

 EVERSON MUSEUM OF ART

EDUCATOR PACKET

Only an Artist: Adelaide Robineau, American Studio Potter

MARCH 11 – MAY 21, 2006



Adelaide Alsop Robineau
Scarab Vase (The Apotheosis of the Toiler), 1910
Porcelain, Everson Museum of Art Museum Purchase.

Introduction

The Everson Museum of Art presents *Only an Artist: Adelaide Alsop Robineau, American Studio Potter* (March 11-May 21, 2006). *Only an Artist* features approximately 100 porcelains by Adelaide Alsop Robineau (1865-1929). These exquisite works are drawn largely from the Everson's collection, with additional key works from other public and private collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Beginning with Robineau's early experiments dating from 1904 to 1910, *Only an Artist* offers a selection of both the matte and crystalline glazes Robineau developed during this crucial period. A unique focus of *Only an Artist* is the representation of almost thirty works from the last three years of Robineau's life.

Our Objectives

The EMA provides this packet to help educators adapt these exhibition offerings to individual curriculum needs. In addition, this packet should enable each instructor to maximize the benefits of a guided tour of the exhibits. We hope that the benefits will be evident in your students' level of participation during and after their museum visit, as well as in your students' ability to transfer the information they learn from these exhibits to other projects.

Visual Thinking Strategies

The EMA utilizes the inquiry based, student-centered Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) curriculum in many of its tours and school-museum collaborations. We encourage educators to use VTS in the classroom to enable students to discuss works of art on their own terms, based on what they see and what they decide is interesting and important. A more comprehensive explanation of VTS can be found at the Visual Understanding in Education website, which we encourage you to visit at www.VUE.org. The role of the teacher as facilitator in this process is crucial to its success. If you would like to know more about VTS or are interested in receiving training, please call the Education Department at 474.6064. When scheduling a class tour, please consider requesting a VTS tour.

Adelaide Robineau and the Arts and Crafts Movement

The Arts and Crafts Movement is the name given to an art movement during the last half of the nineteenth century that sought to reassert the importance of finely designed and made objects during an era of increasing industrialization and mass-production. The movement was a reaction against the popular Victorian style, which was characterized by complex curvilinear forms, fringed and heavily decorated surfaces, and collections of ornamental objects. In both Britain and the United States, techniques of mass production promoted the creation of cheap reproductions of Victorian art objects

and furniture, making this style even more popular. Groups of artists and architects in both countries began to feel that the mass production of household goods was separating humans from their own creativity and individualism. They believed that people should live in an environment of carefully crafted and designed handmade objects, rather than in an environment of shoddy machine-made goods. These artists wanted a return to the honesty of good design focused on simplicity and functionality.

The Arts and Crafts Movement began in England, but quickly moved to the United States. In both countries, the movement centered around the creativity and skill of individual artists. Two artists, both from the Syracuse area, had particular influence in the American Arts and Crafts Movement. These artists—Gustav Stickley, a furniture maker, and Adelaide Robineau, a potter—became world-renowned for their skillful design and well-crafted wares (see biographies below).

Gustav Stickley

"What we plead for is discriminating labor, not mere slavery or unthinking play. It is productive work beyond mere financial returns that we believe will carry the final benefit for the human race." —Gustav Stickley

Born: 1858, Osceola, Wisconsin
Died: 1942, Syracuse, New York

First trained as a stonemason, Gustav Stickley preferred to work in wood and dreamt of building fine tables and chairs. He learned furniture making at his uncle's chair factory in Pennsylvania. Traveling to Europe in 1896, he met notable Arts and Crafts designers. The following year he returned to the United States and founded the United Crafts of Eastwood, New York. In 1904, Stickley founded the Craftsman Workshops in Syracuse. The furniture he designed was of a sturdy-plain design in contrast to the highly decorated late Victorian pieces. The woodwork was exposed and upholstery was made of more natural materials, such as canvas and leather. It became known as Mission Style.

Stickley's designs were exhibited at the prestigious Grand Rapids and Pan American furniture expositions. In 1901, Stickley founded the periodical known as *The Craftsman*, which explained and advocated for the philosophy of the English Arts & Crafts movement. As it matured, the publication is credited with being the leading voice of that movement in the United States. In 1903, Stickley established the Craftsman Home Builders Club to spread his ideas on domestic architecture. Working with architect Harvey Ellis, he designed house plans for the magazine that later appeared in two books: *Craftsman Homes* (1909) and *More Craftsman Homes* (1912). These books illustrated the homes' exteriors, as well as their interiors, and were accompanied by a floor plan. Stickley's beliefs regarding architecture, which were a major influence on architect Frank Lloyd Wright, included the following points:

- A house ought to be constructed in harmony with its landscape, with special attention paid to selecting local materials
- An open floor plan would encourage family interaction and eliminate unnecessary barriers
- Built-in bookcases and benches were practical and ensured that the house would not be completely reliant on furniture from outside
- Exposed structural elements, light fixtures, and hardware are all considered to be decorative
- Artificial light should be kept to a minimum, so large groupings of windows were necessary to bring in light.

