

¡Ojo! *Looking at Art*



A R T M O B I L E

Traveling throughout Bucks County
October 1995 - June 1996

Artmobile is the outreach museum of the Division of the Arts at Bucks County Community College. A portion of Artmobile's general operating funds for this fiscal year has been provided through a grant from the **Institute of Museum Services**, a Federal agency that offers general operating support to the nation's museums. ¡Ojo! *Looking at Art* is supported in part by a grant from the **Pennsylvania Council on the Arts**.

This manual was devised to help teachers incorporate the Artmobile experience into their curricula by providing background information and classroom activities related to the exhibition. It is intended to serve as a resource both in conjunction with and apart from the exhibition.

Artmobile is celebrating its nineteenth year of bringing the arts to the school children and adults of Bucks County through its visits to schools and public sites. For more information about Artmobile and its programs, please call 215/968-8432.

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Special thanks to Edwin Arocho for guest curating this lively and informative exhibition and for writing this teacher's manual.

Many other people provided additional support for this exhibition. My heartfelt thanks to: Stephen Caputi, for his assistance with the installation, his hard work washing and waxing the trailer, and his cooperation and good humor throughout; Eli Scarce, for her expert construction of many of the interactive displays; Nicole Harbison, for keyboarding the wall labels; Sandi McLaughlin, for always having good ideas and for proof-reading this manual; Andrew Berko, for his expertise in wiring the electrical interactive displays; and especially to the Artmobile Guides for this tour — Nadja O'Dwyer, Carol Partlow-Fyock and Sandra Riesgraf — for their enthusiasm, hard work and belief in the value of Artmobile. It is through the efforts of our Guides that Artmobile achieves its mission of bringing the arts to our community.

Fran Orlando
Director of Exhibitions/Artmobile
Bucks County Community College
Newtown, PA 18940

What is the essence of enjoyment? To me has been able to share a vision through the arts. This was one of the most challenging proposals I had in years, to assemble an exhibit of regional living Latino artists into a traveling gallery. It was an adventure and a mental voyage thorough out a magical realm we know as art.

I will like give my most sincere gratitude to all the people that helped me in curating this exhibition. Special thanks to Doris Noguieras-Rodgers, Gallery Director at Taller Puertorriqueno for all the references. Allan Edmunds, Executive Director at Brandywine Workshop for his encouragement of development and self-fulfillment. Also, Fran Orlando for the excellent opportunity she granted me, for her patience and understanding.

Finally, my appreciation to all the artists which gratefully loaned their art and talents. This exhibition could not be possible without you.

Edwin Arocho
Guest Curator

EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

¡Ojo! *Looking at Art* is a statement that must not be taken lightly. The Spanish word “ojo,” which literally means “eye,” is used as a warning or command expression such as “look out,” “check it out,” or “attention.” It also conveys the feeling of long distance observation and mental cognition.

The word “looking” suggests a feeling of purposely setting out to search; to investigate, find and observe a determined object or answer. Much like a hunter needs patience, cunning and imagination while stalking prey, one must take time to observe — carefully searching for the answers to the internal critic during a conversation with a piece of artwork.

In short, the combined use of “ojo” and “looking” in the title, communicate the message of intense observation at both levels; up close and at a distance.

What do I see? What does it mean? These two questions are usually the first to appear in a person’s mind when confronted with an artistic statement. The answer to these is within the artwork itself, and is as personal as your hairbrush or your pillow. There are no right or wrong opinions when you look over a painting or sculpture. There are neither true nor false answers when you enjoy observing a print, listening to music or reading poetry. As Guest Curator of this exhibition, I took into consideration many concepts and guidelines. The following are some I consider more important or relevant to the process:

Basic Elements of Art - the foundation of most artistic creations. Every artist must make use of these components in their artwork.

Line - the primary, fundamental and most complicated of all the elements of art. The dictionary defines it with over twenty different meanings which serves as testimony to the complexity of this element in art. Armed with different qualities such as straight, curved or thick, and directions like vertical, horizontal and diagonal, the line is the building block of every artwork. A combination of several lines will create the border or boundary, outline or contour of a shape. In the case of a performance, it is the path of a moving object.

