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INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS ACTIVITIES

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The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens is an institution that features both historic gardens and a fine arts collection spanning 4000 years of western art. With such rich resources available, we strive to connect artwork in the permanent collection with the living art of the gardens. This results in interdisciplinary lessons and activities for museum visitors that illustrate the relationship between the visual arts and the natural world.

Looking at paintings by American Impressionists Childe Hassam and Frederick Carl Freiseke, and listening to music by Impressionist composer Claude Debussy prompts discussion of nineteenth-century style in the galleries and can be followed by experiential learning in the gardens. For example, a discussion of the Impressionists' fascination with the transient effects of light and their refusal to use black in their palettes is

enhanced by an experience in the natural world. Students stand beneath a giant oak tree and watch the play of light beneath the limbs just as the Impressionist painters did, searching for, but never finding, a truly black shadow.

The gardens also enhance math and science curricula. After a discussion of symmetry, composition, shape, and form in the galleries, students search for the same concepts repeated in the gardens. Botanical studies in the permanent collection might inspire a discussion of genus and species in the many varieties of garden plants. An examination of the habitat of people and animals seen in paintings in the galleries is continued by a search for habitats in the gardens, overlooking the St. Johns River.

Teachers can reinforce these relationships in the classroom by enhancing lessons in social studies, English, science, or math with the arts. The creation of such cross-curricular lessons can aid students in developing connections between subject fields and encourage higher-level cognitive development. Although you might not have historic gardens or an art collection nearby, don't forget – any classroom can be turned into a gallery through the introduction of slides, art reproductions, or images found on the Internet. As for gardens, the schoolyard may be as far as you need to go to begin an interdisciplinary adventure.



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WHEN SCIENCE AND IMPRESSIONISM MEET

Though photography was available during the nineteenth century, the Impressionists sought to create works of art that did not replicate objects with scientific accuracy. Instead, they studied the transitory effects of light and atmosphere upon an object, depicting a fleeting impression. The following lesson provides an enhancement to the science curriculum through a comparison of the Impressionist painting style with the principals of scientific and objective observation.

1. Have students find an outdoor plant to study – they should focus on an individual plant not a group.
2. Take a Polaroid photograph of the plant and have students make lists of available data regarding the plant, some of which might require the use of tools or research (i.e., height, growth habit, whether it is an annual or a perennial, etc.).
3. In conjunction with a discussion of the Impressionists' fascination with the effects of light and color, have students create a watercolor image of the plant.
4. Compare the Polaroid image of the plant with the watercolor. Discuss how the two are similar and dissimilar, and the difference between *objective* and *subjective* observation.



RESOURCES

The following resources can extend the learning in the lesson above:

Books and Publications:

- *Art and Ideas*, William Fleming
- *Music: An Appreciation*, Roger Kamien
- *A Treasury of Great Poems*, Louis Untermeyer
- *Culture and Value: A Survey of the Western Humanities*, Lawrence S. Cunningham and John Reich

Art Images:

- Landscapes by Frederic Edwin Church, Thomas Moran and Winslow Homer
- Landscape and garden views by Claude Monet and Paul Cezanne.

Musical Selections:

- *The Moldau*, Bedrich Smetana
- *Largo, Symphony No. 5 in E Minor (From the New World)*, Antonin Dvorak
- *Grand Canyon Suite*, Ferde Grofe
- Works by Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel and Ottorino Respighi



Credits: Page 1, Bottom: (detail) Martin Johnson Heade, *The St. Johns River*, c. 1890-1900, Oil on canvas, Museum purchase with membership contributions. Page 2, Center: (detail) Frederick Childe Hassam, *Afternoon in Pont-Aven, Brittany*, 1897, Oil on canvas, Bequest of Ninah M. H. Cummer. Page 2, Bottom-Right: (detail) Jasper F. Cropsey, *The Nameless River*, 1846, Oil on canvas, Museum purchase. Page 3, Bottom-Center: Lorraine Zell, *Landscape*, 2001, Acrylic on paper. Page 4: Top: (detail) Theresa Segal, *Carriage House, Princess Place*, 2001, Black and white photograph, On loan from the artist © Theresa Segal, 2001. Page 4: Bottom: (detail) Theodor de Bry, *Meeting between René de Laudonnière and the Timucuan Chief Athore*, 1591, Engraving on paper, Gift of Ms. Constance I. & Mr. Ralph H. Wark.

