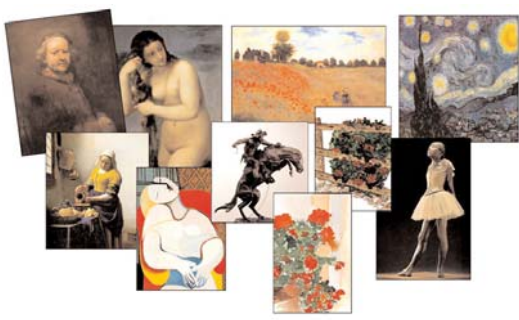


A DAY IN THE ARTS

Making art accessible to all

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KID FRIENDLY MUSEUM SITES

We've all heard how many schools have felt forced to end their arts programs due to budget considerations. Most of us reading this article would no doubt agree though on the importance of art education in the lives of our children. It would be great if every parent would take



the time to create art with their children. But can we do more?

With that thought in mind I searched the internet for museums that had special places for children to visit. I'm happy to report that there are many sites geared toward our youth. Today, I thought I would highlight two of them: The National Gallery of Art and the Museum of Modern Art. Let's visit the NGA first.

There is literally HOURS of artistic entertainment and education to be found in the NGA "Art Zone". The first activity I clicked on was the Collage Machine. It takes you to a page where you can create a digital collage. You can save your work, print it out and even send it to others via the computer. There are also instructions for building your own collage using recycled paper and glue.

"Still Life" helps children understand how artist would arrange and paint everyday objects around them. Their web site explains it best: "Young children can explore spatial arrangement, perspective, proportion, and balance while creating engaging, interactive still life compositions that mix everyday objects with elements borrowed from famous works of art. More advanced artists will enjoy creating complex arrangements, and then switching to the painting mode to add and manipulate textured 'brushstrokes' that give their

art a more abstract, painterly quality.” My quick still life can be found on the first page. While not great art, it was fun! (Warning: It requires a fast connection to work properly.)

There are quite a few other computer activities available on the site but there are also helpful articles and books to print out. For instance, you can download the book *Paintings of the Dutch Golden Age* and view the paintings of 17th century Dutch artists. You can also download the latest issue of the *Inside Scoop*. It’s a quarterly publication that teaches children about the lives and works of various artists. The current issue (winter 2009) features Jackson Pollock and teaches how Pollock painted and also provides an exercise so that young painters can learn to paint as he did. The museum included this friendly reminder at the end of the activity: There are no mistakes. Chance occurrences are part of art making! Other issues of the *Inside Scoop* focused on the work of Mary Cassatt., Martin Johnson Heade and Leonardo da Vinci.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

MOMA takes a different approach to their children’s area. They take you on a journey with a cute alien in search of modern art. Once the alien lands at the museum, you are able to control which piece of art the alien explores. For example, one of the first options is Picasso’s *Three Musicians*. You have several options. If you click on “listen”, you are advised to move your mouse over each musician and, well, listen. On one, you hear the clarinet. You also hear a guitar being stummed, a dog barking and a singer singing. You can then opt to hear all speak/play together.

If you click on “look”, the painting is



Umberto Boccioni's *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913 (cast 1931). Bronze, 43 7/8 x 34 7/8 x 15 3/4" MOMA photo.

scrambled and you help put the pieces back together in the proper order. Choose “about” and you hear and read four brief points about Picasso’s life. And finally, if you choose “idea”, you are invited to print out four basic shapes and asked to make a person with them.

Once you’re done exploring Picasso’s

Three Musicians, you can move on through the museum. You might choose to learn more about a sculpture by Umberto Boccioni (left). If you click on “tools” you can learn how to create a sculpture using metal or stone. The creative idea for this work uses aluminum foil to create your own sculpture. Using your foil, how would you show energy and motion? That is the question the museum asks as you start this project.

There is much more to be discovered on both the National Gallery and the Museum of Modern Art websites, regardless of age. If you’re stuck in a creative rut, it might help to take a few minutes and explore the museums and their special sites for young ones. After all, Picasso said that “all children are artists. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.” Exploring these sites just might inspire you to greater creativity. Now if you’ll excuse me, I’m dying to get my hands on some aluminum foil! 🎨

Resources

National Gallery of Art
<http://www.nga.gov/kids/kids.htm>

MOMA

<http://www.moma.org/destination/#>



ART NEWS

SMALL TOWN PUBLIC ART

With a population of less than 10,000 the town of Davidson, North Carolina has commissioned its first work of public art. The metal sculpture by artist Andy Dunnill was made possible by pooling funds from a number of sources. A local art history professor hoped it might become a model for other small communities. Dunnill teaches all levels of sculpture and is the foundry manager at UNC Greensboro. The town is spending about \$36,100 for the work .

RODIN IN CONNECTICUT

From March 7 through May 24 the Stamford Museum and Nature Center will show "Rodin: In His Own Words". The exhibit will feature 36 bronzes and maquettes, interpreted by the artists own writings. www.stamfordmuseum.org

ART AND HOPE

Artist Anne Kotleba of Biloxi,

Mississippi spent two days a week for four months at the Harrison County Youth Detention Center. She and nearly 100 inmates painted murals on the facility's walls. The project was funded by the Mississippi Arts Commission and "Communities In Schools" (Greenwood, MS). It was hoped that the project would give the minors a sense of accomplishment and a feeling that many adult's were supportive for their personal success.



Auguste Rodin, Head of Shade (Detail), Modeled about 1880, Musee Rodin Cast II/IV in 1995; 26 1/2 X 14 1/4 X 15 1/2 in. Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation.

BRANDED AND ON DISPLAY

The Salt Lake Art Center's new exhibit, "Branded and On Display," examines the work of artists who explore the strategies of branding and retail presentation as they respond, with both humor and criticism, to the pervasive marketing that colors our lives and leisure time. The pieces, created by dozens of artists, lead us to look at how advertising and display strategies shape our thinking, our impulses and our desires. ➤



Hank Willis Thomas, Branded Head (detail), 2003, digital C-print mounted to Plexiglas, 46.75 x 36.75 inches, courtesy of Jacqueline Bradley and Clarence Otis Jr.

ART AEROBICS (WIN A BOOK!)

Get your aluminum foil ready! No set time. Just pull it out, start crumpling it up and create! And to make this a little more fun, we have a small book on Picasso that we will send to one of you artists who take this art aerobics challenge! Just send us a photo of your creation no later than February 28, 2009 and we will draw a winner's name out of a very creative hat! ➤

Send photos to: editor@adayinthearts.com