Texture - is the visual/tactile character of a piece of art. The artist, can re-create this visual illusion with the repetition of lines or shapes, or by adding a textural element such as sand to the paint. Using solid sculptural materials, he/she can produce true three-dimensional textural quality. An example of this would be the rough surface of a tile made by using a comb, carving lines or poking holes into the clay.

Color - It is defined as the property of reflecting/manipulating an element of a particular light wavelength, dye or pigment. Color has the ability to maneuver mood, and change, alter or distort context when used properly. It can “make” or “break” a piece of art. For example, red and yellow will add warmth to a painting and blue, green or gray will suggest coolness. Although the color wheel is a simple and necessary tool for the artist, color theory is very complicated. The positioning of several colors next to each other can “make” or “break” a piece of art by subconsciously influencing the viewer’s feelings and opinions in a positive or negative manner.

Shape - the result of either a combination of lines, or a definite area of color. It creates the form in any given artwork. Shapes can be geometrical or amorphous, symmetric or asymmetric. Some artists, working in non-representational or non-figurative styles, use shapes and color to express their ideas or concepts. Without shape, the artist does not have a definitive image.

Tonal Value - This is better recognized as the quality in pitch, intensity or shade. With the proper use of tonality, the artist gives volume, weight and variety to both color and black and white images. Although the use of these subdivisions are the same in several disciplines, it also reflects the mood, character and energy flow in performance media such as music, dance and theater.

Media - Media are the materials and techniques used as tools of expression to produce a work of art. Sometimes the skill of the artist in combination with the proper medium or media serves as a catalyst for the creation of visual ecstasy. For example, watercolor, pen and ink, etching, clay etc. . . . Why did the artist choose printmaking instead of painting? What are the methods, materials and techniques? How are they manipulated? Does the medium help to convey the message?

Style - characteristic manner of expression in language, design, etc.; in any art period and of any artist. Style expresses a meaning of artistic excellence through the development of distinctive and personal representation. Does the personal style reflect other historically recognized artistic styles or is it “original?”

This section is interrelated with outside influences such as foreign artistic expressions (i.e. how Japanese and African art influenced Impressionist and Cubist artists or the fact that Picasso’s prolific production of art may influence another artist).

Symbols - are objects, images or a combination of both, used to communicate ideas, emotions or a message when explicit meaning is not wanted or not necessary. Carl Jung, in *Man and his Symbols*, wrote that everything can assume symbolic significance: nature (Earth as a symbol for Greenpeace), Abstract forms (Numbers, Geometric Figures) or man-made things (airplanes, skyscrapers).

In the examination of symbols in a work of art, one should consider the following categories: 1) personal symbols or those symbols that mean something to the artist as an individual; 2) cultural symbols or the specific symbols that are part of his/her particular community at large; and 3) religious symbols or iconography as a means of expressing feelings or philosophical or metaphysical values.

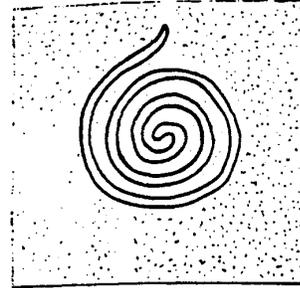
Personal, religious and cultural symbols are both unique and open to unlimited interpretation by the observer as well as the artist. On the other hand, Universal symbols, such as bathroom signs or traffic signals, are more general and limited in their content.

My approach to curating this exhibition was honest, unclouded and unpretentious, with the intention of displaying the best Latino artwork available within the tri-state area. This eclectic gathering of art, artists and media was assembled with the idea of showing a wide variety of artistic experiences and personal opinions in the form of artistic expression.

I included not only two-dimensional pieces but sculpture, video and music in an attempt to provide a more complete cultural/personal view. ¡Ojo! strives for diversity among the many Latino American cultures that have migrated to this region and are striving to make their mark on our history. Now lets go and OJO: LOOK AT ART!