LANDSCAPE PAINTING FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

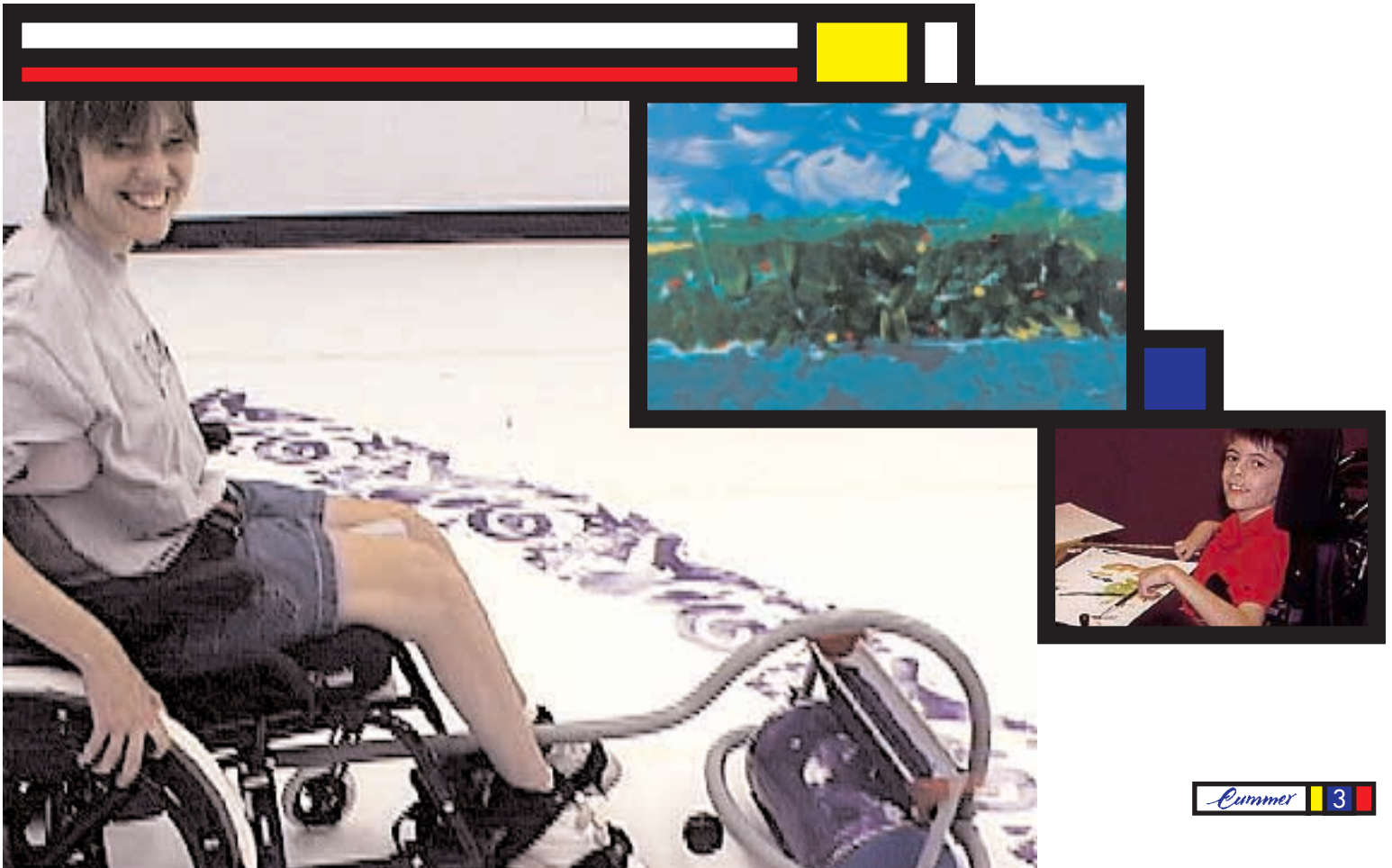
By Hope McMath

Director of Education at The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens

