

Sponsored by the New York State Art Teachers Association

2008 Olympics of the Visual Arts

The problems for this year's Olympics of the Visual Arts are all related to a single theme:

**THE LEARNING STANDARDS FOR THE VISUAL ARTS,
MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES, CREATIVITY, AND MODELING THE VISUAL ARTS**

The *New York State Learning Standards for the Arts* document is conceptual and sets forth in broad terms the context of relationships and responsibilities within which we seek to educate every child in the elementary, middle, and secondary schools of New York State. The Learning Standards are focused upon common content standards and performance standards for the visual arts. The Standards suggest that statewide curricula in the VISUAL ARTS must elaborate the Standards to suit the uniqueness of the visual arts discipline.

The discipline of visual arts is practiced as a part of general education and is a common branch subject. Major components of the visual arts content standards emphasize the following:

- Students should have the opportunity to create works of art that explore different kinds of subject matter, topics, themes, and metaphors.
- Students should use a variety of visual arts materials, techniques, and processes.
- Students should reflect upon, interpret, and evaluate works of art, using the language of criticism.
- Students should explore art and artifacts from various historical periods and world cultures to discover the roles that art plays in their lives and in the lives of people of a given time and place.

This year's Olympics of the Visual Arts Program calls for the exploration of creativity and originality, multiple intelligences, and making interdisciplinary connections between the Learning Standards for visual arts, science, mathematics, social studies, and English language arts.

Students should explore the problem categories and brainstorm their options, seek direction utilizing historical references, always vigilant toward originality and artistic merit. Creative problem solving requires risk taking when seeking newness. Each problem category may be solved by an individual student or through collaborative enterprise. All entrants will be required to exhibit a portfolio with their long-term solutions, providing evidence on how they used historical references, examples of problem solving, working sketches, and reflections. As students address the problems of the Olympics of the Visual Arts, they should pursue their interests in the same spirit of artistic intent that has emerged throughout history. Read the problems carefully and then take off!

2008 OVA PROBLEM CATEGORIES

in alphabetical order

ARCHITECTURE – Mountain Top Retreat

ar·chi·tec·ture: *n.* The profession of designing buildings, open areas, communities, and other artificial constructions and environments, usually with some regard to aesthetic effect.

One of the wealthiest families in the world has purchased a 6000-foot mountain in the Adirondacks and has hired you to design a year round retreat on its peak. Money is not a concern. The peak of the mountain is solid granite and has no flat surface to build on, and your design must blend into its surroundings. The customer is adamant that the retreat is to have 360° views of the surrounding mountains and wilderness. There are no roads (and none can be built) or electricity (none is available), so you will have to find creative solutions to provide access and power. The good news is that you do have water available on the site. Creativity and originality is important.

Build a detailed scale model of your design. If water is part of your architectural design, it should be simulated with other materials when exhibiting your entry. No water or other liquids are allowed to be part of your entry. Your architectural entry should be displayed with a portfolio that will include all of your research, documentation of your creative problem solving, original sketches, reflections, and written notes.

References: Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American Art, historical museums, print and electronic media reference materials, libraries, and amusement park and golfing publications. Famous architectural sites from around the world; architects such as: Cesar Pelli, Michael Graves, Richard Meier, Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Zaha Hadid, Rem Koolhaas, Arata Isozaki, Massimiliano Fuksas, Paolo Scoleri, Pier Luigi Nervi, Kenzo, Lucio de Costa, Richard Buckminster Fuller, Le Corbusier (Charles-Edouard Jeanneret), Gustave Eiffel, Thomas Jefferson, William Thornton, Thomas Ustick Walter, Erich Mendelsohn, I. M. Pei, Antoni Gaudi, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (Bauhaus), Frei Otto, Charles Gwathmey, William Pereira, Frank Lloyd Wright, Philip Johnson, Louis Sullivan, Arata Isozaki, Aero and Eiel Saarinen, Renzo Piano, Louis Kahn, Helmut Jahn, and Frank O. Gehry.

DRAWING – Playground Landscape

draw·ing: *n.* The art of representing objects or forms on a surface chiefly by means of line.

