



## **Documentarians of an Era: A Study of the Paintings of Thomas Eakins and Gustave Caillebotte**

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### **Introduction**

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Different modes of communication make possible the sharing of information, ideas, and feelings that can help us to understand what it is that makes us human. Language, music, dance and art are recognized as fundamental tools in this quest. As a teacher of a foreign language, my focus has been the written and spoken word, my vehicle promoting understanding of life in other cultures. The tools that I use are the words, idioms and expressions of thought and experience intrinsic to culture different from our own. That these have parallels to our culture makes the learning more relevant to my students. Learning a language does not, however, merely entail the acquisition of nouns and verbs in their syntax. Innuendo, pause, inflection and accompanying gesture all serve to enrich the total understanding of the message spoken. This is not so in music and dance, however. Here artists from diverse cultures, who may not speak nor understand each other's language, can share a common understanding of the notes, rhythm, choreography and movement of these art forms without speaking a word! Perhaps music and movement are more archetypal whereas language is learned. However, these expressive forms communicate at different levels and with different rubrics for successful understanding than do verbal arts.

But, what about the visual arts? Here we can form parallels with the written word that work to support one another by sharing the specific vocabulary, expressions and style of another medium. So, vocabularies of colors, shapes, textures and forms bring descriptive imagery to our senses. They catch our attention and speak to us! Artists, as "writers," invite us into their world; invite us to know them better. Their visual themes reawaken our memories and connect us through our own experiences.

### **Goals and Objectives**

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My objective in this unit is twofold and based upon a French art class. I intend to use several examples of the visual art of Thomas Eakins from America, and Gustave Caillebotte and Edgar Degas from the later nineteenth century in France, to introduce my students to three similar, though very different contemporary artists. To complement their work, I will include examples of the verbal arts from the American poet, Walt Whitman. It is

my hope that we may be able to form some parallels between art and prose, between one culture and another, by viewing and hearing the shouting that comes from their silent art. My students will experiment with several different, though complementary, modes of communication in this endeavor. First, they will research the lives and times of these primary artists. What was happening in both their countries in subtle and cataclysmic ways? What subjects held the artists' attention? How did the rapidly changing faces of Paris and Philadelphia impact the lives of these artists and of ordinary citizens? How did the development of science and technology impact the outside world, and therefore their painting? What did people do, and how were their customs changed by the rapid race towards knowledge and information? In examining these themes, students will learn to appreciate the differences and similarities between America and France in the context of their art. In so doing, they will come to know about the traditions, customs and dreams that energized their own world and nurtured their creativity.

Secondly, students will experience the art first hand, at the Yale University Art Gallery. They will visit the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. In order to experience the paintings of French artists whose work is elsewhere, they will visit to the Louvre and the Orsay museums in Paris by means of a virtual visit on CD ROMs.

Next, my students will take a closer look at photography and how it may have influenced the painters we will examine. We will ask questions about space, the arrangement of objects and about figures and their environment. How can photography be used to catch a "slice of life?" What does a photograph show that a painting can or might not reveal, and vice versa? Why would an artist use photography to contribute to his/her painting? Students will experiment first through the eye of a lens, and then through the medium of pencil or oil pastels when they create their snapshot on paper. Then, with the help of the school art teacher, students will create a painting on canvas. In this hands-on, studio experience students will broaden their awareness of what is seen and unseen and how art may be created with both in mind.

Finally, they will write in-depth analyses of several paintings, with close attention to line, color, perspective and content; and then learn how to make assumptions about the painters and their work based upon their observations. In addition to this detailed analysis, students will write, in a form of their choosing, about an object they see: either through the analytical eyes of a critic, a poet using more succinct, sensory vocabulary

or, in a more anecdotal way, as a spectator "on the scene" of the painting. My hope is that an example of visual art becomes a matter for language as well as sight. In that way, the vocabulary of words may offer another way to describe the vocabulary of a painting.

## **Thomas Eakins: A background**

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The great realist portrait painter from America, Thomas Eakins, spoke to us in his paintings, inviting us, the observer, to communicate with his world. His paintings praised the human spirit, whether in sport, academia or at rest. He cared little for academic landscapes devoid of people. His interest was to paint the human figure with a keen eye to the culture they represent, and for the emerging modern "landscape" of ideas. Eakins' world was experiencing enormous change in the early 1870s. This modern period in our nation's history was filled with signs of change in every aspect of life. The railroad was expanding with an accelerating speed across America. Sport as a pastime as well as a profession was gaining respectability for both women and men. The advances of science in medicine were making possible not only the saving of lives, but the study of

the human specimen. Eakins would be a part of this. He would document these changes and advances as quickly as they were happening, at almost photographic speed! Eakins came from an academic Philadelphia family parents both teachers and he approached his own studies with the zest of the master teacher. He was fascinated with drafting in particular, a skill that would figure into all his paintings. He developed his keen sense of line and perspective while still in high school. It was then that he realized that he needed to paint, and to paint with a faculty for correct observation. He studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts after high school. This school was modeled on the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. At the Academy, Eakins drew endlessly from casts of antique sculpture. Finally, during his last years there, he was given the opportunity to study the nude, a course open to men only. He was driven toward perfection. How would he create the human form without understanding how the muscles and bones worked in harmony to create movement and action? In 1864 he enrolled in an anatomy class at Jefferson Medical College, where he learned, first hand, about the structure of the human body. Here began Eakins' lifelong interest in science that consistently contributed to his art. He would appreciate from that point on how interconnected and interdependent these two studies would necessarily be. A tireless student, Eakins achieved what he considered a knowledge of the human anatomy "as great as that of most physicians, and considerably greater than that of most artists."

He needed to be in Paris, the center of the modern world of painting and sculpture. In 1866 he left for four years of intense study at the *École des Beaux-Arts*. He practically bullied his way into a class! A rigorous, structured bastion of conservative methodology, the *École* was entrenched in neo-classical tradition and protocol, a fact which only excited Eakins. He learned as much French as possible and after a mere six months, was admitted to the school, and eventually to the atelier of the then very popular and accomplished leader of the conservative establishment, Jean-Léon Gérôme. Gérôme had already exhibited several times in the United States, and was well known to any aspiring American art student. Eakins felt at home at his atelier. And, although the group which became the Impressionists was already making groundbreaking art, history really, with their avant-garde use of color, light and texture, Eakins focused his attention on portraiture and the life of the Parisians. He, like the Impressionists, visited the notorious nightspots cafés and dance halls in an ever-ravenous quest to see the human body in action.

