

# ANIMALS IN ART

**TITLE:** *Contested Meal* 1994

**MEDIA:** Bronze sculpture

**SIZE:** 68" x 39" x 32"

## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Korry Bird began making strides toward an artistic career at an early age. While still in junior high, he began sketching the wildlife near his home in Springville, Utah. It was then that he decided to pursue an artistic career.

While attending high school, Bird did illustration work for the Utah Fish and Game. He also participated in a work release program offered by his school and spent every afternoon at Brigham Young University doing illustration work for Dr. Vernon J. Tipton in the Entomology lab.

During his junior and senior years in high school, he again participated in the work release program and spent this time in the employ of the noted sculptor of western themes, Stan Johnson. Mr. Johnson owned and operated one of the first art casting facilities in Utah.

While working with Mr. Johnson, Bird learned the intricacies of the lost wax casting process. In addition to helping the sculptor build a studio and foundry, Korry took advantage of the two years he spent with Johnson and learned every bit of information, experience, and criticism he could from the well-known sculptor.

After two years of experience with Mr. Johnson, Korry was ready to move on. He spent the next two years in North Carolina as a missionary for the LDS Church. Upon his return in 1982 he immediately began sculpting. This artistic adventure led him to the studio and foundry of Edward J. Fraughton. Not many young artists have the opportunity to have such reknowned mentors. Bird considers himself fortunate.

For the next three years, he frequently visited the studio of Mr. Fraughton. Here he was exposed to principles and practices that still greatly influence Bird's direction and attitude. During the third year of this formative period, the young artist was a daily

fixture of Fraughton's operation. He was employed by the artist to assist with the casting of the monumental sculpture *Spirit of Wyoming*, a 14-foot bucking bronco for the Capitol grounds in Cheyenne. Bird remembers those days with a smile. " I look back on that time in my life with great fondness. The kindness that Ed showed to me will always be a bright spot in my life. He has been the greatest single influence on my attitude toward this profession. He helped to instill in me the realization that one must become a true student of sculpture. His gentle way of letting me know that I must continue to improve will always be appreciated."

Korry Bird studied sculpture at the University of Utah and then headed to California. There he worked in the foundry industry to learn even more and began sculpting his own wildlife and figurative work.

Korry started his own foundry, Park Gallery, along with five full-time employees. The foundry was built on the philosophy of absolute quality in wax work using the best molds in the business, from the best mold-maker in the business--Ken Donnelly of Springville, Utah. He is proud of the help he had in the foundry and recognizes those individuals as the heart and soul of his foundry's quality and service.

Since that time, Bird has moved on and no longer casts other artists' work, which gives him more time to work on his own pieces. He says that learning the foundry process and having his own foundry was a double-edged sword. On the one hand, he developed a high-quality foundry and the knowledge and skills to cast his own work, but on the other hand, having the foundry meant he spent a lot of time learning and casting other people's work instead of focusing on becoming a better sculptor himself.

Wishing he were a little less conservative, Bird says he made enough money from the beginning to live from his art, but he has always had a hard time trusting he will bring in enough money to support his family. His own sales continue to do well. He sculpts his well-known wildlife pieces, does figurative work, especially children, and fantasy work such as the sculpture for Mapleton Elementary School--a boy with a dragon.

Bird says he thinks he will continue to do a broad range of sculpture, but that he can see a natural progression in his work. *Contested Meal* was made in 1994 and *Sunny Day* in 1999, five years later. He believes *Sunny Day* has a more sculptural feel, that his use of shape and mass and design have improved. The surface of the sculpture is of course partly dictated by the subject, but he likes the increased subtlety and the way the surface took the patination. His art is getting more sophisticated. However, he also says, "Even as I reflect on the whirlwind of activity over the past twenty years, I feel as though I am just beginning."

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## **SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

**ARTIST:** Korry R. Bird- (1961- ) Mapleton, Utah

**TITLE:** *Sunny Day* 1999

**MEDIA:** Bronze sculpture

**SIZE:** 29" x 17-3/4" x 17"

### **QUESTIONS FOR LOOKING**

#### **(History, Aesthetics, Criticism)**

What kind of artwork is this? What style is the artwork? (For very young students: Did the artist try to make the sculpture look real?) How can you tell? Why do you think the artist called this piece *Sunny Day*? How else besides titles might an artist tell us something about his artwork? (Read or tell some of the information from the biography.)

Is this sculpture meant to look like a real pig? Real pigs aren't this color and although they're kind of lazy, they never sit still for so long. What else tells you this is an artwork and not a real pig? Do you think the artist wanted to make his sculpture look exactly like a real pig or did he want to make good art? Are these two different things or are they the same? Would you like this sculpture better if it looked even more like a real pig? Why?

Compare this piece with *Contested Meal*, also by Korry Bird. He made one of them last year and one five years ago. Which one do you think he made first? Why? Has he gotten better or are the two sculptures just different? What makes you feel that way?

### **ACTIVITIES**

#### **Art**

**Objective:** Students will learn to draw animals by drawing the Basic Shapes first.

This activity is based on the idea that Basic Shapes are the foundation for all form. All objects can be broken down into these basic shapes.

Principles/elements: line, shape

Materials:

Posters with obvious shapes

overhead projector

transparencies of animals

whiteboard or large sheets of paper

dry erase marker and eraser

### Day 1

Show the class the slides of several of the artworks featured in this packet such as *Sunny Day*, *Big Boys*, *Yellow Bluff*, and *Lizard Relay*. Ask the students how they think the artists got so good at painting or sculpting animals. (They observed and drew lots and lots of animals until they knew how those animals looked.) Tell the students they are going to learn how to approach a drawing of an animal by looking at the basic shapes of the animal.

First, have the students look around the classroom at various objects and point out the basic shapes that make up the objects.

Next, using a transparency to project images with multiple shapes on the whiteboard, choose students to trace the basic shapes of the image being projected. (Use the other students in the class to spot shapes which have been overlooked.)

After the basic shapes have been drawn, turn projector off and draw the Contour Line of the objects being studied. Add detail to give the drawing life.

Once students can identify the basic shapes within an object, the process of drawing becomes a simple task.

### Day 2

Materials:

laminated pictures of animals

pencils

colored construction paper

watercolor markers

8-1/2" x 11" newsprint or manilla paper.

Review Day 1. Project a new transparency on the whiteboard for students to break down into basic shapes. Answer questions and clarify as needed from Day 1.

Pass out watercolor markers and laminated pictures of animals to each student. The students will trace the shapes of the animal on their individual laminated handouts.

Then, while the ink is still wet, the students will carefully lay an 8-1/2" x 11" newsprint sheet over the top of the shape drawing, and press down firmly. This will create a copy of the basic shapes the students have drawn.

Next, have students turn the paper over and create a carbon by laying on graphite with the side of a pencil lead. They will place the carbon on construction paper and trace over each of the shapes in the picture. (Each shape should be given an individual color, traced

individually, and then each shape should be cut out individually.)

### Day 3

Materials:

scissors

colored construction paper

glue

pencils

When the students have cut out each individual shape from their drawing, they should glue them in position on a solid-colored background in the shape of the animal.

### Day 4

Materials:

pencils

white drawing paper

good erasers

Give each student a new sheet of drawing paper, and have them lightly draw, freehand, the basic shapes on the paper. Then students will connect basic shapes with contour lines to form the outline of the animal being drawn and make and adjust as needed.

When students are happy with the contour lines, they can carefully erase changed lines and then add detail and darken the lines within the drawing.

**Variation:** Include other subject matter such as buildings, people, objects, etc.

**Extension/Variation: Sculpture--**After drawing animals by drawing their basic shapes first, give students clay to work with. If the students do not have much experience making objects with clay, give them oil-based clay first, to practice with. They should make animals by creating basic shapes from the clay, joining them, smoothing, and adding a few details.

