move your arms and your back as gently or as powerfully as the wind?"

Some books that are good "time" springboards for dance exploration include:

- *Jamberry* by Bruce Degen, ISBN 0-06-443068-5
- *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault, ISBN 0-671-67949-X

### **Explore the Element of Energy**

To explore the element of energy or quality of the movement, talk about how you could show emotions by making a sad, happy, frightened, or angry shape with the body and how you could move those emotions through space.

Explore the words darting, trembling, floating, pouncing, vibrating, swinging, collapsing. Build a movement sequence or dance based on three of these energy or quality words.

Some books that are good "energy" springboards for dance exploration include:

- *Caps for Sale, A Tale of A Peddler, Some Monkeys and Their Monkey Business* by Esphyr Slobodkina, ISBN 0-06-443143-6
- *Mouse Paint* by Ellen Stoll Walsh, ISBN 0-15-256025-4

- *The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything*, by Linda Williams, ISBN 0-06-443183-5
- *Isabella's Ribbons* by Satomi Ichikawa, ISBN 0-399-22772-5
- *Talking to the Sun* by Kenneth Boch and Kate Farrell ISBN 0-8050-0144-1

General Dance Springboard Books (each page of these books dances):

- *Together* by George Ella Lyon, ISBN 00531-07047
- *Planting a Rainbow* by Lois Ehlert, ISBN 0-15-26
- *The Sky Jumps into Your Shoes at Night* by Jasper Tomkins, ISBN 0-671-74971-4
- *The Magic Fan* by Keith Baker, ISBN 0-15-200983-3
- *I'm in Charge of Celebration* by Byrd Baylor, ISBN 0-684-18579-2
- *Joyful House, Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman, ISBN 0-06-021852-5
- *The Dancing Man* by Ruth Bornstein, ISBN 0-8164-3214-7
- *Earth Dance* by Joanne Ryder, ISBN 0-8050-2678-9



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## ***Postcards to Rembrandt***

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Lessonplan for BETA workshop 3/11/99

Written by Virginia Catherall

**Level:** Elementary and secondary art and writing

**Materials:** Postcards, pencils, scratch paper, portraits (either real works of art or posters)

**Goal:**

1. Students will "read" a work of art and infer meaning by analyzing its elements of art and principles of design.
2. Students will practice creative writing by composing a postcard to an imaginary person.

**Outline of Lesson Plan:**

Each student will choose a portrait in the Museum or in the classroom and write a postcard. The student can either take on the personality of the person portrayed or can write to the person in the artwork. Explain to the students that they need to be succinct because there is limited space on a postcard.

Have them look at a portrait for up to 15 minutes and make some notes. The more time you spend with a work of art the more you see. The students should write descriptive words about the person and be sure to notice the person's dress, mood, culture, and personality. Explain to the students that how the artist has used the elements of art to portray the person can tell you a lot about them, for example:

1. the dark shadows in many glamour photos of movie stars tells you that they are a mysterious and glamorous person
2. the soft texture in drawn portraits or wedding portraits gives the person a soft and feminine look
3. the sharp lines and stark black and white of some woodcut portraits give a harsh, angry mood to the work of art.

Have the students write a postcard either to the person in the portrait or from the person. They should first write a draft on a piece of scratch paper and then edit it to fit on a postcard. They should try to get the personality of the person in just a few words. A lot can be left unsaid and still get the meaning across.

Evaluation: Have the students read back the postcards to everyone while standing beside the portrait. Discuss how they came up with the mood and personality of the person - what did they see in the portrait that inspired them?



## Examples from the Workshop for Teachers:



Baskin, Leonard (b. 1922)

**Adolph von Menzel, German, 1815-1905,**

wood engraving, 17 3/4 x 15 1/4 in.,

Purchased with Funds from the Friends of the Art Museum  
Museum # 1965.015

Brother,

How did I get into this mess? My life has become so off-center. The spotlight of society has become unbearable. I wish they would just let me die in peace. If they only knew how sketchy my life has been, they might not want my money. I know my sordid past won't come out until after I am dead - Don't let them sully my name too much. Be my defender, remind them of my good qualities if you can remember them. Tell sis I love her.