Financial problems forced Stickley to stop publication of *The Craftsman* in 1916. While he lived another twenty-six years, Stickley's popularity had waned by the end of the World War I. In recent years, however, Stickley's furniture has once again grown in popularity as people have come to appreciate the fine design and technique and simplistic beauty of his designs.

Sources:

<http://www.arts-crafts.com/archive/gstickley.shtml>

http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/reference/gustav_stickley

Adelaide Alsop Robineau 1865-1929

Born: 1865, Middletown, Connecticut

Died: 1929, Syracuse, New York

Adelaide Alsop Robineau (1865-1929) was one of the most influential artist-potters in America at the turn of the twentieth century. Her life-long relationship with ceramics began within months of graduating from finishing school, when she took up china painting, a fashionable pastime for middle-class women. China painting was primarily a means to personalize the home with beautiful objects. However, for entrepreneurially inclined women, like as Robineau, who had the ability to teach and produce painted objects for sale, it was also an acceptable source of income. In 1904, at the age of thirty-nine, Robineau traded her secure position as a leading practitioner and instructor of china painting for the supreme challenge of working with the difficult medium of high-fire porcelain. She was driven by the desire to handle the entire artistic process from "clay to finish."

Not content to simply paint forms created by others, she began studying ceramics under Charles Binns at Alfred University, and painting under William Merritt Chase, a famed American Impressionist. She married Samuel E. Robineau in 1899, and, with his help, set up a small kiln and studio producing an ornate line of superbly executed work. Robineau lived and worked in Syracuse from the 1900s until her death in 1929. The

Robineau's also edited *Keramic Studio*, the first magazine in the United States to focus on ceramic design and technique. This magazine was very influential in spreading interest in hand made ceramics and bringing the ideas of the Arts and Crafts Movement to the United States.

Robineau's porcelain-making career spanned a dynamic period in the history of fine art. She lived in an era that embraced classicism and naturalism; a period that valued the hand-made object on a par with painting and sculpture; a time that saw the Arts and Crafts movement and the Art Nouveau style give way to the more abstract, austere and modern expressions of Art Deco. Robineau's porcelains have characteristics derived from each of these influences, but they also point to the path of painterly decoration that akin to the studio pottery movement that followed her era.

Robineau's early experiments as a potter (1904 to 1908) show a potter growing rapidly more able and confident in working with glazes, carving, piercing, incising and excising surface decoration. She drew her inspirations from an eclectic range of historical motifs, including Asian, Egyptian, Native American and pre-Columbian sources. By 1913, Robineau developed her distinctive high-fire bronze, a thin black-brown matte glaze.

Robineau's porcelains from the 1910s demonstrate her gradual turning away from the use of pictorial motifs as she concentrated instead on the clean-lined shape of the object. Specific allusions to insects, flowers and other anecdotal motifs all but disappeared. She sometimes enlivened the surfaces with repetitive rings of horizontal ridges; but other times she left the body smooth except for decorative incising at the neck. When she gave carving prominence as decoration, it clearly exhibited the controlled and smooth stretch of Art Deco's repetitive rays and waves.

Adelaide Robineau was an unusual woman for her day, having already established her national reputation as a china painter, publisher and artist by the time she began making her first ceramics in 1901. She was also the mother of three children, and taught on the staffs of both Syracuse University and the People's University of the American Woman's League. The Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse houses the largest collection of her ceramics, including her most famous work, the Scarab Vase. The home and studio that she built still stand on Robineau Road overlooking Onondaga Park and downtown Syracuse.

Sources:

<http://www.glenclale.edu/--rkibler/scarabvase.html>

http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/antiques_and_collectibles/100576

<HTTP://WWW.CERAMICSTODAY.COM/ARTICLES/ROBINEAU.HTM>

Lesson 1 MEMORIAL PLATES

New York State Standards Addressed:

The Arts Standard 1: Creating, Performing, and Participating in The Arts 121

The Arts Standard 2: Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources

The Arts Standard 3: Responding To and Analyzing Works of Art

The Arts Standard 4: Understanding The Cultural Dimensions and Contributions of the Arts

One of the ceramic works of note in the Everson's collection is the funerary urn of Adelaide Robineau. The urn, titled Cinerary Urn, was started by Robineau, but finished by Robineau's disciple Carlton Atherton after her death. The urn, which was donated to the museum by Robineau's husband, is used to hold her ashes and is on permanent display in the Everson.

Questions to Consider

- o Why do we create memorials to people?
- o Have you ever visited a public memorial or monument? Did it feel formal or intimate? How do you feel about visiting a gallery in a museum where someone's ashes are part of a display? Would you want to have your death publicly remembered? Why or why not?

Materials

- o White clay
- o Clay modeling tools
- o Watercolor paints and brushes
- o Acrylic paints and brushes
- o Chalk and oil pastels
- o Neutral paste shoe wax or spray polyurethane
- o Foam plates
- o Epoxy and hooks (for hanging plates on the wall)
- o Hand extruders

Process

In this project, the student will create a plate to memorialize a person in his or her life who is no longer there—it could be from death or from changed circumstances, such as moving, breaking up with a boy/girlfriend, etc. The finished plate should have at least five references to the person being memorialized. The challenge is to incorporate these references into a finished piece that is well crafted and pleasing to look at.

