Art and Society as a Resource for Foreign Language Teachers

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INTRODUCTION

I am a foreign language teacher at a middle school in the northwest Houston (HISD) district. I have been teaching Spanish, French and ESL, among other subjects, to 6th, 7th and 8th students for five years. Half of my student population is regular and the other half is Gifted and Talented. In spite of their differences, both groups enjoy learning through art. I was interested the seminar entitled *Art and Society: How People and Cultures Define and Value the Arts* because I thought I could relate its content to the design and implementation of my foreign language classes, and improve the quality of interdisciplinary thinking of all my foreign language students.

ACADEMIC SETTING/UNIT BACKGROUND

Hamilton MS is an inner-city school located in the North Central District (The Heights) of the Houston Independent School District and with a student population of about 1240 students in grade six through eight. Approximately 77% percent of the students are Hispanic, 13% are African American, 9% are Caucasian, and 1% are Asian. Around 82% of all students receive free or reduced lunches. Forty-six (46) percent of the student body is classified "At-Risk," 13% are limited English proficient (LEP), 18% are receiving special education services, and 19% are classified as Gifted and Talented.

One of my first priorities as a foreign language teacher has always been to accomplish as many learning standards for Texas children as possible at the same time, in this case both TEKS (*Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills*) and *Project CLEAR* (*Clarifying Learning to Enhance Achievement Results*) objectives. I am especially concerned about the following TEKS goals: 114.22.C.1. (*The student communicates in a language other than English using the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing*); 114.22.C.2. (*The student gains knowledge and understanding of other cultures*); 114.22.C.3. (*The student uses the language to make connections with other subject areas and to acquire information*), and 114.22.C.4. (*The student develops insight into the nature of language and culture by comparing the student's own language and culture to another*). Using art in foreign language classes can easily help students attain most of these TEKS goals. Art is usually a very proactive and useful indicator of culture, and because of its intrinsic characteristics, it usually pleases everybody, especially children. I have always been interested in art; in fact, I am currently working towards my doctorate in Philosophy of Art at Jaume I University in Castellón, Spain, and I usually like to include as many paintings as possible when I teach. My lesson plans are envisioned as interdisciplinary lessons dealing with art, foreign language, sociology and history. I think that by exploring different art topics, my students can acquire a better interdisciplinary understanding of cultural and linguistic issues.

Philosophic Theory of Art as Background

John Dewey used to claim that art is a way to understand culture. There is even a sound theory of art as a form of cognition that requires interpretation (Freeland 149), which I try to

honor throughout this unit. I particularly think that art expresses people's societies, values and languages. It is an excellent indicator and opportunity to teach not only historic and related social topics, but also vocabulary, common topics and debates. It generates a lot of dialog, and I try to incorporate it in the first introductory lesson, when dealing with the different ways we can perceive art and society as intermingled and interacting. There is an old proverb that says, *"A picture is worth more than a thousand words*." This is true in several ways: a) usually, art depicts not only the social, historical or daily reality of its epoch, but also demonstrates the main evolved tools, and technology used; b) art depicts also national civic social culture and main values of the epoch; c) art depicts not only the psychological personality of the individual artist but also different personalities of a culture, or society; and finally, d) society and culture make art evolve in certain ways, developing avenues based upon values of that determined society or culture. Students must have a previous understanding of all these abstract issues before attempting to analyze further paintings, or other artistic objects.

This curriculum unit will be used over a whole school year in foreign language sections that deal with art. Each section of this unit is designed for one or two 60-minute periods, where I would like to introduce a few examples of different foreign paintings and time periods, and an in-depth reflection of what they express and value, and how they may reflect the culture and language they come from. For this curriculum unit, I have chosen Artemisia Gentileschi's *Self Portrait as the Allegory of Painting* (1630-32), Joan Miró's: *Payés catalán al claro de luna* (1968), *and Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue* (1921) by Piet Mondrian, as samples of different centuries, societies, genders, and artistic styles. In order to reflect on them, students have to apply a simple scheme of content analysis (Gaul Seminar). Following one example, and taking into account the historic and social context of these pictures, students would have to analyze them. As you can appreciate, this is a very useful activity to also reinforce some of the curriculum of reading in English, as students have to apply a subtle command of aesthetic terms.

Vocabulary Exploration

On the other hand, by using these or other paintings of your own choice, students can explore various pedagogical and linguistic connections to improve their foreign language communicative skills. Teachers and students can include as much foreign language vocabulary and grammar structures as they wish, as the possibilities seem endless: they can explore not only the field vocabulary related to the painting itself but also the artistic movement, its main characteristics, its context vocabulary, its formal analyses, etc. For me, this section includes semantic fields in French and/or Spanish, through which the main structures and grammar related to the paintings, are analyzed.

Unit Objectives

Following the Texas Essential Knowledge Objectives mentioned above, students would be able to participate in activities that focus on the following six skills/objectives:

✓ Students will get a first approach to different definitions of art and its different artistic manifestations. After reviewing different paintings and their social and historic contexts, students will do a field-trip to the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston; they will also debate and summarize what they have learned about art and art forms by using a contextualized frame.
✓ After historic and social contextualization of Artemisia's, Miró's, and Mondrian's paintings, students will also relate them to their historical epoch and other similar artistic movements, by creating a chronological graffiti or poster, where all three paintings would be displayed.
✓ Students will acquire visual literacy tools and language, as well as a sense of taste critique by analyzing and judging the contents of those different paintings.

- ✓ Students will develop research abilities by using new technologies and library resources in order to find out Artemisia's, Miró's and Mondrian's biographies. As a creative synthesis of their research, students will reinforce their creativity, essay skills and empathy by writing a diary based on the life of those three painters.
- ✓ Students will write an extensive aesthetic newspaper, commenting on all three paintings, and including at least one personal painting, their analyses by using content analyses as an aesthetic method, and a related poem.
- ✓ Students will *assess* and will be assessed on what they have learned by keeping their work in a portfolio, and assessing them through rubrics (see Appendix A).

Lesson Plans

The lesson plans for this unit use more or less the same schedule and structure**.** At the beginning, and after a brief historic, social and cultural introduction to the artistic movement to be considered, and their main characteristics, I like introducing a few paintings of the artistic movement considered to students, as well as an in-depth reflection on what they express and value. In order to do this, the students have to apply a simple scheme of formal content analysis, including: a) tone or first impression suggested by the picture; b) descriptive or denotative level; c) semantic or connotative level; and d) finally allegoric or subjective lecture. At the same time, students acquire foreign language vocabulary related to perception, likes and dislikes, objects, textures, shapes, light, styles, subject matters and related semantic fields as well as main foreign language structures and grammar related to the paintings analyzed.

In further lesson plans, the unit develops at least the following sections and activities for each artistic movement: A) *Artistic newspaper project:* by creating a comprehensive gazette about different areas of the cultural epoch considered, students will enhance their research and literacy skills both in English and foreign languages. They would also reinforce their creativity and technological skills through the use of word processors and Internet. B) *Huge timeline-based graffiti murals:* Students will design huge graffiti murals related to at least three different artistic movements throughout history. This is an expressive pictorial experience, conceived as a summary of the knowledge acquired on previous lessons. Students can display their informative slogans in the bulletin boards of the school by using spray paints, cartons, papers, collage adhesives, etc. C) *Painter's Diary***:** Students will develop research abilities by using new technologies and library resources in order to find out Artemisia's, Miró's and Mondrian's biographies. As a creative synthesis, students will reinforce their creativity, empathy and essay skills by writing a diary based on the life of all of them. A twofold purpose is pursued here: 1) first, to acquire reading skills on biographies, and 2) to create creative diaries where the students could project their creativity and knowledge of different artistic movements by assuming the role of the painter's perspective. D) *Artistic Painting***:** Finally, and after going over main characteristics of the different artistic movements at stake, students can be real painters by doing drawings of paintings from different artistic movements with the help of computer graphic software, or other technique of their choice, thus exploring their own artistic talents when trying to emulate or create a new painting. E) Finally, this unit is assessed through several *rubrics*, used for each section. In Appendix I the reader can find a general but useful example of rubrics for the painters' diaries and the artistic newspaper, which could be tailored as needed to your own didactic purposes.

Benefits to Students

This art unit focuses on three basic needs of all students: 1) First, it enhances research skills by actually looking into real libraries, websites, etc. As a complementary activity, this unit includes a visit to the main Houston Public Library in Downtown Houston to acquire a better understanding

of research tools by experts, and research on main biographies and social contexts of the main paintings; 2) It relates the academic world to the outside world by means of field trips: visits to the Houston Public Library and to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts are recommended. The Museum of Fine Arts has excellent and beautiful examples of art from different context period and epochs; and 3) It finally develops creativity and an artistic sense of perception, helping students to be able to create a real work of art and being able to judge other artistic abilities and designs.

SECTION I: OUTLINE OF MY METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

As stated above, this current unit tries to analyze through a formal analysis three different paintings, one of the 17th century: *Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting*, and two 20th century ones from Miró and Mondrian. There are different kinds of methodological approaches to the study of these paintings, but I consider that the case study based upon content analyses patterns is really useful and easy to teach.

There is an academic tradition of the analyses of the visual discourse that has been trying to theorize about image literacy through different authors. In Spain, we can mention the work of S. Mallas, A. Aparici, A. Gual, etc., among others. In the USA, we could mention the names of Terry Barrett, Arthur Danto, Amy Tucker, etc… All these authors have set forth a standardized symbolic interpretation of images, which makes this approach quantitative and systematically valid. I like the theoretic presentation of the case study approach through its content analysis given by Bernard Berelson in 1952, in his book *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. For Berelson, the content analysis is a serious study case and research tool used for the objective, systemic and quantitative description of the manifest content of any type of communications (16). Paintings are communicative as they interact with the receptor (aesthete) that contemplates them. In theory, the content analyses applied by Berelson to written discourses can also be applied to visual presentations, as they possess all the elements, verbal and non-verbal, of a discourse. Through picture content analyses, we attain visual literacy, or as Tucker defines it, "*the ability to 'read' and understand visual information*" (Tucker 5), which is one of the main goals to attain when developing this unit. Besides the approach suggested by Berelson in his book already mentioned, (Berelson 17), other content analyses proposals by Tucker in her book *Visual Literacy* (Tucker 28), *or* by E. Burke Feldman, in his book *Varieties of Visual Experience*, (Burke 149) can be helpful. I personally prefer to follow Gual's proposal, due to its eclecticism and its simplicity. I am including an initial summary of the methodological approach created by Gual, which has the following dimensions to consider:

1. Tone or mere perceptual encounter of reading level
2. Aesthetic descriptive or denotative analyses: description and formal analysis
3. Semantic and connotative analyses: interpretation
4. Latent or subjective allegoric level: evaluation (Gaul).

