

Waterford Public Schools Lesson Plan Visual Art, Grade 7, 8 (1)

Project Title: Art History Discussion and Narrative

Focus: Beatrice Cuming, Saturday Night: New London, 1938, New London, CT

Artist Biography:

“Beatrice Cuming (1903-1975) was born in Brooklyn, studied art in Paris and lived in Tunisia before settling in New London, Connecticut in 1934. Cuming described her arrival in New London as a sort of accidental love story. One day she was taking a train and began to explore downtown. Supposedly she was so taken with the area, she never got back on the train! Her art flourished here due to the financial support from the federal government’s New Deal art programs. Cuming also taught art classes in New London Public Schools and at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum. A number of her paintings feature industrial landscapes from Electric Boat across the Thames River.”

(Courtesy Lyman Allyn Art Museum Education Department)

Subject History:

“This work depicts a crowded street during a summer weekend in a port city. A marquee announcing the 1935 Gary Cooper film *The Lives of the Bengal Lancers* places this scene in a specific time. In the distance, the hip roof of H.H. Richardson’s Union Station is visible. In the crowded street scene, a sailor pulls imploringly on the hand of one young woman while he talks to another. Some faces appear ghoulish, some bodies distorted. Building on the social realism of New York’s Ashcan School, Cuming also adopted the edginess associated with that style. Her composition shows curious loners as well as convivial groups, mixing races, classes, and different ages grouped in an unaffected, unsentimental jumble.”

(Courtesy Lyman Allyn Art Museum Education Department)

Task Description: Students will break up into groups of four looking at the painting of Saturday Night: New London, by Beatrice Cuming projected on the promethean board. Each group will be given a list of the seven elements of art. They will identify the elements of art in the painting and analyze how Beatrice used them. Students will discuss the painting as a group and then will create their own narrative story about the image.

Enduring Understanding: Artists use seven basic elements to create art. Artists use personal experience and familiar places as motivation for painting and artwork.

Essential Questions: What is an element of art?
What are the seven elements of art?
What inspires artists?

State Standards in Art: Check the standard that applies to project

1. Students will understand, select and apply media, techniques and processes
2. *Students will understand and apply elements and organizational principles of art
3. *Students will consider, select and apply a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas
4. *Students will understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture