



Fiber Arts, Papier Mache and Basketry

Artist: Susan Marrant



Susan Marrant

Grade Level:

K-Adult, After School

About the Artist:

Susan began working as a fiber artist in the 1970s. She shares her creative enthusiasm with students by drawing upon her academic training in anthropology and the arts, years of field research in Romanian villages and extensive travel. Rather than focusing exclusively on the finished product, she emphasizes the process that joins human beings to the objects of their labor: the creative relationship she calls “workart.” As an anthropologist and artist, Susan sees the nurturing of artistic expression and discovery as one of humanity’s most ancient and effective means of social education. Susan strives to reacquaint all of her students with the quiet satisfaction of creating beautiful objects of necessity.

Objectives:

- To lead students to discover their creative abilities
- To teach students new skills and traditional techniques of artistic expression
- To develop students’ awareness of and sensitivity to other peoples and cultures
- To expand students’ horizons and their sense of self within a safe, secure and fun social environment

- Prior to classroom residency: An in-service technical training workshop for adults assisting in the classroom during presentations.
- As part of residency: Meeting with classroom teachers to help integrate, where possible and desirable, residency ideas and activities into the curriculum.
- Follow-up activities: Providing a resource list of supplies, books, internet sites and other useful resources for classroom teachers.

Activities:

Activities include, but are not limited to, the making of potholders, small tapestries, felting, masks or baskets. One-hour time blocks, with a minimum of three to four classroom visits are preferable. Every class will begin with a presentation that illustrates a particular concept. If basketry is the topic, for example, Susan might briefly discuss the raw materials available in a given geographic region and how they would be properly collected and prepared. This would be followed by a display of examples from a specific culture and discussion of their place in the larger social context. The hands-on technical instruction would follow. The last portion of every class will be devoted to an open discussion encouraging the development of skills in constructive critique and positive reinforcement.

Felting:

- Felt Snakes/Ropes: K-grade 4, 1 hour
- Felt Balls and Beads: K-adult, 1 hour
- Felt Pad: grade 5-adult, 3 hours

Weaving:

- Pot Holders: Grade 2-adult | 1.5 hours
- Woven Tapestry: Grade 4-adult | 5 hours
- God's Eyes: Grade 1-adult | 1-2 hours.

Basketry:

- Reed Basket: Grade 3-adult | 3 hours
- Painted Basket: Grade 9-adult | 3 hours
- Melon Basket: Grade 9-adult | 3 hours

Papier Mache:

- Papier Mache Bowls: Grade 6-adult | 3 hours
- Papier Mache Baskets: Grade 3-adult | 1 hour
- Papier Mache Masks: Grade 4-adult | 3 hours
- Papier Mache Sculptures: Grade 4-adult | 3 hours

Workshop Size Limits:

- No more than 30 students with the help of at least one volunteer for every ten students

Special Equipment:

- NA

Space Needed:

- A classroom, preferably non-carpeted, with access to water and space to store incomplete projects

Connections to the Curriculum:

- Art history, art, history, geography design, social studies and language arts