Tone

This first reading level refers to the quantity of items or elements that forms the structure and composition of an image/object, and that makes it appear as simple or complex. Perceptually, it is scientifically proven that the eyes gaze can observe less than four elements in an image at a glimpse. The inclusion of more than four elements in a composition (either as colors forms or textures) obliges the eye to sweep the image in a characteristic way for each composition: what is more, if the elements included have a relation among them, then the level of complexity tends to increase. The interpretation of a message is usually related to its level of abstractedness, to its originality and to its quantity of meanings. In turn, the way an observer's gaze perceives a work of art depends not only on the selectivity of the vision, and the physical facts of sight, but on the

artist's methods for directing the path and duration of that gaze. The tone is thus going to give the audience the first impression produced by such composition not only as one of initial simplicity or complexity, but also as one of positive and negative connotation for the spectator as a first perceptive gaze.

Aesthetic Descriptive Analyses or Denotative Level

From the point of view of the descriptive-denotative analysis, the observer just gives account, names and describes each of the different elements, objects or items depicted in the work of art, without projecting any evaluations over it. It also would include the identification of materials, and/or equipment used to create the work of art. Finally, it would include the description of the main visual *elements* to take into account in a composition, such as shape, dots and lines, texture, values, etc… Due to the fact that the majority of the works of art to be described by the students are paintings, at this level of description one has to take into account the theories of composition applied to fixed images in order to be analyzed: among others, dots and lines, color and light, forms and shapes, angles and frames, objects and characters, texture and time, etc.
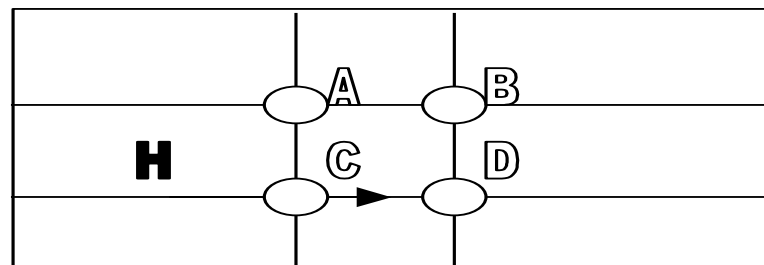
Dots and Lines

Figure 1. Golden Mean Section and western reading projection

Generally speaking, dots and lines above the geometric center of the painting tend to produce a compensated balance or equilibrium feeling. By conventional definition, lines are paths left by a moving point, and they can assume different formats (actual, implied or lines created by edges may be undulated, wavy, broken lines, etc). Among its different functions, lines outline and form shapes and masses in outline drawings, but they also convey movement and emphasis, just because they naturally tend to follow a path, and can delimit frame-within-a-frame to outline themes. They also have direction related to our experience of gravity. It is conventionally understood that flat, horizontal lines tend to have an assertive quality by defying gravity. "*Diagonal lines tend to be very dynamic and tend to imply action or motion.*"(Gilbert 84). The *force lines* of any composition are defined by the use of diagonals in its surface. *The force line* goes from the above right angle to the left inferior angle and the *interest line* goes from the left above angle to the right lower angle of the frame. Both lines serve to break the monotony of the composition. In this section, we need to mention the famous classic *rule of thirds* or *Golden Mean section* (Gaul). All devices breaking the relative regularity of the image serve to attract the audience attention to the disruptive point: the optic center is the one perceived as real and usually is placed above the geometric center of the frame. Any image is created around the called solid points: the four inner points (delimiting another four intersections among parallel and perpendicular lines) are the solid points where the interest centers of any image are placed: As observed below, *A, B, C* and *D* are the solid points and focus the attention of the rectangular vision. The element to be outlined is usually placed in the middle of those four limits (in western culture, it is conventionally accepted that it tend to favorite the reading to point *D* from point *H*) and it tends to be the crossing point of reading paths for the spectator. From the point of view of visual literacy, this quality is called *framing*, and it is a quality present in all well built images permitting that the visual sweeping done

by the observer would focus towards the central subject. This optimal framing allows framing only the informative content related to the subject, showing an open horizon or an open negative space to provide with a depth asymmetric field that avoids the perceptive monotony of the symmetry and would facilitate the deepness of the perceptual field (Gaul).

Light

These visual elements allow a painter to create shadow, outline colors and volumes, and it is used for: 1) expressing feelings and emotions; 2) creating a poetic atmosphere; 3) differentiating aspects of a representation; and 4) outlining the deepness of the close ambiences and that of open spaces (Gaul). As many photographers and painters know, the perception of forms and shapes, of space relationships, as well as of sizes, masses and shapes is easily modified according to the light treatment used by those experts: *harsh light* or *direct light* is the one that provides deliberate shades by showing the peculiarities of the model and making hard contrasts of shades and lights. Its exaggeration leads to *chiaroscuro*, or dramatic emphasis of contrasts of lights and shadows. *Diffuse light* makes sure that all parts are illuminated; it tends to smooth shades and makes all objects visible though it could offer flat images. The light use is also important: Light could be used with a realistic effect in mind, when reproducing natural light as faithfully as possible, or with a second intention, forcing all light effects (counter light, chiaroscuro, and light-shadow). By illuminating more or less different visual elements of the image, those could be beautifully or harshly outlined, give the impression of peace and calmness or anguish and torment, as we will see later on. Light direction also gives information of the visible surfaces in the image: A frontal light eliminates shadows; lateral lights give volume, and counter-lights outline the silhouettes. The light height has also to be considered: *High light (zenithal)* creates inadequate shadows, while *low lights*, in counter-angles, produce the inversion of the shadows enlarging them and creating a threatening effect. Finally, light can also modify the context in which objects and characters appear (Alabarce 4).

Color

It is commonplace in art to refer to the chromatic circle, where the primary colors (red, yellow, and blue) are equally spaced around it, with the secondary colors (orange, green and violet, which are combinations of two of the primary colors), between them. When mixing a primary color and its neighboring secondary color, intermediate colors are formed. Complementary pairs of colors are the ones opposite each other on the circumference, such as orange and blue, yellow and violet, red and green. Colors get their definition by their location on the color spectrum. In general, colors can be described by their characteristics of family (primary, secondary or neutral), tone or hue (color name or chromaticity), value (lightness or darkness, intensity of white light reflected), intensity or saturation (purity or brightness of the hue) and warmth (less visibility time). The visibility of the colors tend to diminish with their association or combination, as some of them have higher visibility because they need less perceptive time (as orange) and some act as background components. Different contrasts can be obtained by combining warm and cold colors. This is what is called a*esthetic effect of color or subjective color* (Gaul). Color association produces determined sensations and feelings, such as agreeableness, disagreeableness and even indifference, according to the colors present in the composition, their distribution and the surface occupied by them. The relationship among colors creates two kind of opposite effects: contrast and harmony (Gaul). As for contrast, it is defined as the mutual influence among juxtaposed colors without affinity. There are three kinds of contrasts: a) tone contrast, b) valor contrast, and c) simultaneous contrast. A) The more intense *contrast of tones* is the one in between complementary colors that are saturated (located in front of chromatic circle), as if both occupy the same surface extension, the effect is excessively violent and disagreeable. There are scientific studies which measure the

extension of surface they must occupy in order to have a better contrast. For instance, yellow with a luminosity of 9 must occupy a surface of 3 in front of the violet, which a luminosity of 3 must occupy a surface of 9. B) *Value contrast* is the one created by juxtaposing a light tone with an obscure one, as black and white. C) *Simultaneous contrast* is produced among complementary colors with different luminosity (yellow and violet). It is the contrast of tones and values at the same time. Harmony or intonation is the opposite to contrast. The relation of affinity between the tones and the values of a set of colors produces harmony. A) *Tone or color harmony*: Proxy colors in the chrome circle are harmonic. A secondary color is harmonic to a more or lesser extend with the primary ones which compose that one. The more is present a component in a mixed color, the more harmonic is with it. Blue greenish gets more harmony with blue than yellow, and the yellowish green gets more harmony with yellow than with blue colors. B) *Value harmony*: Gradation from one tone towards white and black is harmonic. Artists use them in ranges of little extension, as abuse of them may cause monotony.

Finally, colors have also psychological effects to be considered. By acting upon and altering the sensibility and state of mind of the spectators, color tones express determined feelings and emotions that are subjective. In fact, the reaction to colors is individual and it depends upon a series of factors and previous experiences that make that generalization be not always valid. Colors can be identified and related to kinesthetic associations such as temperature and mobility: cold colors are related to far away sensations while warm colors are psychologically related to proximity. Light colors provoke wider sensations in depth and size and less boredom and tiredness than the more intense or saturated. Obscure colors limit the environment perception and tend to project more reduced and limited spaces (Alabarce 5).

Shape and Composition: Formal Analysis

In the painting surface all the elements of the artistic painting intervene and establish a determined relationship with the others. They may form lines, shapes, colors, volumes, masses, lights, etc. Taking into consideration the number of elements, the symmetric axe, and the interests' center, one can obtain different types of composition. Taken only into account the number of items, then the choice of composition resides upon simple compositions (up to 4/5 items), and complex composition (many elements); when taking into consideration the symmetric axis, the distinction between *symmetric and asymmetric compositions* (Gaul) appears: A) *Symmetric compositions* use more the triangle and the circle shapes due to their formal balance. Though elegant, these compositions tend to express perceptual monotony and provoke perceptual difficulty in appreciating field deepness. B) *Asymmetric compositions* are preferable when the optic effects of unbalanced are harmonically counterweighted through masses and colors. Altering the tone, size or form of any element in the composition may unbalance the symmetry. Also by forcing the visual path towards a line, axis, object, shape or composition set, which has the meaning of the composition, the interest center can be attained. Artists do this by means of balanced formats, which lead all attention to them such as triangles, circles, squares, etc; or by means of contrasts, and other devices, among others: A) Spiral in the middle gives an idea of evolution. B) A descending attention line from one angle to the other of a painting or frame conveys irregularity, movement, fall effect, or declination sensations. C) An ascending attention line from one angle to the other of a painting conveys the idea of evolution, sublimation, progression or ascension. D) Some other expressive resources that outline interest centers would include: 1) The light tends to focus the interest center by illuminating it; 2) The characters' glances driven towards one determine point of the painting are delimiting also the interest center; and 3) Color, by means of contrast, luminosity and saturation produce interest centers in themselves: yellow upon black, etc.

