South Dakota Artists Curriculum Unit

Robert Aldern
“Relief Sculpture”

Provided by the South Dakota Art Museum
Brookings, South Dakota
South Dakota Artists Curriculum Unit

**Unit of Study:** Robert Aldern, painter

**Title of Lesson Plan:** Relief Sculpture

**Grade Level:** 3 – 5
South Dakota Content Standards

Fine Arts:

Visual Arts Standard One 3-4:
Students will describe how visual arts tell stories, express moods, or convey ideas.

Visual Arts Standard Two 3-4:
Students will understand selected techniques which give artwork detail.

Visual Arts Standard Two 5-8:
Students will describe the various techniques which give artwork definition and detail.
Assessment Strategies

- Class discussion
- Observation using VTS
- Creation of a relief image graded by requirements in a rubric
Learning Objectives

- Students will learn about South Dakota artist Robert Aldern.
- Students will evaluate the art piece using VTS techniques.
- Students will define relief sculpture.
- Students will create a relief image out of Styrofoam plates.
Time Required

- One class period of 30 minutes

Materials/Technology Needed

- Image of Robert Aldern’s relief image made out of brick at First Lutheran Church in Northfield, Minnesota titled “The Creation Story” (see link for the image under reference section)
- Styrofoam plates
- Pencil/pen
Robert Aldern is known for his various church art by doing a variety of projects commissioned by various churches and businesses. He is also known for his series of prairie horizons. This lesson features some of those images.
Lesson Description

- Show students an image of Robert Aldern’s brick relief work titled “The Creation Story”.

- Using VTS observation, have students answer questions like:
  - What do you see?
  - What makes this work unique?
  - How did the author create depth in this work?

- Discuss the answers to these questions as a class.
Lesson Description continued

- Next, tell students that they will be creating their own type of relief image using Styrofoam plates. They will be pushing on the back of their Styrofoam plate with a pencil or a pen (it would work best using a broken pencil or a pen that has a lid that could be used to indent the Styrofoam, not break through it).

- Ideas for images - students could write their name and create a design around the letters of their name, or you could relate the image to something you are working on in class.
Enrichment

- Have students create their relief image out of a bar of Ivory soap or other materials like popsicle sticks, legos, etc.
Bibliography/Resources

- South Dakota Art Museum Collection
  - Robert Aldern

For image of “The Creation Story”
- “More Work by Robert Aldern.” Augustana Art/Anthropology Department. 2002

Robert Aldern Presentation to Students
Robert Aldern

Robert Aldern in his studio
http://www.robertaldern.com
Robert Aldern

- Born in Sioux Falls, SD in 1929
- Has had an impact on the art of South Dakota
- Growing up in South Dakota and other contemporary American painters have influenced artwork
- Artwork includes landscapes, liturgical, still lifes, and figure studies
Art Terms

- Landscape – artwork that shows an outdoor scene
- Liturgical art – artwork relating to religion that may be placed in a church
- Still Life – artwork that shows a group of objects placed together in an interesting way
- Figure Study - a painting, drawing, or sculpture where a live model is the subject
Bibliography


*For more information or to show students other pieces of artwork by Robert Aldern, go to his website at www.robertaldern.com or contact the South Dakota Art Museum.
The Creation Story

http://www.augie.edu/dept/art/art/faculty%20divisions/popups/More%20work%20by%20Robert.htm
Other Examples of Robert Aldern’s Artwork
Half Acre

Image Courtesy of the South Dakota Art Museum
Floating Lantern

Image Courtesy of the South Dakota Art Museum
Edible Earth

Image Courtesy of the South Dakota Art Museum
Downpour

Image Courtesy of the South Dakota Art Museum