Beyond the Medici

The Haukohl Family Collection

EDUCATOR
RESOURCE
PACKET

DAVID OWSLEY MUSEUM of ART BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

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The *Beyond the Medici* exhibition presents a selection of artworks from the Haukohl Family Collection, the largest private collection of Florentine Baroque art of the late 16th to the early 18th centuries outside of Italy. Assembled over more than 35 years by Houston-based art collector and co-founder of the Medici Archive Project Sir Mark Fehrs Haukohl, the collection includes paintings and sculptures depicting allegories, religious narratives, genre scenes, and portraits. The exhibition sheds light on the intellectual history of Florence under the reign of the Medici Grand Dukes, while at the same time illuminating the deep interest in science and painting founded on *disegno* (drawing or preliminary study) during the Florentine Baroque period. Overall, the exhibition and its accompanying catalogue illustrate how the Florentine artists of the 17th and early 18th centuries influenced European art history, politics, and philosophy to a far greater extent than art historical research and the public have previously perceived. The collection highlights the elegance and *bravura*

Felice Ficherelli, Italian (1605–1660)
Saint Sebastian Tended By Saint Irene,
1630s, oil on canvas

(dramatic skill) of Italian artists along with showcasing the role of women in history. Sir Mark and his personal philanthropies have launched an American college art museum tour, of which the David Owsley Museum of Art is a welcome beneficiary. Please join us and bear witness to the beauty of Florentine Baroque art and culture.

- Dr. Robert LaFrance, DOMA Director

Exhibition Themes:

Mario Balassi, Italian (1604-1667) *Virgin and Child,* 1660, oil on panel

Religious figures:

The exhibition displays many artworks focused on religious figure, from both Christian and Greek lore. The focus on both offers insight into Florentine history and religion.

Florence was strongly catholic—there was no worship of Greek or Roman gods or goddesses, but their imagery was invoked in many works of art. This was partially due to the opinion that the city-state was akin to the Roman Empire in strength and artistry. *Florentia* (Florence) was established by Roman soldiers as a fortified village during their conquest of modern-day Tuscany. Its history as an actual village and then city-state started after that however, when survivors of the city *Faesulae* (Fiesole) took up residence after a civil war in 63 BCE. It gained economic importance from Tuscany feudal lords that came into power there. The city swore allegiance to the holy Roman Empire but also the Papacy, which caused many rifts and power struggles between families who followed only one or the other. This struggle over religious power in the government inspired the painting of many religious works of art to reinvigorate Catholic faith. Amid the conflicts, the Medici family rose to wealth and power. They effectively became the rulers of Florence in 1434, and the Florentine

Cesare Dandini, Italian (1596-1657) *Saint Dorothy of Cappadocia,* late 1640s, oil on canvas

Renaissance had begun. The great diplomat of the dynasty, Lorenzo il Magnifico, ruled Tuscany for half a century and made the age of the Renaissance blossom. However, his death in 1492 allowed the Medici's enemies to take control of Florence. Later the city-state became a republic after the strict Girolamo Savonarola was executed, but conflict did not cease. Florence suffered many attempts of conquest, with Charles V of Spain succeeding in 1530. When this happened, the Medici family was able to seize absolute power again as an ally of Spain.

However, further questions of authority within the church came to a head between the Council of Trent, held from 1545 to 1563, and the Protestant Reformation. The Council of Trent, a meeting called by Pope Paul III in the city of Trento, was to reform all parts of the Catholic church and doctrine in response to the Protestant Reformation. During this time, there was a Tridentine decree that church artwork should show proper restraint, be easily readable, and be educational to the general population in response to Protestant Reformists saying Catholicism was using religious images improperly. The Reformists also called for acknowledgment that the Council held higher authority than the Pope. The schism that resulted from the fighting between Protestants and Catholics during the time fueled much of the political unease in Europe going forward. In Italy, the Medici continued to rule, finally in a time of relative peace and prosperity, until the last family member died without an heir in 1737.

Allegorical and mythological figures:

An allegory is the symbolic description or illustration of a subject in a body of work, such as a book or a painting. It includes a figure representing an idea, truth, or generalization about human nature. An allegorical painting might include figures that represent different emotions, allude to characters from mythologies, or personify abstract concepts, such as glory, beauty, freedom, or revolution. Artists found allegories and descriptions of allegories for their works from studying symbolism and through the work of other people. A major influence for these

Felice Ficherelli, Italian (1605–1660) *Allegory of Poetry,* 1620s, oil on canvas; lapis lazuli frame

paintings was Cesare Ripa (1555-1622) who wrote *Iconologia* (a study of symbolism) and its second edition in 1603 that featured fully illustrated pages. Included in this book is the description of Poetry as "a beautiful woman crowned with laurel and wearing a sky-blue mantle adorned with stars, her visage filled with thoughts and emotions befitting the creative act" that Felice Ficherelli used to inform the imagery seen in *Allegory of Poetry*. Ottavio Vannini also based his painting *An Allegory of Meditation* off Ripa's description of Meditation.