Space Choice: Frames and Angles

Frames: *The choices of frames by the author structure the message to be conveyed, by including those items that are intentionally meaningful to him/her. The frame classification is usually established by taking into consideration the human body as a reference: 1)* General frames *offer a greater angle of coverage of the scene or the painting, as the scene or painting as a whole is the main focus of interest. They are informative or descriptive, and tend to show exact location, relocating the audience or spectator in the context to be taken into account. Among them, we find: 1.a.* The great general plane *covers in theory the greatest angle of the scene/painting. Used mainly to give the reference of the place in which the scene/painting is located. 1. b.* The general plane *is more descriptive as its arc of coverage gives more details (time and place) of the situation, or of a portion of smaller reality. 1.c.* The joint general plane *reduces the field of view and individualizes each object or subject in a more precise form. 2)* Average frames *tend to focus the attention of the spectator on the subject they show. Used to relate the characters implied, tend to escape of the surroundings, and give little details of the context. They give a more objective vision of reality.2.1.* The American plane or 3/4 plane *shortens the subject over the knees. Its natural direction is always vertical. It stresses the relationship among characters, objects or focus of interests, trying to place them in a partial context. 2.2.* The flat plane means *yields more importance to the emotional aspects of the subject. Vertical or horizontal formats affect this plane: In the former, the personage, the subject, or object tends to occupy the great majority of the scene and the bottom happens to be unnoticed; in the later, the air enters into consideration, and the personage, or subject, or object occupies something less than half of the scene. 3)* Short or first planes *are more expressive, to show more concrete aspects of the reality: they focus totally on the subject and its feelings. There are three types: 3.1.* The first plane *enlarges the detail and minimizes the context of the scene, eliminating the importance of the bottom. It is the most used to show whole faces in paintings. 3.2.* The close-up *centers the glance in a small fragment of the reality, usually eluding the bottom. 3.3.* Flat detail plane *is the closest one. There is no reference to surroundings or the own subject, thus enlarging both details and emotional load.*

Angles: A scene, an object or a person can be taken from different angles that serve as different points of view from which to frame reality. The *normal angle* has a horizontal position to the height of the observer's eye. It is a type of standard angle, which is the closest to an objective vision of reality. *The high angle* is taken from a slightly superior position from the normal observer's point of view and it has a functional use as to relate to the author's interests. The most extreme of these angles is called *zenithal*. Finally, the *low angle*, taken from a slightly inferior position from the normal observer's point of view (if taken from the floor, it is called *nadir*), has expressive meaning to give more value or magnify a determined character or object in the composition (Alabarce 7).

Semantic and Connotative Analyses

In this level, the observer interprets the previously listed items, and gives interpretations within a range of foreseeable repertoire of answers based upon his/her previous experience and knowledge. Concepts such as genre, intertextuality or iconography as defined by different art writers (Tucker 13) could be included here. This level is both a symbolic and historic level: A) Being symbolic, the connotation code is not simple, as it is compounded by a series of different associated variables which play their role when compounding the message. B) Being historic, the connotation code is given in a determined context, and in specific social, political and economic circumstances. Its representation and meaning are determined by the dominant values that a society values or refuses to value. The attitudes of the individuals define the meaning of the image, as

human beings can convey anguish, pain, happiness, etc. through gestures. The objects appearing in an image allow to make contextual associations and to establish emotional relations among the individuals and the items around them. For instance, thanks to them, one can deduce the social class by the kind of furniture, or clothing appearance, the intellectual level of its books, records, portraits, souvenirs, etc. (Alabarce 8).

Summarizing, a) there are some connotations lacking manipulative intention in them; b) connotations or wealth of associations brought by the viewers to the artwork according to their previous expectations, background and pre-understanding of the genres, forms and subjects of already familiar works; and finally, c) connotations that are intentionally manipulated by the artists for pictorial and expressive effects. Among the latter ones, the most outstanding ones are 1) color and luminosity, 2) composition as predominance of lines, shapes and volumes, and 4) framing and angles (Gaul).

Color

The use of light and color may connote luxury, success, triumph, etc. Color subjective elaborations are based upon a quasi-universal unconscious gradation of perceptual sensations and colors**:** Warm colors should not be too much abused and be confined to outline elements of greater importance or meaning: a) yellow connotes light; b) red conveys emotion; c) orange provokes emotional warmth. Cold colors, and especially the blue ones, tend to suggest smoothness, distance and depression. Neutral cold colors such as gray and sienna are integrated elements but not too much meaningful. Secondary colors, such as oranges and green violets, are used like contrast nuances. Color symbolism is culturally diverse also. Independently of their physiologic characteristics, colors can even get opposite meanings: white, for instance, is related to mourning in the East, but to happiness in the West because of conventional reasons only.

Symbolism of Lines and Masses

Lines and shadows can create also drama and tension in works of art: Their traits of stability and elevation make vertical lines suggest activity, life, push, and vigilance. Horizontal lines suggest death, calm, rest and melancholy, due to their characteristics of stability and containment, still and inertia. Curves suggest accented dynamism and constant change. Oblique or inclined lines suggest agitation, danger, dynamism, and tension, due to their instability and dynamism. Wavy lines suggest mobility, due to their smooth movement of the point. Zigzag lines tend to suggest truncated effects, and give a sense of rupture and confusion, due to their character of aggressive, repenting and cutting change. Several complex lines integrate mixed lines, and their variation is multiple. The more variables, the more complex is the set as a whole.

Symbolism of the Point of View

As stated above, the way the framing is conceived determines what is/are the focus of interests, and the kind of ideological treatment to receive according to the author. The optimum framing tends to outline only the necessary informative content of the issue, showing an open horizon or a decongested background, in order to offer deepness, as well as favoring the composite asymmetry and balancing the optic effects of disequilibrium by counterweighing masses and colors harmonically. As for angle symbolism, we have to take into account that: A) Normal or standard angles are the closest to an objective vision of the reality and the one with less subjective influence. B) High angles have functional use depending upon the artists' interests. They can connote surveillance by superego or superior instances; authority of the spectator towards the observed subject; indignity of the observed, etc. These are surreal points of view, in which the observer is the

vision center. Finally, C) low angles are used to convey expressive meaning, either magnifying or valuing a determined character, or object.

Symbolism of the Plan and Proxemics

There is a positive correlation between the kind of planes and the proxemic distances described by Edward Hall in his book *The Hidden Dimension*. Along with time, Hall considered space as another richly communicative aspect of the social environment, and defined *proxemics* as the study, observations and theories of how groups and people systematically use space as a specialized elaboration of culture. He identified four proxemic distances that people tend to use to define the space around them. These zones are closely connected with the personal identity of the individuals, the nature of the relationship they have with persons they interact with, cultural and social definitions of appropriateness, etc. For instance, personal distances reflected on average planes are defined by Hall as a sort of mobile territory that each person has around him or her as an invisible bubble of space. This bubble expands and contracts depending on the relationship to the people nearby, the person's emotional state or cultural background, and the activity being performed. Few people are allowed to penetrate this strip of mobile territory and then only for short periods of time. Changes in the bubble brought about by cramped quarters or crowding cause people to feel uncomfortable or aggressive. Different cultures have different patterns of personal spaces, thus northern European cultures having larger personal spaces than the south-European ones. The table below shows the relationship among the kind of planes and their connotative associations with the proxemic distances.

Symbolism of the Plan and Proxemic		
Kind of Plane Used	*Proxemic Distance Implied*	*Distance in US*
Short Planes	Intimate distance	0 - 18 inches
Intermediate Planes		
American Plane	Personal distance	18 inches - 4 feet
Flat Means	Social distance	4 - 10 feet
General Planes	Public distance	Beyond 10 feet

Latent or Subjective Allegoric Reading

This last level would establish the last semiotic reading suggested by taking into account the image analyzed. Usually images are multi-communicative as they are signs for words, and sentences related to those words, which could be interpreted or perceived according to different personal, social and cultural codes. As connotations suggested may take different approaches depending on the different codes implied in the perception of the paintings, students may end up with different, even opposite, connotative level of analyses based upon their previous reading levels.

SECTION II.   CASE STUDY OF ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI (1593-1653): *SELF-PORTRAIT AS THE ALLEGORY OF PAINTING* (CFR.1630)

Historic Background

Artemisia's *Self-Portrait* is an example of the Baroque style. In its origin, the Baroque was the dominant style of European art between Mannerism and Rococo, an original response from the Catholic Counter-Reformation movement, born in Rome during the 17th century and characterized by its overt rhetoric and its dynamic movement. Because of its desire to evoke emotional states by dramatically appealing to the senses, it is often associated with the traits of grandeur, sensuous richness, drama, vitality, tension, and emotional exuberance. The general label *"The Age of Baroque"* is used to refer to the period when this style flourished, mainly the 17th century and in

certain areas much of the 18th century. But the term can also be applied to art of any time or place that shows the emotional intensity, vigorous movement and sensual richness, or all the qualities associated with its primary meaning. In the 17th century, Rome was the artistic capital of Europe, and artists such as Caravaggio, Carracci, Bernini, Pozzo, etc. built the basis of this movement. This style soon spread outwards from Rome to different countries where it would adapt itself to their different tastes and local traditions. In some areas it became more extravagant (especially, in Spain and Latin America), and in others it was toned down to suit more conservative tastes. In Catholic Flanders, Rubens' work was one of its major manifestations, and in France, the Baroque found its greatest expression at the service of the monarchy (Louis XIV's Versailles castle) rather than the church.

Along with Caterina van Hemessen de Antwerp, Giovanna Garzoni, and Sofonisba Anguissola, Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1653) is one of the few women artists of the baroque. Women at this epoch were generally not very literate and would not have access to painting skills very easily, but some biographical circumstances allowed them to become excellent painters and excel in Baroque art. This is the case of Artemisia.

Biography of Artemisia

Born in Rome on July 8, 1593, she was the eldest and only female child of the famous painter Orazio Gentileschi and Prudentia Montone. Her father trained her as an artist at an early age and she soon displayed her talent in painting during the years 1605-10. Thanks to her father's profession, she had access to many great works in progress during her lifetime, as well as to many artists working in Rome during those years. It is most likely that she would have personally known the artists Caravaggio, Michelangelo Buonarotti the Younger, etc. These impromptu meetings might have formed her most important artistic influences in later life, a mixture of Tuscan idealism, Roman realism and Caravaggio's chiaroscuro naturalism. One of her first dated painting is the painting *Susanna and the Elders* (Pommersfelden, Schloss Weissenstein, 1610). Unfortunately, Artemisia was raped by one of her perspective trainers, Agostino Tassi, a landscape and marine painter with whom her father had decorated the Sala Regia at the Quirinal Palace. The trial held in the Vatican in 1612 was well documented in that epoch in the Archives of the State of Rome. Besides being tortured, Artemisia had to have a medical exam to prove that she was a virgin before the rape; and both her reputation as a woman and as an artist were questioned. After the trial, Artemisia continued painting and she began to develop her more distinct personal style. It was during this time that she painted *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (Naples, Museo di Capodimonte, 1612-13), a very violent interpretation of the Biblical scene, whose realism and dramatic chiaroscuro recalls previous works by Caravaggio and Rubens. One month after the trial, and maybe with the intention of restoring her credit, the father of Artemisia arranged for her to marry to a Florentine businessmen called Pietro Antonio di Vincenzo Stiattesi, and moved to Florence, where months later she had a baby-girl, Prudenza. Her husband taught her how to read and write perfectly. But five years later, and after constants quarrels with him, Artemisia moved back to Rome without him and her little child, who was left under the protection of the sisters of the convent of Saint Spirit in Florence. She would pick her up years later. She would also have another female child with an unknown father later in her life. After accompanying her father to England, where she co-painted *David with the Head of Goliath* (1609-10) for Charles I, and her "*Self Portrait as the Allegory of Painting*" (1630). Artemisia finally settled in Naples, where she lived in little splendor, and where she died in 1653, after having produced excellent paintings such as *"Madonna and Child"* (1609), "*Woman Playing a Lute*"(1610-12)," *Minerva"* (1615),"*The penitent Magdalen"* (1617-20), *"Lucretia"* (1621, 1642-43), *"Cleopatra"* (1621-22), *"Clio"*

(1632), *"David and Bathsheba"* (1640), and several more Judiths cutting off the head of Holofernes (1612-13, 1613-14, 1620, 1623).