And so young Thomas Eakins learned to paint in Paris. Frustrating though it was to endure the tedious five months of obligatory drawing with strict attention to line before picking up a paintbrush, his delayed entrée into oil painting eventually arrived. Once again, the young painter could not work fast enough, hiring models to sit for him late into the night. At first he was puzzled by how difficult the medium was. "I remember many a trouble that I have got into from trying to play my tunes before I tuned my fiddle up." In letters home to his parents, he described the philosophy of the "big artist [who] keeps a sharp eye on Nature & steals her tools... what to do with light the big tool & then color then form. Eakins had firmly rejected the work of the Impressionists in Paris characterizing their work as effeminate not so much in terms of subject matter, their attention to "naturalism," but rather in terms of technique. He would applaud, however, their attention to the reality in what they painted the immediacy of it and how they were able to capture a moment, a breath, in time. He wrote to his father about this, "I love sunlight & children & beautiful women & men their heads & hands & most everything I see & some day I expect to paint them as I see them and even paint some that I remember or imagine [or] make up from old memories of love & light & warmth..."

Eakins returned home, energized by all that he had learned, but anxious to return to his roots on American soil. He yearned for the American scene and felt confident that he could paint what he knew with honesty and clarity. Here began his work in portraiture and intimate scenes of home life. He resumed his interest in sailing, hunting and rowing; this last interest would figure prominently into his sculling scenes a couple of years later. Although he had not rowed on the Seine while in Paris, he knew the Schuylkill in Philadelphia. At this time,

rowing, or sculling, had become a popular pastime as an amateur sport. In fact, the first international amateur regatta was held on the Schuylkill in Philadelphia at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, just two years after Eakins painted *John Biglin in a Single Scull*. We might assume that Biglin rowed on one of the American club crews, side by side with crews from Columbia and Yale, Trinity, Dublin and First Trinity from Great Britain and the London Rowing Club. Eakins would steal much from Nature, learn to "steal her tools" when creating his masterpiece *The Champion Single Sculls* (1871), a canvas which would insure his place as the leading American Realist of the 19th century.

## Reading the Canvas: How to observe

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In his painting, *The Champion Single Sculls*, Eakins captured on canvas a fleeting moment. In this "snapshot" we become a part of the scene as well; we are there. This canvas represented Eakins' first tribute to the sport of rowing, a sport which would come to symbolize, for him, the place of the common man as hero in the American scene. Though others had also chosen this theme to honor, namely Currier & Ives, this rendition of Eakins' became something of a benchmark in what was known as the new American Realism. Let's take a closer look. (<http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/eakins/scull.jpg>) The viewer is struck by its immediacy, its presence. We are invited, also, into the decade; in this Eakins is a supreme realist and documentarian. Juxtaposed with the calm river, with the unmoving trees and quiet sky of *The Champion Single Sculls*, is the new railway bridge cutting across the idyllic scene. The bridge signals the future; a train, barely visible, rushes off to the right. A steamboat in the distance counterbalances the bare physicality of the two men in the foreground and near right. An easy triangle connects the three men in the distant red scull wearing traditional Quaker garb, reminiscent of the earliest days of rowing, with the two in the foreground dressed in then modern clothing, leading both figuratively and actually the way. What is here in the reality of the picture is the calm of the water, the ancient trees, the stone structures, the older, historic bridge, the calm following a successful practice. What has come to break the mood is the contemporary attire, the modern mansion up on the hill to the right, the iron of the new bridge, the speed of engines and steamboat, the coldness of grays and whites, the future speeding off. This image is furthered by the struggle of the man in the second scull (this is Eakins; his name is on the scull), still rowing hard, pulling towards his future. Eakins speaks to us about his world. He is a recorder, a documentarian of sorts, using his paint as words. In this snapshot of the race, we catch a glimpse of the changing scene of the new day and witness the pull of an age. In this, too, we glimpse the quite sublime beauty of the natural world, and respect for the common man in the continuum of life. Change is occurring fast enough, but the old is not anachronistic; it blends with the new, signaling acceptance and welcome.

Eakins' renditions of rowing races were meticulously crafted, first by drafting his scene on paper. Intersecting lines formed the geometric network for the scull(s), bridges, turning stakes (if any), and horizon line. Eakins used his system of solving difficult perspective problems by first mapping his canvas, geometrically. The painting, *John Biglin in a Single Scull*, followed Eakins' same rigorous use of descriptive geometry in its planning stage. Eakins had first drafted an enormous, mathematically precise study of the perspective that his painting would follow. As viewers we feel only several feet from the rower, close enough to take a picture, but this impression is only a masterful trick of calculated perspective. He had devised a plan for first creating the image in draft form. With that, he could manipulate the drawing mathematically, change the size of his objects on the imaginary plane of the picture, to create his desired perspective. He wrote, "To fix the distance [from the picture to the eye] you consider how large you want one of your important objects to be in the

picture: if you want it life size in the picture, your drawing must be distant from the eye as far as that object. If you wish any object to be in the picture half as big as real, you must place your picture plane at half the distance from the eye of that object; if quarter as big, quarter the way & so on."

Eakins' ability to create this real perspective was masterful. In *John Biglin in a Single Scull*, he actually drew the painting first on the canvas; then he painted over it so that the underlying interrelationships of lines and intersections were only faintly visible, even to him. Nothing would be exaggerated; the effect would be true, realistic. Gustave Caillebotte also used perspective to great effect. We will look at two of his most powerful paintings two that deal with perspective and line on the technical side, and with his timely subject matter that document his civilization equally well. The French Impressionist, Edgar Degas, must be acknowledged here as having influenced both of these painters. It would be impossible to evaluate the contribution of both Eakins and Caillebotte to the world of art without paying homage to his genius. But, before that, let's take a closer look at the *John Biglin in a Single Scull*. The following analysis is a tool for observation and understanding. With the intent of assigning a similar, though less detailed and concise, activity for students in an art class, the "modus operandi" of Jules D. Prown is offered below.

