

Henri Matisse "Still Life: Apples on a Pink Tablecloth"



Paul Cezanne "Still Life"



Artwork Overview:

The artist Paul Cezanne studied geometry and used the concepts in his paintings. Many of his paintings looked almost mathematical, because he took objects and turned them into simple shapes like circles, squares and rectangles. Cezanne's painting "Still Life" using geometry for the basis of each shape. The table appears to be tilted so that you can see each shape. This is not a random grouping of objects, instead each object is carefully placed and each line is planned. The colors are not totally natural in color. The fruit is almost all the same value of orange, while the table is almost the same color as the background. Cezanne used color in this way in order to achieve "unity". There are few shadows so the painting looks very flat, and geometric.

In the painting "Still Life: Apples on a Pink Tablecloth", Henri Matisse shows objects placed very carefully in a brightly colored space. Matisse's paintings often showed bright colors and patterns. He was concerned with the feeling of calm and rest in his art work. The placement of the objects (composition) was very important to Matisse. Notice the pattern and colors in the cloth, pitcher and background. This was important in the composition for providing unity to the painting. Matisse once wrote "What I dream of is an art of balance, purity ... something like a good armchair in which to rest." This calm, pleasing still-life is just such a "resting-place" for the eye.

Topics for Discussion:

1. In what ways are these paintings alike? How are they different?
2. Find where geometry was used in the composition for Matisse's "Still Life".
3. How do each of these artists use color?
4. How do each of these artists use shape? Are they organic or geometric?
5. Did each artist use natural colors in their paintings?

Hands-on Art Activity: Still Life Oil Pastel

Preparation: Use props from the supply closet or bring your own. Arrange objects on a table cloth in interesting views for every student.

Materials: 12 x 18 colored construction paper
Oil Pastels (*cray-pas*)
Pencil (kids supply)

Directions:

1. Each student should look carefully at the still-life and decide what shapes they see, whether geometric or organic shapes or a both.
2. Using the pencil draw the **outlines** of the shapes. **Do not devote time to details.**
3. When drawing is complete using oil pastels redraw outlines of shapes and complete coloring the drawing.
4. Sign the front when complete.

About the Artists:

Refer to **Henri Matisse**

Refer to **Paul Cezanne**