1. Have students look at and discuss the image of Cinerary Urn included in this packet. Does it look like an urn for holding ashes? Is it a good memorial to Robineau? Why or why not?
2. Using the question sheet provided, have students begin to plan a memorial to a specific person in their lives. When the sheets are completed, have students narrow the worksheet down to a list of five or six major characteristics or emotions they want to communicate about this person. Working in groups or with partners, have them brainstorm visual symbols that could represent these concepts. Students may research symbols from a variety of cultures in the library, or using websites such as <http://www.symbols.com/index/wordindex-a.html> (a searchable list of symbols used in western cultures) or <http://www.writedesignonline.com/assignments/masks/animalsymbolism.htm> (a list of animal symbolism with links to other sites).
3. Have students create 4-5 thumbnail sketches of their finished plate, considering creating both low- and high-relief elements, as well as carved areas.
4. Demonstrate the slab process, using the foam plates as a drape mold to form the base plate.
5. Show students how to combine clay techniques (additive, subtractive, pinch pots, coiling extruding carving, etc.) to create the remaining elements of their plates, making sure to stress the importance of slipping and scoring to keep the elements attached during firing. As students progress, hold mini-demonstrations for techniques that students are struggling with. Before pieces are fired, make sure that students carefully clean up all edges and surfaces, especially since these will not be glazed.
6. When the plates have been bisque-fired, use a slab of fired clay to demonstrate wet- and dry-brush watercolor techniques, acrylic paint applied full strength or diluted to a wash, chalk and oil pastels applied directly onto the plate or using cotton swaps and fingertips to soften the edges. When the surfaces are finished, have students rub paste shoe wax into the chalk as a fixative, or spray (outside) with polyurethane for a shiny finish. Epoxy picture hanging hooks onto the backs of the plates for hanging.
7. Focus evaluation and critiques of the plates on the emotions and ideas communicated through the various visual elements. What do students plan to do with the plates now that they are done? Do they feel the plate is a fitting memorial to the person? Why or why not?

Extension Ideas

1. Writing: Have students create free-form poetry about the person being memorialized, using the memorial plate as a starting point for the writing. Display the plate and poem together.
2. Drawing: Have students bring in five objects that represent a person important in their lives (or that represent themselves). Create contour line drawings of each object on five different sheets of paper (consider using different types of paper for different drawings). Use the interior space of the objects to write about the emotional/symbolic importance of each object (writing may also be typed and collaged into the interior space of the objects). Arrange the drawings into a pleasing composition and collage together, drawing and/or writing on top of the collage as it progresses.
3. Sculpture: On copier paper, have students list all of the people they can think of who have had an impact on their lives. The impact may be positive or negative, major or minor. They must list at least 25 people. Have students rewrite the list as many times as necessary to fill the entire space of the 8 1/2 x 11 paper. Make 5 photocopies of each list. Starting with a 10" square support of mat board or foam core, use the photocopies to create a 3-dimensional design—cutting, tearing, ripping, folding, spiraling and gluing the paper in any way possible to create 3 dimensions using only the paper attached to the mat board. The sculptures become autobiographical memorials of the influential people in students' lives.

Name:

Date:

Memorial Plates Worksheet

1. Who is the person you would like to remember in this project?
2. What is his or her relationship to you?
3. How old were you when you met this person?
4. What did this person like to do in his or her free time?
5. What did he or she do for work?
6. What made this person special or different for you?
7. What colors do you think of when you think about this person? Why?
8. What kind of music did he or she listen to?
9. How would you describe the character of this person (honest, caring, funny, etc.)?
10. What accomplishment do you think this person is most proud of?
11. What were some major milestones in his or her life?
12. What do you most want to remember about this person?
13. What was really important to this person (other people, pets, events, etc.)?

Lesson 2 CAREFULLY CRAFTED CERAMIC SERIES

New York State Standards Addressed:

The Arts Standard 1: Creating, Performing, and Participating in The Arts

The Arts Standard 2: Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources

The Arts Standard 3: Responding To and Analyzing Works of Art 121

The Arts Standard 4: Understanding The Cultural Dimensions and Contributions of the Arts

One of the important issues for artists who were part of the Arts and Crafts Movement was creating quality handmade objects. As a group, they rejected society's reliance on machine-made goods and sought to heighten consumers' awareness of the beauty of handmade objects. Adelaide Robineau is said to have spent over 1,000 hours carving the scarab vase, which eventually went on to win her international honors. When the vase came out of the kiln, there were several small cracks in the work. Her teacher at that time advised her to discard the work and begin again as it appeared irreparable. Instead, Robineau spent hours grinding bisque into a paste with powdered glaze, and filled the cracks. Then she reglazed and finished the piece. It emerged perfectly intact with no signs of the repairs. This level of dedication to artistic production was a hallmark of the Arts and Crafts era artists.