Ottavio Vannini, Italian (1585-1644) *An Allegory of Meditation,* about 1638-1642, oil on canvas

In allegories, symbolism plays a major part in identifying the person or idea they are referring to. In portraits of mythological figures, there is always included an object referring to an act, concept, or time that the individual is associated with. *Apollo with a Lyre* by Onorio Marinari includes the lyre the painting is titled after, as well as a halo around Apollo's head. As Apollo is the god of music, he is often depicted alongside the ancient lyre, a typical instrument of Ancient Greece. The halo represents his connection to the sun, as he was tasked with carrying it across the sky and it became one of his major symbols. The symbolism in the allegorical works refers to aspects and virtues of their respective concepts. In *Allegory of Poetry*, the woman is crowned with a laurel; laurel is a symbol of victory and success. Throughout history, a crown of laurel leaves denoted a personal achievement, including at academic institutions. Here, the crown is to inspire creative success. Both Apollo and Meditation are adorned in blue, which was a symbol of power since the pigment was only available to the wealthy. Apollo's clothing of ultramarine blue shows that he is a godly being attached to the sky. Meditation's blue drapery denotes her tranquility and wisdom, especially since it is a lighter shade. The book she is resting on refers to meditation's connection to the arts.

Onorio Marinari, Italian (1617-1716) *Apollo with a Lyre,* 1690, oil on canvas

Religious narratives:

Pietro Dandini, Italian (1646-1712) *Esther Before Ahasuerus,* 1680s, oil on canvas

A religious narrative painting is one that depicts a story or scene from the Bible. Composition for these paintings is often diagonal, going from the top left corner down to the lower right corner. This shows a hierarchy within each piece moving from a higher power to the individual with less power in the situation. In *Esther Before Ahasuerus*, Ahasuerus has more power over Esther since he is the king and is also surrounded by his court. Furthermore, she is powerless because she has just fainted. In *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, Judith holds power over Holofernes in the act of killing him. In *God Reproving Cain for the Murder Of Abel*, God is the all-powerful being over Cain and Abel, but Cain is also shown higher than Abel in the painting as he had just used his power to kill him.

Onorio Marinari, Italian (1627-1716) *Judith Beheading Holofernes,* 1680s, oil on canvas

All the paintings use dramatic lighting to emphasize focal points on individuals or actions. This is a tradition from Romanticism, which many artists pulled from at this time. The artists use dynamic, or action, poses to help push the narrative, which is another tradition from Romanticism. Also, the line of eyesight between the figures in each painting moves the viewers' eye around the work and develops the narrative. In *Esther Before Ahasuerus*, going from left to right, we see the king and his counsel looking at Esther as the king runs towards

Giovanni Ferretti, Italian (1692-1768) *God Reproving Cain for the Murder of Abel,* 1740, oil on canvas

her. Two of her maidens look at her as she collapses, one already supporting her and one running to support her, while two other maidens look at the individuals moving to help Esther, Ahasuerus, and the running nurse. The line of action in the bodies combined with where they are looking shows the viewer that this painting depicts the moment right after Esther collapsed in front of her husband, King Ahasuerus. In the painting *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, Judith's nursemaid looks at her during the act of beheading while Judith looks down at Holofernes and the head of Holofernes looks at the knife in her hand. In moving the viewer's eye around the piece through the sight lines of the figures within it, the painting also leads the viewer chronologically through the narrative. In *God Reproving Cain for the Murder of Abel*, the line of sight combined with the line of action shows how the figures are reacting to what has just occurred in the narrative.

Portraits:

The show includes portraits of achieved artists, writers, scholars, and the elite of Italy amongst the exhibition's religious figures. Most important is the Medici family, the center of the exhibition and patrons of the various artists in it.

The Medicis moved to Florence around the 12th century and rose to power through banking and commerce. The family also produced four popes that helped them maintain power: Leo X,

Justus Suttermans, Flemish, (1597–1681) *Portrait of Giovan Carlo De' Medici,* before 1644, oil on canvas

Clement VII, Pius IV, and Leo XI. Cosimo de Medici (1389-1464), or Cosimo the Elder, started the illustrious Medici dynasty in 1434. He ruled Florence as an uncrowned monarch for the rest of his life as a warrior figure, but also patron of the humanities. The focus on the humanities worked to advance Florence's culture and status as a city-state, while also garnering public affection for the Medicis. It was during Cosimo's, his son's, and specifically his grandson Lorenzo de Medici's, time that Florence was the center of the Renaissance.