Materials:

oil-based clay

ceramic clay\*

glaze or paint

Before the students are given the ceramic clay, remind them of a few rules for working with clay:

1. All joins must be made by scratching, slipping, and reinforcing. (See following page)

2. No part of the animal should be thicker than 1".
3. No skinny or thin parts can stick out. (They'll break off. Avoid by choice of pose, by simplifying features, and by making things like tails lie along the animal's back or leg. For example, a cat, curled up asleep, is a good shape.)
4. Keep clay moist, not wet or dry.
5. Cover animal, so it dries out slowly.

Very simple animals can still convey the sense or feeling of an animal. However, if you wish, students can add texture to their animals. (You probably already know that you are likely to have students who spend only a few minutes and then want to be finished and also students who will not know when to stop. Encourage students to examine whether their artwork is complete--not just decide they [the students] are finished. Encourage students who do not know when to stop to look at their artwork and see when it has just enough detail. )

Let the animals dry very slowly, or they will crack and additions such as legs will break off. Fire to bisque temperature. Again, this must be done slowly, especially in the first stages, because the animals are thick and if the water that is still in the clay after it is dry heats too quickly, it will expand and blow pieces off the animals. Glaze and refire or paint the animals and/or seal with a clear ceramic sealer.

\*If you buy a clay body that is a nice color, you can glaze the pieces with a clear glaze, to keep things simple and elegant. (Stores or ceramics catalogs will have samples or pictures of what the clay bodies look like under different firing conditions and with different glazes.)

To attach legs, heads, etc, use the method below:

Scratch the area, add slip, push leg piece on firmly, add skinny coil, smooth out. The legs may be reshaped somewhat after they're attached. Do use sturdy legs. You may need to allow the animals to lie on their backs for a while until the legs will hold the weight of

the body. However, sturdy legs will usually be fine; their ends will bulge slightly, which will give the feeling of feet or hooves.

### **Art--Making, Expressing**

**Objective:** The students will create a cartoon featuring animals.

Show the class some slides from this packet and briefly discuss the different ways artists have depicted animals. Then show the class some cartoons that feature animals such as Boyington, Mother Goose and Grimm, Calvin and Hobbes, Far Side, Peanuts, etc. Ask the students to look at how the animals are drawn: are they realistic, exaggerated, caricatures? Have students identify what they find funny in the cartoons. Have them think about what kinds of situations might be humorous or what animals could be saying to each other or to the people in the cartoon.

Another possibility is to make cartoons of expressions involving animals such as sly as a fox, dog-tired, Sleek as a cat.

Have students complete the first day of the Basic Shapes activity. After they have grasped the idea of creating animals out of their basic shapes, they can apply the technique to cartoons, remembering their discussion about how animals appear in cartoons. To create their own cartoon, first, have students sketch some ideas on scratch paper. (These sketches should be turned in as part of the assignment.) When they have decided what they are going to do, they should create a frame for the cartoon. For a one-cell cartoon, they can use the width of a ruler to create a border around a sheet of paper, erasing the lines where they overlap. For a three- or four-cell cartoon, they should divide the paper into the necessary number of rectangles, again, leaving a border. This is good practice in using rulers for young students. Students should lightly pencil in the drawings and then go over the lines with a pen or fine-tipped marker. Color can be added with colored pencils, if desired. Display the cartoons for everyone to enjoy.

Assessment:

You can use a rubric to assess the cartoons on criteria such as:

1. Did the student use at least one animal in the cartoon?
2. Does the cartoon show evidence of planning and thought in the sketches and the finished product?
3. Is the finished product neat and carefully done?
4. Did the student clean up after the assignment?

**Extension for advanced students:** Look at cartoons as social comment. Have the students analyze how cartoons address social issues by lampooning, making us laugh at our own foibles, helping us see our weaknesses, etc. According to cartoonist Calvin Grondahl, editorial or political cartoons are often not funny; instead, they prick us. Have the students look at how different cartoonists use animals in their strips. For example, the animals may make the comments more acceptable than if a person had said them, the animals may use their distance from humans to highlight the human's weaknesses, the

animals may symbolize a group of people, or the animals may just provide an additional twist.

Have students create cartoons that comment on events, problems, situations, dilemmas, etc. in the students' lives, using animals to make the observations, suggestions, or criticism. When the cartoons are finished, vote on the best cartoons and display them where the whole school can see. You may be able to get some of the cartoons published in the school newspaper.

Assess the student work using a rubric that contains items you have established as criteria. The list below gives some possibilities.

1. Did the student identify and address a current social issue?
2. Did the student use animals to convey the message?
3. Did the student exhibit some creativity in the cartoon, show some originality as opposed to copying a known cartoon or cartoonist's style?
4. Is the cartoon carefully drawn and finished?
5. Is the cartoon appropriate for the school setting ?

The following list offers a few suggestions for cartooning:

1. Use only the basic shapes of the animals.
2. Exaggerate or emphasize the identifying or unusual features.
3. Keep the cartoon simple.
4. Write the words before you make the word balloons.

You may also want to consult books on the subject, I found several even in our small public library (Payson).

### **Language Arts**

**Objectives:** **1.** The students will write a story from the point of view of an animal. **2.** The students will make connections between the visual arts and literature.

*Sunny Day* is a natural pairing with Charlotte's Web. If your class is just starting to read Charlotte's Web, show the class the slide of the sculpture first, and talk about the artwork, using some of the QUESTIONS FOR LOOKING.

If your class has already read Charlotte's Web, after you have discussed the artwork, show the class other slides from the packet such as *Yellow Bluff*, *Snowshoe Hare*, *Guest*, *The Colt*, and have the students make up a story involving one or more of the animals. You may want to spend a few minutes discussing how having the story of Charlotte's Web told from the point of view of the pig and the spider involve the reader and make the story very different than it would be if told from the point of view of a human.

**Variation for older students:** Use the slide of *Sunny Day* as a way to introduce a discussion of point of view in which the students compare Charlotte's Web with A Day

No Pigs Would Die. They can write a story from the point of view of an animal, or they can write a short- short story from two different views--humans and animals.

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## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

**ARTIST:** Korry R. Bird  
**TITLE:** *Contested Meal* 1994  
**MEDIA:** Bronze sculpture  
**SIZE:** 68" x 39" x 32"

### QUESTIONS FOR LOOKING (History, Aesthetics, Criticism)

When you look at this work of art how do you feel? What do you think of? Does the art work remind you of anything?...Experiences, stories, something you have read or something you have done? These are the kind of ideas that can give substance and content to a work of art.

Look carefully at the slide of *Contested Meal*. Do you see the fish? .....**There is no fish...**it is only lines, shapes, values, colors and textures that remind one of a fish. Are there any other lines, shapes, values, colors and textures that remind you of another animal? What is the medium (stuff it's made of) that carries the lines, shapes, values, colors and textures? Can you point out any of these "elements" and determine which are most interesting, most important to the overall work, which are most dramatic and impressive? Where does your eye want to look? Is there an interesting visual element there to catch your eye and hold it for a moment? Can you find a spot on this work that would be interesting all by itself with out the rest of the piece? Can you find an even smaller place that is only lines, shapes, values, colors and textures that is interesting anyway? Do you think that it is possible for the "visual elements" of line, shape, value, color and texture to be more interesting than the "subject matter" (what it is a picture of)?

This kind of art is different from a painting (even though it looks like a picture because we are looking at a slide of it) because if you were where it is (grounds of the Springville Art Museum) you could walk around it and see it from all sides. Sometimes it is called a statue but in art talk what do you think we call this? If you think sculpture you are right. In fact this is a metal sculpture. In fact this is a bronze metal sculpture because it is a sculpture made out of bronze metal. Do you think we are talking down to you? Do you

think that is bad? Why?

We usually call sculpture "3-Dimensional Art" and painting "2-Dimensional Art". What do we mean by dimension or dimensional? What are the two in 2-D art? What is the third one in 3-D art? Are all sculptures totally in the round (360 degrees)? What is relief sculpture or bas relief? Now are we talking down to you? Do you like this better? Why?