Questions to consider:

- o How many of the things that you use on a daily basis are handmade? How and where are they made? Why do you think our society uses more machine-made than handmade goods?
- o How would your life be different if a majority of the objects you used on a daily basis were handmade?
- o Think of someone you know who is skilled at making something by hand that most people would simply buy at the store. It could be someone who sews clothing, makes jewelry, bakes bread, etc. Why do you think that person chooses to spend time creating by hand rather than simply purchasing the goods at the store?
- o What are some of the advantages to living in a society in which most of our goods are mass-produced? What are some of the disadvantages?

Materials

- o Clay
- o Clay modeling tools
- o Potter's wheel (optional)

Process

In this project, students will create a series of four functional ceramic forms that match each other in form and size, with only a decorative detail that distinguishes one from the other. The goal is to challenge students to pay close attention to form and to push their technical skills.

1. Have students begin with several thumbnail sketches to establish the form they would like to work on. Encourage students to look at examples of ceramic forms from Robineau or other Arts and Crafts Movement artists, noting the simplicity of form that characterizes much of the work. Remind students that they will be creating four of these vessels, so simplicity of form will also help in terms of time. The finished design could be as simple as a small bowl with a carved leaf that changes slightly from one to the other. When both student and teacher agree on a basic form, students should begin planning the decorative detail that will change slightly from one form to the other. Again, encourage students to look at the design elements used by Robineau or other artists whose work they respect.
2. Students should then begin planning the process through which they will create their forms. A key component of this stage will be planning how to make the forms match in size and form. Should the same amount of clay be used for each? How will students measure and set aside the clay to ensure consistency in their process? Will students be throwing or hand-building their forms? Have students complete the planning worksheet below to help in the planning process.
3. As students begin production on this series, encourage them to stay focused on the idea of attention to detail and making the vessels match in size and form as much as possible. Remind them to take the time after the forms are created to spend at least two class periods "cleaning up" the forms so that the walls and surface are as smooth as possible. Focus the critique and evaluation for this project on the idea of carefully crafted work. What was difficult about this project? How does it differ from the way the students usually work? How did it feel to work carefully on the small details of these forms?

Extension Ideas

1. Drawing: Bring in several ceramic forms that you think are well crafted. Have students create a series of three drawings of a single ceramic form from different points of view, paying careful attention to the exact lines and proportions of the form. Discuss the idea of artistry and the decisions that go into creating each specific vessel. Students can use these drawings as a starting point for a series that explores light and shadow, mixing of media, color theory, etc.

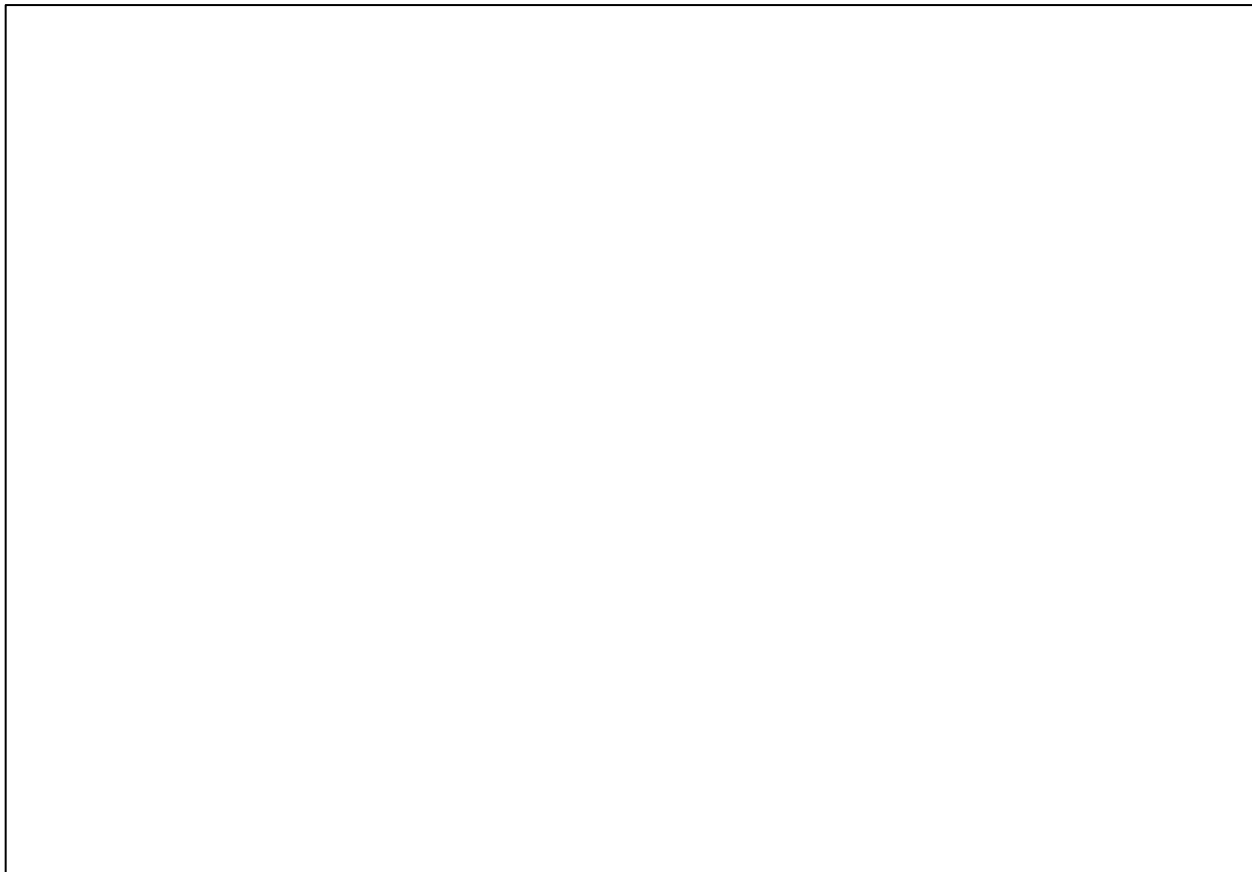
2. Writing: Have students interview someone in their lives who is particularly skilled in a certain area. That skill might be car repair, carpentry, sewing, cake decorating, etc. How did the person become so skilled? Did he or she attend school for it? Was it passed down by another person? Is the skill used to earn an income or for some other reason? What has kept this person's interest in this particular skill? Has he or she taught it to another person?