Giovanni Vanni, Italian (1646-1712)
Glorification of the Corsini Family or a Study for a Corsini Ceiling, 1690s, black and red chalk on paper

Lorenzo was a patron to many famous artists, but was primarily attentive to Michelangelo, who lived with the family and completed multiple commissions for them. Lorenzo died in 1492 and his son, Piero, succeeded him but was not as liked as a leader. Two years into his rule, he was exiled, and fundamentalist friar Girolamo Savonarola took control after Florence was invaded by Spain. In 1497 his supporters collected books, art, and musical instruments, and burned them in a massive bonfire. However, the friar was excommunicated and hanged in Florence in 1498.

The Medicis returned to power in 1512. Rule was left to Piero's younger brother, Giovanni (future Pope Leo X). Giovanni reestablished Medici popularity by following in the steps of earlier rulers and devoting himself to artistic patronage. Later his granddaughter, Catherine de Medici (1519-1589), would become queen of France after marrying King Henry II. She was a significant commissioner of portraits depicting her family and her court. She also handled many architectural endeavors. Lorenzo's great-great-grandson Cosimo I (1519-1574) became duke of Florence in 1537, establishing absolute power in the region. His descendants would rule as grand

dukes of the Tuscany area into the 1700s. The later Medici line (1600 onward) promoted a more authoritarian rule, which decreased focus on the arts. The last Medici grand duke, Gian Gastone de Medici, and the family dynasty died in 1737 when he left behind no male heir.

Women's place as inspiration or empowerment:

In the art and life of Florence, internal virtues (and gender attributes) were thought to be communicated through outward appearance. Art during this time embodied Humanist philosophy, which strove to emulate the beauty of the Greeks and Romans. Though Humanism conflicted with the Church, religion influenced the majority of everyday life through guidance and political leadership. Following Humanism, artists thought that painting the ideal female form was the most genuine way to capture the natural world, demonstrate skill, and show ideal virtues—the female body was considered the mirror of the soul, encapsulating the perfect beauty—which bled into applying the techniques of realism to religious artwork. With the purpose of inspiring spiritual perfection, religious paintings served as a source of strength and dignified model of feminine virtues, representing women as chaste and submissive. In such paintings they also adopted Christ-like qualities of temperance, constancy, and endurance that were fundamentally masculine but emulated Christ, a model imperative for everyone to strive for.

Many political, social, and religious practices continued into the Renaissance from previous times, particularly among women, who remained assets or property of their fathers and husbands. A renaissance woman's virtues were chastity and motherhood, her domain the privacy of the home, while men's virtues were more broadly defined as excelling in duties of public life, social and political, through dominance. Men were thought to have a natural superiority

over women, following the Christian hierarchy of Eve being subordinate to Adam, as well as medical understanding of human bodies at the time, stemming from Greek and Roman traditions. Medically, gender separation was due to the four humors: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. Men and women were humoral opposites. Men were characterized by the superior humors associated with heat and dryness, which provided the steadfastness necessary for public and political life, while women were associated with inferior humors of cold and wetness, which accounted for timidity, menstruation, and the pains of childbirth. It was thought women's humoral inferiority also contributed to how they experienced emotions. They were more susceptible to extreme emotions and less capable of managing them in socially appropriate ways. This is all reflected in the manner of painting the two genders, heavy in symbolism and representations. As Renaissance culture was a display culture, respect and influence were gained through the visibility of female perfection within paintings, which illustrated their nobility. Women were to be docile, beautiful, decorative, and actively defining the traits of ideal feminine beauty through the significance of wealth, lineage, and religious devotion. On the contrary, gender roles encountered in Renaissance art reflect ideals, not necessarily the reality of lived experience as many women did participate in public life.

In two specific works of art, *Penitent Magdalene* (Jacopo Giorgi) and *Juno* (Vincenzo Dandini), the comparison of Humanist and religious artwork shows the ideal feminine virtues in different ways.

Magdalene is regarded as an ultimate symbol of the religious virtue of penitence and was used throughout time to discredit sexuality and disempower women. It has been confirmed that Mary Magdalene was not a prostitute, but the myth influenced the art surrounding her for centuries. She was an extremely devoted follower

of Jesus, in some stories his wife or lover, and previously thought to be a prostitute who repented so she could follow him. In *Penitent Magdalene* by Jacopo Giorgi, her red hair recalls her sensual past but how it is depicted, loosely flowing down her shoulders, is also a symbol of penitence in religious art. She is passive in the painting, with soft features, an elongated face, closed lips, and tilted head—all characteristics used often in Renaissance portraits of women to represent their docility. She is not painted to be inside the domestic sphere due to the nature of this being a religious painting. The cross in her hand indicates her presence at the crucifixion of Christ and the Resurrection, while the skull represents her unwavering devotion up until her death. Before and during the Florentine Renaissance, ideal feminine virtues were to be detached from sexuality and not question male authority. Establishing Magdelene as a figure that embodied these ideals instead of empowering women was important to justify male dominance in the Church and society. In earlier times her story as such a devoted follower gave rise to calls for more female representation in positions