Methodology

The following conclusions about Artemisia's S*elf-portrait as the Allegory of Painting* could be drawn according to the methodological approach already outlined above:

Tone

This painting has a simple composition, as there are no more than four objects included. The location of lines and objects is done above the geometric center of the painting providing with a sensation of balanced equilibrium and serenity. Along with it, the sobriety of lines and style gives a general emotional tone of self-contained equilibrium, which is a little bit tenebrous, due to the chiaroscuro's technique used by the artist.

Aesthetic Descriptive Analyses or Denotative Level

This canvas is an oil from the 17th century, located in a room at Kensington Palace in London (England). A first appreciation reveals the existence of several objects: 1) a square dark wooden trowel with 5 patches of color on the palette. The colors of the trowel are dark, not only to increase the chiaroscuro of the painting, but because they are the ones the painter is using; 2) a paintbrush made of light wood; 3) a dark wooden table in the left corner of the painting, where both the hand of the artist, and the trowel of colors are about to be resting; 4) finally, the only character of the painting appears in the center of the canvas: It is a young female in her twenties, a little bit chubby, and in good shape, her black hair in a bow. She is dressed with a silken dark olive blouse, complemented by a light brown bodice and skirt, and wears a golden medallion in the form of a mask around her neck. No earrings are visible. She is facing the left hand side of the painting, where her eyes seems to stare directly at un unrevealed easel, exceeding the limits of the canvas. She is slightly raising her right arm where she holds a little paintbrush as in a posture of starting to paint something in front of her, to the left side of the painting. She is holding a trowel of colors in the other hand, as it about to rest it on a table located down to the left-hand side of the canvas (Alabarce 10).

As for colors, there is a predominance of dark olive colors in the outfit of the female person, which hardly contrasts with the pale ivory of her skin, and the intense black of her hair. The background wall is also painted in an obscure dark brown with greenish nuances. This wall occupies around 1/4th of the back of the canvas. The female silhouette occupies the upper part of the diagonal drew from the upper left angle to the low right angle of the painting (lines of forces). Her total silhouette occupies an estimated surface of 3/4th of the canvas, being a 1/4 of air in the left- center that is occupied by the room wall of the supposed painting studio she is at.

As for the lines of the composition, these are basically vertical (upright position of the female character, vertical wall structure at her back) and horizontal (table, trowel, etc.), with the exception of the slight curve of the female personage who turns her chest and back as in a bowed semi-circumference in the middle of the painting. The plane used is an American plane or 3/4th plane, one of the average ones. This plane serves to relate the main character (the artist) with the objects around her (paintbrush, canvas, trowel, table, and studio). The dots and lines of force serve to break the monotony of the composition: both the face and the dynamic posture of the artist are placed just among the two lines of force, and the crossing of ABCD points (see figure #2). The *force line* goes from the upper right angle to the left lower one, from the two strong point (B and C) of the composition towards the left hand of the artist, thus obliging the observer to read from the artist face towards the trowel she is holding on her left hand side (see the reading arrow below).

The *interest line* goes from the upper left angle to the inferior right one, from the left shoulder of the artist to her right arm, which is extended, slightly inclined and ready to start painting with the paintbrush. There is a slightly *high angle* in the point of view, as the character is portrayed from a position above the eyes of the spectator. This effect is reinforced not only from the frame, but from a light source non-portrayed, possibly an oil lamp, located in front of the eyes of the artist, which gives frontal light upon her right hand, face, breast and left shoulder, producing shadows and chiaroscuro presentations, thus allowing a better discrimination of the surroundings around her. The diffuse and partial illumination of the background helps also to create a higher contrast of the main female character.
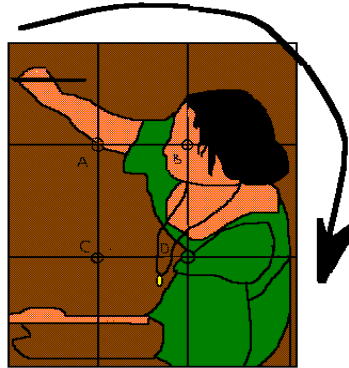
Figure 2.Artemisia self-portrait's lines of force, and reading arrow

Semantic and Connotative Analyses

A quick brainstorming on the feelings conveyed by the overall portrait is likely to reveal that most of the adjectives related to it deal with expressions of serenity, relaxation, peace, confidence, security, prestige, force, dynamics, energy, calm, labor, creativity, interest, concentration, etc. What the overall painting usually conveys is the idea of industrious activity, or labor. While students are brainstorming in English, foreign language teachers can have an excellent opportunity to introduce new words in the foreign language at stake. A second brainstorming about the feelings conveyed by the female figure *per se,* is likely to throw out similar adjectives to the ones above: powerful, inspired, creative, rational, thoughtful, controlling, concentrated, resolute, and serene. Though there is beauty in the face and manners of the artist, the painting does not focus on details of beauty, as the character does not wear any jewelry or adornments or decoration besides her medallion. The medallion and the silk might indicate some social status acquired through the work, more than for merely beauty or vanity purposes. The surroundings are pretty much bare and also sparsely decorated. In general, a connotative reading could tell that the feelings transmitted by the main character who is in a position about to paint are the ones of labor and concentration while industriously working. The position, outlook and gestures of the female painter confirm this. The decision of her arm confers security in the performance of the brushstroke: the inclination of her body towards the painting reflects a will to continue working on the painting, absorbed in it with energy and vigor, but with serenity at the same time. Her general attitude is warm and receptive, as it is a secured posture, empathetic towards the canvas to which she is bending with decision. The gestures are smooth: the hand takes the brush with delicacy, and not abruptly, as her hands are traced as calm, relaxed and smooth. The facial expression is natural and realistic, showing serenity and concentration, and painted with careful attention to detail: Her mouth, though closed, is relaxed, and cooperates towards the idea of being absorbed in her work; Her eyes, slightly semi-closed, are focused on the canvas in front of her; Her hair is disheveled, probably by the

intoxication of so much work; Her face profile does not show all her facial traits, but clearly conveys and reinforces the idea of being busy, and paying attention to her work. The overall non-verbal facial message reveals that the main character is showing great concentration and attention towards the labor she is doing (eyes almost semi closed, mouth firmly closed). Her gesture tends to indicate great determination and will, or at least, a great interest on what she is painting. In any case, not only her facial gesture but also her whole body bending and posture reflect serenity, calmness, emotional control, and maturity, along with resolution. The use of the low angle has the expressive purpose of magnifying and outlining the role of the female character. This effect is supported by the light game also as expressed above. The female character gets the maximum preeminence, not only because of being the interest center in itself (light effects, formal preeminence, lines and dots of force), but for the fact that she is focusing her interest in the painting she is working on, probably the same one the spectator is just analyzing. She is indirectly returning the message to the interest center: the whole painting itself.

As for the situation in itself, it seems to be a quotidian activity, made on a daily basis for her. Items such as the trowel and the paintbrush locate the main setting, a studio, leaving the canvas (element of interest of the artist's gaze) out of reach of the real spectator. The gaze of the artist is sent to an item located beyond the limits of the real painting, which is in turn a virtual painting she is working on. The context remains in shadowed and obscure condition, and the interest focus, because of being hyper-illuminated, is clearly the artist's actions. The subtle but vibrant use of color, both in flesh tones and the dress, makes us turn into the world of colors of this painting. There are main five qualitative variations in color: 1) Olive green in the dress of the female character and in the shadows produced over the brownish wall behind her; Olive green is frequently associated with peace and calm, and also with life in itself, with emotional balance. Related to Venus, to the love's planet, it usually expresses the good and the evil of youth hood; related to the leaves, it is associated to the rebirth of the spring, fresh growth, and to the silent power of nature. The human eye easily perceives this color, and that is why it tends to be related to the qualities of stability, reservation, calm and security. It tends to wake up curiosity, reflection and imagination (Gaul). 2) Red-browns, burnt siennas and earth colors, lighter or darker, are delimiting the surroundings of the artist studio, and her skirt and back bodice. The color brown is used in a neutral manner to contrast with the green, outlining this last one more. 3) Black is present in the artist's hair, in her dress' wrinkles, the trowel, and in the room's obscurity. 4) Yellowish skin colors are outlined by the incidence of an invisible light upon the artist face and shoulders. Through the chiaroscuro technique, Artemisia distributes shadows that contrast some colors while smoothing others. In fact, light serves here both to establish spatial planes by modulating flesh though white highlights, and at the same time to express the feelings and emotions of both serenity and balance. Variations of yellow in the form of golden ochres are perceived in both the medallion and the light reflections upon Artemisia's dress have golden ochre tints, slightly golden. Golden yellows are related to magnificence. Being the vehicle between the sun, giver of life, and the gold, landlord of the earth richness, golden yellows irradiate warmth, imagination, and above all happiness. 5) Magnificent violets are seen on the cloth of the sleeves, to play the role of a different hue shadow contrasting with the green of the blouse. In fact, there is a skillful balanced complementation of the red-browns of the background with the dark green of the blouse and the blue-violet highlights of the sleeves of Pittura (Garrard 355).

Latent or Subjective Allegoric Level: Evaluation

In this painting, Artemisia portrays herself as Pittura (the female representation of the art of painting expressed in Latin), as there was a tendency in art to combine the woman and the allegory as being the personification of Painting, the noblest profession of the inventive human spirit. In a

well-known and widely consulted sixteenth century book by Italian Cesare Ripa, *The Iconologia* (1643), the description of *La Pittura* (Garrard 337) is the one of a beautiful young woman with unruly locks of hair representing the frenzy of creation, with attributes of medallion, brush and palette. Typically, her mouth appears covered with a scarf to signify the painters' usual predilection for silence and solitude, thus bringing life and strength to the imagination. The mask held around her neck by a gold chain is used to represent that painting and subject are inseparable. Technical skills allow the artist to go beyond nature so that the painting is understood both by the senses and by the intellect. In most paintings, the allegory of Pittura takes her brushes in one hand while the other holds a painted self-portrait. Finally, Pittura's dress has to be of *drappo cangiante* (Garrard 355), a virtuoso technique consisting of changing colors to emulate shadows or wrinkles in clothes. This painting, a clear example of the maturity of her painting, shows the profile face of Artemisia with the attributes of the iconology mentioned above by Ripa: a golden chain around her neck, with the imitation mask hanging off of it, and the brush in her hand. Both the denotative and the connotative reading outline the concentration and the activity of a female artist who introduces herself in the painting as hardworking, self-absorbed, serene and mature. The same artist specifies not only through the painting itself, but also through its title, that this is a purposely-meant self-portrait as the allegory of Painting. Though other artists in her epoch had represented Pittura, Artemisia's self-portrait is unique because of two basic details: a) it is the first time a female artist portraits herself as the allegory of Pittura; and b) unlike previous works by most both female and male artists (including Rubens and Rembrandt), Pittura is not an idealization, but a reality. It is the same Artemisia at work. She even portrays herself with disheveled hair, as artists have when lost in the compulsive and agitated task of creativity, thus standing for the divine frenzy of the artistic temperament and absorption. The uniqueness of this work could be explained by the fact that, as a woman, Artemisia was not able to use male models for her subjects, and only infrequently able to use female models. As a result, she often had to use her own body as a source of inspiration. Clearly in this picture, Artemisia's aim is not to call attention to her own womanliness, but rather to reveal her own talent as an artist.

