

Lesson Title: Paintings of Place

Grade Level: K – 5

Connections: Social Studies, Visual Arts

Students examine two works of art that record the history of a place – two different city streets in Columbus. Activities help students to gain an understanding of the history of Columbus and their own local community and how communities change with time.

National Standards:

National History Standards -

Students should understand the history of their own local community and how communities in North America varied long ago.

National Visual Arts Standards –

Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes

Chooses and evaluates a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

Makes connections between visual arts and other disciplines

Performance Objectives:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the history of their community through creating a historical narrative.

Students will understand that changes through history in communities can be seen through examining works of art.

Students will create a work of art communicating a personal view or record of their place or community.

Works of Art:

Aminah Robinson, American, b. 1940, *A Street Called Home*, 1997, mixed media. Museum purchase with funds donated by Wolfe Associates, Inc.

Felix de la Concha, Spanish, b. 1962, *One Season from Each Corner*, 1995-96. Oil on canvas on plywood, Museum purchase.

Vocabulary:

Panorama – A view or picture of everything that can be seen over a wide area

Community – A group of people with common interests living in a particular area

Activities:

1. Both of these paintings record the history of a place – two different city streets in Columbus. Felix de la Concha painted the panoramic painting by placing his easel at the corner of Michigan and West Second Avenue in Columbus. Aminah Robinson painted her picture based on her memory of living on Mount Vernon Avenue in Columbus. Examine these two paintings. What is similar? What is different? Use a Venn diagram to record your answers.

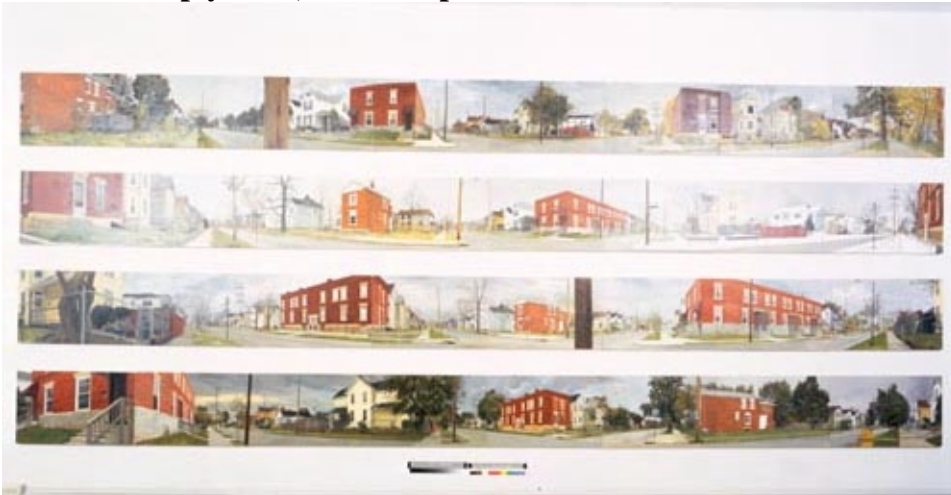


A Street Called Home

One Season from Each Corner

2. One of the artists said the following about the place they painted, “That was a self-sufficient street; it knew how to survive. People wove in and out with their horses and carts and trucks; you could hear the street cries; people bartered and bought and sold; people played and danced. Everything you could need you could find...”
Do you think it was Felix de la Concha or Aminah Robinson? Why?
3. Locate Mount Vernon Avenue and the corner of Michigan and West Second Avenues on a current map of Columbus. Go to the library or the historical society and look at a map of Columbus from around the period of the 1940s, when Aminah Robinson lived on Mount Vernon Avenue. Again locate Mount Vernon Avenue and the corner of Michigan and West Second Avenues. How has the city of Columbus changed? What do you think caused the changes? What has remained the same?
4. Observe and sketch the street where you live. Create a painting or drawing based upon your observations and sketches. Think about what you want to communicate to others about your street. Are there any cars, people, or children playing? What season is it? Aminah Robinson painted herself in her picture – are you a part of your picture? Where is your viewpoint – street level, from a window in your house, from the sky? What colors will you use? Aminah Robinson adds other materials, such as buttons and thread, to her paintings that reflect her childhood memories of making things at home. Consider adding other materials to the painting that say something about you or your community.
5. How has your community or street changed since the 1940s? Conduct a classroom research project and create a historical narrative about the history of your community by gathering information from local residents, records found in early newspapers, historical documents and photographs, artifacts, and other data found in local libraries and historical societies.

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