All my love,

Adolph

Klinger, Max (1857-1920)

**Die Quelle, Mit Benutzung eines Bildes von Arnold Böcklin**  
**(The Source, with debt to the work of Arnold Böcklin), c. 1899,**

etching, 6 x 4 1/2 in.

Purchased with Funds from the Friends of the Art Museum  
Museum #1981.006.002

Dear Sister,

The countryside is beautiful but it is a hollow beauty. The ache in my heart overcomes my senses. The solace you had hoped the country would bring seems to have eluded me. How can I go on? Sometimes I feel him here with me but I know it is my own memory I feel. It seems everyone I meet can see how raw my soul is; like they can see all the hurt behind my skin. When will I be able to function again? I wish you were here with me.

Love, Alayna



Scholder, Fritz (b. 1937)

**Screaming Artist, 1971**

lithograph, 30 1/8 x 22 3/8 in.

Gift of the Artist

Museum # 1976.6.6.3

To Whom it May Concern,

I don't know if you realize how obtuse and ignorant your small brain is. How can you criticize my work when you obviously know nothing about art. My illustrious and prolific career speaks for itself. My art is great! Your comments only emphasize the complete lack of knowledge on your part. I propose you get off your butt, go out into the real world, and learn before you make another complete fool of yourself.

The Artist



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## Canvas Transformations

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Lessonplan for BETA workshop 3/11/99

Written by Xan S. Johnson, PHD, Department of Theatre, U of Utah Theatre Consultant, Utah State Office of Education

### **Purpose:**

- To demonstrate methods of teaching the new K-6 Theatre Core
- To demonstrate an integrated Theatre/Visual Arts lesson plan

### **Specific Teaching Objectives:**

The STUDENTS will be able to transform the content of paintings currently in the collection hanging in the Utah Fine Arts Museum, using the four theatre techniques of storytelling, kinetics images, soundscapes, and ritual building.



Danquart Anthon Weggeland (1827 – 1918), American born in Norway

***Mormon Emigrants Crossing the Plains in 1862***, 1912

Oil on canvas

University of Utah Collection

Museum # x.008

### **Strategy example:**

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, have each performance group write or record a story and then share storytelling with the class about the characters in the painting and it has to involve, "people in a place with a problem to solve."

### **Strategy example:**

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, imagine the painting could come alive, have each performance group create kinetic images (buffalo stampede, hail storm, bodies riding in wagons, exhausted people walking and carrying things, etc.) drawn from the paintings and these images may be real or abstract.

### **Strategy example:**

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, have each performance group, using human voices or interesting objects, create soundscapes that would emanate from the painting were it to come alive, e.g. sound of breathing, feet dragging, wind, moans, wagon clatter, etc.

Strategy example:

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, have each performance group use ritual building to create the many rituals of daily survival demonstrated by the pioneers -- religion, meals, danger, games, hunting, etc.

**Specific Teaching Objectives:**

The STUDENTS will be able to script an original performance piece through embodying the key scripting concepts of unity, character, and plot.

Strategy example:

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, have each performance group create an original performance piece based on the painting where environment, circumstances, and design elements all unite into one connected concept.

Strategy example:

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, have each performance group create an original performance based on the painting where all characters connect with each other somehow.

Strategy example:

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, have each performance group create an original performance based on the painting where the plot has a beginning (exposition), middle (rising action), climax (Crisis conclusion), and end (resolution).

**Specific Teaching Objectives:**

The STUDENTS will be able to stage an original performance for an audience.

Strategy example:

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, stage an original piece created from the painting off one wall of the classroom making sure all action faces the audience.

**Specific Teaching Objectives:**

The STUDENTS will be able to perform an original performance piece in front of a live audience.

Strategy example:

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, perform an original piece for classmates in the classroom.

**Specific Teaching Objectives:**

The STUDENTS will be able to assess theatre work through a shared rubric.