Jacopo Giorgi, Italian (1623-1665)
Penitent Magdalene, about 1656, oil on paper laid on canvas

of the church. However, as the New and Old Testaments were established and sects sought to answer questions about the relationship between body and spirit, the scriptures moved away from men and women having equal social agency due to arguments culminating in restriction of sexuality. The notion of Mary Magdalene as a repentant sinner was first introduced as a result of a sermon delivered by Pope Gregory I in 591 where he conflated her with other women named in the bible. However, this reading was not accepted by all from the start as Eastern Orthodox Christians believed that she was only a devoted disciple of Christ. The Gnostic Gospels, discovered in 1896 by

theologians and archaeologists, is where the image of Mary Magdelene as a partner to Christ became further established. In 1969 the Church fully established that Magdalene was not a prostitute by identifying different dates for the women in the General Roman Calendar.

Juno by Vincenzo Dandini depicts the less religious and more social aspects of feminine virtues with a Humanists approach. In mythology Juno is queen of the gods, a kind of second in command under her husband Jupiter but ruler of the various goddesses in the Roman pantheon. She is the goddess of family, marriage, and childbirth, additionally holding the title of protector and patron of Rome. Unlike her Greek counterpart, Hera, Juno is sometimes depicted more warlike due to her position as protector of women and young

Vincenzo Dandini, Italian (1609-1675) *Juno,* early 1640s, oil on canvas

soldiers. Her symbols are usually a diadem (crown) and scepter, sometimes a *patera* (offering bowl). In the typical fashion, Dandini presents her here wearing a diadem and holding a scepter. The scepter is almost reminiscent of a war baton, a uniquely masculine trait as it puts Juno in an active position socially and in the painting, although it is resting on her leg. Her soft features, closed lips, elongated face, and titled head all follow the usual depictions of ideal feminine beauty. The folds of the fabric around her suggest softness and nobility, important virtues that tie into motherhood. Through her features, Dandini subtly combines masculine and feminine traits to show Juno's position as a leader in small details coupled with how her body position could be read as rising to stand instead of sitting still. As a strong queen and protector, Juno is empowering to women. In Dandin's rendition of her, she is also meant to inspire women to emulate the ideal feminine virtues of the Florentine Renaissance.

Education:

There can be seen a theme of celebrating those select individuals that pushed groups and ideas forward. In some works, there could be a narrative endearing the viewer to celebrate their own skills or to take up the mantel of scholar. In examining the stucco portraits of some of the great Florentines, hopefully you find inspiration for your own endeavors.

Antonio Montauti, Italian (1683–1746) *Portrait of Niccolo Machiavelli,* about 1710-1720, polychrome stucco

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) rose to power in 1498 as the secretary of the Florentine republic. A political philosopher, diplomat, and dramatist, he is best known for his book *The Prince* (written 1513, published 1532), which inspired the term "Machiavellian" for its endorsing of ruthless, cunning, deceitful, and somewhat cruel ruling practices. Machiavelli wrote many philosophical and political books that established him as the "father of modern political theory." Philosophers cannot agree on the full content of his practices, teachings, or philosophy, but almost all major historical philosophers' ideas can be traced back to him, including Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Marx, and Nietzsche. Through his works, scholars have been able to determine that he focused on ideas of virtue (concerning the capacity to shape things and a combination of self-reliance, self-assertion, self-discipline, and self-knowledge), fortune (understood as destiny), nature, history and necessities, truth, what he called the political Humors (desires that affect the elements, like the government, of the state), Republicanism, glory, religion, and ethics.

Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564) was considered the greatest living artist in his time. His output as a painter, sculptor, architect, and poet during his long life was prodigious. Early on, through his apprenticeships he was exposed to many great artists, poets, and scholars that influenced his practices. Michelangelo acquired special permission from the Catholic Church to study cadavers for anatomy—this shaped his distinct style of muscular precision and elaborate realism. The most impressive works of his are the

Antonio Montauti, Italian (1683–1746) *Portrait of Michelangelo Buonarroti,* about 1710-1720, polychrome stucco

ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, which he spent four years painting at the request of Pope Julius II, the *Pietà*, his sculpture of *David* (considered by scholars to be near technically perfect), and St. Peter's Basilica, for which he was the chief architect. Unlike most artists, he achieved fame and wealth within his lifetime, even seeing the publications of two biographies. He had few direct pupils, yet exerted an unparalleled influence on the development of European art.