Lesson Plans

Lesson One: The Baroque Epoch

In this introductory lesson, which practically is going to be reproduced at the beginning and ending of each painter and painting period, students get a first approach within four periods of 60 minutes to different definitions of art and its different manifestations. After reviewing different paintings and social and historic contexts, students may debate and summarize what they have learned about art and art forms by using a contextualized frame and a definition of art. In a first class, introduce the debate by brainstorming main social, cultural, religious and contextual factors affecting art in general; after that, you may have students experience different manifestations of Baroque art in writing, sculpture, architecture, etc. Have them brainstorm its main characteristics and traits. Have them read about the Baroque epoch as a counter-reform movement. Why has religion affected so much art? Make students connect different factors and causes and see how they affect different artistic manifestations. To conclude this part, I like to show different artistic manifestation of the baroque (paintings by Orazio, Caravaggio, Poussin, etc.) aligned under the definition on the board of art as imitation, mimesis or a mirror, by both Socrates and Plato (Freeland 5): How does this definition apply to the Baroque philosophy? Do you agree with its implications? Though most artists tried to imitate nature in their art, can their products be still considered nature? How do realism theories fit into this theory of art? What were the main objectives of the Baroque style? In which way can religious or other social factors affect art and the life of the artists? Do all these purposes fit into a theory of art as imitation?

After historic, cultural, religious and social contextualization of Artemisia and other baroque paintings, you may want to have students start during a second class working on the first one of their on-going assignments, the big graffiti and chronological poster, which could be hung surrounding the walls of your classroom or in the halls of your school. This assignment is specially conceived for them to relate the paintings of Artemisia, within her historical epoch and to other simultaneous artistic movements such as rococo, mannerism, classicism, etc. As you cover all the lesson plans for Artemisia, let your students display Artemisia's paintings on the big graffiti mural. You may also want to consider hanging the students' artistic imitations or creations next to the original ones. Have them reflect on comparative analyses: in which way the Baroque painting differs from the other styles, in content and theme? What do you like or dislike about the three paintings? How would you have dealt with the subject/s treated in this epoch (for instance, the portraits) instead of a baroque painter? Students may hang their reflections too in the form of graffiti traces, poems or riddles.

As a complementary activity, this unit may include a visit to the main Houston Public Library in Downtown Houston (3rd class) to acquire a better command of research tools by experts, and research on main biographies and social contexts of the baroque paintings. A visit to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts is also recommended (4th class), as it has excellent examples of baroque art from different periods and epochs. I like to program both of them in advance to make them coincide with this lesson plan.

Lesson Two: Artemisia Gentileschi's Life

The life of Artemisia is an exciting one. To start this discussion on the first and second class of this lesson plan, there are several interesting resources, such as novels and a couple of movies about her life (see below in the bibliography). Whichever your choice, have students guess and predict about her life, with statements such as: Born in the middle of the Vatican, her life was not precisely an example of a reflection of the counter-cultural reform made by the Church of her epoch. In which way are artists victims or contradictions of the movement they lead? In which way do you think social and cultural factors may have constricted or extended Artemisia's professional career? How might her gender influence her career? Can you infer which kind of life she might have had? Compare these answers with the ones at the end of this lesson. Artemisia was also the first woman to complete art studies at the Accademia del Disegno in Florence, and she soon began to work for various patrons, including Philip IV, King of Spain, and members of the Medici family. In a way, she managed to sell her image and her paintings, being her own manager, by writing letters to all of them. If Artemisia had been illiterate, she would not have able to do all this. In a 3rd class, ask students in which other ways being literate help to obtain triumph in life. You might ask also how this would apply to artists and painters nowadays and to their own lives. After attentively looking at several paintings by Artemisia in a 4th class, it is clear that assertive women are in fact the central theme of many of her paintings (but not all of them), including "*Jael and Sisera," "Susanna and the Elders*", "*Lucretia", "Zenobia*", and perhaps above all the figure of Judith cutting off the head of Holofernes - a scene that she painted very frequently. All the women in her paintings are strong and powerful figures, energetic and resolute in their decisions and executions. In her time, they might have appeared too manly. Some feminists have argued that her paintings reflect her own life and her subconscious. It has repeatedly been suggested that the figure of Holofernes can be seen as the rapist and that of Judith as Artemisia, the rape victim. Have students write in their aesthetic journals about the following questions: Why do you think feminists state that? Do you agree with this perspective? Do paintings reflect the personal life of the artists, the same way as songs may reflect the personal life of singers? Can you think of other artistic or professional cases? In the chronicles of the period there seem to be mentions of baptism ceremonies

to which Artemisia was invited as a godmother to girls named after her. Apparently during her lifetime she was considered a success story and a role model. She would even be portrayed several times by artists of the period, who would include inscriptions indicating that she was "*a virtuoso painter*", *"a pictrix celebris"* or "*a famossissima pittrice*" (Garrard 64). There is also evidence of the opposite, and some contemporary writers would comment that there is a derogatory epitaph in her tomb, considering her an ill-reputed woman. Have students discuss in which ways is it possible to reconcile the inner contradictions of Artemisia's life: is or was her private sphere interfering with her public space, or sphere? What do you think? Are there any examples nowadays alike in the artistic field or in any other professional field? Do you personally think your private life should be taken into account to judge your career or professional value? Another best practice I use in another class of 60 minutes would include researching by using new technologies and library resources in order to find biographies of Artemisia, Caterina van Hemessen de Antwerp, Giovanna Garzoni, and Sofonisba Anguissola. After reading about their lives in a previous class, students might work in small groups to complete a comparative/contrast Venn diagram on their lives. In which way social, political and cultural factors do you think determine the life and events of these artists? In which way they were successful and fulfill their objectives in life? In which way did they differ in the way they developed their artistic tendencies?

Finally, and after having read at least three different biographies of Artemisia from different sources (you could adjust the quantity to your own needs and preferences, as I tend to triangulate the points of view), students may write a personal 17th century diary reflecting, from the point of view of Artemisia, her main life events, paintings and possible feelings: How did the prediction of her life change from her reality described in those biographies? Is Artemisia a typical stereotype of a woman? Tell students to think about the possible self-image they could adopt as a baroque female painter, heroine, or a *donne forti e intrepide* (Garrard 153) as they empathize with her by taking her position. Suggest students to write at least fifteen different entries about what you think may be her own perspective of life, her way of painting and influences, her way of conceiving nature and arts in her epoch, etc, after commenting on a couple of her own personal letters to Commendatore Cassiano dal Pozzo, in Rome or to Duke Francesco I d'Este, in Rome, two of her patrons, for instance. You can also suggest changing the diary and writing it down in the form of a comic. Children like to draw the lives of the artists, and it is usually also very stimulating. I usually spend two classes on the diary.

Lesson Three: Content Analysis of the Painting. Pittura and Artemisia

In a first class, have students apply the content analyses method described above to the painting of the allegory of Pittura as stated above, and derive main interpretations, with your guidance. On this section, students might apply main vocabulary learned in foreign language in order to describe the portrait of Artemisia. Some of the semantic fields to use might include references to: a) color (escasamente coloreado-faiblement coloré, colorido-coloré); b) composition style, (exuberante-exhuberant, sencillo-simple, sobrio-sobre); c) artistic tendencies (clásico-classique, clarooscuro-clair-obscur, romántico-romantique, etc.); d) feelings conveyed (felicidad-bonheur, madurez-maturité, concentración-concentration,etc.); e) likes and dislikes (me gusta-J'aime, percibo- j'apercois, veo-je vois…) It is possible to infer more different allegoric meanings that the one stated here. Have students reason how and why they got their conclusions based upon objective data on the previous levels of analyses. In a second class, have students look at different presentations of *the Allegory of Painting* by other artists, such as Vermeer (Garrard 96), Cerrini (Garrard 353), the anonymous *Portrait of a Woman Artist* in Rome at the Galleria Nazionale d' Arte antica in the Palazzo Corsini (Garrerd 87), and others. The iconographic paintings tend to repeat the same standards set by Ripa, and some of them deal with the Muse Clio. If the painter

was a male painter, he would usually portray a female model who was adorned with the attributes of Clio. Artemisia was one of the first painters to actually portrait herself as the allegory. That was an interesting innovation, as female painters were traditionally stereotyped as fruit still-life painters, or low-class portraitists, unable to be real painters. Start the debate by asking what implications can be derived from this innovative point of view: How does this contribute to the vision of a heroine, in the case of Artemisia? How do you think this innovative point of view would have affected art after her? Artemisia would also refuse to bind her mouth in order to impersonificate Pittura. She would challenge the antique description of painting as mute poetry, a clear sign that she could speak out through her paintings. What would this mean to posterity? And to her contemporaries? Besides showing different self-portraits by different baroque authors, ("*Self-Portrait*" by N. Poussin, 1650,Van Dyck, "*Self -portrait with Sunflower*"(1633-35), teachers can also show different kind of portraits from different cultures in that same class, and ask students in which way they differ. Do you find any change in perspective?

After going over main characteristics of the Baroque movement, have a couple of classes dedicated to students being real painters by doing a free-subject drawing of a chiaroscuro painting (if needed, you can assign a chiaroscuro self-portrait with Ripa iconography) by using computer software, or any other artistic means which would interest them. Try to give the students a chance to explore their own artistic talents as they try to emulate a chiaroscuro painting that interests them or to create a new one.

Finally, spend two more classes beginning to write the extensive artistic newspaper to be finished at the end of the unit, commenting the different paintings seen in these lesson plans. Have students choose different articles to be written from the point of view of Artemisia, another female painter, a baroque contemporary, a critique from the modern epoch, etc. Have at least one personal critique about any classmate's painting done on the previous best practice. Have them make their own analyses by means of the content analyses as an aesthetic method, and have them write a poem written with foreign language words related to the painting assessed as a conclusion.