INFLUENCES IN LATINO AMERICAN ART

The history of art in Latin America, as well as the rest of the world, began long before the written language. Cave paintings such as those found at Cueva del Indio in Lares, Puerto Rico and burial finds as in Mexico's Plaza Mayor demonstrate this fact. An example of these are the petroglyphs left in Puerto Rico by the Taino Arawak natives. These writings/symbols, carved directly onto stones, range from a simple linear scratch



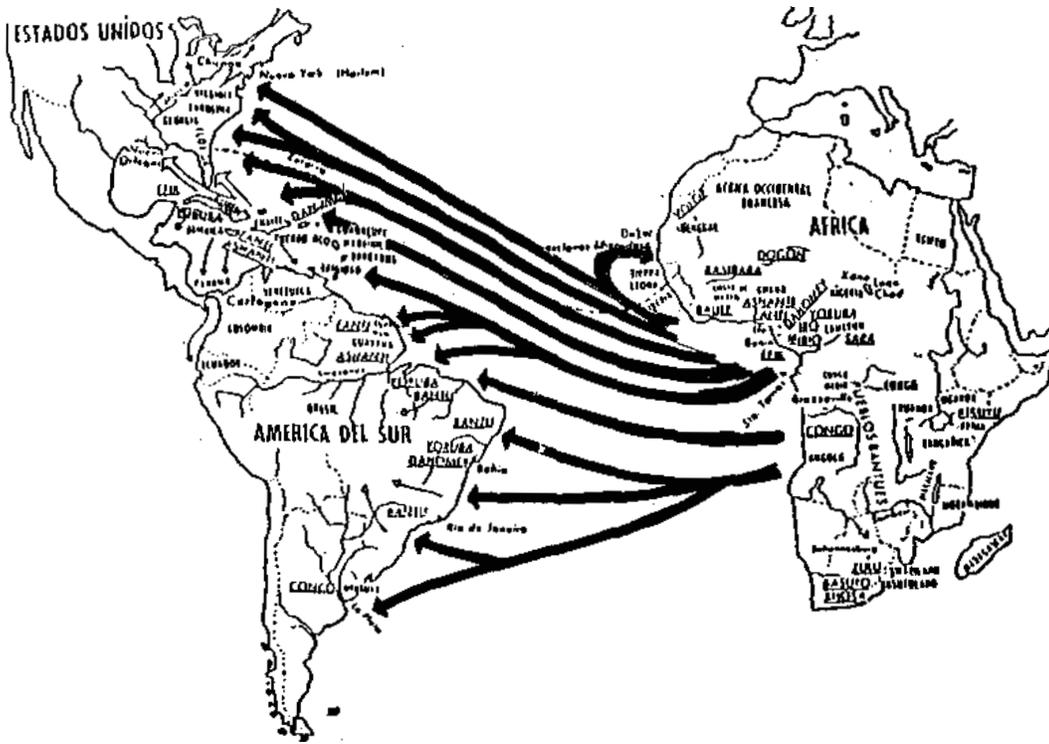
to more complex drawing such as “Caguana” the spirit/goddess of fertility .

The Mayan, Aztec and Inca nations had well-developed societies with artists working full time in the development of art. Throughout the Americas, the indigenous peoples each had distinct artistic/representational methods of communication and adornments.

These communities established themselves as great artists and craftsmen creating ceramic, wood and stone sculptures, jewelry and clothing.

When Christopher Columbus happened upon the Americas, the influence of the European ways came upon the natives. The Catholic Church, with great interest in the “savages,” indoctrinated many of them changing their culture and behavior. Due to overwork and diseases brought by the Europeans most natives either died or became unable or unwilling to work. The slave trade provided the solution.

Hundreds of thousands of African slaves from different parts of the African continent (Bantus, Ashanti, Yoruba, etc.), were brought to the “New



Continent” to labor on cotton, sugar, banana and cacao plantations among others. The slaves brought their own cultural, religious and artistic influences in music, visual expressions and dance.

The last component of this magnificent mixture of art, history and human endurance represented in this exhibition is the United States of America. As a superpower and leader among the nations of the world, the U.S.A. has been either a direct or indirect influence over most of Latin America and the world.