Name:

Date:

Carefully Crafted Series Planning Sheet

In the box below, draw the form that you intend to create for this series of hour finished works:



1. What method will you use to create this form? Why?

2. What can you do before you start building the forms to help ensure they will be the same size when they are finished?

3. What do you think will make this project “good” when it is finished? In other words, what should you be thinking about as you build the forms so that they meet the project criteria when they are finished?

In the box below, draw the four forms to show the decorative detail that will change even though the four forms will stay the same in size and shape.

4. How will you create the decorative detail? (carving, slip, underglaze, attaching clay, etc.)

Lesson 3 SYMBOLIC PAPER ANIMAL MASK

New York State Standards Addressed:

The Arts Standard 1: Creating, Performing, and Participating in The Arts

The Arts Standard 2: Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources

The Arts Standard 3: Responding To and Analyzing Works of Art

The Arts Standard 4: Understanding The Cultural Dimensions and Contributions of the Arts

One of Adelaide Robineau's most well known ceramic works is a large vessel known as *The Apotheosis of the Toiler*. It is reported that, by the time the piece was built, carved, repaired and glazed, Robineau had dedicated over 1000 hours to working on it. The prominent design motif is the scarab beetle, an insect sacred to the ancient Egyptians. The image of the scarab beetle is carved over and over on the surface of Robineau's vase, giving the piece the nickname 'Scarab Vase.' Due to its observance of daily routines, the scarab beetle was seen by the Egyptians as a symbol of the cycle of day and night, life and death, and immortality. The scarab beetle was important to Robineau because it symbolized the ongoing labor of the craftsperson.

Questions to Consider

- What animal represents hard work to you? How do you think you came to associate that particular animal with the idea of hard work?
- What do you think inspired Robineau to dedicate more than 1000 hours of work on a single ceramic piece? What do you dedicate a lot of time to?

Materials

- Watercolor paper
- Watercolor paints and brushes
- Texturizing substances—salt, plastic wrap, aluminum foil, rubbing alcohol, crayons, etc.
- Spray glue or high quality glue sticks
- Mat board or other stiff paper
- Tracing paper (optional)
- Tissue paper (optional—for adding final details)
- Siring and hot glue gun (optional—for hanging)

Process

In this project, students will create a mask of an animal that represents specific traits or characteristics. To create the mask, they will use paper that has been decorated through marbling and/or a variety, of watercolor techniques. The goal of this project will

be to simplify the animal face so that the Mask can be identified as a particular animal while maintaining an emphasis on the symbolic significance of that animal.

