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Duane Hanson: Real Life

Teacher Activity Packet

9/16/06 – 1/14/07
Prepared by Ruth Anderson
Assistant Curator of Education

EXPLORE
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Duane Hanson Biography for Teachers

"I'm mostly interested in the human form as subject matter and means of expression for my sculpture. What can generate more interest, fascination, beauty, ugliness, joy, shock or contempt than a human being. Most of my time involves concentrating on the sculpting aspect. Casting, repairing, assembling, painting, correcting it until it pleases me. That takes some doing as I'm rarely satisfied."

--Duane Hanson, Nov. 26, 1981

Early Beginnings

From the start, Duane Hanson's primary interest was in recreating the human form. His first extant sculpture is a three-dimensional wood rendering of the figure in Thomas Gainsborough's famous portrait *The Blue Boy* (c. 1770). Remarkably, Hanson created his version of *Blue Boy* in 1938 when he was thirteen, while living with his family in the isolated town of Parkers Prairie, Minnesota. According to the artist, there was only one small library in town, which had only one art history book, in which he discovered Gainsborough's portrait of a young man wearing blue satin breeches. Hanson carved *Blue Boy* out of soft wood, possibly a log, using whatever implements were available, including his mother's butcher knife. His mother's old broomsticks also became fair game for his naturalistically rendered carvings of the human form.

His first formal art training began in 1943 when he enrolled in Luther College, and ended in 1951 when he concluded his education with a Master of Fine Arts from the Cranbrook Academy of Art. One of the few sculptures that survives from Hanson's college years is a small soapstone likeness of a plump woman spanking a child. This sculpture—executed while Hanson was a student at Macalester College in St. Paul in the mid 1940s—is probably one of the earliest that he produced in a medium other than wood, and it is noticeably more stylized and abstract than *Blue Boy* and the miniatures. *Woman Spanking Child* represents Hanson's attempts to reconcile his naturalistic sculptural inclinations with Abstract Expressionism, a struggle that would consume Hanson throughout the late 1940s and 1950s.

Transition and Influence

The work of the Pop artists of the 1960's- usually direct, literal renderings of commonplace objects, such as the soup cans of Andy Warhol- encouraged Hanson to yield to his naturalistic inclinations. His acute sense of contemporary life allowed him to comment succinctly about his subject matter. One of the best representations of this marriage is one of the first sculptures Hanson created after moving to South Florida in 1965. Titled *Abortion*, it was a two-foot-long mixed-media rendering of a dead pregnant

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woman sprawled on a table and covered with a sheet.

When *Abortion* was publicly displayed for the first time in Miami the following year, it provoked intense reactions—both favorable and unfavorable—and suddenly propelled Hanson into the spotlight of the South Florida art scene. Apparently he decided that *Abortion* would have had even more impact if he had made it larger, and soon thereafter he recreated it life size. Although he was disappointed with the larger version of *Abortion* and he later destroyed it, he would never again work on a small scale. By 1967 he had begun casting sculptures in molds created directly from the bodies of human models, which became his standard method of working for the rest of his career.

Hanson's lifelike sculptures of the human form, which he embellished with accessories such as hair, clothes and a variety of props, quickly attracted attention beyond South Florida. In 1969 the artist moved to Manhattan where the sheer humanity of the city allowed Hanson to explore more into his aesthetic of realism. During this period he begins strictly working with *bondo*, or polyester resin and fiberglass, creating *Housewife*, *Hard Hat* and *Tourists*. This move also broadened his work's exposure in the New York art world.

It was during his time in New York that Hanson realized that his intent as an artist was not merely to impress the viewer with the incredible authenticity of his sculpture. In the downcast, sober gazes of Hanson's archetypes of humanity, most of which were inspired by working-class subjects, one senses that he wanted to comment on the contemporary human condition, that he intended to reflect the sense of isolation, loneliness, and alienation that we experience in the modern world.

Mature Career

In 1973, Hanson and his family moved back to Florida wary of the hustle and bustle of New York life. This was their final move- to Davie County. He set up a studio in his home, many times working into the wee hours of the morning to ensure that his sculptures conveyed emotion and quiet introspection. His studio provided him the space and inspiration to create the rest of his life's work.