Each of the artists represented in this exhibition has been a product of a historical/cultural blend that can not be duplicated. As a result of this schizophrenic evolution, you will witness particular sets of signs, symbols and expressive manners unique to each individual artist. However, these conglomerates of ideas-turned-visions, are also collective and universal since the observer develops his/her own interpretations, influences and opinions. The struggle for self-definition is present and vivid with the influences European, African and indigenous peoples.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The materials needed for the following lesson plans are available in most classrooms. These plans have been simplified to allow the teacher to develop and customize them to their liking. As with any lesson, the success or failure of it is directly affected by the amount of motivation and encouragement the student receives.

It is my suggestion to the teachers to be extremely creative in the introduction and implementation of the lesson. Whenever possible include music, literature, video and culturally related information. A good example of this would be to create a mini carnival after the completion of the masks and the puppets with carnival music and candy. In short, make it special and fun!

If you need to get special or culturally sensitive materials or information, consult the reference and resource section at the end of this manual. I bid you good luck and success with the lessons and best wishes, that these plans are helpful to you.

List of words and concepts

This is a short list of words and concepts that can be used in conjunction with the different lesson plans available in this manual. I encourage teachers to add or delete words in order to create a list that fits their specific needs.

Carnival	Vejigante
Freedom	Independence
Moor	Abstraction
Figurative	Geometrical
Symmetric	Mask
Latin America	Essence
Petroglyph	Ojo
Looking	Struggle
Flag	Evolution
Line	Schizophrenic
Shape	Mardi Gras
Texture	Taino Arawak
Color	Watch
Mood	Amorphous
Symbol	

Follow the Leader

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY – PRIMARY SCHOOL

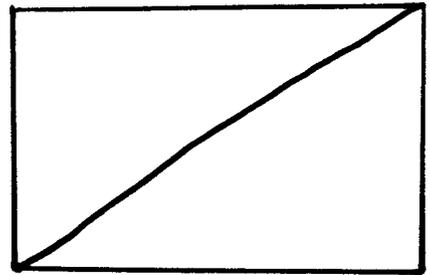
Goal: The understanding of the basic elements of art, design concepts and non-figurative abstraction is the goal of this lesson. Each student will complete a painting which is similar to his/her classmates' but still very different. Students will practice listening skills, following directions and verbal skills.

Art Reference: You can use as inspirational models art and artists from Cubism, German Expressionism and twentieth-century American art.

Materials: White paper, Crayons, Pastels, Watercolors

Activity: After distributing the paper and the crayons, the teacher will act as the leader dictating the type of line to be used in the painting. The lines should be drawn in the order and manner that the teacher says. For example, draw a straight line from the top right corner to the lower left corner with the red crayon. The paper should look like example #1. Draw a zig zag line from any where in the left side of the paper to any where on the right side of the paper with the black crayon, and it could look like example #2.

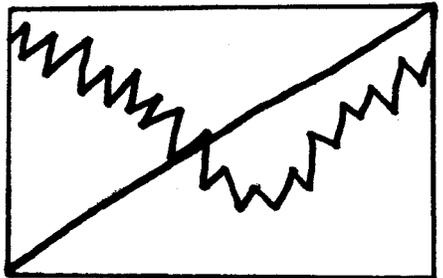
EXAMPLE #1



I recommend no less than five different qualities of line such as:

- Slow and curvy
- Zig Zag
- Straight (vertical or horizontal)
- Crazy (all of the above in one)
- Thin or thick

EXAMPLE #2



Then three geometrical shapes are added to the painting. These can be drawn with different color pastels. One should be a circle that touches three sides of the paper. the other two are completely up to the teacher. The final drawing should look something like example #3.

EXAMPLE #3



The last section of the lesson is to paint the different shapes with as many varieties of colors as possible, keeping in mind to preserve some of the shapes with plain colors and some with mixed colors.

Vejigante Puppet

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY – PRIMARY SCHOOL

Goal: The concepts of “Carnaval” (carnival), costumes and African influences in Latin America should be discussed as an introduction to this lesson. Also the reinforcement of motor skills, eye/hand coordination and completion of a task are some of the more immediate results of this activity.