Strategy example:

Using a painting of an early pioneer trek, assess the performance of the original piece using a shared rubric that differentiates with a least five measures.

**Grade levels:** 3-6

Links to the new Theatre Core: STANDARD (I) Playmaking/Script Writing

Key words and terms: Playmaking, unity, character, plot, storytelling, image kinetics, soundscapes, ritual building, and assessment rubric.

**Preparation:** Have students familiarize themselves with the collection of paintings currently hanging in the Utah Fine Arts Museum. (Advanced prep might include the study of just four or five paintings through background research and interaction with a museum docent.)

### **Lesson Activities:**

- Break into performance groups - 5 to 7 per group.
- Each group selects a painting on which they will base an original drama.
- Each group explores the use of storytelling, kinetics image, soundscapes, and ritual building in transforming the selected painting to a theatrical performance.
- Each group plans environment, characters, and plot in scripting a performance piece based on the painting.
- Each group stages or rehearses their original work.
- Each group performs their original work in front of a live audience, which could mean performing for other students in the class or another call or an outside audience.
- All groups help assess the work using a shared rubric.

### **Theatre Bibliography for Teachers:**

- Bolton, Gavin *Drama for Learning: Dorothy Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert Approach to Education* . (1994) ISBN 0-435-08643-X
- Collins, Rives *Look What Happened to Frog: Storytelling in Education*. (1992) ISBN 0-89787-345-9
- Erickson, Karen *Integrated Units in a Dramatic Framework* (1995) ISBN 1-884771-02-5
- Erickson, Karen *107 Favorite Level I Ideas for Drama* (1995) ISBN 1-884771-03-3
- O'Neill, Cecily *Drama Structures: A Practical Handbook for Teachers*. (1990) ISBN 0-7487-0191-5
- Wills, Barbara *Salisbury Theatre Arts in the Elementary Classroom: Grade Four Through Grade Six*. (1996) ISBN 0876020341
- Wills, Barbara *Salisbury Theatre Arts in the Elementary Classroom: Kindergarten Through Grade Three*. (1996) ISBN 0876020341

### **Shared Rubric Assessment for Theatre Lesson Plan**

Project Criteria: Transforming Paintings (theatre techniques)

- Excellent: Meets the criteria for Proficient and shows the imaginative integration of all four theatre techniques
- Proficient: Meets the criteria for Competent and shows the successful inclusion of all four theatre techniques
- Competent: Shows the awareness, but not necessary the successful inclusion, of all four theatre techniques
- Adequate: Shows the successful presence of at least two of the four theatre techniques
- Unsatisfactory: Reveals a lack of understanding of the four theatre techniques

Project Criteria: Scripting (unity, character, and plot)

- Excellent: Meets the criteria for Proficient and shows a clear through line of action that reveals unity, character, and plot as interrelated
- Proficient: Meets the criteria for Competent and shows a logical connection between unity, character and plot
- Competent: Shows the inclusion of unity, character, and plot
- Adequate: Shows the presence of at least one or two of the key scripting concepts - unity, character, and plot

- Unsatisfactory: Reveals a lack of understanding of the key scripting concepts of unity, character, and plot

Project Criteria: Staging (rehearsing)

- Excellent: Meets criteria for Proficient and reveals strong beat by beat focus and ensemble skills from all actors
- Proficient: Meets the criteria for Competent and demonstrates audience focus from beginning to end
- Competent: Demonstrates a rehearsed group of actors that effectively utilize the stage to complete a performance
- Adequate: Demonstrates a completed performance on stage
- Unsatisfactory: Demonstrates an incomplete and often under-rehearsed performance on stage

Project Criteria: Original Performance (sharing with others in class)

- Excellent: Meets the criteria for Proficient and imaginatively captures the world of the painting
- Proficient: Meets the criteria for Competent and shows vocal and physical choices that connect to the painting
- Competent: Shows a planned performance idea that connects consistently to the painting
- Adequate: Shows a performance idea that sometimes connects to the painting
- Unsatisfactory: Shows an ill chosen performance idea that has little useful connection to the painting