

## Dear Educator,

Thank you for booking a tour with the Museum of Glass. We look forward to your visit!

We're sending you this curriculum to help enhance the museum visit for you and your students. These activities have been carefully prepared to go with the exhibit you will visit. You can use them as pre-visit materials or post-visit, but we strongly encourage that you spend some time with the packet before your visit. We've found that students understand and learn so much more if they are prepared before they come.

Along with this packet, we have extensive curriculum and interactive activities on our website about glassblowing and working with hot glass as an art form. Please visit [www.museumofglass.org](http://www.museumofglass.org) and click "**Learn**" on our home page. From there, visit the **Virtual Hot Shop**, where your students will get a chance to experience glassblowing by creating a *macchia*. Participants walk through the process step-by-step until they get a finished work of art! Along the way they can also choose to learn more about glass. You and your students can even watch the Hot Shop Live, by clicking "**Watch**" on our home page and selecting the "**Live Web Streaming of the Hot Shop**" link.

We sincerely hope you enjoy these materials and your visit to the Museum of Glass.

***Sounds of the Inner Eye:***  
***John Cage, Mark Tobey and Morris Graves***  
**(Inaugural Exhibition)**  
July 6 - October 6, 2002

**Lessons**

**Life as Art: Transcending Boundaries**

Communications 1.5: Listens and observes: interprets visual media through different perspectives

**Nature and Transformation: A Study in Observation and Abstraction**

Arts Essential Learning 1.1.2: Concepts and Vocabulary: creates realistic and **abstract art**

**East and West: The Meeting**

*Writing Essential Learning 2.2: Writes for a range of purposes: to persuade*

# Life as Art

## Transcending Boundaries

### Teaching Process: School Educator

- Assists students in brainstorming descriptive language associated with attributes of sound
- Directs students to create a “log” of sounds with language
- Guides discussion of diagramming strategies to visually represent what is heard
- Facilitates discussion concepts of ordinary sensory experience vs. “art”
- Shows images of Cage’s visual work

### Learning Process: Students

- **Brainstorm adjectives associated with a diverse range of sound for accessible word source bank to support description of sound in log.**  
*Buzz...slap...rattle...hum*

### Listen (small groups of students should be at different school locations so experiences vary)

- **Activate sensory awareness by:**  
Clearing the mind of all thoughts...breathing rhythmically...focusing and LISTENING acutely for an interval of 5 minutes. Students associate descriptive language with sounds and describe, in written form, as accurately as possible what they have heard: emphasis should be on description of qualities of sounds rather than naming their source.

### Identify (strategies for diagramming the relationship and sequence of sound visually).

*With a time line? A graph? A musical score?*

*How can interval between sound and rhythm of sound be represented?*

*How can simultaneous or overlapping sounds be represented?*

*How can soft or loud sounds be represented?*

- Students create a diagram of sound based on descriptive language generated and recall a sensory experience.
- Students self-assess for language to make descriptive distinctions between sounds and diagramming with specific visual reference to relationships of sound.

**Reflect on distinction between what we define as sound or noise, and what we define as “music.” How does sound come together in music? How does sound come together in everyday life?**

**Catalyst words:** order, chaos, structure, rules, chance, silence, accident, plan

**John Cage:**

John Cage once said "You have to invent history" (1989). As a musical composer, he challenged traditional ideas by blurring the distinctions between ordinary sensory experience and our perception of art. He participated in many creative endeavors often in collaboration with other performing and visual artists during his lifetime. He often used ordinary objects, adapted or unconventional instruments, spoken words, and long periods of silence in his musical compositions. He was influenced by Eastern philosophy of Japan and China and adopted a method of using "chance operations" from the "I Ching": an ancient Taoist Chinese oracle system for answering questions. Much like throwing and interpreting dice, the I Ching governed the composing of a musical or visual art for Cage: Random chance, which brings sounds together in any given life moment, determines the sounds of music or the look of art. The element of change and spontaneous occurrence brings the experience of Cage's music closer to the experience of life.

**View visual art work by John Cage:** Cage considered making visual art a form of "meditation."

**Outcome**

- Students create descriptive log based on focused observation. Diversity of language and graphic organization show studied response to sounds. Students verbalize thoughts on music and sound, perceptions of art.

## **Nature and Transformation**

### **A Study in Observation and Abstraction**

#### **Teaching Process: School Educator**

- Introduces art of Morris Graves and Mark Tobey
- Leads exercise in observation of objects from the natural world
- Assists students in applying seeing and drawing skills in a representational drawing
- Guides creation of abstract painting
- Facilitates reflective discussion on art-making process
- *Materials: 8"x10" dark paper (brown, gray or blank), white colored pencils, white tempera paint diluted to a flowing consistency, small brushes 1/8 – 1/4" round, small paint containers. Objects from nature: shells, bones, feathers, plants*

#### **Learning Process: Students**

- **View art of Morris Graves and Mark Tobey**

Morris Graves and Mark Tobey were both legendary observers. The deep spiritual reverence of nature of Zen Buddhism is at the center of Morris Graves' magical images of nature. The Baha'i Faith, originating in Persia, formed a spiritual foundation for Tobey's work emphasized tolerance and unity through acceptance of all world religions. The moving focus in his paintings created with repetitive lines symbolizes unification in Tobey's work were inspired by traditional Asian calligraphy. Tobey and Graves were friends and an inspiration to one another: they both included luminous "white writing" in much of their work.