Among the many awards and accolades Hanson received before his death in January 1996, he was perhaps most proud of those that identified him as a Florida artist. In 1983, he was given the Ambassador of the Arts Award of

the State of Florida, and two years later he received the first annual "Florida Prize" of \$10,000 for his outstanding achievements in sculpture. In 1987, he was honored with a "Duane Hanson Day" proclamation in Broward County, and he was inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame in 1992. Today, it is the general consensus that Hanson was the most popular and significant artist ever to have come out of South Florida.



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Duane Hanson Biography for Students

"First of all, and above all, I'm a sculptor. My most important concern is to get all the forms to look right."

--Duane Hanson

Beginnings

Duane Hanson was born on January 17, 1925. He was always interested in sculpture. He grew up in a rural town in Minnesota called Parkers Prairie. The town had 700 people, one small library and only one art history book. When he was thirteen, he saw Thomas Gainsborough's famous portrait of *The Blue Boy* (c. 1770) for the first time. He carved his own version of this painting out of a soft piece of wood using his mother's butcher knife. He soon began to carve many things, and even his mother's old broomsticks became fair game for his natural-looking carvings of the human form.

Training

Duane's first formal art training began in 1943 when he enrolled in Luther College, and ended in 1951 when he concluded his education with a Master of Fine Arts from the Cranbrook Academy of Art. One of the few sculptures that survived from Hanson's college years is a small soapstone likeness of a plump woman spanking a child. This sculpture—executed while Hanson was a student at Macalester College in St. Paul in the mid 1940s—is probably one of the earliest that he produced in a medium other than wood. It is a very abstract image.

Sculptures

Duane Hanson was influenced by Pop artists including Andy Warhol. He was interested in contemporary life and all the exciting developments in art and society in the 1960's.

He created his first life-sized sculpture in the mid 1960's. Some critics really loved his work, and others disliked it. By 1967 he had begun casting sculptures in molds created directly from the bodies of human models, which became his standard method of working for the rest of his career.

Hanson's lifelike sculptures of the human form, which he embellished with accessories such as hair, clothes and a variety of props, quickly attracted attention beyond South Florida. In 1969 the artist moved to New York City. Here he found many people to inspire him to create more sculptures. It was also in New York that he learned to use *bondo*, or polyester resin and fiberglass, creating *Housewife*, *Hard Hat* and *Tourists*.

In New York Hanson realized that he wanted to do two things as an artist: impress the viewer with the incredible realism of his sculpture, and reflect the sense of loneliness that he experienced in the modern world.

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Awards

Among the many awards Hanson received before his death in January 1996, he was perhaps most proud of those that identified him as a Florida artist. In 1983, he was given the Ambassador of the Arts Award of the State of Florida, and two years later he received the first annual "Florida Prize" of \$10,000 for his outstanding achievements in sculpture. In 1987, he was honored with a "Duane Hanson Day" proclamation in Broward County, and he was inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame in 1992. Hanson was the most popular and significant artist ever to have come out of South Florida.

Death

In 1971, Duane Hanson was diagnosed with cancer. The polyester resin and fiberglass he worked with his entire life were very unhealthy art materials. He died in 1996. He was 70 years old.



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The Techniques and Processes of Duane Hanson

Duane Hanson's methods and procedures began with the real people who were models for his work. The models ranged from family, to friends, to colleagues and students from the local community college art department. Hanson chose his models according to the "look" he was trying to achieve. Age, gender, and body type all played a part in his selection. These models would become the form from which he would make a mold. The following describes the process, which was completed in an average of six months.

1. Hanson took Polaroid pictures of the model, either sitting or standing, to find a pose that looked relaxed and credible. Once the pose was selected, the casting process began.
2. Having shaved off most of his or her body hair, the model was then greased with petroleum jelly to ensure easy removal of the casting material, a fast-setting silicone rubber. This material, much like a very heavy cream, was applied directly to the model's skin and reinforced with a fast setting plaster of Paris and hemp fiber mixture. Each body part was completed separately; the legs, torso, arms, and head molds were needed for each figure.
3. After each mold dried, it was cut up the back, opened, and removed from the body. Sometimes the mold came away with a flaw. If there were too many defects, Hanson would recast the body part. Otherwise, he simply repaired the molds to his satisfaction.
4. When the molds were completed, Hanson poured the flesh-colored liquid polyester resin reinforced with fiberglass in to each mold. He released each part from its mold and used soldering irons to finish seams, correct imperfections, and adhere the body parts. In the assembly process, Hanson worked from the feet up. He assembled all the body parts, keeping the sculpture balanced throughout the process.
5. Hanson sometimes exchanged body parts from one sculpture to the other in order to achieve a specific result. His goal was to assemble a figure that looked unposed and natural.
6. Once assembled, Hanson reworked the sculpture's surface to correct imperfections and enhance the overall impression of authenticity. With his standing sculptures, he not only had to balance the figures, he had to make the sculptures appear genuine. It was an intuitive decision. The sculptures had to look right and. Above all, could not give the impression of being arranged.