The “Vejigante” is a quasi-mythological character used in Puerto Rico. As part of the “Santiago Apostol” festivities, Patron Saint of the town of Loiza. The “Vejigante” represents the evil influences that “Santiago” battles continuously. (For more information, see Resources and Bibliography in this manual.) The costume consists of a papier mache or coconut husk mask with horns, a clown overall of bright colors and wing like attachments reminiscent of a bat.

Art Reference: African Masks are the best artistic influence available for this topic, especially those of Ashanti or Yoruba origins. In the historical context, the Loiza carnival is based in the Spanish story/legend of Santiago Matamoros (Santiago the Moor Slayer.) He is the Spanish knight responsible for the expulsion from Spain of the Moor conquerors.



Materials: Pre-printed puppet (See Addendum A, page 20) Crayons, Pastels, Watercolors, Scissors, Paper fasteners, Hole puncher

Activity: This is a very simple project to do. After distributing the paper and the crayons, the students color and cut out the different sections of the puppet. Punch a hole in the indicated place. Put the paper fasteners through the proper holes. Cut and tie two pieces of yarn from the indicated holes, from arm to arm and from leg to leg. Tie the extra yarn to the center of the previously tied smaller pieces. Hold by the neck and make the Vejigante dance by pulling the string down.

Cut and Paste My Brain

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY – MIDDLE SCHOOL

Goal: The use and understanding of complementary color, and the use of positive and negative spaces will be the intent of this lesson. The Taino Arawak tribes from Puerto Rico should be discussed and studied putting emphasis in the artistic development of the petroglyphs. Basic cutting and pasting skills are used in this exercise.

Art Reference: Cave painting, Egyptian and Aztec wall decorations are among the artistic examples that can be used as a motivational tool.

Materials: 11" x 17" paper (white or colored)
Construction paper (assorted colors)
Crayons
Pastels
Scissors
Glue or art paste
Examples of petroglyph designs (See Addendum 22, page)
Glitter

Activity: The 11" X 17" paper will be used as working area. (It could be smaller 8 1/2" X 11".) Each student receives a sample sheet of petroglyphs designs and assigns a letter from his/her name to each of the designs. This shapes or designs are then transferred and cut in the construction paper, keeping in mind that complementary colors and positive/negative spaces should be used for the creation of each "letter."

The "letters" are then glued to the background in the same order of the name. To complete the artwork, the students will create a border around the name tag using patterns of lines and geometrical shapes with the crayons, pastels and glitter.

A variation on this lesson consists of rendering the Taino designs with the crayons in squares of colors complementary to the color of the crayon/pastel.

Curator's Choice

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY – HIGH SCHOOL

Goal: To introduce students to one of the areas of curatorial expertise, essay writing. The emphasis is the opinion about the artwork. Who, what, why and how the piece of art is enjoyable or not.

Art Reference: There are plenty of exhibition catalogs and newspaper art reviews in any library. Have the students research the topic and become familiar with the style of writing used on them.

Materials: A reproduction of an artwork
Pen or pencil
Writing paper

Activity: Introduce the lesson by telling the students that they have been chosen as imaginary art critics for a newspaper. The student choose a reproduction of a piece of art. It can be any medium.

The essay should answer the most basic elements in newspaper writing: Who, what, when, where, why and how. At the same time, it must include the most important part, the personal opinion of the student as an art critic. This exercise can be used in all language classes, composition, typing and art.

Vejigante Mask

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY – PRIMARY SCHOOL

Goal: To reinforce previously studied information about carnivals and about the “Vejigante” from Puerto Rico. Also reviews basic skills in art such as coloring, cutting and assembling.

Art Reference: A combination of African masks and a variety of carnival floats (for example Mardi Gras) from New Orleans, Brazil, or “Carnaval de Ponce” in Puerto Rico. In addition, Mexico, Venezuela, Peru and Bolivia have festivities with representational masks.