1. Begin this project by researching the symbolic significance of animals. If you wish, have students bring in examples of popular culture animals from home (stuffed animals, sports logos, cereal mascots, etc.), or have them gather images from magazines and the internet. They should focus on objects/images that show our cultural use of animals. Objects/images should be spread out on tables. Each student will have to choose two to write about on the attached worksheet.
2. Have students complete the "Symbolic Significance" worksheet attached. As students complete the worksheet, you may want to lead the class in a discussion about cultural use of animal symbols. Why do Disney movies so often focus on telling stories through the use of animals? Why do sports teams often choose animals as their mascots? By the end of the worksheet, students should have narrowed down their selection to an animal that is personally significant to them and have a sense of the animal's most important features.
3. Students should then begin planning the design. This mask will eventually be created on watercolor paper that is adhered to mattboard. There will be a single vertical fold down the center to give it a sense of 3-dimensionality. Demonstrate the process of identifying the unique features of an animal and sketching a simplified version of the face. The emphasis should be on maintaining the character of the animal while simplifying the form in an aesthetically pleasing, decorative way. When a final sketch is completed, students should use colored pencils to create a color plan for the animal.
4. Demonstrate creating textures using watercolor with saran wrap, salt, resists (such as rubber cement or crayons), aluminum foil, splattering, etc. Students may find it helpful to experiment on scrap watercolor paper before beginning their actual project. Marbling is also a good way to create textured decorative paper. When they are comfortable with these methods, students should begin creating textures on sheets of watercolor paper, based on the colors established in their color plans. Eventually, these sheets will be cut and collaged to form the mask, so the textured paper should be approximately the size (or slightly larger) than the pieces of the face that they will be used to create.
5. When the paper is textured and dried, students should begin cutting out pieces in the size and shape needed for each part of the face. If necessary, they can use tracing paper over their original sketch to trace the shapes, then use these as a template for cutting shapes out of the decorated paper. When the main shape of the face is cut out, this should be attached to a piece of mat board (or other stiff paper) that has been cut to the same size and shape. Glue sticks or spray adhesive work best for this. This main face shape should then be folded down

the middle to create a sense of 3- dimensionality. The remaining pieces of the face can then be attached, again using glue sticks or spray adhesive.

6. When the major components of the face are in place, students can critique in small groups or with partners to decide what finishing touches need to be added. There might be parts of the face that need more emphasis, or additional paper that could be added to give more texture (tissue paper fringe around the ears of a lion, for example).
7. When complete, string can be hot-glued onto the back of each for hanging.

SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE

Name:

Class:

Directions: Choose two of the animal objects or images from the selection in the room and answer the following questions about them.

1. What animal is represented in the objects or images you chose?

Animal #1:

Animal #2:

2. What characteristics do you generally associate with this animal?

Animal #1:

Animal #2:

3. How is the animal used in the image you are looking at? In other words, why do you think the animal was chosen to represent this product or idea? (to make a sports team look fierce, or a facial tissue seem soft, for example)

Animal #1:

Animal #2:

4. What choices did the artist make to focus your attention on specific characteristics? In other words, if a lion is supposed to look fierce for this image, how is it made to look particularly fierce? Are certain facial features or body parts emphasized? Are any left out?

Animal #1:

Animal #2:

Now it's time to start focusing on the mask you will be making. The first step is to choose an animal that is important to you.

1. What personal characteristics are important to you? List at least 10.

2. Look back at the list you just created and circle the most important 2 or 3. Is there an animal you can think of that is often associated with these characteristics? If you need to, take a look at the following website:
<http://www.princetonol.com/groupshacifiessonshniddle/animals2.htm>. This website lists the symbolism of animals in many different cultures.

3. Decide which animal best represents the personal characteristics you would like to show in your mask. If you are having trouble deciding between one or two animals, consider which one you would most enjoy recreating, or create a combination of the two animals.

Animal you have chosen to create:

What are the important features of this animal? (thick mane, sharp teeth, curved horns, etc.):

Keep these important features in mind as you begin planning your mask design!!!

Lesson 4 LOCAL LINKS

New York State Standards Addressed:

ELA Standard 1: Language for Information and Understanding

ELA Standard 4: Language for Social Interaction

Social Studies Standard 1: History of the United States and New York

Social Studies Standard 3: Geography

The Arts Standard 4: Understanding The Cultural Dimensions and Contributions of the Arts

In a 1915 letter to Fernando Carter, director of what was then known as the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts, Adelaide Robineau wrote: "Syracuse has at least two unique boasts to make: There is the salt which gives its savor. And there are the Robineau Porcelains!" As it happens, Syracuse is still known for its Arts and Crafts heritage — from Robineau's pottery to the continuing tradition of Stickley furniture. The Arts and Crafts movement also left a lasting impact on Syracuse in the form of the many Arts and Crafts style homes, which distinguish Syracuse neighborhoods. Adelaide Robineau herself left a distinct imprint on the Strathmore neighborhood of Syracuse. The Robineau family moved to Syracuse, where their magazine *Keramic Studio* was being printed, in 1901. They were attracted to Syracuse in part by the desire to consolidate business operations on *Keramic Studio*, and in part by the presence of Stickley, whose *Craftsman* magazine had already made Syracuse well known.

In 1903 the Robineau's purchased a parcel of land in what was then an undeveloped area of Syracuse. They built a house and studio on a hillside overlooking the city of Syracuse, and also sold plots of land to homeowners who agreed to build homes in styles approved by the Robineau's. They even lent their name to the road on which their home still stands — Robineau Road. By 1930, this area had become the Strathmore neighborhood of Syracuse, populated with many homes in the Arts and Crafts style approved by the Robineau's.

Questions to Consider:

- What factors determine where people decide to establish communities? What inspired the growth of your neighborhood or town? Was it an aspect of the existing physical geography (hills, rivers, salt flats) or the presence of man-made features such as highways, railroads, or workplaces?
- Where do streets, schools, and public buildings get their names? Who or what do these names commemorate? Is this a successful way to honor someone's memory?
- What stylistic and idealistic commonalities are there between Arts and Crafts architecture and the work of Gustav Stickley and Adelaide Robineau?