When you think of a famous artist who do you think of? Was it a famous sculptor or a painter? Usually people think of art as painting. Are there other kinds of art? Why do you think that most people don't know the names of famous sculptors? Now you know at least one sculptor, Korry R. Bird. Do you know the names of any other famous sculptors? Who are they? What did they do? Where did they live? When did they live? Are they still working? Why are they famous? Do you think they should be famous? Do you think Korry Bird should be famous? Why? Can a woman or a girl be a good sculptor? Why? Do you know of any? Why not? [look up: Laura Lee Stay, Judy Chicago, Von Allen, Marianna Pineda, Lee Bontecou, Louise Nevelson, Magdalena Abakanowicz, Nancy Graves, Maya Lin and Marisol.]

### **Lesson one:**

#### **Mythological Animal Sculpture**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of animal anatomy, sculpture, and mythology by creating their own mythological animal using at least two anatomical parts of existing animals and combining them in a somewhat reasonable way to create a novel creature of their own invention.

**Materials:** This is not a medium-specific lesson because there are many wonderful sculptural materials available. Here we shall list only a few and the rest of this lesson can be adjusted to different materials and their special needs. Ceramic clay is an obvious medium for animal sculptures, but other types of clay can be used with out the necessity of firing in a kiln such as the following: oil-based clay ( here is a secret about oil clay; buy a large bag of very fine dry ceramic earthenware. It comes in reds or whites. Add a quantity of light weight oil, perhaps 3-in-one oil, mixing well until the desired consistency is achieved. This clay will maintain its plasticity and not dry out as there is no water to evaporate. Many recipes are available for specific qualities of the clay but all are considerably less expensive than commercial oil clay.) The real drawback with oil clay is its lack of permanence, susceptibility to damage, lack of tensile strength (it collapses under its own weight) and the oil will stain clothes. Amazingly, ceramic clay is much cleaner because it is water based and easily cleans up with a damp sponge.

Some other sculpture materials that can be used in the classroom are listed below:

**plaster**--can be used for additive sculpture in a slurry state, for subtractive carving in a hardened state, and for casting in molds in a slip state

**wood**--small scraps and blocks glued together, or carved from a single piece;

**paper**--cut paper, cardboard, paper towel and toilet paper cylinder tubes, paper mulch and paper-mache;

**wax**--additive in a soft or liquid state and subtractive(carving) in a hard or solid state (remember that old crayons are wax and can be used to color paraffin or bees wax;

**soap carving; stone**--sandstone is soft and carveable with wooden tools and readily available in Utah, small stones can also be glued together as an additive sculptural medium;

**styrofoam**--styrofoam can be carved easily with simple tools, and it can also be made as very large pieces inexpensively with commercial resin and catalyst or can be found in smaller pieces as discards from packing materials;

**wire**--there are many kinds of wire made from different materials and at different gauges. These can be twisted and shaped into relatively flat freestanding animal figures or into very 3-dimensional, almost solid figures. With a sturdy base and careful construction any size can be achieved;

**metals** should be mentioned as a sculptural medium that can be forged (heated and pounded), cast while in a liquid state and cut and added together by welding and brazing. Obviously, very few elementary art programs are going to have welding facilities, but there is a safe and easy technique for small jewelry size metal work know as steam casting;

**salt dough** should also be mentioned but it is a very difficult medium because it has limited tensile strength and very little plasticity, and it is difficult to work additively because it does not like to stick to itself except in a very sticky and soft state, and it is almost impossible to stack very tall without squashing and collapsing, and insects will eat it while it is on display;

**found objects**--assemblages and figures can be created from unusual discarded objects. These can be found in thrift stores, garbage bins, garages, and back yards. Most students and their parents will be glad to donate their junk if they think the art program can use it. Old clothes can be stuffed and stabilized with wood or wire armatures to resemble human gestures. Found objects can be constructed around a wood armature pieced together with wire, glue, nails, solder, or duct tape, to name a few. An interesting twist on this style is to build a plywood or corrugated cardboard silhouette of a figure and then to glue found objects on it until it is completely covered. Things like leaves, small stones, seeds, plastic toys, game pieces and so forth can easily be used to make an assembled sculpture.

**Process:** After looking at Korry Bird's bronze sculpture, *Contested Meal*, and discussing the QUESTIONS FOR LOOKING, lead students in a discussion of "Mythological Animals." The idea of mythology is not culture specific. Remember that mythology is not just Greek and Roman. For example, in the great traditions of pre-European Mexico, the myth of the eagle and the rattlesnake (depicted on the Mexican flag) is visually reminiscent of *Contested Meal*. The feathered serpent, Quetzalcoatl of the Mayan, Medieval European Gargoyles, Native American totem poles, and Asian winged dragons are but a few of the available mythological creatures made by combining animals to create a new and metaphorical model.

Depending on the age of students and the breadth of the lesson, this could be about mythological animals in general or more culturally specific if desired. It might be appropriate to poll the ethnic composition of the class. Here in Utah we have a large population of Native Americans, Hispanics, Polynesians, Asians, and African Americans, not to mention the plethora of European mythic traditions.

The object of this lesson is to have students create a mythological animal of their own invention. There are several problem-solving approaches to this issue.

1. Simply choose two or three animals and try to combine them with some zoomorphic sense.
2. Students could first imagine a fantasy scenario that uses unique animal creatures with unique properties and characteristics.
3. Students can combine traditional mythological creatures to create their own idea.
4. Purely fanciful creatures that may or may not resemble any other thing.
5. Combining human anatomy with animal anatomy.

There are numerous visual aids and information resources available to teachers about mythology and mythological animals. Your local community library will have books on both mythology and on animal anatomy and habitat. Be resourceful and give the students a lot of options by showing them many animals and possible creatures. Here is a short list to get you thinking and going:

Griffin - head of a falcon, eyes of a man, body of a lion, ears like the fins of fish, tail like a serpent. European and Egyptian.

Sphinx - head of a woman, wings of a bird, body of a lion. Egyptian.

Hours - head of a falcon, body of a man. Egyptian

Minotaur - head of a bull, body of a man. Greek and Roman.

Pegasus - body of a horse, wings of a giant bird. Greek and Roman.

Medusa - head of a woman, hair of snakes and sometimes her lower torso is a serpentine body. Etruscan, Greek and Roman.

Cerberus - the three headed dog of the underworld. Greek and Roman.

Geryon - three headed, six armed giant. Greek and Roman.

Cacus - half man and half reptile and fire breathing. Greek and Roman.

Harpy - body and wings of a vulture, head of an ugly old witch with bear's ears. Greek.

Kappa - size of a 13 year old boy, walks upright, body and shell of a turtle, legs of a frog, head of monkey with long carefully trimmed hair, the top of the head is hollow to hold the water that keeps the Kappa alive. Japan.

Jinni - shaggy beasts part wolf and part hyena, could change into human and could be invisible to everything but roosters, that's why they crow. Arabian.

Ganesha - head of an elephant and body of a fat man. Hindu.

Hanuman - body of a tall a slender boy and the head of a monkey. Hindu

Lishii - a very hairy old man with rams horns and cloven hooves and claws like a bear. Russian.

Whowie - head of huge frog, body of a lizard with six legs and human hands. Australia.

Gurrangatch - half fish and half reptile. Australia.

Moselantja - head and body of an old woman with scaly skin and dogs ears, a very long prehensile tail like a monkey with a serpents mouth and teeth at the end of the tail. Africa.

Dragons - lizards with reptilian wings. China.

Mermaids - head and shoulders of a beautiful woman and lower body of a fish. . . . and what about those winged flying monkeys from the Wizard of Oz.

To help students firm up their ideas, have them draw pictures of their imaginary beasts. Use the drawings as a blue print for sculpting their chosen creature. It is best to have more than one idea, otherwise your best is also your worst. Refer to the section on **materials** for a variety of sculptural medium.