Materials: Pre-drawn mask (See Addendum C, page 26)
Crayons
Watercolors
Scissors
Stapler

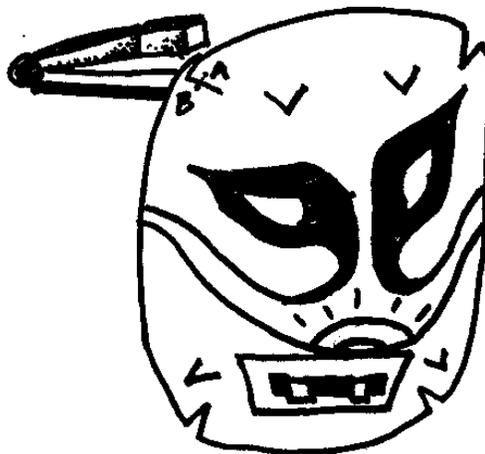
Activity: Reproduce or have the students trace the vejigante mask to a heavy white paper such as 80 lb. stock.

Have the students color the mask with bright colors. Any combination of colors is good. Separate the mask, horns, tongue and head bands by cutting around the edge of the pieces. Fold the horns in the center and cut a slit of approximately 1/2 inch and fold outward on dotted line.

Round the corners of the mask and cut the dotted line slit on each corner. Also cut the V shaped slit for the horns and the eyes. Cut a slit along the lower line of the top lip, long enough to introduce the tongue.

Begin assembly by shaping the mask. Overlap the corner A over the corner B and staple. (See illustration.) Repeat at each corner. Open the eye slits by pushing out from inside the mask. Push in the horns from the back, point first, matching the V shaped slit to the horn and staple the flaps.

The last step is to staple the head bands. Level the bands with the eyes at either side and staple. Then adjust them in the back to size and staple.



Concept Conscious

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY — Primary School

Goal: The use of mental recollection is the main ingredient of this lesson. The need to draw an image from a mental image will develop mental skills such as brain/hand coordination and decision making.

Art Reference: Surrealism and DaDa are the best artistic influences to discuss with this lesson for their incursions on the different stages of the conscious and unconscious mind.

Materials: 9" X 12" white paper
Crayons
Pencil
Eraser
Dictionary

Activity: Using a list of words and concepts (see page 8), the student should pick no less than three, no more than six words to work with. If a student does not know the meaning of a word, he/she should use the dictionary.

On the piece of paper, they should create a picture using the images of the words as design components of the artwork. Emphasize the use of the mental image first, actual drawing/painting after. The image generating ability is limited only by the students imagination.

This lesson can be used in language and composition classes by substituting an essay in place of the drawing component.

Make Your Own Puzzle

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY — Middle School

Goal: Two and three dimensional thinking are combined to create a jigsaw puzzle from a reproduction of an artwork. The development of conceptual decision making abilities and eye/hand coordination are included with basic skills in such as coloring, cutting and assembling.

Art Reference: Collage, Marcel Duchamp and his modified found objects

Materials: Reproductions of Artwork (from magazines, postcard, Posters, etc.)
X-Acto knife/scissors
Glue
Assorted shapes and color sequence
File folders
Color markers
Assorted colors construction paper

Activity: After selecting a favorite reproduction of artwork, the student glues the image completely flat to a file folder to insure a hard backing to the puzzle. With assorted materials, he/she will alter the visual characteristic of the replica by adding their own stylistic elements. For example, put glitter in the hair of a figure and collage eyes, mouth and ears from different sources into it. Also they could add drawing and sequence to complete the changes.

While the glue dries, the student must decide on the pattern they will use to cut the puzzle. The cuts are completely arbitrary and personal. They could be straight from top to bottom and from side to side, or a combination of curves and straight cuts. With the pattern all ready decided, turn the artwork around and draw the cutting pattern in the back of it. Proceed to cut the different shapes with the X-Acto knife or the scissors. (Be extremely careful with the X-Acto knife. It is very sharp. To be used only under supervision of an adult or the teacher.)

As a final activity, the students could temporarily exchange puzzles and put together each other's puzzles.

Mixed Media Galore

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY — HIGH SCHOOL

Goal: The ability to combine several media into one original image will open this lesson into a multi-media event. The students' mental skills such as brain/hand coordination and decision-making will be put into practice, as well as visual and motor skills. Abstract and factual thinking are also motivated in this exercise.

Art Reference: Artists like Juan Sanchez, Red Grooms, Picasso, Sam Gilliam, and DaDa - Surrealism can be used as discussion topic with this lesson for their incursions on different media.

