

HILL-STEAD MUSEUM

Create a Masterpiece En Plein Air

When you go out to paint, try to forget what objects you have before you, a tree, a house, a field or whatever... merely think here is a little square of blue, here an oblong of pink, here a streak of yellow, and paint it just as it looks to you, the exact color and shape, until it gives you your own naive impression of the scene before you.

-Claude Monet



Overview:

After exploring paintings in Hill-Stead's collection that show the how the French Impressionist used the formal elements of line, shape, form, and color the students will use this knowledge to create their own landscape painting. Using the grounds at Hill-Stead as inspiration, the students will experiment with lines, shapes, forms, and colors as they draw what they see.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify and describe the elements of art in Monet's Grainstack paintings, including line, shape, form, color, texture.
- Think critically about these elements as they explore them in the landscape surrounding Hill-Stead Museum.
- Create a landscape that embodies the elements of art they identified in the paintings.
- Discuss their response to their own and others artwork using appropriate vocabulary.

Featured Artwork:

Grainstacks, White Frost Effect and Grainstacks, in Bright Sunlight, by Claude Monet

Materials:

- Artists crayons, pastels, and pencils
- Drawing paper
- Artist lap board
- Matting (by request)

Lesson Steps:

1. Tell students they will be creating their own work of art inspired by the landscapes they have seen on their tour.
2. Remind the students about the elements of art, specifically different types of lines, geometric and organic shapes, colors. For more information see the worksheet *How To Look at a Work of Art*.
3. Remind the students about the quote by Claude Monet, noting that he encouraged the use of shape and color when creating a landscape.
4. Encourage the students to carefully observe the landscape, asking themselves what colors they see, what shapes they see, and what types of lines.
5. Students will take their paper and tools out into the grounds of Hill-Stead and draw what they see using a variety of lines, shapes, forms and color. Suggest that the students press down hard for bold lines, and softly for more transparent lines.
6. Students will return to the Makeshift Theater to add finishing touches.
7. Finally, students will share their artwork with their peers. Encourage the students to ask questions of each other, such as why they chose to use certain types of line, color, shape, etc., and to share their response to it using what they have learned.