"A Turtle Joke", by Breanne age 8  
giraffe head, turtle shell back, horse legs and elephant tail.

"Turtle Squirtle", by Krista age 6  
turtle head, bird body and wings, horse feet, elephant tail.

"Pikachu", by Mitchell, kindergarten.  
dinosaur body, horse legs, human head, elephant nose, lizard spikes, pikachu tail.

## ART IS A KIND OF THINKING:

Here we will discuss the process as an intellectual problem-solving thinking strategy rather than a step by step, how to follow instructions, technical project. We will follow a six-step process.

**Think, Get Ideas, Plan, Produce, Evaluate, Exhibit.**

**Think:** This will include research, brainstorming, working together as a group to expand the thinking possibilities, this is best done more than once because some ideas take time and reinforcement to ferment into life. Keep thinking until you have some ideas.

**Get Ideas:** "An idea is a thought you can see", this is a quote by Sage, age 6. To help students see the thoughts in their minds have them describe to each other what the thought looks like. If they can't it isn't an idea it is only a thought. Some students may not have the words to describe their thoughts and a visual rendering is very appropriate. This is probably what "visual art" really means.

**Plan:** Once students have narrowed their thoughts into ideas it is time to start drawing schematics of the idea. "The idea tells you where you want to go. The plan will tell you how to get there", Jason, age 8. An effective way to firm up and formalize this kind of thinking and planning is for each student to make a "planning page". This is a sheet of newsprint folded into four "thinking spaces" and each fold is drawn in with pencil to reveal a window pane page with four areas to do thumbnail sketches. These little schematic plans help to crystallize the ideas and demonstrate the feasibility or lack thereof in pursuing the idea further. "If you only have one idea it's not only your best idea but it's also your worst idea. It takes two ideas to have one better and one worse. It takes at least three ideas to have your best one." Shelbi, age 9. So if you truly want to use the best idea, encourage your students to go beyond the obvious first impression even if you come back to as the best. It deserves some breathing room.

These plans need not be detailed drawings but simple schematics to work out design, composition and even color scheme.

**Produce:** This is the work mode. Just do it! There are a few tricks in this mode to help keep students focused. It is truly impossible for the human brain to focus on two things at the same time. It can switch back and forth quickly like a fluorescent light but other activities like talking and playing keep a student from being able to focus completely. A little talking also seems give some confidence and *esprit de corps*. So it is a fine line to balance. Somewhere in there is the sound of art being made and the other sound is of students just socializing in a nonproductive way.

Students tend to stop working when they are bored and will tell you they are *done*. Done means, "ready to take out of the oven." Ask the student, "I can see you are done but is the artwork finished or does it need something more? How about..."

**Evaluate:** If the purpose of school is to learn we must take the time to ask, "What can I learn from this idea?" If one of the purposes of art is to communicate, then the artist must take the time to ask, "What have I said?" This is the part of art known as criticism. This is not a negative stance. What we want to find out in a critical evaluation of our own art is, what are the significant elements of this production, what do they mean to me and what can I learn as a person and as an artist from this product? Here are three simple questions to ask oneself: What succeeded here that I should keep? What failed that I should discard? What isn't here that I should add?

When evaluating another artist's work we may want to adjust these questions somewhat. The trick in critical evaluation is consistency in the use of a repeatable model.

**Exhibit:** The last step in any successful art project is exhibition. There is a very good argument that if you do it in a closet where no one can see, it probably is not art. Kurt Vonnegut, the popular writer, says that art is a social experience. He writes that when somebody makes something and puts it out where people can see it, if anyone like it, that's art! Remember that you are someone too.

**Evaluation:** Students should be given a chance to enhance the substantive quality of their project by giving it a name and creating a story about it. This story can either be written or presented orally. It can be done in the genre of a mythological moral play or a purely child fantasy. Refer to bibliography for some examples of very short mythological stories. Do not try to copy existing stories but use them to inspire the students to create their own myths.

**Exhibition:** Students should make a title card to accompany the work. A brief explanation of the project can be displayed with the pieces. Each student should be encouraged to write some sort of explanation of their fantasy creature in which they list the animal parts they have combined or the mythological references they are making.

**Related Projects:** Drawing, painting and relief printing of mythological and made up creatures, traditional realistic animal sculpture, found object sculpture, puppet theater of make believe animals.

**Vocabulary:** sculpture, model, cast, additive and subtractive, found object, anatomy, armature, mythology, zoomorphic.

**Bibliography:** The Worlds Mythology Series, Peter Bedrick Books, New York. Words From The Myths, by Isaac Asimov. In The Beginning, Creation Stories from Around the World, by Virginia Hamilton. Encyclopedia of Legendary Creatures, by Tom McGowen. The Power of Myth, by Joseph Campbell. Children, Clay and Sculpture, by Cathy Weisman Topal. A Collaboration With Nature, and Wood, and Holes, by Andy Goldsworthy. Any set of Encyclopedia.

## Lesson Two

## Accessible Animal Photography

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of wild life photography by creating an original animal photograph using a 35 mm camera while on a field trip to the zoo.

**Materials:** 35mm camera, telephoto or zoom lens, tripod, color or black and white 35 mm film and optional flash strobe.

**Process:** Many schools organize field trips to local zoos and animal parks and wild life refuges. In Utah, we have Hogle Zoo, Tracy Aviary, Wheeler Farm Petting Zoo and if you are not too concerned about the life part of wild life, the Bean Museum at BYU is an excellent source of mounted (taxidermied) animals from all over the world.

Before the expedition have students prepare by looking at a variety of animal photography. Most any issue of National Geographic, Zoobook, Smithsonian, or Natural History will do. For more specific photo techniques, there are a lot of how-to books printed by Kodak and other commercial photography companies. These are especially good for examples. Look at some famous wild life photographers' work. The point is to prepare students with some idea of how to make a photograph be more interesting than the traditional family vacation "snapshot."

What constitutes a successful photograph? **PHOTOGRAPHY** literally means PHOTO = LIGHT and GRAPH = DRAWING or WRITING or **DRAWING WITH LIGHT!** In that case, the very same elements and techniques that create an interesting pencil or crayon drawing will result in an interesting photograph. Ask students, "How can you make a photograph of an old lady be interesting if it's NOT your Grandma?" We all know that a poorly composed, semi-focused, cliched snapshot of someone you know (especially yourself) is interesting to you; not because it is an interesting photograph, but because the subject matter is of personal interest to you. The goal in art is make it interesting to someone who does not know the subject matter personally. A quick little snapshot of your beloved pet dog does not necessarily constitute an elegant, content-laden work of art even though to you and your family it is interesting, entertaining, and important. If a photograph succeeds only because it documents a personal experience that has meaning only to you, we will call it a **SNAPSHOT**. If a photograph succeeds on the same level that a fine painting or drawing or sculpture, then we will call it a **PHOTOGRAPH**. These may be artificially prescribed definitions, but they become useful tools in teaching the **ART OF PHOTOGRAPHY**. In no way should this be misconstrued to demean the importance of family snapshots. They are an important part of other academic disciplines; history and genealogy.

The following is a list of some ways to make your zoo animal photographs be more interesting:

1. Avoid the obvious or the cliché we have all seen. (think)
2. Use interesting lines, shapes, colors, values, and textures.
3. Use an interesting point of view. (camera angle or focus)

4. Fool the eye. (an illusion created by the camera or something that couldn't possibly happen in reality..."the head of the giraffe that looks like it is directly on top of the person in the foreground and appears to be a hat when in reality the giraffe is far in the background)
5. Say something interesting or meaningful or thought provoking. (a visual editorial about feelings and ideas)
6. Use interesting lighting. (in the shadow, colored natural lighting like sunset or sunrise, shadow across the subject matter)
7. Use interesting composition. (movement, balance variation and repetition) 8. Use of interesting or unusual groupings.
9. Specific closeups of animal parts that may or may not suggest the nature of the whole animal or editorialize about the animal.
10. The use of interesting subject matter, doing something interesting and in an interesting way in an interesting place wearing interesting costumes.