SECTION III   CASE STUDY OF JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983):
PAYÉS CATALÁN AL CLARO DE LUNA (1968)

Historic Background. DADA and the Surrealism Movement

Miró's painting is an example of Dada and Surrealist painting. With no formal aesthetic, and even with a disregard for easel painting, Dada was an artistic movement with a nihilistic ethic, self-proclaimed as an anti-art movement, whose origins are to be placed in a revolt against the senseless barbarities of the First World War. This movement criticized the hypocrisy of those who felt that art created spiritual values, and who would take refuge in beauty, after having experienced the massacre of the world war. The first step for Dadaists was to attack the icons of the old culture, and by adapting the Cubist idea of collage to new purposes, they would make puzzling or strikingly incongruous juxtapositions of images and letters to counter-weight beauty and formal previous artworks. Some Dadaist artists were Kurt Schwitters (1887-1948), Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968), Man Ray (1890-1976), Francis Picabia (1878-1953), Jean Arp (1887-1966), and Max Ernst (1891-1976), among others. Dada dissolved into the Surrealist Movement in Paris in the mid-1920s. Surrealism began as a literary movement, involving a special philosophy and lifestyle aimed at exploring and liberating the creative powers of the unconscious mind. In 1924 Breton (1896-1966) published his first *Manifeste du Surréalisme* setting the first standards and definition of the movement, mainly dedicated to writing purposes. In 1930 he published his second *Manifeste du Surréalisme* in which 's*urreality*' appeared as the synthesis of the reality of dreams with the daily quotidian reality. According to Mark Harden's *Artchive*, though there is no dominant painting

style in Surrealism, theorists consider three main tendencies from the point of view of technique exhibited. The first tendency would depend for their application upon the hallucinatory mind of the artist, and would discover imagery and would create pictures by chance by mechanical and automatism techniques, such as *Frottage* (rubbing), developed and described by Max Ernst in his book *Beyond Painting* (1948); *grattage* (scraping) by which Ernst transferred frottage from drawing to oil painting; *decalcomania* (transferring), where the image is obtained by laying arbitrary patches of color on a piece of paper, and after rubbing and separating them, the strange scenes suggest themselves to the imagination; and *Fumage* (smoking) invented by Wolfgang Paalen (1907-1959) in the late 1930s, where moving a candle under a sheet of paper provokes the chance imagery. The second tendency, also referred as Veristic Surrealists, would depict the dream world thoroughly with meticulous clarity and detail. The main representative here, Salvador Dalí, even invented his own *'psycho technique'*, a method he called '*critical paranoia'*. (Moorhouse 6). René Maigritte (1898-1967), Edward Wadsworth (1889-1949), and Paul Delvaux (1897-1994) would work on bizarre juxtapositions, while Yves Tanguy (1900-1955) would produce peculiar dreamlike visions of his own. The third Surrealist tendency, '*Automatic*' techniques, would draw more attention to the materials used and let the line of writing instruments move at will without any previous conscious planning. This *'automatic'* drawing technique used by Miró, Klee and Masson, among others, would influence many artists later on.

Biography of Miró

Joan Miró was a multifaceted and very prolific artist. His works were made using almost every medium – oil paint, watercolor, pastel, collage, sculpture, ceramics, mosaics, paint on copper, masonite, etchings, graphics and lithograph prints, book illustrations, tapestries, painted pottery pieces, and even stage and costume designs for ballet. His artistic affiliation is also a mixture of different tendencies. Joan Miró was born in Barcelona on April 20, 1893. At first, Miró's parents wanted him to be an office clerk, but after his health suffered, they reluctantly decided to send him first to the Barcelona School of Fine Arts and later on to the Academia La Lonja in Barcelona, and to the Academia Cali, where he completed his academic formation. Miró's first showing was at the Galerías Dalmau of still-lifes and landscapes. Most of his works had a wide range of influences including Paul Cézanne, Vincent Van Gogh, different forms of Cubism, Catalan folk art, the Romanesque church frescoes in Spain, and the Fauvist movement. Much of the public did not understand these works, but still recognized Miró's ability and talent. After this showing, Miró traveled to Paris in 1919 to experience and become a part of the artistic revolution. For the next 17 years he spent every winter in Paris and summers at his family's farm outside of Barcelona.

Miró was in Portugal with Delaunay during World War One before settling in Paris. There he met Picasso and Gris, through whom he became much more interested in the painting styles of Cubism and Fauvism. In 1924, Miró joined the Surrealists, a movement and philosophy to which he was faithful throughout the remainder of his career. Through Miró's many friendships with prominent figures in the literary and artistic world such as André Masson, Paul Eluard and André Breton, he was able to meet many of his heroes, mainly the poets. His freely invented calligraphy of highly colored forms was developed under the influence of his friend, the poet André Breton and other surrealist authors, through whom Miró evolved his mature style, often called *biomorphic abstraction* or *biomorphic surrealism*. This method uses biomorphic shapes with small bursts of sharp colors against neutral and flattened backgrounds so the viewer's eye can be directed around the painting. Characteristically, Miró's pieces have a sense of imagination and spontaneity to combine the abstract with partially recognizable shapes with gaiety, humor, and rhythm. At this stage, he painted *The Farm* (1922), and though the Parisian public did not receive it very well, this painting reflects most of the symbols Miró would use later on in most of his works, such as such as

a ladder with a bird on it, and the idea of using lettering in the paintings. In October of 1929, Miró married Pilar Juncosa from Majorca. They had a child, Dolores, two years later in Barcelona. The decorative complexity of *Harlequinade*, also called *Harlequin's Carnival* (1924-5) gave way in the 1930s to a simpler use of expressive colors and symbols, which influenced Kandinsky and probably Picasso. In 1933, Miró created his first etching, *Daphnis et Chloe*. In 1936 the civil war burst out in Spain, and this affected Miró greatly. During this period, Miró experimented with large painting using crude materials on masonite and his works exhibited less light and motion, but instead gave a sense of terror and foreboding.

As World War II erupted in Europe, Miró left Paris and moved to a little cottage in Normandy, where he started his *Constellations* series. In 1937, Miró designed wall decorations for the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris World Fair and posters for the Spanish Republic. In 1939, Miró began another phase in his artwork, his lithographic side, by which he created the *Série Barcelone*, a total of fifty works published by Joan Prats. *Morning Star* (1940) was painted at this stage.

Escaping the German occupation of France, Miró returned to Spain in 1940, where he settled in Majorca. In 1944 he began making ceramics with the potter Josep Llorens Artigas and soon took up sculpture beginning with small-scale terracotta's and eventually making large-scale pieces for casting in bronze. A year later the Museum of Modern Art in New York devoted a retrospective exhibition to Miró and with this he achieved international recognition, and was able to work on different murals in USA, among others, the one at the terrace of the Hilton Hotel in Cincinnati and the one at Harvard University. Other public commissions include the two ceramic-tile walls at UNESCO in Paris, *The Sun* and *The Moon*, which won the 1958 Guggenheim International Award. Later works included a mural for the Foundation Maeght, in St Paul de Vence, France (1968), a 10 meter by 50 meter mural on the outside of Terminal B at Barcelona Airport, produced in 1970, and numerous monumental sculptures such as *Woman and Bird* (1982), and *Dona*(1983), which often incorporated *objets trouvrés* - artifacts not originally intended as art but with aesthetic value when cast in bronze and displayed as art. Inspired by texts by the Surrealist author Alfred Jarry, Miró created a series of thirteen lithograph prints in 1966 known as *Ubu Roi* or *King Ubu*, considered to be one of the masterpieces in lithographic arts today. Later on he took up printmaking and in his eighties began stained glass window design. Miró died in 1983, at the age of ninety.

Of all of the Surrealistic painters of the period, Miró is credited with being the only one to hold true to its basic principle – releasing creative forces of the subconscious mind from the control of logical reason through a very distinctive, pictographic, idiomatic, and in certain form autographic style. His vibrant colors and bizarre forms, and his highly colored calligraphy would follow the Surrealist canon during all his life.

Methodology

Following the methodological approach already outlined above, the following conclusions about Miró's *Payés al claro de Luna* could be drawn related to:

Tone

Simplicity is the general tone in this composition and not only for the scarcity of objects (there are only five), but for the reduction of iconicity, and the increase in the abstract level, and also because of the simplicity of shapes, colors (only five) and volumes used. The emotional tone is balanced and one of serenity due mainly to the use of primary colors and to a smooth asymmetric composition.

Aesthetic Descriptive Analyses or Denotative Level

This is 20th century oil on canvas, belonging to the Miró foundation. As stated before, there are only five objects to be noticed: 1) a line which delimits the ground; 2) a red mass representing the Payés, or peasant, in Catalonian language; 3) a black and yellow scythe; 4) the greenish sky, and 5) a couple of rectangle of colors red and violet of doubtful reading (a pool, another Payés sleeping, a stack of hay, or an animal next to him). Though it cannot be affirmed or denied whether there are animals or not, the presence of at least one person is recognizable, represented by the mass volume of color red, whose face in a triangular form is blackened. The dominant mass is clearly this one. The contrast of the red with the black (ground) is softened by its complementary, the emerald green of the sky. The background is given by the emerald of the night sky and by the black ground on which the Payés is resting. As for location, the male silhouette occupies the left side of the upper part of the geometric center, and the scythe occupies the other area of it. The ground, part of the sky at night, and the rest of the body of the *Payés* occupy the crossing intersection of the four interest centers (see figure 3).
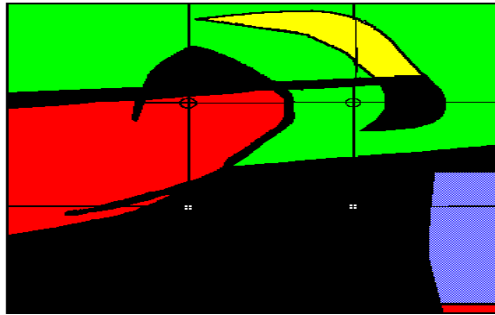
Figure 3. "Payés Catalan al Claro de Luna" ́s interest's centers and force lines

As for the *force line,* this goes from the upper right angle (yellow scythe), to the lower left angle (ground) in a descending trajectory, thus obliging the spectator to read from the object, which socially identifies the main character, towards his sleepy body resting on the ground. The *interest line* goes from the unidentified element towards the blackened sky: in its path, the eye perceives the blackened face and the head of the Payés. As for the points of force, A and B are limiting the upper part of the geometric center, and the centers of interests are situated over there: on A, the Payés' head, and on B, the scythe. Points C and D are located in the ground, which occupies almost the entire lower half of the painting, with the exception of the violet and red masses emerging from the inferior right side. As for lines, these are mainly horizontal (the ground line, Payés reclined to sleep horizontally, the pole of the scythe, adjacent violet item) and inclined slightly up. There is a predominance of curves in the scythe, and partial curves smoothing the contouring lines. As for the plane, it is an average plane as only half of the chest of the Payés appears, cut in its lefty side by the limit of the painting itself. The effect of this plane is to relate the main character (Payés) with his surroundings (ground, scythe...): the Payés rests on his back in a slightly inclined black mass; as for the angle, there is a low angle, called nadir, which takes the Payés as the center of interest, slightly from the ground where he is resting in. The ground occupies the inferior part of the painting, and seems to be the level from which the obscure face of the Payés is taken. Maybe the person sleeping next to him is the one having that low nadir angle look towards him (Alabarce 11).