(See: [http://www.bertc.com/other\\_eakins.htm](http://www.bertc.com/other_eakins.htm))

### ***John Biglin in a Single Scull* . 1873. Oil on Canvas, 61.9 x 40.6 cm. Yale University Art Gallery**

#### *Description:*

A man rowing a scull in calm water, left side in profile, sits with arms extended front, clasped around both oars. His left, partially visible oar extends down through the oarlock towards the water out of sight. The man is dead center in the painting. He wears a white, sleeveless T-shirt with red trim around the arm and a red bandana, tied in a back knot. The wrap creates a band around his forehead, over the ear and to the back. The bandana covers his head, much of his forehead and extends down behind his left ear, showing short, brown hair forward and left of his ear, and below the bandana, towards the knot. He has a light brown moustache, seen only on his left side and front; his left eyebrow scowls over squinting eye. A deep wrinkle outlines his moustache. His tanned face and neck contrast with paler arms and legs. He wears black pants of cotton or wool, rolled up over his knees. Shirt tucks into the pants. His clutching left hand, fingers grasping, and the bent, pointer finger of his right hand on the other oar is visible, just above his left. The well-developed muscles of his left arm are detailed; the elbow is locked. Veins appear at the elbow and extend down towards his left hand. His right arm, partially visible behind and above his left arm, is darker. His right upper arm is in partial shadow up to his shoulder, where red trim appears on his shirt. His bent legs are hairy and muscular. A shadow forms on the lower interior of his right calf. He wears white socks, the tips of which peek out over the rim of the scull. The scull is reddish orange and sits 6 - 8" above the water. We see about one foot of the scull on either side of the rower's body. The gunnel sticks up and angles out, hiding the rower's seat, lower calf and feet. It runs to the right of the canvas and out of our view, lifting upwards slightly, brightened by the sun's rays just above the left oar. The front of the gunnel, extending left and out of our view carves down in step-like design to the floor of the scull. There, the riggers of both sides connect, through a wooden thole pin, the two sides of the gunnel. The riggers, attached approximately 5" apart, meet at the base of the oarlock (of natural wood with blue trim), divide there, separate and fasten to the gunnel, under the rower's seat, again about 5" apart. The top points of rigger attachment are approximately 1" wider than the lower points.

Under the rower and his scull, leading down to the foreground of the painting, a vague reflection of the man and his boat mirrors in broken waves. Blue water breaks up the rippled image. Spots of red reflected from the boat dot the bluish-gray water behind him. From left, midway in the painting, the tip of another scull enters

the painting, truer red with a white edge, appearing on the top and continuing 2/3 of the way to the tip of the scull. This section is all we see. A landscape of warm browns, yellows and cool green crosses the canvas, 1/3 of the way down from the top of the painting, intersecting behind the rower at the point where his bandana meets his forehead in front and just above the knot on his bandana. A speck of white at the extreme left of the painting dissolves into a thin line at the water's edge. The sky is a lighter shade of blue, cloudless and clear, though at the painting's top edge a cloudy form appears, indicating an overcast, sunny sky below.

Lines and geometries abound. An imaginary line drops just right of center at the top of the canvas and extends straight down through the back of the rower's neck, the oarlock, continuing through the reflection of the oarlock in the water to the bottom of the painting. Parallel lines form between the line of landscape, the top of the oarlock, the gunnel and bottom of the scull, continuing to the bottom of the canvas through the rippling waves. Shadows from the rigging originating points fall down and to the left onto the boat. These shadows, if continued up, would frame the rower and draw our vision up to his face and off to the right, in the direction of his boat. A diagonal line formed by the rower's arms meets the oar and forms a V. Other Vs are formed between the separated riggings where they meet the oarlock, the tip of the approaching scull and the knees.

Angles formed by the rower's arms, back and oar create a two-dimensional triangle. A pyramid may be seen of his body when taken in three-dimensions. Negative space of the water between the boat and landscape make flat, opposing triangles in the center third of the painting. The tip of the entering scull and the tip of the right arm oar are also triangular. His arm between elbow and wrist create an isosceles triangle as well as a pyramid when observed three-dimensionally.

Rectangles divide the canvas into thirds lengthwise top to the landscape, landscape to the bottom of the boat, foreground water to bottom of canvas. Widthwise, thirds appear with the rower in the center third. Planes of rectangles stretch across the canvas by the boat and are mimicked in the rhythmic reflecting waves. Parallel shadows of the rigging attachments, continue up to parallel the rower's parallel calves.

Ovals form in the head, hands, knees and torso. Seen from above, the rower and his scull create an elongated diamond shape, where his shoulders and knees are at the center. Rhythms beat in the repetition of waves.

The textures include that of skin, nails (finger), water, wood, metal of the rigging, cotton or wool fabric in the clothing (bandana, shirt, trousers, socks) of the rower, hair on the rower's face, head, arms and legs, tape on the grasp of the oar, paint on the boats and center of the foreword oar, flora on the tree line, sand, again at the tree line, air.

#### *Deduction:*

We may imagine that we are about 10 feet from the rower, perhaps in another scull, certainly not on the shoreline. We are close enough to capture this scene as if in a photograph. There is little breeze; the only movement in the water is that of the parallel waves, moving from right (of the canvas) to left, indicating that the rower rows off to the right, his back facing the direction of the boat. The cool water balances the hot sun. It appears to be late summer; a block of trees lines the horizon, the rower wears warm-weather clothing. He rows on a river or lake as witnessed by the close proximity of the landscape in the background. Judging by the angle of the sun, it is after noon perhaps two o'clock since the sun hits the rower's back and top of head dead-on. The heat is intense. The man looks strong and capable as he pulls his weight; his intent eyes, arms and legs reveal an experienced, strong rower. This is further attested by the worn thole pin, which serves as fulcrum for his oar. He has been in this boat before! He bends forward, going back to the catch. His craggy

face indicates a man in his thirties, of about 5'10" and weighing perhaps 145 - 165lbs. He is absorbed in his task and cares nothing for the viewer. We imagine that the rower is in a race, as another scull moves into the composition from the left, trying to catch up. We want to pull, and to cheer on, (we see this approaching scull!), but prudence keeps us quiet; the rower needs to concentrate. He seems confident as the tips of his oars will soon catch the water and swirl it intensely behind. He has bent forward to extend his arms fully, so as to get maximum pull. We are ready for the speed as his oar catches. In the next second he will straighten his back and legs. As he pulls his submerged oars, his scull is propelled forward to the right of the canvas, and to the end of the race. It is hot. We can feel the heat empathically off the rower's sun-baked body. The water must cool this heat a bit, around the scull. A breeze would be felt as he advances through the water, propelled forward. We may smell the water, the summer air, perhaps even the smell of the rower.