For teachers who feel a little uncomfortable with a 35 mm camera and a telephoto zoom lens, here are some fail-safe ways to use this equipment and still have the students in control of the aesthetic decision making. Divide students into workable groups, about 5 - 10. Use parents as helpers. Work with one small group at a time while the others are out looking for the animal and pose they want to photograph. Make sure that all on the "Photo Safari" get to shoot at least one idea before the more prolific thinkers shoot again.

When a student has focused his or her attention on a specific animal and can explain briefly what kind of a photograph they want to take, set up the tripod. There are very inexpensive tripods available in many camera departments. By using a common zoom or macro zoom lens (70 mm to 200+ mm), the student can get very nice close ups and have many more compositional options that a traditional point-and-shoot camera eliminates. The simple point-and-shoot camera that most children have are fine to bring along. The photos taken with those cameras will show an interesting difference between a detailed and specific photograph and a generalized snapshot documenting the field trip. Many of the newer automatic cameras come with automatic zooms that usually go up to about 105 to 120 mm. That is enough. Use whatever you have. The best ideas work comfortably within the limitations of the medium or equipment and still create something interesting to say.

After the student has chosen a shot, the camera is on the tripod, and the students can find the subject animal through the lens, the student photographer can use the zoom to crop in close or zoom back for a wide angle shot. Look through the lens and discuss briefly with the student the pros and cons of the shot and some possible other ways to get the same subject. Check carefully for focus. Let the student do the focusing, but it is o.k. for you as teacher to make polite suggestions like, "How about focusing the thing." If you use a camera with automatic focus and light setting, it is a done deal, and no adjustments need be made. If you are using a manual adjustment camera (preferable as a teaching tool), you must adjust the light setting or f-stop (most easily understood as the aperture setting, how big the hole is that lets the light through).

Most cameras available today with the ability to change lenses have a "through the lens" metering system. That means there will be a circle and a needle or some equivalent, and when they are lined up you have a "safe" exposure setting. If you can't find enough light, then you must slow down the shutter speed (how fast the shutter allows light through the aperture). This is usually a knob somewhere on the top of the camera near the rewind handle, and frequently it is also the ASA setting knob. By adjusting the f-stop ring on the lens and the shutter speed setting, you can find a safe setting with the light meter as seen inside the lens somewhere on the outside edge of the picture format as a scale of numbers and a light meter needle. Match them up and you have a safe setting. Not all cameras work this way, but you as teacher should know your own camera.

[if you want to buy a camera for your class but can't afford it ,volunteer to be in charge of the school year book. That means you will need to keep the school camera in your room]  
]

The "safe" setting is not necessarily the best. Try bracketing the shot. That means to shoot the exact same picture at several settings, usually one slightly overexposed (one f-stop click for too much light) one right on and one slightly underexposed (one f-stop click for less light). Somewhere in there will be a more interesting exposure setting (frequently slightly underexposed for more value contrast and deeper, lusher colors). After a few rolls of film, most students will start to develop a preference and style of exposure setting all their own. Encourage this.

Exposure log: Each roll of film needs to be accompanied by a record of exposure settings, student's name and subject matter matched to each frame on the roll of film. Don't try to rely on memory. The reason we need this record is to tell whose photograph it was and how to repeat a success and how to avoid a failure.

A convenient little check list to verbally run each student through as they compose and shoot their picture might be like this:

1. zoom and composition
2. focus
3. f-stop with light meter
4. focus again
5. shutter speed
6. focus again
7. zoom and composition
8. focus again
9. **CLICK** the shutter.

In many cases, especially for indoor studio shots under artificial light, a very slow shutter speed is required. The use of a shutter release (an extension to the shutter button) is necessary to keep the camera still. It is a good idea to always use the shutter release when using a tripod mounted camera.

For the zoo animal project use a relatively fast film like a 400 ASA (t-max or tri-x) for black and white and for color use an outdoor Ektachrome slide film of about 200 ASA. The reason for using a color slide film instead of a color print film is that the slide makes a good proof to look at in class to decide which ones are good enough to print up and about what size enlargement the exposure can stand. After the field trip is over and the film all shot, take it to a reputable film processing lab (try World Wide) and have black and white developed and a contact sheet or proof sheet made with it. The contact sheet will have all the shoots printed as positives the size of the negatives on one sheet, easy to see and evaluate and easy to keep track of.

Students should then engage in an evaluation of the shots to see which are worthy of printing and enlarging. Look for focus, contrast, density, and composition. Help students decide which should be printed. For the sake of expense, it is a good idea to have the school shoulder the cost of the film, the film processing, and the contact sheet (depending on the film and the lab, maybe about \$10 per roll). If students want to enlarge their picture, have them pay for their own enlargements. Some traditional sizes are 4x6, 5x7 8x10, and 11x14. An 8x10 is a very good enlargement size and for black and white is usually under \$5. A good reminder for children is that "bigger is not necessarily better, it is only bigger." It may be hard to convince small humans of this idea, but it is nonetheless true. Size is quantitative while goodness or betterness is qualitative.

A similar process can be done with the color slides. With slides the proofs can easily be previewed and critiqued by the whole class on a projection screen with a slide projector. If you can get the projector close to the screen it is easier to make the image smaller and denser and give a better idea of the print quality.

Once again, the school can easily handle the cost of film and processing if students will accept the cost of enlarging and printing. If your budget allows, a set of 3x5 prints can be made from the black and white roll for about 40 cents each or less. These can be given to students so that everyone has a print of their work. A 3x5 is not a very good size to exhibit, but each student can own a documentation of her own photographic expertise.

[If you have students whose families actually cannot pay for an enlargement, you may want to explore ways to fund them. One of the best ways is to find individuals who are willing to hire students to do odd jobs. This method allows the children to earn their enlargements instead of feeling like they're charity cases.]

**Evaluation:** A wonderful way for students to evaluate the quality of their photographs is to have them look beyond the "subject matter." That is, to evaluate their use of line, shape, value, color and texture. If a student can identify these visual elements in their own photographic work, there is a good chance that they will be able to overcome the domination of subject matter the next time they take a photograph or the next time they draw or paint.

Have students identify one of the elements of visual art. Line (or point) is probably the

best one to start with. Have them write a sentence or two about a specific line in their photo by describing where the line is found and what it looks like (not as part of the subject matter but like "zig zaggy" or "curvy" ) and by answering questions like, "Which line in the most interesting? Why? How do you feel when you look at it?"

**Exhibition:** An important exhibition venue that should not be overlooked in photography are the photo processing labs and camera stores in the area. This is terrific public relations for the business especially if you can arrange a small opening with refreshments and invitations to families, friends and teachers. This is particularly easy if you are using the business for processing or for supplies and it won't cost them anything. Free advertising is a powerful incentive. Make sure that the work is matted and framed and titled and labeled in a very professional way so as to bring credibility to your school, the students and your contributing host. This is much easier than one might expect since nearly no one in Utah is taking advantage of this strategy. Remember there are a lot of other options for exhibition in the community.

**Related Projects:** A wonderful project in animal photography is to use one photo of the animal and then with a telephoto lens or cropped closeup enlargements have each student in the group take a specific closeup on a part of the animal like a texture of hair or shape of the eye or a corner of the lip or a swish of the tail. These detail photographs can be mounted around an enlargement of the whole animal or put together in some semblance of the anatomical structure that in some general way reconstructs the animal by proximity of the details.

If the zoo field trip is unavailable, bring in pets and do studio portrait work with back drops and inexpensive lights. Use the tripod, shutter release and for color use a tungsten sensitive Ektachrome 160 slide film for use under incandescent lights.