Antonio Montauti, Italian (1683–1746) *Portrait of Galileo Galilei,* about 1710-1720, polychrome stucco

Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) is counted amongst the great Florentines. He contributed to the fields of mathematics, physics, mechanics, military architecture, magnetism, dynamics, acoustics, scientific methodology, philosophy, and had some artistic training. During his career, he was patroned by the Medici family, for whom he named the four moons of Jupiter "the Medicean planets" (Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto). Galileo was able to discover them by inventing an improved telescope that let him observe the moons of Jupiter, the rings of Saturn, the phases of Venus, sunspots, and the rugged lunar surface.

He invented many things that revolutionized astronomy and biology. From 1589 to 1610, he was chair of mathematics at the universities of Pisa and Padua, and performed experiments with falling bodies that informed his most substantial contribution to physics. Galileo pioneered the heliocentric model of the solar system, which was condemned by the Church and Inquisition as contrary to Scripture— this earned him house arrest for nine years until his death in 1642.

Select Artist Biographies:

Onorio Marinari, Italian (1627-1715) *Saint Sebastian,* early 1690s, oil on canvas

Onorio Marinari (1627-1715)

Marinari was active in the artist community of Florence from a young age. The son and student of painter Gismondo Marinari, he trained with his cousin Carlo Dolci, a renowned artist. He apprenticed under Dolci throughout his career and later under Baldassare Franceschini, with influences from Simone Pignoni and Francesco Furini. During his studies, he traveled to Rome and Lombardy to study the masters Raphael, Carreggio, and Titian. The work that gave him his independent renown was *St. Mauro Healing the Sick* (1663-66) for the Badia Fiorentina. Afterwards, he worked on frescos in the Palazzo Capponi with the great Florentine and Tuscan painters of the time. He was a member of the Accademia del disegno di Firenze from 1679 until his death.

Onorio Marinari, Italian (1627-1715) *St. Mauro Healing the Sick (1663-66),* oil on canvas. MutualArt.

Cesare Dandini (1596-1657)

Ottavio Vannini, Italian (1585-1644) *An Allegory of Meditation,* about 1638-1642, oil on canvas

The Dandini family made significant contributions to the Florentine Baroque era. The older brother of Vincenzo Dandini, Cesare Dandini trained with Francesco Curradi, Cristofano Allori, and Domenico Passignano. He enrolled in the Accademia del Disegno in 1621. His works first followed Mannerist traditions of bright colors, bold contrasts, and linear compositions before becoming more animated, being influenced by Pietro Da Cortona. Cesare painted many allegorical and religious paintings for various patrons, most notably Lorenzo de' Medici.

Fun fact: Cesare Dandini's long-lost painting from a series was discovered in a church in New Rochelle, New York in 2020 by an art history professor after hanging there for almost six decades.

Vincenzo Dandini (1607-1675)

Vincenzo Dandini, Italian (1607-1675) *Saint Mark the Evangelist,* about 1645, oil on canvas

A master craftsman, Vincenzo Dandini trained under his brother and at the Accademia del Disegno before studying under the eminent painter Pietro Da Cortona in Rome. He worked in Rome from 1635 to 1636, then returned to Florence where he produced numerous paintings and frescos for the Medici Family. Like his brother, Vincenzo Dandini's work became more animated and dramatic later in his life. Vincenzo taught his nephew, Pietro Dandini, and Anton Domenico Gabbiani the traditional principles he gained from his masters.

Felice Ficherelli (1603-1660)

Felice Ficherelli was born in San Gimignano and was active mainly in Tuscany. He came to Florence when he was young after it had been arranged by an early patron, Conte Bardi, for him to study under Jacopo da Empoli. Ficherelli enrolled in the Accademia del Disegno in 1629 and held the office of consul in 1652. Later in his life, his artwork turned towards *sfumato* effects—a technique that allows tones and colors to gradually mix, producing softened outlines or a hazy form—and the style of Cecco Bravo. Ficherelli is also called "Il Riposo," a nickname given to him during his life because of his peaceful and quiet nature.

Felice Ficherelli, Italian (1603-1660) *Saint Sebastion Tended By Saint Irene,* 1630s, oil on canvas

Pietro Dandini, Italian (1646-1712) *Ester Before Ahasuerus,* 1680s, oil on canvas

Pietro (Pier) Dandini (1646-1712)

Pietro Dandini became one of the most prolific artists in late 17th century Florence. The nephew of artists Cesare and Vincenzo Dandini, he trained under Vincenzo before traveling to Bologna, Modena, Venice, and Rome to learn art. He completed many commissions for religious buildings, such as frescos for the vault of San Jacopo Soprarno, the lunettes of San Giovannino delgi Scolop, and in the dome of the church of Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi. Pietro was a highly prized painter of the Medici Family.