We often think of landscapes as sweeping romantic vistas of fields or forests with hills or mountains in the background, or seascapes with beautiful sunsets and sunrises over the ocean, or dramatic city skylines. But landscapes are not always on such a grand scale or about romantic themes. This year's drawing problem is on a more intimate and local level. Create a landscape drawing of your school or a local public playground that you have visited and played on. Discuss memories of playing on playgrounds and favorite equipment. Be sure to include people using the playground equipment in your drawing. Research how artists have used lines and mark-making to imitate textures and convey feelings. Create an original drawing of your playground landscape using the materials and techniques of drawing lines and mark-making based upon what you have discovered. Avoid the over-use of shading, rendering, or coloring.

The drawing may be of any size, shape, and drawing medium. Originality is important. Evidence of your research should be documented in a portfolio. Your portfolio is to be exhibited with the completed drawing. Research may include the elements and principles of design, perspective, sketches, reflections, written notes, and explorations in different art media.

References: Observation of works of art from throughout history. Visit museums within your community. Artists such as Rembrandt van Rijn, Johannes Vermeer, Albrecht Dürer, Joan Miro, Henri Matisse, M. C. Escher, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Gustave Doré, Aubrey Beardsley, Mary Cassatt, Paul Cezanne, Roy Lichtenstein, Paul Klee, Claes Oldenburg, Isamu Noguchi, Mark di Suvero, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, James Rosenquist, Kathe Kollwitz, Jim Dine, Alexander Calder, Pablo Picasso, George Braque, Salvador Dali, Rene Magritte, Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, Francisco de Goya, André Masson, Vincent van Gogh, Andy Warhol, Norman Rockwell, Jamie Wyeth, Alice Neel, and Larry Rivers. Find your own resources using print and electronic media sources such as the internet and library.

FASHION DESIGN – Circus Costume

fashion design: *n.* A graphic representation, especially a detailed plan for construction or manufacture of the prevailing style of dress.

By 1872, P.T. Barnum had already coined the phrase “The greatest show on earth!” for his circus, and it still lives on today. One of the things that made the circus so memorable was the lavish and exotic costumes the performers wore while performing. Whether the master of ceremonies, a clown, trapeze artist, bareback rider, lion tamer, elephant rider, or the guy who followed the elephants with the bucket and shovel, they all had distinct and elaborate costumes designed specifically for that function. Explore and research the many characters and performers that make a circus, and choose one to design and create a new and original costume. Creativity is important. Your wearable garment is to be constructed entirely from paper products. Fastenings and surface adornment may be made from non-paper materials of your choice.

The modeling of your entry is not to exceed 60 seconds, including the reading of a script and/or the playing of music. Garments made from non-paper products will be disqualified (other than fasteners and surface adornments). Exhibit a portfolio with your entry that clearly identifies the circus act or performer you have designed your costume for. Provide evidence of brainstorming, research and references. Your portfolio should also include documentation of your creative problem solving, your original sketches, reflections, and written notes.

References: Investigate ancient civilization publications, books and magazines on fashion, advertising, illustration, and product design. Explore how world cultures, past and present, have created and interpreted fashion in their artwork. The Smithsonian Museums, The New York Museum of Natural History, The New York State Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Fashion Institute of Technology Museum in NYC, the Museum of Modern Art, and The Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus. Artists like Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, James Rosenquist, Richard Lindner, Peter Phillips, Claes Oldenburg, George Segal, Marisol, Anthony Caro, Robert Indiana, Allan D’Arcangelo, Red Grooms, Edward Kienholz, Alexander Calder, Georges Seurat, Martial Raysse, Mimmo Rotella, and Oyvind Fahlstrom. The movie “The Greatest Show on Earth” (1952) directed by Cecil B. DeMille. Find your own resources using print and electronic media sources such as the internet and library.

FURNITURE DESIGN – Functional chair made from paper products

fur·ni·ture de·sign: *n.* A graphic representation, especially a detailed plan for construction or manufacture of movable articles in a room or an establishment that make it fit for living or working.

An international design studio is having a competition for a creative chair design. The requirements are very simple. Your entry must be comfortable as well as functional, support the weight of a 200-pound person, be made entirely of paper products, and designed around an art historical theme of your choice. Creativity, originality, and research are very important in your solution. Fastenings and surface adornment may be made from non-paper materials of your choice, as long as they do not assist in the structural strength of your design. Your entry should be displayed with a portfolio that will include all of your research, documentation of your creative problem solving, original sketches, reflections, and written notes.