We will hear the slap of the oars as they catch the water and the rushing of the water immediately thereafter. We might hear the grunts and groans of the rower with each pull. We might hear this from the rower in the approaching scull as well. The rower probably tastes the salt of his own perspiration if his sweat drips down his face. He is probably wet with perspiration, especially under his arms and his knees. His bandana might be wet with perspiration around his forehead, though we cannot tell by the color. Perhaps his whole head is wet. His fingers are probably moist in between and around the tape of the oar. The soles of his feet are hot, since they are continuously pushing against the foot spot. His legs, arms, back and lungs ache with the exertion of this activity. He is breathing hard, though he seems practiced and therefore in shape for this event.

If this is, in fact, a race, there might be several sculls in the water, enthusiasts on the shoreline. Perhaps people are shouting. However, this is not a scene taking place today, as witnessed by the early scull, so we cannot know if spectators would be in attendance.

#### *Speculation:*

The rower's stern, outward demeanor gives us confidence in the outcome of the race, though we feel the tension. Nothing is staged or static in this scene, but realistically photographic. This is not a scene from a race of today the rower's clothing suggest the early years of scull racing. The seat would be greased, as the moving seat had not yet been developed. The bandana suggests America. But, where is he? We might guess by his tanned neck and face but paler arms and legs that rowing is his sport, not profession; he has a day job. His absorption in the task at hand suggests that he knows the water, confident of the end of the race. No aesthetic is offered, but rather an honest depiction of a hard fought race.

## **The Written Word as Canvas:**

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Let's now look at how the descriptive art of poetry, from this same period, parallels the descriptive visual art of Eakins. Here, similar themes of the natural world and respect for the common man are communicated through the poetry of Walt Whitman, where striking colors, shapes and textures come alive through words. Eakins and Whitman were not contemporaries Whitman was 68, Eakins, 43 but were contemporaries of the mind, compatriots as artists. In fact, although many artists of the day painted Whitman's portrait, took his picture, sculpted his frame, none were as much esteemed as that of Eakins. Whitman said of his portrait *Walt Whitman, Painting from Life* , "I do not see how anyone can doubt but it is a masterly piece of work... strong, rugged, even daring. All that Eakins does has the mark of genius." The two became fast friends, Eakins visiting him regularly at his home in Camden, New Jersey, a short distance from Eakins' native Philadelphia. What did

they share in spirit? First, a deep respect for their place in time. They both documented the changing vista of their world with integrity and beauty in an honest sense, not dependent upon the superficial. Secondly, they shared a spirit of oneness with their fellow Americans, a spirit of brotherhood, which is witnessed in both of their arts. It would be impossible to assess the contribution of the arts in America without including the poetry of Walt Whitman. Students of any age will be able to, if not relate, come to understand the atmosphere and excitement of the age, as documented by this American poet. From *Leaves of Grass*, his ode to the American spirit, we see America's coming of age.

### ***For You, O Democracy (1892)***

Come, I will make the continent indissoluble, I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon, I will make divine magnetic lands, With the love of comrades, With the life-long love of comrades. I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America, and along the shores of the great lakes, and all over the prairies, I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other's necks, By the love of comrades, By the manly love of comrades. For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you ma femme! For you, for you I am trilling these songs. Whitman had witnessed the age from a somewhat different perspective than that of Eakins. He had lived through the Civil War, had seen its torment with the eyes of an older man, one who would grasp not only the splendor of the emerging American "spirit" but appreciate, too, its cost. He would communicate the essence of this age, not only as a realist, but also with an aesthetic fervor. Yet, the two, Eakins and Whitman, would tell us of their country. In another poem, *I Hear America Singing*, Whitman glorifies a realistic scene:

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear, Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong, The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam, The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work, The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck... Though we do not see Eakins' characters singing, we do see in his visual song an enormous respect for the place in time, for his viewed reality. These two artists complement each other; balance the emerging American scene in different art forms.

## **Evidence of Cross-Cultural Communication**

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Gustave Caillebotte was an equally talented master of creating a view onto his reality. This reality, however, was thousands of miles away in Paris, France. Caillebotte was an artistic realist, a documentarian as well. He had been tutored by Léon Bonnat, a portrait painter who was famous for his broad use of color, who, incidentally, taught Eakins during the summer of 1869. (Could they have worked together?) M. Caillebotte became one of the major figures in the late nineteenth century art world when he exhibited eight works along with Degas, Monet, Renoir, Morisot, Pissaro and Sisley in 1876, at a show on the Boulevard des Capucines. Caillebotte had not been close with these artists, but quickly became so as a painter with certain similarities to the group to be known as Impressionists. Equally important, however, he showed his priorities by acquiring many canvases of these fellow artists. Caillebotte had inherited a then huge sum of money at the occasion of his father's death (1874), which made him a wealthy man. When his older brother died suddenly, Gustave decided to insure that the Impressionists would retain and further their place in the art world (and, thus, his own, though he was less interested in this eventuality) by drawing up a will with them in mind. He wrote:

It is my wish that sufficient funds be allocated from my estate to finance in 1878, under the best possible



conditions, the exhibition of the painters known as the Intransigents or Impressionists. It is rather difficult for me to estimate today what the necessary sum might be; it could go up to thirty, forty thousand francs or even more. The painters to figure in this exhibition are: Degas, Monet, Pissaro, Renoir, Cézanne, Sisley, Mlle Morisot [sic]. I name these without excluding others.

I leave to the State the paintings in my possession; however, as I want this gift to be accepted, and in such guise that these paintings not end up in an attic [storage room] or a provincial museum but rather in the Luxembourg and later in the Louvre, a certain lapse of time will be necessary before the execution of this clause, until the public may, I do not say understand, but admit this painting. Twenty years or so might be required; in the meantime my brother Martial, or failing him another of my heirs, will keep them.

I ask Renoir to be my testamentary executor and to accept a painting to be chosen by him; my heirs will insist that he take an important one.

