

Flowers, Andy Warhol

University Art Museum, CSU, TO71



... About the Artist



Andy Warhol was born in Pittsburgh, PA in 1928. He was the featured artist of the Pop art movement throughout the 1960's. He was intrigued by the commercial culture of the United States and often showed this interest through his artwork. He is most noted for working with silkscreen prints and paintings and became heavily involved with film in his later years. He became a worldwide celebrity, becoming business partners and friends with people in some the highest, and wealthiest, social ranks.

Lesson Overview

Students will explore the work of Andy Warhol's *Flowers* series and learn the basic ideas of color theory and screen-printing. Students will then create a mixed media work of their own using ideas they've learned about color theory.

Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify and describe the screen prints of Andy Warhol.
2. Students will be able to define and describe the ideas of color theory as well as the process for creating screen prints.
3. Students will be able to compare and contrast color associations.
4. Students will be able to identify works of art by Andy Warhol and other Pop art artists.
5. Students will be able to create a print employing color to create an impact intended by the artist.

Vocabulary

- Color Wheel
- Primary Colors
- Secondary Colors
- Shade
- Tint
- Tone
- Hue
- Value
- Analogous Colors
- Monochromatic
- Achromatic
- Complementary Colors

Procedures: Part I - Comprehend and Reflect

1. Show students Warhol's *Flowers*. (Slide 1) Ask them to carefully describe what they see. Ask them to be very specific in their descriptions. Ask the students what they think about the colors used in the art work? Ask them if they think the colors help describe what the artwork is about? Explain.

2. Begin to describe to students the research about color theory. Begin by showing students a the 12-part color wheel. (Slide 2) Have them point out primary and secondary colors. Allow them to discuss any ideas or relationships they already know about color theory.

3. Show Warhol's *Pears In Space Fruit Suite*, 1977, (Slide 3) and discuss the ideas of complimentary colors (Two colors that are the direct opposite of each other on the color wheel, such as red and green.) Discuss the fact the complimentary colors create the *most* contrast and balance in a design. Ask students why they think this may be true? Ask students their reaction this color combination. How do they feel? (Anxious? Excited? Provoked? Calm?) Why? What was Warhol's intent in using this color combination?

4. Discuss Warhol's use of analogous colors in *Camouflage*, 1987. (Slide 4) Analogous colors the lay next to one another on the color wheel. Ask students to consider the use of analogous colors in this work by Warhol. What does camouflage mean? What types of concepts and images come to mind when you interpret this word? (War, conflict, etc.) How do these images relate to the analogous colors employed by Warhol in this print? Why do you think the artist used this color combination?

5. Discuss how color can describe an emotion or a feeling that the artist may want to portray. Initiate a conversation about the hue, tone, tint, etc. and how specific colors can be equated with feelings and emotions. For example:

--**Red** is a very emotionally intense color. It enhances human metabolism, increases respiration rate, and raises blood pressure. It has very high visibility, which is why stop signs, stoplights, and fire equipment are usually painted red. In heraldry, red is used to indicate courage. It is a color found in many national flags.

--To the human eye, **orange** is a very hot color, so it gives the sensation of heat. Nevertheless, orange is not as aggressive as red. Orange increases oxygen supply to the brain, produces an invigorating effect, and stimulates mental activity. As a citrus color, orange is associated with healthy food and stimulates appetite.

--**Yellow** produces a warming effect, arouses cheerfulness, stimulates mental activity, and generates muscle energy. Yellow is often associated with food. Bright, pure yellow is an attention getter, which is the reason taxicabs are painted this color.

--**Green** has great healing power. It is the most restful color for the human eye; it can improve vision. Green suggests stability and endurance. Sometimes green denotes lack of experience.

--**Blue** is considered beneficial to the mind and body. It slows human metabolism and produces a calming effect. Blue is strongly associated with tranquility and calmness. In heraldry, blue is used to symbolize piety and sincerity.

--**Purple** combines the stability of blue and the energy of red. Purple is associated with royalty. According to surveys, almost 75 percent of pre-adolescent children prefer purple to all other colors. Purple is a very rare color in nature; some people consider it to be artificial.

--**White** means safety, purity, and cleanliness. As opposed to black, white usually has a positive connotation. White can represent a successful beginning. In heraldry, white depicts faith and purity.