Semantic and Connotative Analyses

This painting is an average plane of a human figure that on principle cannot be identified as for sex, gender or age, characteristics which must be ascribed to a male peasant according to the title of the painting. The peasant, in red outfit, rests in a horizontal position, carrying up his shoulders a

yellow scythe (possibly a reflection of the moonlight). The face of the Payés is totally blackened, in the form of a triangle, finishing in an angle that might be interpreted as a nose. There is no indications or signs of a mouth, eyes, or even hands on him, outlining thus his anonymously status. It could be any Payés, in any place, any night. His face looks up, towards the sky, without any reflections. His figure is surrounded by ground below and by the bow of the scythe and the sky above his face. This human figure appears in the horizon line, which delimits in turn the sky (emerald green) from the ground (completely black). In first plane, down to the right hand side, there is a violet mass and a red strip, with no specific meaning, maybe it represents a pool, shining under the moonlight, or another human being, sleeping by the Payés, or even the shadow of Death, etc. The feelings conveyed by this painting are of rest, security and calm. The use of horizontal lines conveys feelings of relax, peace and rest. This effect is also created by the contrast of the vivid red by the emerald green of the sky, its complementary, and by the neutralization of the black. The slightly inclination of the body towards the left hand side of the painting, backed up by the ground, gives also the feeling of resting, comfort and security as the peasant seems to be peacefully sleeping. The situation in which the main character appears is the countryside, or at least, any Catalonian ground. In any case, it is a quotidian surrounding for the main character as he is resting on the ground. The context is at night, as the shadows cover and conceal the Payés' face. The moonlight reflects on the upper blade of the scythe, giving a special interest to this peasant tool. The low angle, or nadir, has an expressive meaning to magnify or point out to the lying position of the main character, as this painting has an extreme high horizontal line. The red color is used to provide with maximum visibility and attention. It is located upon the geometric center of the painting, being the crossing section of its diagonal lines: the Payés becomes thus the maximum interest center of the whole composition.

The predominant colors are the red of the Payés, the emerald green of the sky and the black of the ground and the obscurity of the night. The qualitative variations of colors are basically five: 1) Bright red, present in the outfit of the Payés, which occupies 1/3 of the color mass of the painting, forming the Payés' body volume (in the upper central left part), and also present in a small strip that emerges from the right inferior part of the painting. This color is an advanced, passionate, and aggressive color related to emotions, dynamics, and flesh. Its expressive happiness and enthusiasm, is linked to its high communicatively emotional force. 2) Emerald green represents $1/3^{rd}$ of the color mass of the painting, occupying the upper part of the whole painting. The green color stands for the sky at night, with watered tints in its original oil composition. As stated above, green is the complementary of the red, and represents the emotional balance, and the calm and serenity of the power of nature, especially the peaceful countryside. 3) Black is both the representation of the ground on which the Payés is resting (approximately, almost $1/3^{rd}$ of the inferior side of the painting), as well as the shadow provided by the night circumstance (face of the Payés, inferior blade of the scythe, pole of the scythe, etc.). 4) Intense yellow on the upper blade of the scythe indicates possible incidence of the moonlight upon it (the moon in fact is not seen in the painting itself, but inferred through its reflections). This color is associated to the death of the green, especially in leaves; and related to the mind could also have a meaning of caution and distance, though in its purest form irradiates warmth, and imagination; 5) the pale violet, with watered tints, appears in the form of a little vertical range in the right inferior part of the painting. It might be a pool, but it is not clearly revealed due to the abstract condition of the painting. Violet is the complementary of the yellow, and it tends to appear in a similar amount to the presence of yellow, possibly to compensate and balance this one. The complementation of masses and colors (red vs. green, yellow vs. violet) gives a global sense of peace and calm. The light serves also to express feelings and emotions of peace, relaxation and balance. The light appears through the use of colors. The maximum intensity or purity is in the use of the red and the yellow, which get their maximum

contrast against the black, indicating the centers of interests: the Payés and the scythe. The green emerald gives a lot of luminosity to the night. The ground is black and its only contrasts are the violet and red stain to its right, and the Payés upon it. The night painted in black would have obscured the painting too much: that is why the color green, which gives a certain optimism and rest at the same time, it is a good luminance solution. In conclusion, the connotative reading outlines the dream and the rest of the Payés, a Catalonian peasant: The center of interest given by the Payés red volume initiates the clock-like reading movement of the sight, which goes from the interest points, A and B, towards C and D. The coloring set is harmonically peaceful, and the color treatment repeats the idea of balance, rest and calm (Alabarce 12).

Latent or Subjective Allegoric Level: Evaluation

The Foundation Joan Miró edited a central notebook in Barcelona Metropolis Mediterrànea trying to give their subjective allegory of this painting, alleging two recurrent themes in the work of Miró: the personification of the ground through the Catalonian Payés (the Payés is the ground, he is the essence of the country), and the night (the moonlight). According to their approach, the identification of the man with the ground is evident in the shared red by the Payés' face and by the fragment of the landscape not concealed by his body. The sky and the ground do not have independent meaning as separate entities, though. The harmony entails a correspondence: the Payés dresses himself with the night colors, and the sky adopts the field color. Going beyond this reading, I would dare to say that the allegoric reading might even lead to the concept of death as something calm and relaxing, normal consequence of the descending line of life. From this perspective, life (symbolized by the Payés and his vigorous red color) is the element that rests, slightly inclined, upon its own death, which is in turn implicitly symbolized by the scythe. In certain form, life always carries death, as the Payés always carries his scythe with him, even when resting. The real identification of this Payés does not really matters: the universal concept of Death justifies the anonymous treatment of the Payés and his circumstances. All of us carry Death upon our heads, as a Damocles sword. It is a quotidian element, a light companion who dares accompany us in our daily activities (scythe), and in our states of vigil and sleep. The dreamlike element (usual trait in Surrealists paintings) is precisely interpreted in the form of death during life, as if human beings would dream their own life, when in fact they are already dead (Direcció de comunicació corporativa i qualitat, Ajuntament de Barcelona).

Lesson Plans

Lesson One: The Surrealism Movement

On this introductory lesson, I like to introduce the debate by brainstorming main social, cultural, religious and contextual factors affecting modern art in general; after that, you may have students experience different manifestations of Dada and Surrealist art in writing, sculpture, architecturally, etc. Have them brainstorm its main characteristics and traits. Have them read about the Dada and Surrealist epoch as an anti-art movement. Why did the First World War affect art so much? How did the Second World War affect it? Make students connect different factors and causes and see how they affect different artistic manifestations. To conclude this part, show different artistic examples of the surrealist movement (paintings by Dali, Magritte, Ernst Max) aligned under the definition of art by Anderson: "*Art is culturally significant meaning, skillfully encoded in an affecting, sensuous medium"* (Anderson 29) on the board. Have them write on their aesthetic journals how this definition applies to the Surrealist philosophy: What were the main objectives of the Surrealist and Dadaist styles? In which way social factors such as the war can affect the conception of Art and the life of the artists? What would sensuous mean in the case of Surrealists and Dadaists?

After this first historic, cultural, religious and social contextualization of Miró and other Surrealist paintings, you may want to have students in on a second class start working on the first one of their on going assignments, the big graffiti chronological-poster, which could be surrounding the walls of your classroom or the halls of your school. This assignment is specially conceived for them to relate the paintings of Miró with his historical epoch and to other artistic contemporary movements such as pop art, neoplasticism, etc. As you cover all the lesson plans for Joan Miró, you may want to have your students display Miró's paintings on the huge graffiti mural, along with their artistic imitations or creations next to the original ones, by the end of these lesson plans. Have them reflect on comparative analyses in their aesthetic journals: in which way Dadaism /Surrealism differ from the others styles of their epoch in style, content and theme? What do you like or dislike about them all? How would you have dealt with the subject? Add their reflections in the form of graffiti traces, poems or riddles.

As a complementary activity, this unit may include another couple of visits to the main Houston Public Library in Downtown Houston and to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts to deepen in research skills and tools provided by experts and research on main biographies and social contexts of the Dadaist/Surrealist paintings at stake.

Lesson Two: Miró's Life

The life of Miró is an exciting one. Born in the middle of a counter-cultural crossing, he met famous artists of his epoch, and was able to attain and develop many remarkable paintings, sculptures, and tapestries, through the use of almost every kind of materials in art. Considering his prolific aspect and his Surrealist confession, how do you conceive the life of this painter? How do you think living in the South of Spain would influence his perception of colors, and life? What influence might have Picasso had (a famous contemporary painter in his epoch) upon him? Have students develop research abilities by using new technologies and library resources in order to find out biographies of Miró, Dali and Picasso. As a creative synthesis of their research, have students work in small groups to complete a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting them. Which are the strengths and the weaknesses of all of them? In which way the surrealist movement expresses his tendencies through them? Which one do you prefer? Why?

Miró deeply admired the poets and the theorists of Surrealism, such as Picabia, Tzara, Breton, Masson, Artaud, Próvert, Desnos, Eluard and Michel Leiris, among others. Most of his painting breakthroughs owe a lot to Surrealist literature and poetry, and they would not have been possible if Miró would not have been able to read and enjoy poetry. Spend a class having students reflect on their poetry likes and dislikes: How can poetry influence painting? Have students experience reading a Dadaist poem and try to visualize it with a drawing. Have students experience the opposite, and make them write a poem based on a Dadaist painting: How did you like it? Was it difficult? In which ways? Miró met in life and befriended several of his peers including René Magritte of Belgium, Max Ernst of Germany, Jean Arp of France, Paul Klee of Switzerland and poet Paul Eluard, from France. Miró was deeply multicultural, influenced by all this contemporaneous artists, but he influenced in turn the work of other painters such as Gorky, Pollock, and Motherwell: in which way? Show students artworks by Gorky, Pollock and Motherwell. Try to infer main traits and influences. Show students different maps of Europe, and locate the main trajectory followed by Miró during his life. Complete the map with references to the main artists, and countries according to above references. How might the passport of Miró have looked like?

Finally, and after having read three different biographies of Miró from different sources, students may jot down a personal diary reflecting his main life events, paintings and possible

feelings during the next couple of classes. Students will empathize by taking Miró's point of view, his perspective about his own life, his way of painting and influences, his way of conceiving nature and arts in his epoch, etc.

Lesson Three: Content Analysis of the Painting. The Concept of Death in Miró

Have students apply the content analyses method described above to the painting of the *Payés Catalan al Claro de Luna* as stated above in the first class of this lesson, and derive main interpretations, with your guidance. In this section, students might apply main vocabulary learned in foreign language to describe this abstract oil on canvas. Some of the semantic fields to use might include references to: a) colors (colorido-coloree, nocturnidad-nocturnité, reflejo lunatico-reflet lunaire); b) composition style, (sencillo-simple, sobrio-sobre, exhuberante-exhuberant, equilibrado-equilibré); c) artistic tendencies (dadaista-dadaiste, surrealismo-surréalisme, abstracto-abstrait, etc.); d) feelings conveyed (serenidad-sérénité/, equilibrio-équilibre, sosiego-paisible); e) likes and dislikes (me gusta-J'aime, j'apercois-percibo, yo veo-je vois) It is possible to infer more different allegoric meanings that the one stated here. Have students give reasons how and why they got their conclusions based upon the previous levels of analyses. In a second class, have students look at different presentations of persons resting in inclined positions such as Goya (*La Maja Vestida*, *La Maja Desnuda*), Artemisia (*Cleopatra*), Caravaggio (S*leeping Cupid*), etc. How does Miró's painting differ from the other paintings? Which artistic tools and devices did Miró have to use in order to compensate for the representational effect lacking in his artwork? Do you feel like this might entail more difficulty or less than in a traditional painting? In a third class, compare the self-portrait by Miró (*Autorretrato* 1937/38-1960) with the one by Artemisia. Ask students in which one do they differ and in which one are they similar. Do you find any perspective change? Why would Miró spend almost two decades painting his self-portrait? Compare his self-portrait to any one of Van Gogh ones: How do they resemble each other? How do they differ? Which one do you prefer, and why?

