

Janice Mason Art Museum
LESSON PLANS FOR WIER EXHIBIT
Background Information

ARTIST NAME : Frank Gallo

ART PIECE(S) ON DISPLAY: “Valedictorian”

About the Artist

Frank Gallo was born in Toledo, Ohio in 1933. He was the youngest of four children born to a Sicilian shoe repairman and inventor. While growing up, Gallo had the good fortune to live within “a stone’s throw” of the Toledo Museum of Art. The museum became a childhood retreat from his father’s shoe shop. During his frequent trips to the museum, he was able to absorb the detailed elements of [classical art](#), and on the weekends receive direct instruction in [drawing](#), [painting](#) and [sculpture](#). Gallo attended the University of Toledo, and in 1956 received a B.F.A. in education, a degree reflecting both his desire to become an artist and his family’s hopes that he would have a reputable career. He began graduate work at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in the summer of 1956 but gave it up for a year to teach art to elementary and secondary school students. He started graduate work again in 1958 at the University of Iowa, with an emphasis on both [sculpture](#) and [printmaking](#). He received his M.F.A. from the University of Iowa in 1959. That same year he accepted a teaching appointment at the University of Illinois. Five years later he resigned from his teaching post when his career as a [commercial artist](#) began to take off. At this time he was showing his work in galleries in both New York and Los Angeles. Gallo returned to teaching in 1967 at the University of Iowa and resigned a year later to become head of the [sculpture](#) department at the University of Illinois. There he was asked to develop a new program for the sculpture department. Throughout his years as a teacher, Gallo continued to create his own [sculptures](#), employing different media, but using consistent style and subject matter. Gallo’s work has been exhibited in more than 50 galleries and museums throughout the world.

Frank Gallo was inspired to create [sculpture](#) by the Romantic poets like Keats and Shelley, whose work was a reaction to the industrial age. Carved above the entrance of one of the college’s Gallo attended were the words, “Ars longa vita brevis est” - Life is fleeting, but art endures. He feels that the words of this motto are just as apt today.

About the Art

Gallo has always been primarily a [sculptor](#) except for his brief time as a [commercial artist](#). He has worked almost exclusively from the human form. In the late 1950’s he began to use the material polyester resin reinforced with fiberglass, which gives his sculpture a [viscous](#) finish. Although he is noted for his studies of women, he has also made [sculptures](#) of men, including Abraham Lincoln. Gallo commented, “ I am obsessed with the female figure. I get static from some women-you know, women’s lib-who say that I capitalize on them. But that’s not fair. What I express in these pieces is worship, not exploitation. I’m interested in the beauty of the female figure, and I’m trying to express it the way I feel.”

Since 1977, Gallo has been working primarily in [cast paper](#), a technique he taught in the handmade paper and [paper casting](#) program he helped initiate at the University of Illinois. He

also does some [sculptures](#) in crystal after having spent some time in France to study glass at Daum Crystallier. He has made some [lithographs](#) using the same thematic subject material. He is considered to be a part of the [Pop movement](#).

The [sculpture](#) piece in this exhibit is entitled “Valedictorian” and was completed in 1968. The piece is an [abstraction](#) of a student giving the valedictorian address at his commencement exercise. The [medium](#) used for this [sculpture](#) is epoxy resin and it is mounted on a wood base. The piece measures h 66” X w 20” X d 8”.

Related Terms

- abstraction
- cast paper
- classical art
- commercial artist
- drawing
- lithograph
- medium
- painting
- paper casting
- Pop movement
- printmaking
- sculptor
- sculpture
- style
- subject matter
- viscous

Specific Lesson Plans

Grades K-5

Kentucky Core Content

AH-E4.1.34 Describe a variety of media and processes used to produce two-dimensional (2-D) and three-dimensional (3-D) artwork.

AH-E-4.2.35 Recognize that artists choose to express themselves in different styles and subject matters.

AH-E-4.1.42 Use a variety of media and art processes to produce two-dimensional (2-D) and three-dimensional (3-D) artwork.

AH-E-4.2.31 Identify various purposes for creating works of art.

AH-E-4.2.32 Purposes of Art- expressive (express emotions and ideas), narrative (describe and illustrate experiences), functional (decorate objects).

AH-E-4.2.35 Recognize that artists choose to express themselves in different styles and subject matters.