--**Black** gives the feeling of perspective and depth, but a black background diminishes readability. Black is a mysterious color associated with fear and the unknown (black holes). It usually has a negative connotation (blacklist, black humor, 'black death'). Black denotes strength and authority; it is considered to be a very formal, elegant, and prestigious color (black tie, black Mercedes)

6. Andy Warhol was not only known for his use of color, but his attention to consumerism and the culture that surrounds it. Have the students discuss how they think they are influenced by the things we buy and use on a daily basis. Ask students if they believe art is influenced by popular culture. Does popular culture influence art?

7. Show students Mondrian's *Composition with Red, Blue, and Yellow*, 1930 (Slide 5) and (Slide 6) *Nike Dunk Lo*, 2008. Does "putting a painting on a shoe" change its purpose? Should a painting be put on a shoe? Why? Why not? Can students give other examples of artists' art works being appropriated for other purposes? (Tee-shirts, coffee cups, commercial and political advertisements, etc.)

Procedures: Part II – Create and Transfer

8. Have students discuss issues that they encounter or would like to address about things they buy or own... toys, food, clothes, etc. Discuss again the connection between Warhol and his focus on consumerism and commodities. Have children narrow down their ideas to one of these themes they would like to express in an artwork. For example, if they chose to explore “junk food” they could do a large image of a candy bar.

9. Show Warhol’s screen-print flower to the students once again. Discuss the technique and process of screen-printing. The artist creates a stencil and applies it to a piece of fabric (the screen) stretched over a wooden frame. Ink is pulled across the screen with a squeegee and forced through the openings in the stencil onto a sheet of paper. The advantage to screen-printing is it can be done on a wide variety of materials, and allows for different ink thicknesses, which can add another effect to the finished piece. This process can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wogKeYH2wEE>.

10. Briefly discuss the history of screen-printing:

- This form of art that was first seen in China during the Song Dynasty.
- It was popular throughout Asian countries, and made its way West in the 18th century.
- It was originally used as industrial technology however became an art medium soon after.

Inform students that screen-printing is not just found in art, but is used to make posters, tee-shirts, and CD covers.

11. Have students begin to sketch ideas they may have for their final pieces. Discuss composition and let students know their designs should remain simple and with few details. Explain to them professional screen-printing can capture many details and tiny shapes, however for this project we want to keep things simple. Discuss the use of color, and how they want that to be their main source for expression. Refer back to Warhol’s prints. Point out the simple, large shapes and how impact is made with his choice of color.

12. Once the students have chosen their final design, have them cut the shapes out of cardstock. (Scissors can be used for elementary aged children; X-acto knives maybe used for high school students who have more intricate designs.) Remind students that what they cut out will be where the printing ink/paint will go, and what will show on their final piece.

13. Once the student’s stencil is complete, have students choose the final material they want their design to appear on. Have students secure stencil on top of the material (with tape, paper clips, etc.) so stencil won’t shift when applying printing ink or paint.

14. Each student should then choose the color ink they would like to use. Encourage them to use multiple colors, as well as to mix and create their own. Ink should then be rolled onto the stencil and the exposed material below it. This process can be repeated to apply color using multiple stencils to complete the design. Each color must dry before the next is applied.

Discussing Student Work / Assessment

1. Have students work in pairs to discuss their prints and answer these questions. Have students film their answers in an “interview style” to share with the class.

- What do you see? Student should be very specific in their description of the work.
- What is the print about? How do you know this?
- What does the artist do to make her or his idea clear to the viewer?
- What do you think about the color used in the print? How does it make you feel? Why?
- If there is something you could change about this work, what would it be? Explain why you would change it? Be specific.

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:

--Make informed critical evaluations of visual and material culture, information, and technologies

--Explain, compare and justify that the visual arts are connected to other disciplines, the other art forms, social activities, mass media, and careers in art and non-art related arenas

--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. Older students can continue to research theories on color theory and its application in architecture and interior design. Students can further explore the relationship between consumerism and art.

2. Students can explore other graphic and print processes. Have students investigate making a linocut print, woodcut print, paper lithograph or digital print to express ideas about art and consumerism.

Relevance and Application:

--The inquiry skill sets of analyzing, assessing, and evaluating are valuable in becoming informed consumers of visual images in marketing and in mass media.

--Visually interpreting and analyzing works of art provides opportunities for discussions around artistic intent and broadens the level of personal engagement with a work of art.

--Artists and audiences use cultural and community identities and social perspectives to make and respond to art.

--Works of art reflect the artist's ideas, interests, and background.

--A work of art allows the artist to communicate intended meaning to the viewer and evokes new meaning through the viewer's perspective.