If all this technical stuff seems to much, use a point and shot automatic camera with flash indoors or outdoors and try to figure out how to avoid making personally esoteric "**SNAPSHOTS**". The most effective way to leave snapshots behind is to get as close as possible to the subject matter. Notice how many pictures in your family shoe box have a small picture of part of Uncle "Somebody" with lots of extraneous surrounding stuff that you can't exactly recognize and off somewhere is the person your are trying to capture by *drawing with light..*

**Vocabulary:** photography, snapshot, exposure, tripod, lens, composition, value, contrast, content, subject matter, f-stop, aperture.

**Bibliography:** Kodak Books: Photographing Your Vacation and Close Up Photography. My Camera, by George Ancona, The Solitude of Ravens, by Masahisa Fukase. FOCUS: Five Women Photographers, (Julia Margaret Cameron, Margaret Bourke-White, Flor Garduno, Sandy Skoglund, Lorna Simpson), by Sylvia Wolf. The Photographic Eye, by O'Brien and Sibley. The Camera, by Time Life Books.

### **Lesson three**

#### **Science; Habitats**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of "HABITAT" as it relates to animals and plants, weather and ecology or any one of the proceeding issues by creating a large butcher paper mural of one of four natural habitats, Deserts, Mountains, Swamps and Oceans then making cutout renditions of animals and or plants and or weather and other ecological concerns and attaching the cutout to the habitat mural in the appropriate place.

**Materials:** large sheets of butcher paper at least six feet long, masking tape, pencils for sketching, charcoal pencils and watercolor or tempera paint. (crayon, watercolor, colored pen or pencil and colored chalk and oil pastel)

**Process:** Students will first be led in a study of various habitats. There are many habitats available including generic and specific ecological locales. Simple and general is probably best for younger students such as Desert, Mountains, Jungle, Swamps, and Oceans.

With older students, more specific habitat might be more interesting and appropriate. After general habitats have been discussed including the over all biosphere of the terrain and the specific botanical and zoological bioforms in a particular habitat are listed, students will divide into the appropriate number of habitat groups and create a large landscape mural depicting the geology and geography of the chosen habitat. This landscape can be drawn from photographs or illustrations found in science books or generally made up to suit geological necessities. Remember that many of the plants and animals live above or below ground and water surface and mud. Part of the landscape can be a cutaway to show under the surface of the ground, inside of trees, under the surface of oceans and lakes. Remember also that much of the biology of a habitat is in the air so room needs to be left to include flying and floating biology. Another consideration is possible weather phenomenon.

After the habitat is chosen and groups are organized students will first make a list of everything they think might want to be included in their mural. This list can be larger than space available so a prioritizing must happen. When a clear list of inclusions is made have students draw lightly with pencil some small schematics of the overall mural so that composition and placement can be predetermined. Compare the various sketch proposals and have the group come to some kind of consensus as to *what* and *where* to be included in the mural. At this point the medium for the final mural must be decided upon. It is all right for the teacher to decide on medium depending on what materials are available. Try watercolor as it is easily available and relatively easy to use with just a little instruction.

A careful look at some landscapes with plants and animals might be appropriate at this time. Some prints to look for would include *Stone City*, Iowa by Grant Wood, *Peaceable Kingdom*, by Edward Hicks, any of the jungle and animal scenes by Henri Rousseau such

as *Virgin Forest*, and any of the seascapes by Winslow Homer. Another source of landscapes are the multitude of calendars with landscape photographs. These can be valuable resources because they demonstrate the "Five Ways" to make things look near and far in a landscape: Overlapping, Detail, Size, Placement and Contrast. Make sure the students understand these basic "perspective" concepts. Have students draw the whole landscape lightly with pencil on the large butcher paper. This type of mural will work better if the students draw large general areas rather than trying to put a lot of intricate detail. After pencil drawing have students use a charcoal pencil to outline the shapes and objects found in the landscape. Now it is color time. If students can not divide up the responsibilities on their own then make assignments either by subject matter parts of the landscape or by dividing the landscape into specific areas to which individuals are assigned. Do not overlook the opportunity to teach cooperation skills and how to achieve group consensus.

Now it is color time. Watercolor is a great medium to use but certainly not the only one. Here we will talk about color generically so the teacher must choose the medium which is most accessible and easiest for the teacher to model. Do not use a medium that intimidates the teacher. Before color is applied explain something about value. Insist that students avoid the temptation to let the watercolor set or crayon box tell them what color the sky is. This is their project and just because there is only one color of blue in the set doesn't mean that it is the right color. Students should discuss what color the sky in their habitat can be and mix the colors to get it. Notice that it is very rare in any environment that the sky or water or ground or rocks be one flat generic color that comes straight out of the art supply box.

First, the artist must have an idea of the color they want and then go about mixing it. This is a very important idea concerning color so model to the students how to get variation in color. When color is finished spray it with a clear acrylic spray. This is to prevent the tape which holds the plants and animals on from sticking to and tearing the mural.

When the landscape habitat background is finished (remember we are only creating a geological background for the rest of the plants and animals to be hung on) have students in each group make a list of animals and plants that are found in the habitat they have just rendered in their mural. Make sure the list is long enough. Too many is better than coming up short.

Divide up the list and have students draw and paint the individual plants and animals. When each is finished and the object cut out spray it with a clear acrylic sealer so the attaching masking tape will not stick and tear the cutouts. These projects can be made on any kind of paper including butcher paper for very large objects but card stock is probably best because it is very sturdy and can be moved around during the processing of this project without much damage. For younger students it may be advisable to seal the plant and animal objects in a laminating machine.

When the visuals of this project are finished have students discuss the balance and give and take of the plants and animals in this environment addressing such issues and

predator and prey, camouflage, nesting and burrowing sites, night and day behaviors and how seasons affect the balance and what each plant and animal do at various seasons. Remember that if the background habitat and the plants and animals can easily be moved about a variety of conditions can be simulated.

**Evaluation:** An excellent way to evaluate the amount of learning experienced by the students in this project is to have them write a brief synopsis of what they have learned about specific habitat and its residents and occupants. The writing can be done individually or with each student doing a part of a larger report as a cooperative effort resulting in one large description of these relationships in nature of Who, What and Where.

**Exhibition:** The product of this exercise is a valuable teaching tool. The work can be hung in a prominent place in the school with the report or reports displayed along side the visuals. Oral and dramatic presentations can be given in class about these locales with each student taking a specific part of the ecological relationship. These projects can be presented to different classes either as preparation for next years students or to divide up the project between classes with each class responsible for teaching their part to the other class. In this last instance have the students make a test to document how well the other class learned the habitat lesson and to see how well each class is at teaching an important lesson. When students create the test, the process losses some of it's adversarial nature.

**Related Projects:** There are a multitude of available spin off projects and variations on this theme. The habitat could be a specific place like the old pond or stream down the street from the school or for that matter the school grounds and adjacent vacant lots. Other more general specific areas could be along the Wasatch Front or Yellow stone Park or the West Desert or Utah Lake.

Other interesting habitat can be used like Tropical Islands, Arctic and Antarctic, above the tree line Mountain Tops, in Glacier Valleys, along Rivers and in City Parks. It might be interesting to do the same habitat in different seasonal conditions. Perhaps one habitat with Night and Day ..

Another interesting habitat mural could be made by including MAN as one of occupants of the natural setting, not only as a resident but by environmental impact factors like roads, air quality, farming (herbicides and pesticides and muddy run off from plowing and irrigation) water availability, noise pollution and simple trampling of terrain. These are interesting issues which impact all of us. Ask this question, "Are humans and human made things part of NATURE?" "Is there any place on earth where humans are not part of the ecosystem"?

**Vocabulary:** Ecology, habitat, nature, zoology, biology, botany, landscape, geology, geography, perspective, value scale, mural.

**Bibliography:** The Art and Science Connection, by Kinberley Tolley. The Magic School Bus, Looking for Liz (Habitats) The Salamander Room, by Anne Mazer. Our Planet

Series, by Troll Books.

#### **Lesson Four**

##### **History; AN ANIMAL TIME LINE**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of the chronological and sequential nature of history generally and art history specifically by documenting and dating how humans have drawn, painted and sculpted animals since earliest known prehistoric times and displaying these images chronologically in a time line.