By the year 1877, still very much alive, Caillebotte had purchased forty-eight paintings, among which are some of the most prized and well-known masterpieces of the afore-mentioned Impressionists. That same year the third Impressionist exhibition took place. Caillebotte submitted five paintings: *Paris Street ; Rainy Day ; The Pont de l'Europe ; Portraits in the Country ;* the portrait of his mother, *Portrait of Mme Martial Caillebotte ;* and *House-Painters . The Floor-Scrapers (Raboteurs de Parquets)* , which elicited much attention and controversy, had already been exhibited in 1876. In these works, Caillebotte distanced himself a bit from his admired contemporaries, but remained similar to Manet by the inclusion of figures in all his canvases, and to Degas by his choice of subject matter and the unusual perspective into which the viewer is thrown. Caillebotte, like Eakins, was not interested in the exquisite landscape without reference to society; he included workers, dandies, people at work and sport, people going about their daily lives, unaffected by the voyeur, Caillebotte himself.

His desired effect in a painting was to catch the immediate a trait which, again, allies him closely to Eakins of a scene; and, as with Eakins, Caillebotte's figures are in motion. The camera must have influenced Caillebotte's eye. The scene is cropped, with objects entering in a random way; windows and architectural shapes are cut off. He, as well as Edgar Degas used the camera technique skillfully to orchestrate line and perspective in their paintings, giving the viewer an often askew, seemingly accidental shot, where "negative" (unfilled, un-peopled) space played an important part in the carefully planned, overall composition. Caillebotte's *The Floor-Scrapers* (1875) begs comparison to Eakins' *The Champion Single Sculls* . Let's take a closer look.

(See: <http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/Caillebotte/Raboteurs/scrapers.jpg>) The viewer is situated before a scene where common laborers are at work. This is a scene which Caillebotte, himself, might have come upon, might even have contracted, being a member of a prosperous bourgeois family in Paris. We are immediately struck by the "contre-jour" effect of sunlight on the backs of the three men and on the floor they are scraping. This light practically becomes the subject of the painting as it draws our eyes backwards towards its source, from the bright floor, through the figures of the three men, back to the wall and the glass door, where the old Parisian rooftops maintain their stance. The figures scrape away the room's past. Present still, however, is the finely detailed grillwork of the balcony, the marble slab before the unseen fireplace and the 'boiserie' (wainscoting) of this unordinary, 2nd Empire (1830-48) room. It promises to be beautiful, but changed for sure, as the pace of changing Paris quickens and makes its new mark. We are witness to more than a simple refurbishing of a room; we are witness to the emerging, new Paris. The men at work, responsible for this change, appear as ironic mimics of the traditional filagree grillwork just outside the glass, in the curves of their

muscles, their rounded shoulders, their sharp-edged tools. They are the links between the old and new. Caillebotte wanted us to know this world and documented it in his exact, descriptive rendering of this realistic scene, devoid of pathos, but Naturalistic in content. We see precisely what tools were used and how; we see the evidence of a mid-day break (the open wine bottle...doubtless, these men would return home for lunch! But, could we see in this, too, a metaphor for change in the fermenting wine?); we can even see, if we're attentive, a wedding band on the man closest to us. In this, Caillebotte, like Eakins, paints with a documentarian's palette, making evident his world and the world to come.

## Degas: The Third point in the Triangle

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Caillebotte's interpretation of this scene of men at work draws an interesting analogy not only in its precision of perspective and line (we will discuss later), but also in content, with the great master, Edgar Degas. Caillebotte, a bourgeois with an interest in people from all walks of life, chose his subject of three urban laborers with the intent of boldly describing their activity, observing with a keen eye, as if a fly on the wall. He catches them unaware, and in that he offers to us a sense of their reality, 'traces the truth' of their place in society. Degas would have been, and probably was, impressed with Caillebotte's *Floor-Scrapers*. He had done the same thing in his paintings, especially those of the ballet dancers and the laundresses. If we examine the painting *Ballet Rehearsal (La Salle de Danse, 1891)*. The Yale University Art Gallery) we see a typical scene of dancers at practice, at work. We enter this scene as perhaps another dancer or instructor or piano player. We are part of the "in crowd." We are ignored; no one looks at us or cares about our presence. Thus, the dancers are not ill at ease, modest or tense. They are internalizing what they are doing and are inside themselves. The four dancers on the back wall are pointing and bending, probably rehearsing a move. The dancer on the extreme right of the four stares, absentmindedly, as if bored, out the window just to her right. At the corner of that wall, divided by a vertical post just left of center in the room (and painting), our eyes follow down the adjacent one where two other dancers sit, stretch and adjust their stockings, silently. It is a scene without aesthetic, made almost shocking by its naturalism and immediacy. We feel their fatigue, unquestionably. The room is, practically, without ornamentation only a curtain (hung possibly for quick changing), a bench and a bulletin board break the monotony of this room. It is almost sad in its unglamorous depiction of the daily, grueling routine of these women; but it is real. We are there. This natural quality of the work is emphasized by the values of blues and browns throughout, and the lighter shades of their tutus. The only warmth of this room stems from the disheveled head of red hair of a seated ballet dancer and a curiously beautiful still life bouquet of flowers, which divides the two groups.

We react similarly when viewing Caillebotte's *Floor-Scrapers* whose colors, though warmer, involve us equally in the mood the mood of work, the mood of concentration. Work does that. These laborers, too, are inside themselves, with little care or concern for our presence. Sport can do that, too. Eakins captured the same, real, sense of concentration in his *John Biglin* painting. We can feel the intensity of his concentration, his total commitment to task. There is a mind-body connection happening, even a mind-body-scul connection, which is not only powerful, but also exhausting for the viewer to witness. Art, creating art, must elicit similar tensions. In preparing the canvas, mixing and watching the colors blend and arranging the objects, the rest of the world must disappear while these real connections are made. We know that Degas used to watch his subjects tirelessly; he became involved in every detail of their movement. He watched as if painting, making swirls in the air, sharp jabs of intensity, musical dénouements with his arms and hands! And only then would he paint. Some said that this was evident in his work. A friend of Degas', Jacques-Emile Blanche, said that Degas was

essentially "speaking their [the ballet dancer's, the laundresses'] language, explaining to us in technical terms the applied stroke of the iron, the circular stroke, etc.... And, it is really very amusing to watch him on the tips of his toes, his arms rounded, combine with the aesthetic of the ballet master the aesthetic of the painter."

Degas must have influenced Caillebotte in terms of line, composition and perspective as well. Both used negative space to intensify their composition. In the *Ballet Rehearsal* , an entire third of the painting is floor. Why did he do this? First, we can imagine that he wanted to give us an idea of the size of the room. Perhaps he wanted to paint a character study, like a portrait, of said room, help us to get to know the space. When faced with this empty space, we might wonder, what happens here? Perhaps he intended for us to see a room, cut by a random shot of a camera. All is possible, but what is effected by this space in the *Ballet Rehearsal* is that we come to feel the perspective of the room. The greater the negative space, the greater the space between us and the objects or people on the canvas, and therefore, the greater the size of the room.