Research the history of furniture design, and its relationship to the size and mechanics of the human body. Research and experiment with paper technologies and engineering in building strong structures. Evidence of your research and selection process should be included in your portfolio.

References: Metropolitan Museum of Art, Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American Art, American Craft Museum, and historical museums, as well as print and internet reference materials, libraries, and publications on furniture design and construction. Famous furniture artists and designers like Jacques Dubois, Abraham Roentgen, Jean-François Leleu, Scott Burton, Charles and Ray Eames, David Roentgen, Adam Weisweiler, François-Honore-Georges Jacob-Desmalter, and Wendell Castle.

ILLUSTRATION – “Over the Rainbow”

il·lus·tra·tion: *n.* A visual representation (a picture or diagram) that is used to make some subject more pleasing or easier to understand.

Made famous by Judy Garland in the 1939 movie “The Wizard of Oz,” the song “Over the Rainbow” (music by Harold Arlen and lyrics by E.Y. Harburg) has been recorded by numerous recording artists and musical acts. Visually, the imagery of the song has become synonymous with the characters and sets of the movie. It is your job to create a new and original visual interpretation of the lyrics. Pay special attention to the lyricist Harburg’s visual descriptions and decipher his metaphors of color and emotion. Your illustration should be an original interpretation of the song, and not “borrowed” from the movie or the work of other artists. As the illustrator, you are only responsible for the finished artwork, and not for lettering or typography.

Most illustration requires the artist to read all or part of the work being illustrated. In the case of “Over the Rainbow” you may want to listen to some of the many versions that have been recorded of the

Over The Rainbow

Somewhere over the rainbow
Way up high
There's a land that I heard of
Once in a lullaby
Somewhere over the rainbow
Skies are blue
And the dreams that you dare to
dream
Really do come true
Some day I'll wish upon a star
And wake up where the clouds are far
behind me
Where troubles melt like lemondrops
Away above the chimney tops
That's where you'll find me
Somewhere over the rainbow
Bluebirds fly
Birds fly over the rainbow
Why then, oh why can't I?
Some day I'll wish upon a star
And wake up where the clouds are far
behind me
Where troubles melt like lemondrops
Away above the chimney tops
That's where you'll find me
Somewhere over the rainbow
Bluebirds fly
Birds fly over the rainbow
Why then, oh why can't I?
If happy little bluebirds fly
Beyond the rainbow
Why, oh why can't I?

song to gather insight into different interpretations of the music by musicians. Your research will be an important part of the success of your illustration. Create an original illustration that best interprets the main emphasis of Over the Rainbow. Size and media are your choice. Exhibit your portfolio with the completed illustration. Research may include the elements and principles of design, perspective, sketches, reflections, written notes, and experiments in different art media.

References: The Society of Illustrators, Norman Rockwell, James Montgomery Flagg, N. C. Wyeth, Howard Pyle, Bernie Fuchs, Bob Peck, Frank Fazetta, Patrick Woodroffe, Stan Lee, Jacob Lawrence, H. R. Geiger, Aubrey Beardsley, Albrecht Dürer, W. W. Denslow, Robert Indiana, Roy Lichtenstein, Milton Glazer, Greg & Tim Hildebrandt, Jasper Johns, Alphonse Mucha, Gustav Klimt, M. C. Escher, Ben Shahn, Diego Rivera, Brad Holland, and Ralph Steadman. Find your own resources using print and electronic media sources such as the internet and library.

PAINTING – Portrait of Mythological Character

paint·ing: *n.* The process, art, or occupation of coating surfaces with paint for a utilitarian or artistic effect.

Choose a mythological character from any time period or culture from history and create an original portrait of that character in the specific style of an Impressionist painter. It is important that your subject is a mythological character, and that your portrait is an original interpretation of its description. Research and discover the many styles and underlying principles of Impressionism, and use them to create an original painting. Creativity is an important part of your final solution.