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7. Painting the cast sculptures was entirely different from painting the figure on canvas. Because the figures were in the round and displayed with variable lighting, Hanson discovered that he had to exaggerate the light and shade, particularly around such expressive features as the eyes. He painted with his fingers, a brush, a rag, or whatever happened to be available. Early on he used both acrylics and oils; later he experimented with various media such as crayons to render imperfections in the skin, and nail polish over oil paint on the fingernails.

8. Next came the hair. For the sculptures made from hard polyester resin, Hanson bought wigs. The softer vinyl material allowed hairs to be poked through with a needle, integrating strands of gray, black, and yellow hair for a more realistic illusion. In his early sculptures, he painted the eyes. Later, he began using acrylic eyes, because they are durable and can withstand ultraviolet light. Hanson acquired the clothing and props for his sculptures in several ways. Sometimes these items were new, sometimes from a thrift shop. Some models actually gave him their old clothes and personal objects. The most important consideration of all was that all components of the sculpture look authentic, even if it meant aging the clothing with mud, bleach or paint.

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Duane Hanson • Timeline

• **January 17, 1925**

Duane Hanson was born in Alexandria, Minnesota.

• **1946**

Received his BA from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota.

• **1951**

Received his MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan in 1951.

• **1953 - 1960**

Hanson lived in Munich and Bremerhaven, Germany, working as an art teacher for the U.S. Army Dependent School System. It was in Germany that he began to experiment with synthetic media, in particular polyester resin and fiberglass - materials that would become his signature media.

• **1960**

Hanson moved back to America.

• **1962 - 1965**

Hanson was an art professor at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta. During this period he was commissioned to produce several large decorative sculptures for the exterior of the university building.

• **1965**

Hanson's work begins to express social protest and political agitation. He works with issues such as racial inequality, abortion and gangs. He is interested in forcing the audience to face challenging issues without the distancing inherent to television and newspaper reports.

• **1969**

Hanson moved to New York City. His sculptures were shown in solo exhibitions in New York and Germany. Because of their politically charged subject matter, several sculptures were banned from museum exhibitions and denounced by reactionary critics.

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- **1976 - 1978**

A major retrospective of Hanson's sculptures went on an extended museum tour throughout the United States.

- **1983**

Hanson was named Florida Ambassador of the Arts.

- **January 6, 1996**

Duane Hanson died in Florida.

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Essential Questions

“Here at last was something I deeply wanted to say about life around us today. But, more important, after years of uncomfortable ventures into abstract, nonobjective and conventional representative work ... I had embraced realism as my mode of expression.”

Would you describe Duane Hanson’s art as sculpture, or a mere likeness of reality?

“The subject matter I like best deals with the familiar lower and middle class American types of today.”

How does Hanson portray stereotypes?

“Pop Art certainly spurred me on, especially George Segal.”

How have sculptures through history affected Hanson’s images?

“I’m not duplicating life, I’m making a statement about human values.”

How do you react to Duane Hanson’s art?

“The kinds of things I dress (my sculptures) in are very important. Their clothes have to reflect their attitudes and tell a story – exactly.”

How does Duane Hanson use details to communicate an idea?

“...perhaps I am so close to my work that I don’t see the illusion. If there is one, it is a by-product for me. It is not my goal.”

What do you think Duane Hanson is trying to communicate through his work?