Jacopo Da Empoli (1554-1640)

Jacopo Empoli, born Jacopo Chimenti, apprenticed under Maso da San Friano where he learned Florentine Reformist traditions. Throughout his life, he continuously studied the art of Andrea del Sarto and sold many copies of Sarto's work. Empoli was an active and influential member of the Accademia del Disegno from 1576 until after 1635; he was elected *Provveditore* in 1589 and served as Conservator in 1635. He only ever painted one fresco in his life, *The Sermon on the Mount*, despite those being common commissions, because when stepping back to look at his work he fell off the scaffolding.

Jacopo da Empoli, Italian (1554-1640) *The Immaculate Virgin Appearing to Saint Hyacinth,* about 1709, oil on copper

Francesco Furini (1603-1646)

Francesco Furini, Italian (1603-1646) *Allegory of Poetry,* 1620s, oil on canvasT

One of the most successful Florentine painters of the time, Furini painted mostly small works for private clients. His works consisted of many sensual female nudes and figures from mythology or the Old Testament. Furini was born in an artistic family, his father being a portrait painter. He trained at first under Domenico Passignano and Giovanni Biliverti, two of the leading painters in Florence at the time, before moving to Rome in 1619 and studying under Bartolomeo Manfredi. In 1633 Furini was appointed priest of Sant'Ansano in the Mugello north of Florence but continued to paint, including nudes.

Laurel Crowns and Poetry

History Lesson Plan
By: Halle Pressler

This Lesson is intended for elementary school students and can be adapted for grade levels and accessibility. It is best fit for second through fifth, but the poetry writing can be omitted for kindergarten and first grade.

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, students will learn about the history of the connection between laurel crowns, success, and poetry through a history lesson, writing prompt, and art-making activity. Students will be given background knowledge on the origins of laurel crowns in history and mythology before creating their own crown out of construction paper and a paper plate. After the laurel crown is assembled, students will write a short poem about a time they succeeded to connect the main themes of this lesson.

Objectives:
- Students will learn the history behind laurel crowns.
- Students will show understanding of what a laurel crown is and how they connect to poetry.
- Students will learn to write a free-verse poem.
- Students will use their fine motor skills to create a laurel crown.

Guiding Questions:

- What is a laurel crown?
- Who is Apollo?
- What is poetry?
- How are laurel crown connected to Apollo and poetry?
- What are the Pythian Games?

Vocabulary:

- **Laurel crown:** evergreen tree leaves intertwined to create a crown or wreath that was given to winning athletes at the Pythian Games.
- **Apollo:** Greek and Roman sun god associated with music, poetry, healing, and art.
- **Pythian Games:** athletic games similar to the Olympics held in Delphi, Greece to honor the god Apollo.
- **Myth:** a traditional story that tells the beginnings of a group of people or explains natural events.
- **Nymph:** a divine woman found in mountains, rivers, or forests.

Materials:

- green construction paper
- paper plates
- scissors
- glue
- paper and pencils

Lesson Steps:

1. Preparation
    a. Gather the materials needed for students to create laurel crowns. On the green construction paper either draw or print leaves to fill the page. Students will need

approximately 15 to 25 leaves each depending on leaf and head sizes.

2. Background Knowledge

    a. Students will be given a brief lesson explaining the history of laurel crowns and the myth associated with them. During this step students should gain an understanding of the main themes and should be able to define the vocabulary terms.

3. Create a Crown

Students will be given the green leaf template, a paper plate, glue, and scissors to create a laurel crown by following the steps below.

1. Grab the paper plate and a pair of scissors. Using the scissors make a small cut straight into the plate. Start cutting in a circle big enough to fit your head in the middle of the plate. One you cut out the center of the plate, put your head in the hole you cutout and see if it fits. Throw away all of your scraps.

Step 1

    i. If the hole is too small, cut a little more from the center of the plate until the plate fits. Then glue the ends of the plate together by putting one end on top of the other so they overlap and glue between the ends.
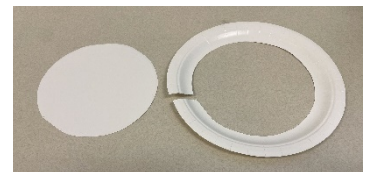
    ii. If it is too big, then overlap the ends of the plate from the cut you made earlier until it fits. Glue one side on

top of the other where it fits best and hold it until the glue dries.

2. Once the glue is dry, write your name on the bottom of your plate.

3. Put the plate aside. Grab the green leaf template. Follow the lines to cut out all of the leaves from the template. Throw away any scraps when you are done.

4. Once all of the leaves are cut out, glue them to the top of the plate one by one. The pointy end of each leaf should face the outer edge of the plate. Repeat this step until the top of the plate is covered by leaves.