**Materials:** School and community reference library, photocopier, a large space to display images and writing and dates.

**Process:** Depending on the age of students; explain, display and model how humans track time with sequential dating. When we make a large linear image of time sequence we call it a time line. It is a bit of an illusion since time is not simply linear but most of what we do in art is an illusion anyway (things aren't really smaller the further away they get, they only look smaller). For our purposes here we will deal with the singular illusion that time is a thin straight line and all happenings in human experience can be found somewhere on this line. It is a useful image.

To introduce this concept to young students it must be made clear that the calendar used today in the United States is only one of the systems used in the world to track time. There is the Gregorian Calendar, the Julian Calendar, the Hebrew Calendar, the Chinese Calendar, the Islamic Calendar, the Mayan Calendar and a whole variety of cosmologies that create schematic renderings of the sequence of time. This is of course not mentioning all of those cultures and cosmologies that do not see time in any linear way or even track and document time the way we do. The Masi of East Africa keep track of time in each nomadic community separately from the next community and call periods of time by the natural phenomena that occurred to that particular community. For example: "In the time of the big fire" or "the seasons when all the calves died". Only community members knew what anyone was talking about. The periods of time in the Masi culture are not tracked in even increments but in very asymmetrical uneven lumps of time.

Or, take the Australian Aborigines sense of concentric circles of time and the ability to drift into and out of different times with different realities. Or take Albert Einstein's and Stephen Hawking's various versions of the relative nature of time. Anyway, not to confuse the issue but to give young students some hooks to hold on to, let's start our time line at what the Western World calls the "Meridian of Time" or the birth of Jesus. In historical vernacular we refer to BC or the more politically correct BCE as Before the Christian Era and AD which in Latin is *anno Domini* or the "in the year of our Lord." The numbering system then starts with the birth of Jesus and moves backward into BCE and forward into AD and to the present. This is pretty hard for youngsters to grasp. Try explaining it this way: Last year was 1999, that meant that it was the 1,999th Christmas (not counting the shifts and anomalies in the dating sequence) and this year will be the 2,000th Christmas. Children seem to be able to grasp this.

If you can start with the present and push the time sequence backward to their birthday, then the year the school was built, their siblings birthdays, their parents birthdays and grandparents birthdays and so forth keeping it personal, the image and vision become accessible. After all, a time line really is a visual picture of what time might look like if you could see it. Keep it personal and spread it out into community dates, state dates, and national dates until they run out. Then use exploration and discovery dates, first European around the world and other dates reaching back to the birth of Jesus. Keep the dates simple and explain the historical occurrences because they are easier to visualize than the simple numbers involved. Keep going with the aid of the time line in the back of a sixth grade Social Studies book, including the major cultures of the world.

Try to add some of the important dates from the cultures that Eurocentric Americans do not get to learn about like the settlement of Polynesia, Melanesia, Micronesia, Australia, China, South East Asia and some significant dates in African history and South American and Meso American history. When the time line is generally established on the wall or ceiling of your room or out in the hall, it is time to start looking for animal images.

You may want to limit this time line to a specific culture or geographic area. You may want to keep working on this project for a long time and include as much of world history and culture as your research can uncover. Give each student the assignment to find an image of an animal and photocopy it for your time line with appropriate information. You will want to have information like Who, Where and When. Give the students a format of information so they can collect specifics. When? is going to be very important because that will determine where on the time line it will appear. You may want to give a specific size to the photocopy. It can be color or black and white or b/w and hand colored with colored pencils and watercolor. Try to achieve some visual continuity. Have students place their findings in the appropriate place on the time line with some ceremony and bravado to help make their success a big deal. Note: The time line should probably be flexible enough to change it's proportions to accommodate the fact that all time periods will most likely not be represented by an equal amount of room on the time line. Be ready to adjust the amount of space to the quantity of student responses.

Your school library is undoubtedly full of images of animals made by famous artists from all over the world over a long period of time. Here are some things to look for: In Europe we can push the idea of rendering animals in art at least back to *Head Of A Neighing Horse*, from France, c. 30,000-10,000 B.C.E., elk and bulls on the walls of ancient European caves like Lascaux and Alto Mire, c. 15,000 - 10,000 B.C.E., Sumerian bulls, Egyptian lions and birds, Chinese dragons and terra cotta horses and camels, Indian elephants, Native American masks and pottery designs, African animal fetishes and sculptures of antelope, Eskimo whale sculptures, Mayan feathered serpents, and Minoan sea creatures. This is a very short list but a place to start.

For a more current grouping look up some Modern artists like Edward Hicks', *The Peaceable Kingdom*; Marc Chagall's, *I And The Village*; Pablo Picasso's *Bulls* and his sculpture, *Bull's Head*; Albrecht Durer's horses in *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*,

and horses and other creatures in *The Knight, Death and The Devil*; M.C. Escher's fish and birds in, *Sky and Water* and other animals in his famous work *Metamorphosis*; Henri Rousseau, *The Sleeping Gypsy*; Constantin Brancusi, *Bird In Space*; and Paul Klee, *The Seafarer* (sometimes known as *Sinbad The Sailor*).

This is a very incomplete list but the idea here is to learn how to research without just looking up words the teacher gives. The world of visual art is so full of renditions of animals that it would be impossible to look through any general art history text without finding many versions of animals. Do not overlook the many different artistic styles that have been used to render animals. See if you can find some very abstracted versions and some very photo realistic versions. Find some that are painted and some that are sculpted. Do not forget, *Contested Meal*, by Korry R. Bird.

**Evaluation:** A written statement can accompany the photocopied art work if there is room and it seems appropriate. When an artist writes about someone else's art work it is called "Art Criticism". This does not mean to find things wrong with the work but to find things that are important and significant to the art work. You may want to playfully call your critiques "art signifs". Be careful! This is not the correct expression and should not be used to confuse the students. A short critical model to use might be: Who did it? What does it look like? How was it done? and Do you like it? Why?

For older students an Historical statement about the importance of this art work or the culture it represents would be a nice addition to the time line.

**Exhibition:** The time line is a "self exhibiting" project. The building of the time line is a kind of performance installation. Your time line can be large enough to actually walk through. Use your sense of drama and imagination to exhibit the work. Didactics (the little write ups that usually accompany exhibitions in a museum) are a wonderful teaching device. Hint: no matter what important things are said in a sign, if it can't be read it says nothing. The most important thing about a sign is its readability.

**Related Projects:** There is other subject matter in art that could work on a time line. Architecture is a natural because it is so visible and reflective of the culture even the long gone ancient cultures. Another twist on the time line is to do it biographically, focusing on a single artist or a school of art like "Impressionism" rather than the actual art print. A cross referenced time line showing what was happening simultaneously in different cultures makes for easy compare and contrast assignments.

**Vocabulary:** history, prehistoric, cosmology, time, time line, sequence, A.D and B.C.E, abstract, representational, nonrepresentational, symbolic.

**Bibliography:** *Artforms*, by Duane and Sarah Preble. *A Basic History of Art*, by Janson and Janson. *Art Through the Ages, Vol. 1 & 2*, by Gardner. *Looking at Art*, by David Piper.

## **Lesson Five: Visual Elements**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate an understanding the of basic visual element, **line**, by inventing and drawing a line which conveys and expresses qualities found in a specific animal without drawing any "realistic" picture of the animal.

**Process:** Students will first be led in a discussion of line and the broad range of expressive variations available in a simple line. A short classroom presentation that will help students see the qualitative nature of line follows: First draw two lines on the board. One is a smooth slightly rolling horizontal line. Label it no. 1. Draw a second line which is a jagged diagonal line somewhat reminiscence of the traditional symbol for lightening. Label it no. 2.