In *The Floor-Scrapers* , Caillebotte leads us back from the foreground of the painting empty, save for the scraped floor in such a way as to challenge our understanding of perspective. It catches us off guard and gives us the impression of practically falling off the floor, out of the painting! His negative space is somewhat unnerving. But, clever Caillebotte reels us back in by the careful position of the tool, half-hidden in the foreground and the wine bottle, firmly planted on the marble hearth. He intensified this use of startling perspective with *The House Painters* (1877). Here, the street seems to zoom back from the front edge of the painting to a point where the sky takes over, stretching out in an opposing triangle. This open space balances the scene and lifts our gaze upward through the busy street, peopled with men at work and others who go about their daily lives. Caillebotte's insouciant treatment of the scene prompted art critic Victor Fournel to say:

What a wonderful thing observation is, and what a fortunate man an observer is! For him boredom is a word empty of meaning; nothing dull, nothing dead to his eyes! he animates everything he sees...

Here too, then, Caillebotte was to show us his skill in composition, while, at the same time, creating metaphorical relevance to the changing face of Paris by his use of bold intersecting lines and perspective.

Similarities abound within the works of Caillebotte, Eakins and Degas, as all three served as witness to great change in their respective cultures, change that they would communicate through their art. Possessing an enormous respect for technical precision in their paintings, each experimented with these innovative approaches to line and space.

## **Philadelphia and Paris: Parallel Planes**

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It is interesting here to look at the environment which nurtured these painters. Thomas Eakins was a native Philadelphian, born in 1844. His father was a successful writing and penmanship teacher who encouraged Eakins to explore his diverse interests in the pursuit of excellence. Philadelphia was a city rich in opportunities for just such an endeavor. Congruent with the time of Eakins' birth, the Pennsylvania Railroad was incorporated, the largest in the country, offering modern, widespread travel to everyone in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. It was a model system. Philadelphia had founded several fine newspapers at this time, notably the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* . The city was becoming a major publishing city, boasting, too, the *Saturday Evening Post* . It was turning into a Mecca for journalists and writers. In addition, the American Medical Association was organized in Philadelphia in 1847. These two last events influenced the young

Thomas, his interest in the written word and his fascination with medicine. His hometown was a bright spot on the American horizon, one that Eakins would grow to love and honor especially on canvas.

Situated on the Schuylkill River, Philadelphia also offered leisure activities for its burgeoning masses. Eakins loved boating of all kinds. He had learned to row during his adolescence and missed it terribly while in Paris. Through Paris ran the river Seine, a sometimes-melancholy reminder of his beloved Schuylkill; he did not take part in the sport of rowing while there. As a boy Eakins witnessed the very first organized boat races in the East. American amateur boatmen and women had organizing boat clubs in Philadelphia, Boston, New York and New Haven. (The first college boat club was at Yale). As a result of the Industrial Revolution in this country, people were moving into Philadelphia by the thousands, leaving the countryside for the many opportunities to be found in the city. The Schuylkill figured prominently into their leisure time, another important element taking its place in the expanding culture of working Philadelphians. The city was diverse in industry, railroads and shipbuilding, as well. The Schuylkill River, cutting through the center of the city, served its population as an avenue for industry and leisure, by bringing together each element of the society on its shores.

In Paris, the scene was different. This was a city of ancient streets and architecture, of bridges, hundreds of years old. 'Vieux Paris' was the old world while Philadelphia was the new. Yet the façade of Paris was about to change. Everything was in a state of flux and growth, of change, renewal and experimentation. This was certainly evident in the world of art. The Impressionists were breaking all the rules of traditional painting, challenging the great masters in style, content, even in technique. They documented the changes in their society with their revolutionary technique on the one hand, and with their enormously varied subject matter, on the other. The history of art would forever be changed.

With the arrival of Baron Haussman, Prefect in Paris, equally profound changes came to fruition on the physical face of this Gallic city. It was he who brought about the changes in the avenues and buildings in this great city. Parisians had tried before to improve the physical availability of the city but to no avail, relying instead on the narrow 'rues' that intertwined through residential and business 'quartiers.' Haussman reinvented the city's streets into grand boulevards, opening up the city from east to west, from north to south. As a result, not only did commerce experience new opportunities, but also the greater society benefited from these changes. As in Philadelphia, a new leisure class was developing; the expanding boulevards and squares offered places for relaxation, social interaction and pastime activities. Of course, these enormous changes met with enormous criticism. Many questioned the rightness of these improvements, sensing that Paris was in the process of losing its particular French character. Yet, what transpired, and what continues to transpire in Paris, is a curious love affair between the old and the new. Parisians grew to embrace their tree-lined Champs-Élysées, their arched Rue de Rivoli and even the quaint streets transformed into squares, 'places,' where French of all classes and interests would congregate. Even today, change evokes the same reticence as it did in the nineteenth century. Parisians were horrified at the massive Centre Pompidou, a center for learning and Modern Art; they were disbelieving of I.M. Pei's pyramid in the center of their beloved castle the Louvre. Yet, with heels dug firmly in their cultural cobblestones, they softened, as always, to embrace the new with loving arms.

What had witnessed and persevered through all the change was the Seine, the 485-mile river that cuts through the center of Paris, its largest river port. The Seine has long been a magnet for industry, travel and entertainment. The river is fast moving and navigable through two-thirds of its length. It has provided both opportunities for growth industry and subjects for representation through art. And like the Schuylkill, the Seine has offered Paris' sibling banks a haven for leisure time.

## Conclusion

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My objective in this unit will be multi-layered. Students will be able to recognize the similarities and differences between two cultures, as witnessed by the artists who made their world evident through their art. Integral to this unit will be the study of the forces that contributed to their art: examples of literature from the latter half of the nineteenth century, the influence of the camera and the mutual interests of the painters. Students will examine the elements of line, perspective and space, intrinsic to each of their úuvres. Thanks to the vast collection at the Yale University Art Gallery, students will have firsthand evidence of these two cultures.