Materials

- Computers with internet access
- Strathmore "By the Park" Promotional brochure (in packet)
- Strathmore map copies (in packet)
- Prospectus for current housing development (optional)

Process

In this lesson, we shift from focusing on the specifics of Adelaide Robineau's craft to looking at the broader impact Robineau had on the city of Syracuse. These activities offer opportunities for inter-disciplinary collaboration and encourage students to analyze visual materials as historical documents.

1. As a class, compare and contrast the maps of the Strathmore neighborhood. How did the neighborhood change between 1890 and 1930? Look at the photograph of Adelaide Robineau's home from 1911. What signs of modern city living do you notice in the picture? What is different from contemporary city streets?
2. Look at the image of Robineau's Syracuse home (from 1911) on the cd and the images of Arts and Crafts homes available at:

<http://1164.66.180.31/archive/sears/index.shtml>

http://www.ragtime.org/archirs/RS_Homes.html

<http://www.oldhouses.com/stylesuide/arts-and-crafts-houses.htm>

Ask students to identify stylistic similarities between these houses. It may be helpful to share images of Victorian or Italianate style homes as a comparison. As a class, draw up a list of properties that might be used to identify Arts and Crafts style homes. Have students seen similar homes in their neighborhood or elsewhere in Central New York?

3. Divide students into seven groups and give each group a page from the "Strathmore by the Park" prospectus. Students will practice gathering historical evidence from documents by analyzing this brochure. Post the following questions on the board or distribute them on a worksheet. What historical factors impacted the development of Strathmore on the Park? What factors did the builders think would be important to potential homebuyers? How would you describe the city of Syracuse based on these advertisements? Why might the builders offer to send a car for prospective buyers? What does this offer tell us about patterns of car ownership? Have each group present their conclusions along with their visual and textual evidence for these conclusions.
4. Point out "Robineau Road" on the map of Strathmore. Look at maps of your town or neighborhood, or a map of downtown Syracuse. Can students locate other streets named after prominent local or national figures? Discuss - does naming a

street after someone help us remember them? Does it honor them? Have each student identify a street they would like to rename in memory of an important person (can be important to them, or significant locally, nationally, or artistically). Have students write proposals describing the person, their significance, the location of the street, and why they think this person should be commemorated in this particular place.

Extension Ideas

1. Geography: Have students investigate current housing trends by going online to <http://www.syracuse.com/paradeofhomest> or bring in the Real Estate section from your Sunday paper. Look at the ads for new housing developments. What features do the developers emphasize in their promotional materials? Are they the same as the features emphasized in the Strathmore promotional materials? Have students plot the locations of the new developments on a map of Onondaga County. What do they notice about where these developments are located? What cultural, historical, and technological changes have contributed to allowing people to live in these locations? What might this land have been used for before?

Glossary

Aesthetics — The branch of philosophy that deals with the nature and value of art objects and experiences. It is concerned with identifying the clues within works that can be used to understand, judge, and defend judgments about those works.

(www.artlex.com)

Art Movement — An artistic style or tendency seen in the intentions or works of a number of artists, because there is a striking similarity among the techniques, philosophy or goals they have embraced, or in the attitudes, which they espouse, in a (more or less) organized effort. Art movements have each thrived for a limited time — measured in a few months, years or decades. (www.aitiex.com)

Art Nouveau — French for "The New Art." An international art movement and style of decoration and architecture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, characterized particularly by the curvilinear depiction of leaves and flowers, often in the form of vines. These might also be described as foliate forms, with sinuous lines, and non-geometric, "whiplash" curves. Gustav Klimt (Austrian, 1862-1918), Alphonse Mucha (Czechoslovakian, 1860-1939), Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (French, 1864-1901), Aubrey Beardsley (English, 1872-1898), Antonio Gaudí (Spanish, 1852-1926), and Hector Guimard (French, 1867-1942) were among the most prominent artists associated with this style. The roots of Art Nouveau go back to Romanticism, Symbolism, the English Arts and Crafts Movement and William Morris (English, 1834-1896). In America, it inspired, among others, Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933). It reached the peak of its popularity around 1900, only to be gradually overtaken by art deco and other modernist styles. (www.artlex.com)

Arts and Crafts — An artistic movement, most prevalent in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which emphasized handwork simplicity and craftsmanship over mass-produced, highly ornamented art and architecture. Inspired by the writings of John Ruskin and William Morris, arts and crafts work focused on "honest design" — allowing the qualities of the materials used to shine through, rather than covering them with veneers or ornamentation.

Bisque — Clay that has been fired once but not glazed. Also called biscuit.

Body — A blend of clay and other ingredients that comprise the substances that form ceramics; often referred to as clay body, or paste in porcelain work.