AH-E-4.2.36 Styles: realistic, abstract, non-objective

Objectives

- To learn that Frank Gallo is a **contemporary** American artist who is predominantly known for his **sculpture**, even though he has done some **printmaking**, **lithographs**, and was briefly a **commercial artist**.
- To understand that Frank Gallo's early life and educational experiences helped prepare him to become an important artist.
- To find that throughout Gallo's career he has used consistent **style** and **subject matter**, but different **media**.
- To realize that Frank Gallo has been associated with several different educational institutions but has always continued to create art.
- To understand why Frank Gallo prefers to use the female form in his sculptures.
- To learn what is involved in the **paper casting** technique and why Frank Gallo's name is linked to it.
- To be able to describe Gallo's sculpture piece entitled "Valedictorian" that is part of the Wier collection showing at the Janice Mason Art Museum.

Suggested Questions

1. How do you know that Frank Gallo is an important artist?
2. Where and when was Frank Gallo born?
3. Why was it important that Frank Gallo lived close to the Toledo Museum of Art?
4. How was Frank Gallo involved with different schools and colleges?
5. What did Frank Gallo like to use as his **subject matter**? Why?
6. What are some different **media** (materials) Gallo used to create his **sculptures**?
7. Frank Gallo is considered to be a part of which art movement?
8. Many of Gallo's art works were done by **paper casting**, what is this?
9. Tell about Gallo's sculpture "Valedictorian".

Related Activities

1. Secure from the internet or go to the library and find pictures of some of Gallo's [paper casting](#) sculptures. Show these to the students so they can comprehend how they are beautiful and unique.
2. Have students research the [paper casting](#) technique, needed materials, and methodology. Discuss student findings, gather required materials, and have students make a [paper casting sculpture](#). Suggest that students use the human form in their sculpture so that they can be more like Frank Gallo. When their sculptures are completed, this provides a wonderful opportunity for students to critique their own work.
3. The teacher can demonstrate how to critique a [sculpture](#) utilizing the [Four Steps of Art Criticism](#) found on this website. Naturally, this will have to be abbreviated for the younger students. Then have the students critique a [sculpture](#) they have made.
4. Have the students research the process of making paper. Let them report on their research through a demonstration, written report, creation of a poster, verbal report, or by making paper and sharing this with the class.

Grades 6-8

Kentucky Core Content

AH-M-4.1.34 Identify and describe a variety of art media, art processes, and subject matter to communicate ideas, feelings, experiences, and stories.

AH-M-4.1.35 Media: two dimensional-crayon, pencil, fabric, yarn, paint (tempera, watercolor), ink and pastels.

AH-M-4.1.36 Media: three-dimensional-clay, paper-mache', found objects (used to produce artwork), wood, glass, metal, and stone (Properties of media need to be known in order to respond to artworks).

AH-M-4.1.39 Subject Matter: landscape, portrait, still life, abstract, and non-objective.

AH-M-4.1.42 Effectively use a variety of art media, processes, and subject matter to communicate ideas, feelings, and experiences.

AH-M-4.1.37 Art Processes: two-dimensional-painting, fabric design, printmaking, and mosaics.

AH-M-4.2.31 Describe and compare the characteristics and purposes of works of art representing various cultures, historical periods, artists, and/or styles.

Objectives

- To learn that Frank Gallo is a **contemporary** American artist who is predominantly known for his **sculpture**, even though he has done some **printmaking**, **lithographs**, and was briefly a **commercial artist**.
- To understand that Frank Gallo's early life and educational experiences helped prepare him to become an important artist.
- To find that throughout Gallo's career he has used consistent **style** and **subject matter**, but different **media**.
- To understand why Frank Gallo prefers to use the female form in his sculptures.
- To learn what is involved in the **paper casting** technique and why Frank Gallo's name is linked to it.
- To be able to critique Gallo's sculpture piece entitled "Valedictorian," which is part of the Wier collection showing at the Janice Mason Art Museum.

Suggested Questions

1. Tell about the different kinds of art Frank Gallo has produced?
2. What is Gallo's main art form and what is his predominant **subject matter**?
3. What indicators are there that Frank Gallo is a **contemporary** American artist who is associated with the **Pop movement**?
4. Why do you think Frank Gallo became a **commercial artist** for a short time?
5. What factors in Gallo's early life influenced his art career?
6. What role did educational institutions play in Gallo's career?
7. Gallo most often portrayed women in his **sculptures**. Why was he criticized for this, and how did he respond to these criticisms?
8. What are some of the specific **media** (materials) Gallo used in producing different effects with his **sculpture**?
9. Explain the connections between Frank Gallo and the **paper casting** technique.