5. Let the plate dry.

6. Try on your new laurel crown!
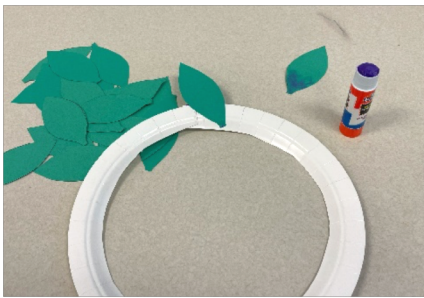
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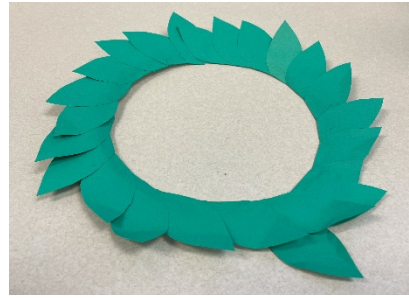
Step 6

4. Write a Poem

   a. Students will write a poem about a time they succeeded. This could be about a time they won a race, beat a level in a video game, or got an A on a homework assignment. This step is to make a connection between the laurel crown's meaning of victory and the concept of poetry.

   b. Example poems:
      • Simple:
         ▪ I saw a book/ got it/ And read it all!

- Intermediate:
  - I played Mario Kart with my brother/He picked Rainbow Road/ It was really hard/ But I beat him.
- Advanced:
  - Heavy Breathing/ Loud Whistle/ Heart pound/ legs moving/ Cross the line/ first place is mine

History of Laurel Crowns:

Today, athletes compete for medals or trophies, but what did they compete for in Ancient Greece? The first Olympic Games were held in Olympia, Greece in the year 776 B.C.E. (Before Common Era) to honor the god Zeus. Athletes would compete in many different sports, and the winners would be given a crown, formally called a wreath, made out of olive leaves. Besides the Olympics, there were four more sporting competitions: the Isthmian, Nemean, and Pythian Games. Athletes at each game were given different types of crowns when they won. At the Isthmian and Nemean Games, the crowns were made out of celery. The Pythian Games had crowns made of laurel leaves from a type of evergreen tree in Europe. The Pythian Games were an athletic event held in Delphi, Greece to honor the sun god Apollo who was also associated with music, poetry, healing, and art.

Laurel leaves were picked to crown winners because of their connection to Apollo. There is a myth from a poem called *Metamorphoses* by a man named Ovid that explains why Apollo loves laurels. The myth goes that one-day Apollo made fun of the god of love Eros, also known as Cupid, because his bow was smaller than Apollo's. Eros was so mad that he shot Apollo with a golden love

arrow so that he would fall in love with the first person he saw. Eros then shot a nymph named Daphne with an arrow made of lead which made her hate love. Apollo fell in love with Daphne and chased her to tell her how much he loved her. She ran away, praying to her father and Mother Earth to save her. When she finished her prayer, her body became a tree and her hair turned into leaves. Apollo still loved her, even as a tree. From then on, he always wore a laurel crown either on his head or around his lyre, a small musical instrument often played while people read poetry. Heroes and athletes in Delphi were given laurel crowns when they won to honor Apollo "winning" Daphne.

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Making Frames

Art Lesson Plan
By Shawna Hayes

This Lesson is intended for elementary school students and can be adapted for grade levels and accessibility. It is best fit for second through fifth grade.

Lesson Overview:

Frames on paintings from the Baroque period were not only unique and important to each piece, they used a wide variety of different types of shapes that they used to create patterns.

> "The framing is the capstone. It is the key to recapturing the period."
>
> Beyond The Medici, Pg.13

The shapes used in the frame can be put into two groups, organic and geometric. Organic shapes are shapes that are not regular, and they tend to have a very curvy flow. Geometric shapes are simpler, and they have names, like squares, rectangles, or triangles.

Objectives:

- Students will create a decorated picture frame by gluing pieces of construction paper a cutout paper board.

Guiding Questions:

- How are geometric and organic shapes different?

Vocabulary:

- **Organic Shapes:** shapes that are curvilinear in appearance.
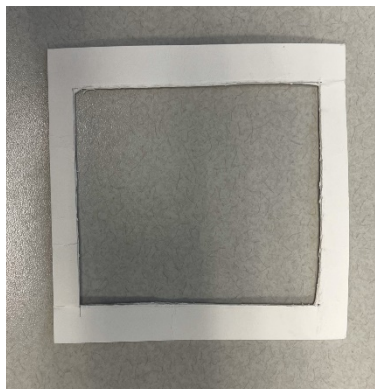- **Geometric Shapes:** shapes with straight edges and geometric appearances.