Casting — A process of forming clay objects by pouring slip into a hollow plaster mold and allowing it to remain long enough for a layer of clay to thicken on the mold wall. After hardening the puddle of slip in the center of the mold is poured off and the mold is opened. The clay object is removed, allowed to dry, and then fired. Casting allows for

numerous forms to be created from a single mold. This process is also referred to as slip casting.

Ceramics — Pottery or hollow clay sculpture fired at high temperatures in a kiln or oven to make them harder and stronger. Types include earthenware, porcelain, stoneware's, and terra coma.

Cone — A scale for measuring the temperature of a kiln. A cone is shaped like an elongated pyramid. Each has an index number that identifies a certain melting point. When the temperature is reached, the top of the pyramid sags until it is level with its base.

Design — The organization or composition of a work of art; the skilled arrangement of its parts. An effective design is one in which the elements of art and principles of design have been combined to achieve an overall sense of unity. Design also refers to the production of attractive and well-crafted functional objects. Subcategories of the design arts include: architecture, bonsai, fashion design, furniture design, graphic design, ikebana, industrial design, interior design, landscape architecture, stagecraft, textile design, and Web page design. (www.artlex.com)

Earthenware — Opaque, low-fired ware that is usually red or tan in color. The bisque firing is normally 1125° C; the glaze 1800°C.

Excision — A method of carving in which the background is removed, leaving a raised foreground. Most of Robineau's carved works are excised.

Firing — A process of applying heat to make hard pottery in a kiln. Also the means of fixing colors to ceramic surfaces.

Glaze — A term used in ceramics to describe a thin coating of minerals, which produces a glassy transparent or colored coating on bisqueware.

Grand feu — Literally, "high fire" porcelain. Adelaide Robineau learned this technique from the writings of French master Taxile Doat.

Greenware — Ceramic objects that have been formed but have not been fired.

Hard-Paste Porcelain — or simply hard paste. Porcelain that is fired until it hardens or *vitrifies*. Unlike soft-paste porcelain, hard-paste only needs one firing.

Incision — A method of carving in which the foreground is carved away, producing an image, which is recessed into the surface of the piece.

Industrial Revolution — The complex of radical socioeconomic changes, such as the ones that took place in England in the late 18th century, that are brought about when extensive mechanization of production systems results in a shift from home-based hand manufacturing to large-scale factory production. (www.dictionmuy.com)

Kiln— A special oven or furnace that can reach very high temperatures and is used to bake, or fire clay. Kilns may be electric, gas, or wood-fired.

Mass Production — The manufacture of goods in large quantities, often using standardized designs and assembly-line techniques. (www.dictionary.com)

Mold—A form that is usually made of plaster of paris and contains a hollow negative form. A positive form is made by pouring clay slip or soft clay into the mold. The clay hardens as the mold absorbs water from it, then is removed. See Casting.

Porcelain—A hard, white, translucent clay body that is high-fired. See Hard-paste porcelain, Soft-paste porcelain.

Slip—A mixture of clay and water that has a fluid consistency. Slip is used for casting; for joining components to forms, such as a handle to a vessel; and for decorating the surface of a body prior to firing. When used for decorative purposes, slip is often colored. Also called slip clay or slurry.

Soft-Paste Porcelain—A clay body that matures to vitreous hardness at a lower firing temperature than hard-paste porcelain. Soft-paste porcelain must be fired unglazed and then refired for glazing.

Stoneware—All ceramicware fired between 2,100 and 2,300 degrees.

Terracotta— (1) A low fired unglazed, usually red earthenware body that is fairly coarse and porous; and (2) objects made of an earthenware body.

Underglaze—Coloring or decoration applied to pottery before glazing.

Vitreous— The hard, glassy and nonabsorbent quality of a body of glaze.

Ware— A ceramic vessel in raw, bisque, or fired state, such as greenware, earthenware, or firedware; and pottery with the same characteristics.

Wheel— A flat, cylindrical surface, that can be rotated for a long period of time (usually with the help of a flywheel) on which a potter builds a vessel. The high rotation speed and force it creates assist in shaping the vessel into a balanced form. Wheels or Potter's wheels may be driven mechanically by kicking or turning a stick, or electronically.

Web Links

Robineau

<http://www.ceramicstoday.com/articles/robineau.htm>

http://www.metmuseum.org/Works_of_Art/viewOne.asp?dep=l&viewmode=0&item=26.37

<http://www.syracusesthenandnow.net/Nghbrhds/Strathmore/Strathmore.htm>

Arts and Crafts Movement

<http://www.arts-crafts.com/> <http://www.burrows.com/found.html>

<http://www.morrissociety.org/> <http://anc.gray-cells.com/Intro.html>

Print References

Bowman, Leslie Greene. *American Arts and Crafts: Virtue in Design*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1990.

Ludwig, Coy L. *The Arts and Crafts Movement in New York State 1890s — 1920s*. Hamilton, NY: Gallery Association of New York, 1983.

Piche, Thomas Jr., ed. *Only an Artist: Adelaide Alsop Robineau, American Studio Potter*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006.

Weiss, Peg, ed. *Adelaide Alsop Robineau: Glory in Porcelain*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1981.