#### **Activate sensory awareness by:**

- Clearing the mind of all thoughts...breathing rhythmically...focusing and SEEING...

#### **Observe**

- See objects from nature with attend to contours (edges) and interior lines revealing texture and the dimension of objects.
- Practice drawing objects with eyes following the objects more than looking at the paper. While drawing, pretend that the pencil is touching the objects as your eyes move around its edges and details.
- Vary pencil pressure to show observation of thick or thin lines.
- Select one object, and draw it with complete concentration.

#### **Abstract**

- Experiment with brush control on a practice paper: Imagine the brush as a writing or drawing tool. Make delicate and precise strokes: vary pressure to control width of stroke.

- Find a line from the first observational drawing which communicates the essence of the object. Abstract that line by simplifying or exaggerating it. Being abstract painting by repeating the chosen abstract line in different areas of the paper. Connect repeated abstract elements with thoughtful painted line.
- If something unintentional happens, accept it and let it lead to another possibility. Think of like as a thread or a web connecting all parts of the painting. Leave open spaces so that the line always remains visible and in balance.

### **Reflect**

- Choose and display one painting or drawing. Discuss and self-asses process as a group through guides questions:
- *What details focused observation reveal in the object?*
- *Where did variation in line show the texture, pattern, and shape of objects?*
- *How does drawing or painting light against dark affect the impact of line?*
- *How does line affect the movement of your eye when looking at a painting?*
- *Is there a sense of shifting focus in a painting?*
- *What are some ways that line can be described in these paintings?*  
*Dynamic? Fluid? Chaotic?*

### **Outcome**

- Varying contour line descriptive of share and textural detail in observational drawing.
- Abstract painting using simplification, exaggeration, and unification of forms through line.

## **East and West The Meeting**

### **Teaching Process: School Educator**

- Presents ideas from Eastern Philosophy
- Facilitates discussion contrasting Eastern ideas and current Western thought
- Introduces the art of John Cage, Mark Tobey and Morris Graves
- Leads students in connecting Eastern ideals with art
- Guides students in writing about the meeting of Eastern and Western ideas

### **Learning Process: Students**

- **Respond to overview by contrasting Eastern and Western culture and philosophy in discussion.**

In the ancient practice of Zen Buddhism there is a dissolving of self into a greater oneness with the world. The mind is emptied of wants, desires, beliefs and judgments through disciplined meditation seeking inner stillness, existence in the present. Reverence for all life and deep immersion in nature are basic elements in Zen and traditional Japanese culture.

Taoism, ancient Chinese religion and philosophy, grew out of a reaction to a violent time in history. The word Tao means “way” or “road.” Unkind or selfish behavior is considered unnatural and wrong according to the Tao philosophy. A quiet meditative life, close to nature and at peace with other human beings is considered aligned with the “way.” The Yin Yang of balance of opposites comes from Taoism. The role of chance and spontaneous existence in the present also are a part of Taoist thought.

The Baha’i faith recognizes the prophets of multiple religions with the belief that each carried a common truth founded in time and place. The Baha’i oppose all kinds of divisions which create strife between nations: and promote peace and unity among all people of the world.

- *How do our Western values contrast with some of these described?*
- *Our view of self?*
- *Self in relation to others?*
- *Self in relation to nature?*
- *The value of the spiritual world?*
- *The value of the material world?*
- *Our desires, wants, goals?*

### **View art of John Cage, Mark Tobey and Morris Graves**

- *Where in this art do you see evidence of the influence of Eastern Philosophy?*

- *Connection to nature?*
- *Emphasis on chance, spontaneity? Spirituality? Balance?*
- *Influence of traditional art forms?*

**Write a persuasive essay inspired by this sentence:**

- ***In what ways could the ideas of Eastern philosophy improve our current Western world?***
- *Consider current issues as a starting point: Economic? Environmental? Social? Political?*

**Reflect**

- Students present their views by reading their essays.
- Students self assess by examining relevancy of cultural issues, and use of language which show examination of cultural contrast.
- Depth of understanding is shown in synthesis of ideas to describe potential cross-cultural influences and outcomes.

**Outcome**

- Students gain understanding of Eastern philosophy, identity, cultural influences in art, and conceptualize the possible outcomes of the meeting and merging of cultural ideals in society.