## Lesson Plans

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In creating lesson plans for this unit, it is my hope to introduce young people to the thrill of observing and understanding art. While there are many opportunities in our city to experience really great art, so few ever enter a museum. Few ever read poetry, unless it is required. The media television, MTV, the Internet has changed our lives. And, whereas these interests have contributed much, what they have taken away is even more profound our curiosity about those ideas and objects that have the power to enrich and nourish our spirit, things that last. Art history is not my forte; I am a French teacher. My interest has focused on communicating with another culture through words and idiom. Yet, I hope that by engaging in some of these exercises both the students and I will come to learn, together, about the treasure of art, within our reach, and its relevance to the culture it represents.

### **LESSON PLAN 1: Reading the canvas: How to observe**

Focus and Review: Students have studied the methodology of object analysis as proposed by Jules Prown in *Mind in Matter* , from the Winterthur Portfolio. In addition, they have researched and learned about the life of Thomas Eakins. *The Champion Single Scull* will be offered as evidence of this occurrence. Objectives: (Learning Outcomes) At the end of this lesson,

- Students will be able produce an object analysis of *The Champion Single Scull* beginning with description, proceeding to deduction, and finally providing speculation by interpreting the outward evidence of culture.

Guided Practice:

- The teacher will lead students through the object analysis of Caillebotte's *The Floor Scrapers* .
- Students will be encouraged to brainstorm about each step as the teacher directs it: what elements should be included where, and so forth.

Independent Practice:

- Students will study a color transparency of *The Champion Single Scull* in class. Four overhead projectors will be set up to allow for small group observation and note taking.
- Students will take copious notes in their analysis.
- Students will use a clipboard and paper to sketch the painting in an effort to recognize line and shapes on the picture plane.
- Students will type their analysis of the painting.

#### Evaluation/Closure:

- Students will take turns offering their observations.
- Fellow classmates will be encouraged to critique the observations, add to or contradict them.
- Criteria for success will be:
  - to observe the student's ability to follow the procedure from description through speculation.
  - to observe their correct observations and insight.

#### Materials Needed:

- Clipboard and paper.

#### Interdisciplinary Links:

- In addition to taking notes in class, students will research the background of Thomas Eakins in the books and research opportunities provided by the teacher.
- Students may make use of information and suggestions for research provided by the art teacher and library media specialist.

### **LESSON PLAN 2: Documenting Change in Culture**

Focus and Review: Students have made a study of paintings by Eakins and Caillebotte in which evidence of cultural change in society is rendered. Eakins' *The Champion Single Scull* and Caillebotte's *The Floor-Scrapers*

will be offered as evidence of this occurrence. Objectives: (Learning Outcomes) At the end of this lesson,

- Students will be able to identify clashes/dichotomies/anachronisms in their physical environment. Discussion/brain-storming of what these might be: e.g. 'modern' metals (chrome, plastics, etc.), fabrics, modern techniques/shapes, etc.
- Students will develop a "skill" in using a Polaroid camera.
- Students will render a drawing of their photograph
- Students will make a painting on canvas.

#### Guided Practice:

- Students will be led to recognize examples of cultural change in their city, using criteria stated above.
- Students will explore the city of New Haven, looking for evidence of cultural change in tandem.
- Students will learn to analyze a scene for balance and space.
- Students will decide whether to incorporate figures into their snapshot.
- Using a Polaroid camera, students will photograph the scene.

#### Independent Practice:

- Students will study their photograph for balance. (Sometimes, their photographs will not succeed in showing both cultural change and balance i.e. pleasing to the eye. They will be encouraged to analyze their shot and allowed to re-take (if they choose to) using a different angle, "correct" their drawing or find a new scene.)
- A Xerox copy of the photograph will be made if wanted, enlarging - if wanted.
- Students will be directed to validate their evidence by writing a description of the interaction of cultural changes in their shot.
- Students will use pencils to produce a recreation of their snapshot.
- Students will replicate their drawing to canvas.

#### Evaluation/Closure:

- Students will display their photograph and accompanying completed drawing and painting.
- Students will select one of their classmate's work and write a Cinquaine about it.
- Criteria for success will be:
  - to observe the student's understanding of cultural change in their environment by using at least two examples of evidence.
  - to render an accurate drawing and painting of their snapshot.

#### Materials Needed:

- Polaroid camera
- Drawing paper
- Canvas board
- Paints
- Art teacher

#### Interdisciplinary Links:

- Students could sketch evidence of cultural change in their home or place of work or worship, at play or in the gym, in social interactions, etc.
- Students could search the web for other artists using evidence of cultural change.
- Students could compare evidence of cultural change in the works of Eakins and Caillebotte with the work of another visual artist of their choosing.

### **LESSON PLAN 3: Imagining an encounter**

Focus and Review: Students have studied the lives/backgrounds of Thomas Eakins, Gustave Caillebotte and Edgar Degas. With that in mind, they will write a scenario of a brief encounter between Eakins or Caillebotte



and Degas. Objectives: (Learning Outcomes) At the end of this lesson:

- Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the works and techniques of the three artists observed.
- Students will imagine how each would respond in a conversation by using elements of persuasion, criticism or praise.
- Students will perform their 'brief encounter' with a partner from class.

Guided Practice:

- Students will take notes in class on the lives of these artists.
- Students will be led to discuss their scenario with their partner.

Independent Practice:

- Students will rehearse their skit in class.
- Students will be encouraged to use props, costumes, special lighting, furniture, etc.

Evaluation/Closure:

- Students will perform their skit in front of the class.
- Criteria for success will be use of convincing arguments and believability as judged by their fellow classmates.

Materials Needed:

- Students
- Props, if desired
- 'Paintings' of the artists

## Interdisciplinary Links:

- Students could confer with members of the debate team, members of the faculty, family or friends for encouragement and criticism.
- Students could read selected books or search the web for evidence of the artists' personal preferences or biases on art.

## **LESSON PLAN 4: "Wordpools" that Evoke the Senses**

Focus and Review: Students have been exploring the theme of 'figures in interior spaces' as portrayed by selected artists of the same time period but from different cultures. Through careful description, analysis and speculation, the students have learned that art can be an accurate documentation of an era, showing the changes in their cultural history in a similar, realistic style.

Objectives: (Learning Outcomes) At the end of this lesson:

- Students will draw on their descriptive skills learned and written in the appreciation phase of this study, comparing the works of Thomas Eakins, Gustave Caillebotte and Edgar Degas.
- Students will select various parts of speech and create poems consisting of 'pools' of words, expressing imagery that awakens our sensory intelligences as they describe the scene.