Now ask students to choose which one of these lines is quiet and which one is noisy buy suggesting that you as the teacher think that one of these lines is soft and quiet and gentle and that one is loud and noisy and dangerous. Have students choose by raising hands. Most will obviously choose line no. 1 as the quiet line. Some may not but reinforce that in art we do not all have to agree. When students have made and expressed their decision put your ear up close to each or ask a student to and tell the class what you can hear. You will not hear any noise for either line so how can anyone think that one line is loud and one quiet? Explain that we are hearing with our eyes! A whole other lesson is available here dealing with seeing, hearing and touching. . . see related projects.

Why do most people see the horizontal, slightly rolling line as quiet and the diagonal, jagged line as noisy? Ask students what the second, noisy line reminds them of. Someone will say, "lightening". Find a good large photograph of lightening. It will be in a book on weather in your library. Notice that lightening does not look at all like the diagonal saw blade line that you have drawn. It fact lightening usually looks like the branches of a dead tree or the way human circulatory systems look splintering off into capillaries or the way a river delta looks from space. These photos are all available. They look similar because they share the same physics. Now, why does the jagged diagonal line remind people of lightening? Because it shares the same emotional qualities of lightening. Ask if lightening is safe or dangerous. Then ask which line, 1 or 2 is dangerous. Ask if lightening is violent or peaceful. Then ask which line is more violent, 1 or 2. Then ask is lightening loud or quiet, soft or hard, nice or naughty, good or bad, passive or aggressive, wild or tame and so forth. What we have actually done is to draw a line that does not look particularly like

lightening but which shares the same emotional, symbolic and metaphorically qualities. Line no. 2 reminds us of lightening because it brings up **our** emotional response to the phenomenon of lightening.

Obviously we are using the lines symbolically and metaphorically and in fact, that is what we always do in the visual arts. The line works when drawing an animal not just because it conveys the shape of the animal but because the lines used also have captured some of the essential qualities of the animal.

At this point have students look carefully at the slide image of Korry Bird's *Contested Meal* to see if you can find lines the have the quality of an eagle or a fish or the quality of "fighting over food". Blow the image up large on the screen and then shrink it down this will show your students general to specific. If you want you can "window" to isolate an area and loose the "realistic" illusion of the work or a light pointer can be used. Find the lines. They are there. This can also be done with shapes, textures, colors and values. You may want to ask, "What does a "fish" line look like? An eagle line? A fighting line? A flying line?" Use the other animal slides in the packet to discover other lines that belong to the quality of the animal rather than simple pictorial rendering.

Have students choose an animal. This can also work as an excellent group project with room for discussion and group cooperation skills and consensus making. When students have chosen their animal have them make a list of five to ten characteristics of that animal. These should not only be physical characteristics but also emotional, symbolic and metaphorical attributes of the animal. For example, here are some animal attributes made by second grade students: **SNAKE**; long, slimy, slithery, skinny, curvy, wiggly, dangerous, poisonous, scary, mean, good or bad, naughty or nice and other moral options depending on the personal view of the artist. **EAGLE** (by sixth graders); fluffy, pointy, flying, hunter, aggressive, nasty, "it can kill you", very fast, "sharp beak and claws", dangerous, interesting, free, intense, graceful, independent, beautiful, unusual...

When students have made their list (more than one or two is important) have them draw a line which conveys the same emotional sense that the animal possesses. If there are too many conflicting qualities listed about the animal have students choose the one characteristic that they think is most important and then draw a line which embodies that quality. It may be helpful to have students first decide if the quality they are going to draw is diagonal, horizontal or vertical. (sounds like a whole lesson). The students may want to draw a lot of lines until they have found the best one that reflects the sense they are trying to communicate. Newsprint is cheap and experience is of great value.

This is a line drawn by Nic age 8. He chose Rhinoceros as his animal and developed a list of five characteristics: Strong, Wild, Big, Mean, and Dangerous. He then chose a slightly diagonal line, practiced a few lines and decided that the line above was right for the character of a Rhino.

To turn this into a finished, exhibitable lesson and project, have students use a half sheet of drawing paper and draw a ruler width border around the edge. Students should then choose from the "animal lines" they have invented and drawn, the most successful idea. Remember that we are not drawing pictures of what the animal looks like but rather what the animal is like, what it feels like, what it sounds like, what it seems like: the emotional, intellectual and spiritual nature of the animal. Each student should choose one of the three directional movements of line, horizontal, diagonal and vertical (each has its own evocative quality) and scribe the line from border to border. The line need not be a true or straight horizontal or vertical but one that starts on one side and ends on the other (horizontal) or starts at the top and ends at the bottom (vertical) or starts at one corner and ends in the opposite (diagonal). Notice that each of these lines will have isolated a shape that has either two or three straight sides and one very interesting qualitative line side. Have students choose which of the two shapes (positive and negative) communicates the qualities of their chosen animal and then fill it with a single, mixed color of their own devise which is the color that communicates the quality of their animal that they are focusing on. Any color medium can be used but crayons are difficult to mix. Colored pencils are especially good for this kind of work and watercolor or tempera work well for mixing colors. The only requirement about color should be that no one uses a single color right out of the tube or box but creates their own by first thinking of the color and then making it. Do not let the art supply company decide on the right color for you to use. Textures can also be added but do not lose the lesson about line in all the other decision making until the first element, line, is working to the students fulfilled expectations. These other elements may actually be complete separate lessons.

**Shark** line by Eperanza age 9  
mean, grouchy, hungry, fast, evil.

**Shark** line by Stephen age 7  
wet, sharp, smart, swimmer, neat.

**Evaluation:** A nice way to evaluate the quality of the line is to have each student present their line and have students list on the board the emotional and suggestive qualities they see in the line and then match them up with the animal and see if there is any correlation. This kind of evaluation and processing of a project can be dangerous because the outcome is tentative. It is also real and even the very young are impressed with a teachers courage and faith in the eventual outcome. It is a way to model your own conviction that lines can show evocative quality.

**Exhibition:** Exhibit this work labeled with the name of the animal and if possible a picture of the animal and of course the name of the artist and the title of the piece. The work will become somehow more "professional" and be taken more seriously if you can mat the work or even use a cut out construction paper frame. Nice framing and matting are of course the best way to go but good layout and composition of the exhibition and some sort of matting and framing will give credibility to the work and take it out of the traditional child art genre of "playing with art supplies" and demonstrate that art production is cognitive and substantive.

If you are looking for some good didactics to accompany this show, write up some

definitional differences between, REALISTIC, Nonrepresentational, REPRESENTATIONAL, SYMBOLIC and METAPHORICAL styles of art. Examples are available.

**Related Projects:** diagonal, horizontal and vertical lines; lines can show feelings; shapes, textures, colors and values can show feelings;

Hearing with your eyes: We do not see with our eyes. We look at things with style is the artwork? (For very young students: Did the artist try to make the sculpture look real?) How can you tell? Why do you think the artist called this piece Sunny Day? How else besides titles might an artist tell us something about his artwork? (Read or tell some of the information from the bio.)

Is this sculpture meant to look like a real pig? Real pigs aren't this color and although they're kind of lazy, they never sit still for so long. What else tells you this is an artwork and not a real pig? Do you think the artist wanted to make his sculpture look exactly like a real pig or did he want to make good art? Are these two different things or are they the same? Would you like this sculpture better if it looked even more like a real pig? Why?

Compare this piece with *Contested Meal*, also by Korry Bird. He made one our eyes but we see with our brain. Do you see what I mean? We do not hear with our ears. We listen with our ears but we hear with our brain. Can you see what I'm getting at? We do not feel with our fingers. We touch with our fingers but we feel with our brain. Now do you see what I'm try to say? Seeing means understanding.

**Vocabulary:** emotions, vertical, diagonal, horizontal, realistic, nonrepresentative, representative, symbolic, metaphorical, expressive.

**Bibliography:** Artforms, Parts 1 and 2, Chapters 1-5 by Preble and Preble. Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain, by Betty Edwards. Looking at Art, by David Piper, Part Two, The Language of Art, by Christopher Cornford. Artalk, by Rosalind Ragans.