Research myths and legends from ancient to modern times and choose an interesting mythological character you would like to depict. Investigate what influenced the Impressionists to create their style of art. Explore the different styles, techniques, and solutions artists have used throughout the Impressionist movement. Create a series of sketches and ideas that help you decide on your approach to the painting style and technique in the final work. Originality is important. Size, shape, and medium are your decision. Exhibit your portfolio with the completed painting. Research may include the elements and principles of design, perspective, explorations in different art media, sketches, reflections, and written notes.

References: Observation of works of art from throughout history. Visit museums within your community. Research the Impressionist movement and the artists. Also research artists such as Hieronymus Bosch, Giuseppe Arcimoldi, Henry Fuseli, Francisco de Goya, Odilon Redon, Yves Tanguy, Man Ray, M. C. Escher, Pieter Brueghel the Elder, Roy Lichtenstein, Edvard Munch, Henri Matisse, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cezanne, Renee Magritte, Henri Rousseau, Red Grooms, Paul Gauguin, Joan Miro, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, Marcel Duchamp, Georgia O’Keeffe, Claes Oldenburg, Wassily Kandinsky, and Giorgio de Chirico. Find your own resources using print and electronic media sources such as the internet and library.

PHOTOGRAPHY – Manipulating Light

pho·tog·ra·phy: *n.* The art or process of producing images of objects on photosensitive surfaces or through digital processes.

Photographers often manipulate light to enhance or add dramatic effect to their work. Photographers use

many different techniques to use and manipulate light in creating their images. Research and discover the many different ways photographers and other artists use light in their artwork. Create an original photograph that uses the manipulation of light. Your use of color, black and white, composition, or digital imaging, or a combination of techniques is entirely up to you.

The photograph may be of any size and shape. The use of digital cameras, scanners, computers and imaging software is permitted, as well as all other forms of “traditional” photography in achieving your final image. Originality and creativity are important. Evidence of your creative problem solving should be documented in a portfolio. Your portfolio should exhibit your research, and may include other photos, drawings, examples of the elements and principles of design, perspective, and explorations in different photo media, reflections and written notes. Your portfolio is to be exhibited with your completed photograph.

Reference: Artnews, Art in America, Camera Arts, Popular Photography and other publications, cultural institutions and museums, Photographers such as: Ansel Adams, Alfred Stieglitz, Mathew B. Brady, Louis Auguste Bisson and Auguste Rosalie Bisson, Pierre-Louis Pierson, Julia Margaret Cameron, Diane Arbus, Richard Avedon, Margaret Bourke-White, Harry Callahan, Robert Capa, Imogen Cunningham, Walker Evans, Ralph Gibson, Josef Koudelka, Annie Leibovitz, Man Ray, Cindy Sherman, Sandy Skoglund, Edward Weston, Maggie Taylor, Jerry Uelsmann.

SCULPTURE – Celebrating the Creative Spirit

sculp·ture: *n.* The art of carving, modeling, welding, or otherwise producing figurative or abstract works of art in three dimensions, as in relief, intaglio, or in the round.

The theme of this year’s sculpture problem is “Celebrating the Creative Spirit.” Create a sculpture that will serve as a monument to the “creative spirit.” Research, discuss, and interpret the meaning of “creative spirit.” Use what you have discovered in planning your final composition.

The sculpture design may be of any size, scale, and shape. The medium is your choice, but you should take into account that the finished sculpture could be outdoors and exposed to the weather of four seasons. Exhibit a portfolio with your entry that includes documentation of your research, brainstorming, original sketches, reflections, examples of the elements and principles of design, perspective, and explorations in different sculpture media.

References: Public and private museums, corporate and private art collections, the library, art magazines, Internet sources, and sculptors such as Mark di Suvero, Constantine Brancusi, Berto Lardera, Piotr Kowalski, Lynn Chadwick, Barbara Hepworth, Constantin Brancusi, Mathias Goeritz, Louise Nevelson, Claus Oldenburg, Lee Bontecou, Arnaldo Pomodoro, Henry Moore, David Smith, Fritz Wotruba, Jean Dubuffet, Henry Moore, Alexander Calder, Red Grooms, David Smith, and Cesar Pelli, Christo, and other artists such as Frank Stella, Elizabeth Murray, Diego Rivera, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Victor Vasarely, Marcel Duchamp, and Pablo Picasso. Find your own resources using print and electronic media sources such as the library and the Internet.

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