

Adopt an Artwork 2025 -2026

In Season: Still Life Painting

"Still Life with Strawberries and Cherries", Margaretta Peale

Nicole Vadnais

Sussex Tech, Sussex County

9th-12th

Visual Art/Photography

OVERVIEW

Using the still life of Margaretta Angelica Peale as inspiration, students will explore the concept of still life painting. Historically, still lives depict common and seasonal foods and objects (fruits, flowers, drink), that do not move or are dead. Still lives can, "...celebrate or warn of the brevity of life." (Tate.org.uk)

This unit further explores a fresh technical perspective on, "still life" through the artwork of Alexa Meade. Meade is a renowned painter and photographer who paints directly onto three dimensional objects and people, then photographs the result, turning the three-dimensional into two dimensions visually.

TIME REQUIRED

Nine 90-minute class periods

STANDARDS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

- Create 1:2 Generate And Conceptualize Artistic Ideas And Work
- Responding 7:2 Perceive And Analyze Artistic Work
- Create 3:1 Refine And Complete Artistic Work

STUDENT "I CAN STATEMENTS"

- I CAN shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of contemporary life using a contemporary practice of art.
- I CAN hypothesize ways in which art influences perception and understanding of human experiences.
- I CAN engage in constructive critique with peers. I CAN reflect on, revise, and refine works of art in response to person

MATERIALS

- Acrylic Paint - Apple Blossom
- Gesso
- Canvases
- Brushes
- Oil Paint
- Oil Paint Washer Fluid
- Some Good Oily Stuff
- Lights - Rechargables
- Frames - 12" X 18"
- Foam Core
- Adjustable Stands
- 11 X 17" Photographic Prints

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Lesson 1 - Day One:

- Warm Up: Reproduce A Detail From Still Life With Strawberries And Cherries Using Acrylic Paint On Paper.
- Lesson Activity: Using Sketchnotes And The Handouts From The Biggs And HH House, Summarize Information About The Artist.
- Exit Ticket: In Your Sketchbook, Respond To: During painting, what is something you were successful with? What is something that was challenging?

Lesson 2 - Day Two:

- Warm Up: Summarize Information About The Artist Using All Six Parts Of Sketchnoting While Watching The Ted Talk.
- Lesson Activity: Practice Painting Techniques Of Alexa Meade.
- Exit Ticket: In your sketchbook, write a response to the following: Compare and contrast the work and history of Alexa Meade and ... List three similarities and three differences; include subject matter.

Lesson 3 - Day Three:

- Warm Up: In Your Sketchbook And Using A Colored Pencil, Sketch One Of The Still Lifes From Slide Number 13. Write The Nomenclature Next To Your Sketch.
- Lesson Activity: Using Lighting And Backdrops, Create Your Own Still Life Using Items From Your Backpack. (2-6 Students Will Contribute To Each Arrangement.
- Exit Ticket: In your sketchbook, write a response to the following: How did the group decide on the arrangement of your still life after discussing still life paintings?

Lesson 4 - Day Four:

- Warm Up: Gather Supplies For Painting And Paint For 20 Minutes On Your Still Life Study
- Lesson Activity: As A Class, Read Over The Three Options From The Project Menu For Your Summative Still Life.
- Exit Ticket: In your sketchbook, write a response to the following: Why did you select the project you chose from the project menu? List 3 reasons using information gathered from the first three classes (research, paint samples

Lesson 5 - Day 5:

- Warm Up: Ask Your Partner Which Project They Chose And Which Is The Most Meaningful Element In Their Still Life And Why. Write The Response In Your Sketchbook. Share Responses With The Class.
- Lesson Activity: Continue Work On Your Summative Still Life. Practice Painting Techniques Of Alexa Meade.
- Exit Ticket: In your sketchbook, write a response to the following: What is going well with your project? What are you struggling with?

Lesson 6 - Day 6:

- Warm Up: Take Out Sketchbooks And Review All Notes And Sketchnotes. Make A List Of The 3 Most Important Things From Your Entries This Unit. Share With The Class Why These Items Are Most Important.
- Lesson Activity: Continue Work On Your Summative Still Life
- Exit Ticket: In your sketchbook, write a response to the following: After reviewing all the notes you've taken, which part of the unit is most important to you in the creation of your Summative Still Life?

Lesson 7 - Day 7:

- Full Studio Work Day

Lesson 8 - Day 8:

- Warm Up: Preview the "about the artist" worksheet. Complete the items related to your life and experiences.
- Lesson Activity: Complete work on your summative still life. Type your completed statement and post to Schoology for printing.

Lesson 9 - Day 9:

- Warm Up: Prepare your artwork for photographing in the studio. Check that it is signed (can use acrylic marker).

- Lesson Activity: Photograph your finished work and post your artist statement and still life in the gallery. Type nomenclature card and select artifact for group display. Make sure it is signed
- Verbal Peer Critique: Review the three choices for the assignment. Which do you prefer and why? Which work do you find technically superior and why? What is the most important criteria to consider?

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

- Formative:
 - Sketchnotes from Biggs and Hammond-Harwood House Museum website of Margaretta Angelica Peale, her work and life.
 - Sketchnotes from two sources about Alexa Meade, her work and life.
 - Exit Tickets: various responses to questions in sketchbook.
 - Paint samples:
 - Detail section of Peale's Still Life With Strawberries And Cherries, using paint to "sketch" the work first
 - Direct paint onto 3-D objects (oranges/other) in the style of Alexa Meade.
 - Paint Study of still life with objects from our bookbags
- Summative:
 - Completed still life painting (selected from Project Menu)
 - Display of finished still life with typed background information about the artist, their work, and life.

VOCABULARY

- Still Life - a traditional painting incorporating items that are found locally in season. Items may represent a celebration of or the brevity of life.
- Realism - Realism is an art movement characterized by the truthful, accurate depiction of everyday life and ordinary people, rejecting idealized subjects in favor of a faithful representation of reality
- Highlights - The brightest or most intensely lit spot on an object, painting, or photograph where light hits directly.
- Shadows - a dark area where an object blocks a source of light.
- In Season - Items/consumer goods that are fashionable or fresh at the time in the local area
- Consumer Culture - Eg. Starbucks Glass Bear Cup
- Genre Painting - Genre painting is an art style that depicts scenes of everyday life, focusing on ordinary people and their activities rather than historical, religious, or heroic themes
- Color Scheme - specific colors used in an artwork, maybe complementary, primary, warm, cool, realistic, expressive
- Expressive Line: a line in art that conveys emotion or movement, rather than just defining a physical form
- Texture - the surface quality of an artwork that can be perceived through touch (actual texture) or sight (implied texture)
- Sketchnotes - visual notetaking incorporating 6 elements - Lettering, Frames, Connectors, Drawings, Color, Bullet Points

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

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- "James Peale, Portrait of Margaretta Angelica Peale (1795-1882), C. 1820." Visitpham.org, 2025, www.visitpham.org/objects/314769. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025.
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