Materials: 22" X 30" White, 80 lb. Paper
Crayons
Pencil
Eraser
Magazines
Tempera paint
Color pastels
Newspaper clippings
Different shapes and color sequence
Fluorescent magic markers
Assorted colors construction paper

Activity: The object of the lesson is to produce an image from the students mind with outside input as a catalyst. The most important part of this lesson is the theme and subject matter of the artwork both of which are determined by the student.

Using a list of words and concepts (see page 8), the student should pick no less than three, no more than six words to work with. If the student does not know the meaning of a word, he/she should use the dictionary to search for the meaning.

On the piece of paper, they should create a picture using the images of the words as design components of the artwork. Emphasize the use of the mental image first, actual drawing/painting after. The image generating ability is limited only by the students imagination. They may use as many media as they deem necessary, with a minimum of four and a maximum of six.

After the artwork is finished, a formal group criticism session would be an excellent follow up activity. This lesson can be used in language and composition classes by substituting an essay for the drawing component.

GLOSSARY

Ashanti - African Tribe

Bantus - African Tribe

Caguana - Taino name for fertility spirit.

Cueva del Indio - Literally means the cave of the indian in Spanish. It is a cave located in Lares, Puerto Rico. Taino arawak natives carved drawings into the walls.

Fiestas Patronales - Carnival celebrating the patron saint of any town in Puerto Rico.

Loiza - Town located in the Northeast of Puerto Rico. Celebrates a carnival the last week in July.

Moor - Black muslim from North Africa.

Ojo - Spanish word for eye

Petroglyph - Carvings in stones made by Taino natives in the Caribbean area.

Plaza Mayor - Most recent and important archeological dig in the center of Mexico City.

Santiago Apostol - Patron saint of the town of Loiza in Puerto Rico.

Taino Arawak - Indigenous people of Puerto Rico at the time that Christopher Columbus landed in the Antilles.

Vejigante - Costumed character from the carnivals in Puerto Rico. Usually represents evil.

Yoruba - African Tribe

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RESOURCES

Puerto Rican/Latino American Art resources in the region are limited, but not unavailable. The following is a short list from which you can contact an agency to seek more information about the artist featured in this exhibition or particular cultural information such as books and videos.

Taller Puertorriqueño
2725 N. 5th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19133
215/426-3311

Free Library of Philadelphia
6th and Lehigh Avenue Branch
Philadelphia, PA 19133

Free Library of Philadelphia
6th and Girard Avenue Branch
Philadelphia, PA 19123

Asociacion de Musicos Latino Americanos
2757 N. 5th Street, 2nd floor
Philadelphia, PA 19133
215/634-4150

Los Pleneros del Batey
P.O. Box 40792
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215/229-5501

Latin American Guild for the Arts
564 Wartman Street
Philadelphia, PA 19128
215/482-3965

Raices Culturales Latino Americanas
P.O. Box 80
Philadelphia, PA 19076

Hispanic American League of Artists
333 S. Court Street
Allentown, PA 18101
610/821-0531

Estampas Colombianas
P.O. Box 80
Philadelphia, PA 19076

Brandywine Workshop
730 S. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146
215/546-3675

Ritmo y Raza
P.O. Box 80
Philadelphia, PA 19076

Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños
Hunter College
695 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10021
212/772-5689

Addendum A — Vejigante Puppet

Addendum B — Petroglyph Designs

Addendum C — Vejigante Mask

Addendum D — Classroom Handout

The handout opposite this page can be used as is or adapted for the grade level of your students. The important thing is that your students have the opportunity to recall what they have seen in order to reinforce the concepts that they have learned during their visit to Artmobile.

1. What was your favorite art work?
2. What materials did the artist use?
3. What was the most used color? What other colors were used? Did the colors seem warm or cool? Were they light or dark? How did this effect what you “got” from the piece?
4. How did the artist use lines? Were there many or few? Curving or straight? Were they horizontal, vertical or diagonal?
5. What kind of texture did the piece have? Was it real or a visual illusion?
6. Draw three shapes that were in your favorite piece. Were they created by lines, color or both?
7. Were any symbols used? What kind were they? (personal, cultural or religious?) Why? What do you think they mean?