Guided Practice: "The question is not what you look at, but what you see." Thoreau The expressive form 'collage' makes art from bits of 'stuff' collected and linked together through theme in the mind of the artist. "The word poem comes from the Greek poein, to make. In a collage, as in poems, you reassemble fragments of found or collected images to make a new image of your own."

- Students will each be given a page torn from a Yellow Pages Telephone Book. They will be asked to couple two words... perhaps the headings, or one at the top and one at the bottom of a column: Divorce-Dog, Elevator-Embossing, Marble-Marine, etc. These coupled words form 'wordpools' and each gives a different twist to the new meaning created by being 'collaged' together.
- Students will be taken to a room where they don't normally go: the furnace room, the supply room, the kitchen in the cafeteria, the Principal's office, the security person's room, etc. This disorientation will cause heightened awareness of the objects, colors, smells, textures, temperature, line and form.
- Students will be asked to be silent, to turn around slowly and, like a camera, to pan the interior.
- With paper and pencil provided, students will begin to 'couple' two or three words together as their senses call for vocabulary from the scene. This will become a free-form poem.
  - The kitchen might suggest:  
Gray, cold, steel  
Stalactite pots

Hang, bang, clang,  
Mirroring tiles  
Antiseptic ants in hiding

- Students will read their poems upon returning to the classroom.
- Students will create two 'wordpool poems' describing a room in their own home for homework.

#### Independent Practice:

- Students will select four (4) works of art from the study "Documentation of an Era."
- Students will draw on vocabulary from that source, and create lists of words that reveal the senses: sound, touch, smell, taste, sight.
- Students will write poems, coupling these words along with selected verb forms and adjectives, in response to the selected paintings.
- Each of these poems may be presented in a different manner. Some possibilities might include:
- Cutting and pasting letters from random words in magazines, creating a 'random' appearance.
- Drawing the words with colored pencils to assign the emotion of color to the meaning of the word. e.g. green = cool, wet, moist, soft, fresh.
- Writing the words in graffiti style over a torn paper collage, as in the peeling billboard surfaces that reveal past and present advertisements.
- Manipulating the computer font in a creative way to express the poem.

#### Evaluation/Closure:

- Students will self-evaluate the collection of their own four poems for quality and quantity of sensory images intrinsic in the wordpools.
- Students will critique each other's poetry.
- A book will be compiled and published for the school library and made available during the birth months of Thomas Eakins, Gustave Caillebotte and Edgar Degas. Each day of that month, a "Wordpool Poem" will be read over the school intercom during morning announcements.

#### Materials Needed:

- Books, magazines, announcements, dictionaries
- Imagination

#### Interdisciplinary Links:

- Students might keep a journal handy to jot down words and phrases seen on their walk/ride home or overheard in the corridors/bathrooms/play rehearsals, etc.
- Students might study the effect of logos and jingles, seen and heard.
- Students pay closer attention to what is seen and heard on television, video games, during sports practices, at a family gathering, while listening to music, etc.

### **LESSON PLAN 5: The Figure at Work and in Sport**

Focus and Review: Students have made a study of paintings by Eakins, Caillebotte and Degas in which figures are rendered in the act of labor or sport and competition. Objectives: (Learning Outcomes) At the end of this lesson,

- Students will understand the use of the human form as it defines the positive (objects and figures) and negative (background) elements in the composition of a painting.
- Students will develop a skill in blending and layering pastels in a xerograph technique (Xeroxing a picture or photograph and coloring it with pastel crayons) using the human form as subject matter.

#### Guided Practice:

- Students will describe and analyze the positions of the bodies in the following paintings while viewing them in slides
  - *John Biglin in a Single Skull*
  - *The Floor Scrapers*
  - *The Ballet Rehearsal*
- Using a black and white Xerox of one of the slides, students will be asked to color in the figure as a flat shape. This is labeled as a 'positive shape.'
  - Sometimes the figure is touching or connected to another object, as with John Biglin and his oar. This whole figure and scull can be labeled the positive shape.
- Using another color, students will fill in the shapes around the figure. This is labeled the 'negative space' or 'shape.'
  - Students will be asked to look around the room and cite furniture and wall decorations as positive and negative elements in the room.
- Students will be led to understand the importance of the diagonal line or direction within the painting as the critical element that indicates 'action.' They will learn by observing that diagonals are never static and always indicate movement or action.
- Students will make a grid of color variations by layering three colors and writing the stages from first layer to third: e.g. red> yellow> orange, blue> red> purple, etc.

#### Independent Practice:

- Students will search magazine photographs for pictures of figures in actions depicting labor or sport.
- Students (or teacher) will make a Xerox copy of the picture, enlarging if necessary.
- Students will be directed to write a description of the interaction of positive and negative space in the picture they selected. They will identify the lines of strength or stress the figure shows that most accurately defines the pose: e.g. the stretch of the arms in the *Floor-Scrapers* is that element of physical stress that defines the position of the figure.
- Students will use oil pastels to 'paint' the Xerox, creating a new artistic statement. Elements of detail may be eliminated in the positive or negative spatial areas. Choice of color and intensity will help the viewer interpret the action and strength of the activity.

#### Evaluation/Closure:

- Students will display their completed xerographic pastel paintings.
- A continuum may be created showing paintings that go from:
  - those least strenuous to those most strenuous
  - those stretching the figure to the edges of the picture plane to those enclosed.
  - those expressing muscles that are contracting and those extending.
- Students will select one painting and write a Cinquaine\* about it.
- Criteria for success will show the student's understanding of positive and negative space, use of diagonals in composition that suggests action, and layering pastels to create color combinations that give added value and tension to the work.

#### Materials Needed:

- Slides of selected paintings
- Xeroxes of one or two of the slides shown
- Oil pastels
- 8 ½ x 11 white paper for grid of color combinations
- Magazines such as *Sports Illustrated* and *Home Builders* . Magazines providing photos of female as well as male athletes/laborers would be stressed.

#### Interdisciplinary Links:

- Students could search the web for other artists using labor and sport as theme.
- Students could show similarities and differences in the work of Eakins, Caillebotte and Degas with the work of African American artists such as Jacob Lawrence and William Johnson.

\* Cinquaine: A poem consisting of five lines that describes a painting: Noun Adjective... Adjective Gerund...

Gerund... Gerund A four-word Sentence (describing the object) Synonym of Noun (from first line)

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