CUBISM:

Camouflage Drawing and Sculptural Portrait

Cubism is often viewed as one of the most influential art movements of the 20th century. Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso are the two artists credited with starting cubism in 1906. The artists lived in Paris and worked closely with one another until the onset of WWI in 1914. Their work is frequently divided into two categories: analytical and synthetic cubism.

In Analytical Cubism, artists fragment the picture plane so multiple perspectives of the subject matter can be shown at one time. This creates the illusion of movement because we can see several angles of the same subject. The artist achieves this kaleidoscope-like effect by using lines to divide the artwork into geometric shapes. The colors in analytical cubism are usually neutral and muted. Changes in value, or shading, within the many angles help create interest and a sense of density. Subject matter is often ambiguous, or hard to determine.

Vocabulary

Contour Line: line that defines and describes the edges of a shape/form
Geometric Shapes: “Man-made shapes; usually have straight lines and corners
Unity: overall quality of wholeness in an artwork
Balance: equally distributed details in an artwork (can be symmetrical or asymmetrical)
Value: degree of lightness or darkness of a color
Contrast: degree of difference
Freestanding Sculpture: 3-D artwork that can be viewed from all angles or sides

Georges Braque, 1882-1963
Pablo Picasso, 1882-1973

Braque painted Violin and Candlestick in 1910.

Picasso painted Portrait of Kahnweiler, a well-known art dealer, in 1910.
Synthetic Cubism was the second phase of the cubist movement. In synthetic cubism, artists began to collage found elements into their work. Color starts to return to the work of Braque and Picasso. The picture plane continues to be fractured, but not necessarily as much as in analytic cubism. When Braque enlisted in the armed forces during WWI, Picasso continued to develop cubism on his own. Even though the cubist movement came to an end in the 1920’s, elements of cubism can be found in many of the portraits Picasso painted later in his career.

**Still Life with Violin and Flute**, Picasso, 1912

**Picasso created the Portrait of Marie-Therese in 1937**

**Weeping Woman**, by Picasso, was painted in 1937

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**Project #1: Cubist Camouflage Drawing**

The first cubist inspired project is a drawing that reflects the characteristics of analytical cubism.

1. You will begin by creating a contour line drawing of an object. It will be important to fill the page and keep your drawing simple.

2. Next, use a ruler to break up the space with crisscrossed lines and geometric shapes. Be sure to use lines that pass through your contour drawing and go from edge to edge.
3. Select a **color scheme** for your artwork. You may choose your color scheme from the box to the right. Limit yourself to 4 colors.

4. Using oil pastels, start to color your drawing. Within each geometric shape use **blending** to create a range of **values**. Think about how you will create **contrast** in the areas adjacent to each shape. (Should blending be worked in opposite directions? Will you choose different colors?)

**Color Schemes**

- **Analogous**: 3-4 colors that are neighbors on the wheel
- **Triad**: 3 colors that are equally spaced on the wheel
- **Warm**: reds, oranges, and yellows
- **Cool**: blue, green, and violet colors
- **Complimentary**: colors opposite one another on the wheel
- **Neutral**: mixing complementary colors lowers their intensity (grays and browns)

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**Project #2:**
**Sculptural Portrait**

The second cubist inspired project is a **sculpture** that resembles portraits created by Picasso in the years that followed his work with Georges Braque. You will manipulate a 3-D surface to create a portrait that reveals several views, or perspectives, of the face. The finished result will be distorted and interesting!

1. Secure a wire hanger into a wood base. Carefully **bend the wire** into an interesting shape. Your sculpture will be **freestanding** so be sure to examine it from all sides!

2. Next, carefully **stretch a knee-hi stocking** over the wire, all of the way down to the base. You want to avoid getting “runs” in the stocking, so watch for fingernails and jewelry that might snag your artwork!! When you have finished, check your sculpture again and make any desired **form** changes.

3. Apply several **layers of diluted glue** onto your sculpture. This will help strengthen the artwork as well as provide a base for the paint. Be sure to cover the entire sculpture, including the base!

4. While you are waiting for the glue to dry, make several **contour drawings** of your sculpture. Begin to plan where you will place the facial features. Think about how your artwork will resemble Picasso’s portraits!

5. Using your preliminary sketches as a guide, paint your 3-D portrait!