Materials:

- Colored Paper
- Crayons and/or colored pencils
- Glue or tape
- Posterboards cut in 5"x"5 squares
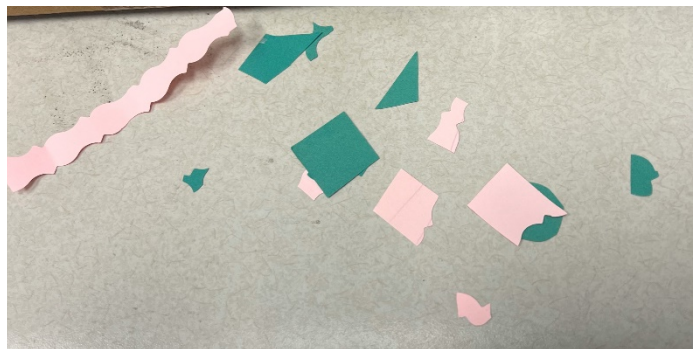- Scissors
- Rulers

Lesson Steps:

1. Each student will receive a piece of 5"x5" poster board.
2. Students will need to outline a 4x4" square on the poster board.
3. Use the outline to cut out the inner part of the poster board, so that you are left with a square frame.
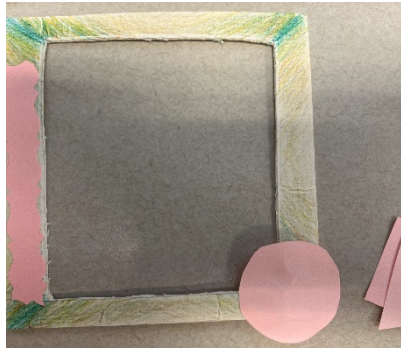4. Cut out geometric and organic shapes out of the colored paper.

Step 3

Step 4

5. Then, use crayons and colored pencils to color both the frame and the paper pieces.
6. Glue the pieces onto the carboard frame, in desired patterns, sizes, and rotations combining geometric and organic shapes.

Step 5   **Step 6**

Allegories

Art Lesson Plan
By Mya Whitis

This lesson is developed for high school or college level students and can be adapted for grade levels and accessibility.

Lesson Overview:

Students will examine and explore the use of allegories as a way to characterize academic pursuits. Students will take the subject of their major/or their favorite school subject and create a persona and symbols for an allegory illustration.

Objectives:

- Students will explore the creative process of creating allegories.
- Students will choose a selection of symbols to represent their major.
- Students will explore dynamic emotional relationships within their subjects.

Guiding Questions:

- What features of your subject do you feel are important?
- How do you want viewers to relate to your allegory?
- What traits do you associate with your subject?
- How would your subject act or look as a person?

Writing Prompt Questions:

- What features of your subject do you feel are important?
- What are the major themes in your allegory and how did you illustrate them?
- How might someone recognize the subject of your allegory?
- How do allegories change the way we interpret things?

Vocabulary:

- **Allegory:** a symbolic image or story that reveals a narrative about a specific story, object, or person.

Lesson Steps:

1. Show students a few examples of allegories (including images from the exhibition).
2. Have students think for about 5-10 minutes about their subject.
3. Lead students through the guiding questions.
4. Have students write out the answers to the questions and create a list of features they want to include in their allegories.
5. Give students pencils and paper and give them time to draw or write out their allegories.
6. Allow students to present and explain their allegories.
7. Lead students through the writing prompt questions.
8. Assign writing prompt questions.

Images:
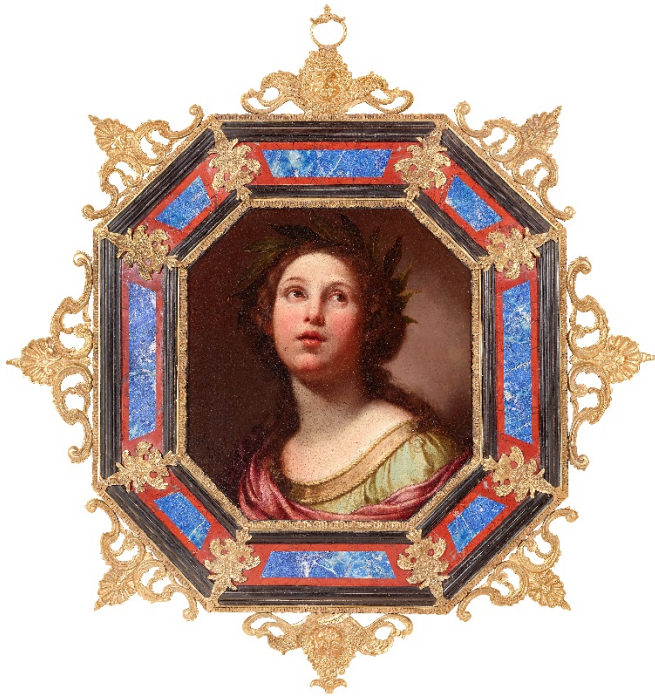
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