No genre of art appreciation and art making is richer in variety and opportunity than the study of landscape. This is especially true when making art objects and hands-on activities accessible to individuals with disabilities. Whether exploring a Roman countryside on the frescoed walls of a villa, or translating a Florida sunset into paint, landscape can provide a variety of sensory experiences. Children can smell a flower to understand the inspiration for a garden scene, and a piece of music can conjure up images of an Impressionist sky for those who cannot see. Every artist can benefit from the engagement of all of the senses in the understanding of the world around us.

Many people remember vividly the first time they painted a picture or drew on a sidewalk with brightly colored chalk. What if you could not hold a piece of chalk or a brush? *Arts for All* art tools, created by artist Dwayne Szot, are unique products that offer people of all abilities an opportunity for creative expression. These tools build self-esteem, improve mobility, and help anyone to become an artist. Paint rollers and chalk holders attached to wheelchairs allow the user to generate marks unlike any made with traditional materials. These tools are especially effective when studying landscape, because they can be used to produce large floor murals while surrounded by the colors and textures of the great outdoors.

For individuals who are blind, the Cummer has designed a series of lessons for creating landscape paintings composed of horizontal bands of water, land, and sky. Music is used to help interpret color, texture, and mood. Grids made with string allow each artist to determine the placement of their brush on the paper. Color, an important element even for those with limited sight, is distinguished through the use of different containers. The resulting paintings depict sensory experiences that involve sound, movement, touch, smell, and visual memories. For many, the most satisfying part of the lesson is the sheer pleasure found in the act of applying paint to paper while listening intently to the rising rhythms of a classical concerto.





SPRING EXHIBITIONS:

Vision 2002: The Cummer Contemporary
February 13 to March 30, 2002

First Encounters: Chief Saturiba and Florida's Timucua People
February 28 to May 26, 2002

Jacksonville Watercolor Society
March 22 to April 7, 2002

Toulouse-Lautrec: Artist of Montmartre
May 3 to July 14, 2002

ART CONNECTIONS EXHIBITIONS:

An Artistic Discovery
April 1 to 30, 2002

The Congressional student art show sponsored by Representative Ander Crenshaw.

Annual Awards Show of the Duval County Art Teachers Association
February 5 to March 30, 2002

An opening reception for area educators will be held on February 7th from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

RESOURCES

Visit these websites to find good art ideas and teacher lesson plans:

- www.2.h-net.msu.edu – *Humanities and Social Sciences On-line* offers on-line resources and discussion lists for educators.
- <http://vos.ucsb.edu> – *Voice of the Shuttle: Website for Humanities Research* offers a vast array of links and information relating various areas of the humanities.
- www.ithaca.edu/staff/jhenderson/humafro.html – *African Americans in the Humanities* offers links to information regarding African Americans and contributions to 20th century culture.
- www.zotartz.com – *Arts for All* website offers adaptive art-making tools for artists with disabilities.



Teacher In-Service Information:

Arts for All
Tuesday, February 5
8:30 AM-3:30 PM

The Timucua People: Native American Culture in the Classroom
Tuesday, February 19
8:30 AM-3:30 PM

Express Diversity Workshop
Friday, March 15
8:30 AM-12:30 PM

Social Studies through Theater and the Visual Arts
Friday, March 15
8:30 AM-12:30 PM

Educator Celebration
Thursday, May 21
5:30-7:30 PM

Learn more about exciting events at the Cummer by visiting our website at www.cummer.org. To book a tour, please call *Art Connections* at 355-0630.

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens • 829 Riverside Avenue • Jacksonville, Florida 32204 • (904) 356-6857



First Encounters is presented in part by FOCUS Cummer. FOCUS is Friends from the Ocean Communities United to Support the Cummer. Those interested in becoming FOCUS members (FOCUS members must be Cummer Museum members also) should call the FOCUS membership chair, Beth Knowles, at (904) 270-0985



Vision 2002 is presented in part by Bank of America.

Toulouse Lautrec is sponsored by Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.