After going again over the main traits and characteristic of Miró and the Surrealist movement, students can be real Mirós in a fourth class and paint a free-subject drawing with a biomorphic surrealist approach by using computer software. Finally, have students continue to write different articles in the extensive aesthetic newspaper to be finished at the end of the unit, commenting on the different paintings seen in Miró's lesson plans. Have students take different articles to be written from the point of view of Miró, another surrealist male painter, a Dadaist poet, a critique from the modern epoch, etc. Have at least one personal critique about any classmate's painting done on the drawing practice, by using their own content analyses comments as aesthetic methods. To conclude, have them write a poem written with foreign language words related to the painting assessed as a conclusion.

SECTION III CASE STUDY OF PIET MONDRIAN (1872-1944): *COMPOSITION WITH RED, YELLOW AND BLUE (1921)*

The development of this section would follow a similar treatment to the ones of Artemisia, and Miró. The *Stijl movement*, or *neoplasticism*, is well documented in general, and more information is provided in the Bibliography and Appendices below.

Wrapping up Lesson Plans

As you cover all the lesson plans for these three different painters, you may want to have your students display all the three main paintings from the artists considered on the big murals: Artemisia Gentileschi's *Self Portrait as the Allegory of Painting* (1630-32), Joan Miró's: *Payés al Claro deLuna* (1968), *and Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue* (1921) by Piet Mondrian. You

may want to consider hanging also some of the students' artistic imitations or creations next to the original ones. Have them reflect on comparative analyses: In which way does the Baroque painting differ from the other two in style, content and theme? What do you like or dislike about each of the three paintings? How would you have dealt with the subject instead of that painter? Which conclusions can you draw about art, and understanding art with the help of formal analyses? Have students hang their reflections on the wall too in the form of graffiti traces. Have students write their final reflections in their artistic gazette or newspaper.

APPENDIX A

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RUBRICS ON UNIT ART AND SOCIETY AS A RESOURCE FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS
UNIT SUMMARY/OVERVIEW
</div>

- ❑ **DURATION:** A whole school year.
- ❑ **GRADE RANGE:** Grade 8
- ❑ **DRIVING QUESTIONS:** *WHAT ARE THE MAIN ESTHETIC, TECHNICAL AND HISTORICAL TRAITS OF THE FOLLOWING ARTISTIC MOVEMENTS: THE BAROQUE, THE SURREALISM AND DADAISM, AND THE NEOPLASTICISM?*

OBJECTIVES:

1) Students will get a first approach to these artistic movements, relating them to their cultural and historical epoch, and contemporary movements, by creating a big graffiti poster of the artistic periods at stake.
2) Students will develop also a sense of taste critic and will judge the contents and main manifestations of those movements through the paintings of their main representatives, by writing a comprehensive artistic newspaper or gazette.
3) Students will develop research abilities by using new technologies in order to find out artists' biographies, and they will reinforce their creativity, empathy and essay skills by writing a diary based on their lives.
4) Students will acquire more foreign language vocabulary related to painters and their respective paintings, content analyses, painting movements and cultural life.

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SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:
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- ✓ Students will develop visual literacy, and a good sense of art criticism and judgement.
- ✓ Students will acquire a better understanding of the European culture and its achievements, integrating new foreign language vocabulary at the same time.
- ✓ Students will be able to discriminate different painting techniques and specially, the baroque, the surrealist and the neoplastic ones.
- ✓ Students will develop writing abilities by writing summaries, essays and historic and artistic biographies.
- ✓ Students will develop research abilities by using new technologies and library resources.

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WEB SITES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY
</div>

Students will search on several web sites and find main info related to the biographies of the different painters.

- ✓ **General painters:**
- ✓ Http://www.ahfine-arts.com/
- ✓ http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/
- ✓ http://www.windsorfineart.com
- ✓ http://www.artchive.com/artchive

- ✓ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/
- ✓ **About Artemisia Gentileschi:**
- ✓ Http://www.webwinds.com/artemisia/bio.htm
- ✓ http://www.pomona.edu/REPRES/WOMEN/art.html
- ✓ http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/~acd/Artemisia.html
- ✓ http://www.slam.org/gentil.html
- ✓ http://www.arlindo-correia.com/180501.html
- ✓ http://www.efn.org/%7Eacd/Artemisia.html#Sites
- ✓ **About Joan Miró:**
- ✓ Http://maliciousfaerie.cosmicshame.com/gnosis/miro.htm
- ✓ http://www.bcn.fjmiro.es/
- ✓ http://www.articons.co.uk/miro.htm
- ✓ http://www.globalgallery.com/bios/miro.html
- ✓ http://www.a-palma.es/fpjmiro/english/index.htm
- ✓ http://www.artchive.com/artchive/surrealism.html
- ✓ **About Salvador Dalí:**
- ✓ Http://www.daligallery.com
- ✓ http://www.salvadordalimuseum.org/
- ✓ http://www.virtualdali.com/
- ✓ http://daliarchives.com/
- ✓ http://www.salvador-dali.org/
- ✓ **About Pablo Picasso:**
- ✓ Http://www.windsorfineart.com
- ✓ http://www.picasso.fr/
- ✓ http://www.tamu.edu/mocl/picasso/
- ✓ http://www.mfa.org/exhibitions/picasso/
- ✓ http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/picasso_pablo.html
- ✓ http://www.artchive.com/artchive/P/picasso.html
- ✓ **About Piet Mondrian:**
- ✓ Http://www.ptank.com/mondrian/
- ✓ http://www.mondrian-script.org/
- ✓ http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/mondrian/
- ✓ http://www.guggenheimcollection.org/site/artist_bio_112.html
- ✓ http://www.fiu.edu/~andiaa/cg2/chronos.html

KEY UNDERSTANDINGS

- ❑ What does those movements bring to the artistic culture? (aesthetic judgements to assess it, technical contributions, etc)
- ❑ Who were the main artists in those movements? How difficult were their lives?
- ❑ In what epoch and where did those movement develop? What were their main features and characteristics?

STUDENT PURPOSE - "WHY AM I DOING THIS?"

This unit tries to broad your art perceptions by opening new clues to grasp the B*aroque, the Surrealism and Dadaism, and the Neoplasticism* movements through the artwork and lives of Artemisia Gentileschi, Joan Miró and Piet Mondrian. It also tries to develop your research abilities to write in English and in a foreign language as well, and judge your own execution. It will give you a better understanding of different cultures by knowing some of their best artistic movements and painters.

a)   Students will make a chronological graffiti poster stating the main cultural (historical, literary, scientists, etc.) facts on the centuries at stake. They will analyze the main causes of the rising of those four movements.

b)   Students will conduct an intensive research on the B*aroque, the Surrealism and Dadaism, and the Neoplasticism* movements by describing the background, "techniques" and methods of their painters. This information collected will be presented in a newspaper format.

c)   Students will do research on the life of one of the most important representatives by focusing on one of the painters. Students will write diaries of their main deeds, achievements, thoughts, and conception of art.

STUDENT REFLECTION PIECES:

♦   Diary about the painters' lives should reflect their main ideas about the perception of the art, nature and life: what is their own perception of this movement? What do they think of their conception of life, nature and life?

♦   Descriptive Newspaper about the epoch and influence of this movement

	RUBRICS
PAINTER'S DIARY	**4 - PROFESSIONAL:** The diary is exemplary**.** ✓ CONTENT AND COMMUNICATION. Being exemplary, the diary is an excellent source of information on the painter's life. It provides a variety of supporting details and concrete examples about his/her ideas about arts, life and culture. ✓ ORGANIZATION AND MECHANICS: All ideas are in the author's own chosen words. Effective use of organizational devices such as paragraphs, sections, and transitions. With minor exceptions, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization are correct. ✓ PRESENTATION: Diary is kept in a nice format notebook, and is written different styles according to the nature of the subject. *Illustration*: There are at least 15 entries and when needed, carefully chosen illustration and useful charts, diagrams, paintings, etc. (all properly labeled and captioned) supports the diary. ***Presentation:*** The overall appearance is neat and professional. **3 - SATISFACTORY:** The diary is acceptable, but could be improved in a few important ways. ✓ CONTENT AND COMMUNICATION: The diary is well finished. It is a good source of information on the painter's life. It provides a variety of supporting details and examples about his/her ideas about arts, life and culture; though some details could be missing. ✓ ORGANIZATION AND MECHANICS: All ideas are in the author's own, well chosen words. There may be problems with organizational devices such as paragraphs, sections, and transitions. There may be several errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization but the overall grammar presentation is correct. Though less than 15 entries, the main life of the artist is transcript. ✓ PRESENTATION: Diary is kept in a nice format notebook, and is written different styles according to the nature of the subject. The overall appearance is generally neat, with minor flaws or missing elements.

	Illustration: The artwork is supported by visuals, which need some improvement. There may be some mislabeling of graphics or design mistakes (e.g., a picture is confusing because it doesn't have a caption). *Presentation:* Satisfactory presentation. **2 - UNSATISFACTORY:** The diary shows flashes of quality, but needs to be improved.

(continued)

2 - UNSATISFACTORY: The diary shows flashes of quality, but needs to be improved.

✓ CONTENT AND COMMUNICATION: Its overall appearance is poor. It is little source of information on the painter's life. It provides little supporting details of the epoch, ideas of arts, life and culture, according to the painter's conception.

✓ ORGANIZATION AND MECHANICS: Language copied from another source needs to be replaced with the author's own words or it could be written all the time in the same style, without changing of perspective. Organizational devices such as paragraphs, sections, and transitions may be flawed or lacking. Numerous errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization.

✓ PRESENTATION: Diary may be kept on a format other than a diary. The overall appearance lacks neatness and professionalism. The presentation and overall appearance need to be improved in several important ways. For instance, the diary might need to be neater or include additional elements. *Illustration:* The diary is supported by limited use of visuals that may be unrelated or offer little support to the artist's life entries. Graphics, tables, charts, diagrams, pictures, and/or a model may be mislabeled or irrelevant.

1 - INCOMPLETE: The diary is at a beginning stage.

✓ CONTENT AND COMMUNICATION: The diary is at a beginning stage. It needs much more information on the topic, with specific details and concrete examples in all key areas of the artist life. It also needs to include one or more central entries and present them in a way that the audience will easily understand.

✓ ORGANIZATION AND MECHANICS: The written sections of the diary need to be greatly expanded and/or improved, using organizational devices such as paragraphs, sections, and transitions. Numerous corrections of errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization may be needed.

✓ PRESENTATION: Its presentation needs to be greatly improved. It may need to be neater, better organized, and include all required elements. *Illustration:* It needs to be illustrated in a way that will help the audience understand the main life events of the artist.

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