Related Activities

1. Have students view on the internet or from the library, Frank Gallo's art. Have them select one piece and describe it using correct art terminology.
2. Have students research Frank Gallo, his life and works. Have them report their findings through a written report, oral report, poster, or timeline of the most important aspects of his art career.
3. Have students research the different types of media Gallo used, select one, and make a **sculpture** of a human form. Have the students replicate, as much as possible, a **media** similar to Gallo's.
4. Have students research the **paper casting** technique, needed materials, and methodology. Discuss student findings, gather required materials, and have students make a paper cast sculpture. Suggest that students use the human form in their **sculpture** so that they can be more like Frank Gallo. When their sculptures are completed this provides a wonderful opportunity for students to critique their own work.

Grades 9-12

Kentucky Core Content

AH-H-4.1.31 Describe works of art using appropriate terminology.

AH-H-4.1.32 Art Elements: color and color theory: primary and secondary hues, values (tints and shades), intensity (brightness and dullness); color relationship: triadic, complementary, and analogous.

AH-H-4.1.33 Principles of Design: Balance (symmetry/asymmetry), emphasis (focal pattern), pattern, repetition, contrast, variety, movement, rhythm, proportion, transition/gradation, and unity.

AH-H-4.1.34 Defend personal interpretations of works of art and architecture by using arguments.

AH-H-4.2.39 Purposes of Art: persuasive (advertising, marketing, propaganda); formalist (abstract, non-objective, arrangement of elements and principles as subject matter).

Objectives

- To learn that Frank Gallo is a **contemporary** American artist who is predominantly known for his **sculpture**, even though he has done some **printmaking**, **lithographs**, and was briefly a **commercial artist**.
- To understand that Frank Gallo's early life and educational experiences helped prepare him to become an important artist.
- To find that throughout Gallo's career he has used consistent **style** and **subject matter**, but different **media**.
- To understand why Frank Gallo prefers to use the female form in his sculptures.
- To learn what is involved in the **paper casting technique** and why Frank Gallo's name is linked to it.
- To gain an appreciation for Frank Gallo's **sculptures** and other art.
- To find what inspired Gallo to create **sculpture**.

Suggested Questions

1. Name and explain the different kinds of art that Frank Gallo has created?
2. What is his preferred mode of creative expression?
3. What influences have contributed to the **style, subject matter, and media** Frank Gallo prefers in his art?
4. Frank Gallo is a teacher and an artist. How have these careers complemented each other?
5. Some women have criticized Frank Gallo's use of the female form, stating that it is derogatory to them. How did Frank Gallo respond to this criticism?
6. Frank Gallo's use of the **paper casting** technique is heavily reflected in his **sculptures**. Explain this technique.
7. Frank Gallo uses many different **media** to create his **sculptures**, name and explain some of these **media**.
8. What inspired Gallo to produce **sculpture**?

Related Activities

1. Have students go on the internet or visit the library to find pictures of several pieces of Gallo's art that have women as the subject? Divide the students into two teams. They will have a debate with one team contending that Gallo's depiction of women is derogatory. The other team will support the claim that Gallo loved the form of women and that his [sculptures](#) are a tribute to women. Have a group of students be observers and determine who made the strongest arguments.
2. Have students research Frank Gallo, his life and works. Have them report their findings through a written report, oral report, poster, or timeline of the most important aspects of his art career.
3. Have students research the different types of media Gallo used, select one, and make a sculpture of a human form. Have the students replicate, as much as possible, a medium similar to Gallo's.
4. Have students research the [paper casting](#) technique, needed materials, and methodology. Discuss student findings, gather required materials, and have students make a paper cast [sculpture](#). Suggest that students use the human form in their [sculpture](#) so that they can be more like Frank Gallo. When their [sculptures](#) are completed this provides a wonderful opportunity for students to critique their own work.
5. Have students critique Gallo's piece entitled "Valedictorian" which is on display at the Janice Mason Art Museum. Use the questions from the [Four Steps of Art Criticism](#) found on this web site as a guide.