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Duane Hanson: Real Life 9/16/06 – 1/14/07

Duane Hanson Lessons • Resources

VOCABULARY:

realistic
superrealism
extreme realism
trompe l'oeil
photorealism
hyperrealistic
abstract
portraiture
mood
theme
social commentary
communication
bondo
polyester resin
cinquain
idealization
Venus of Willendorf

RELATED ARTISTS:

Auguste Rodin
Alexander Calder
Michelangelo
Pablo Picasso
Andy Warhol
Vincent Van Gogh
George Segal
Hans Holbein
Tilman Riemenschneider



Duane Hanson, *Queenie II*, 1988 © the artist's estate

WEB RESOURCES:

<http://www.arken.dk> Artmuseum Arken, Denmark website.
<http://www.artchive.com/1925/matisse.html> Archives of many famous artist's images.
<http://www.artlex.com/> Online dictionary of art terms.
www.artnet.com/artwork_images/934/145560t.jpg Archives of many famous artist's images.
<http://www.centrepompidou.fr> Pompidou Center, Paris, website.
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flash_\(comics\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flash_(comics)) Web resource about Flash Comics.
www.harpercollinschildrens.com Maurice Sendak reference.
<http://www.imdb.com/chart/top> Top movies website.
<http://img.timeinc.net/time/magazine/archive/covers/1965> Time magazine covers.
<http://www.metmuseum.org> Metropolitan Museum of Art website.
www.michenerartmuseum.org James A. Michener Art Museum website.
<http://www.moma.org/> Museum of Modern Art website.
<http://www.ncartmuseum.org> North Carolina Art Museum website.
<http://www.nga.gov/> National Gallery of Art website.
<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/> Nottingham, England, city museums website.
<http://www.robertsmithson.com/sculpture/2.htm> Robert Smithson's homepage.
www.sierraclub.org Sierra Club environmental group website.
<http://www.the-artists.org/> YBA (young British Artist) web reference.
www.uky.edu University of Kentucky.
<http://www.warhol.org/> Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA.

STANDARDS:

National Art Standards Content 1 – 6. PA Arts & Humanities Standards 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4., Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening Standards 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8. PA History Standards 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4.



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How Does Duane Hanson Make Us Feel?

Try these Museum activities to help put yourself in the shoes of Duane Hanson's subjects and sculptures.

FREEZING:

Find a place in the Duane Hanson exhibition or elsewhere in the Michener Art Museum where you can stand or sit for a while. Assume a pose. Freeze. How do people react to you? Can they tell you are real? How does it feel to be a human sculpture?

PERSONAL SPACE:

Did anyone ever come so close to you that you felt uncomfortable? Remember the experience, and describe it to a partner (parent, sibling, classmate or friend.) Then try it out. Stand very still, and have your partner come very close to you, approaching you from the front, the back and then from the sides. Exchange roles. How did it feel? Share your experiences.

STARING:

How long can you stare without feeling uncomfortable? Why is it so hard? What makes you uncomfortable? What do you think someone is thinking when he or she looks at you for a long time?

BECOME A PORTRAIT:

Look around the Museum for a portrait you really admire. Assume the pose of the person in the portrait, as if you were a Duane Hanson sculpture. Hold the pose for as long as you can. If you are with a person who has a camera, have them photograph you (no flash, please). When you look at the photograph, can you tell you are a human, or do you also look like a Duane Hanson sculpture?

SYMPATHY AND EMPATHY:

Sympathy means sharing feelings of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune. *Empathy* means understanding someone else's feelings. Duane Hanson felt both sympathy and empathy for the subjects he portrayed in his sculptures. What did he do as an artist to help us share these feelings? Why do you think he had these feelings about the people he portrayed? Are there other works of art in the Museum that also make us feel sympathy and empathy for the people depicted in the works of art?

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LOOK AT YOURSELF:

Which of the people portrayed in Duane Hanson's sculptures is most like you? Why? Which is most like your mom? Your dad? Your brother or sister? Your best friend? Your teacher? Your school principal? Your hero? If you HAD TO BE one of the people portrayed in these sculptures, who would you be? Why?

POSE:

What if there was another person as part of one of the Duane Hanson sculptures in this room? Assume a pose close to one of the sculptures (not too close). What position do you take? Who are you? What is your character? Why did you choose pose where you did?

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Duane Hanson Lessons

Visual Arts • Elementary School



CONTEMPORARY ISSUES:

Duane Hanson was inspired by his sculpture process as well as by social and political events of his lifetime. Is there a particular social or political issue that interests you? Create a mixed media collage that expresses your concern for this issue. Incorporate your collage into an advertisement that would communicate the importance of this issue to an audience. Display your ad on the walls of your school. Use them to generate interest in the social issue you believe in.

Duane Hanson's sculptures were so realistic they were called "hyperrealistic." Through his creations, he aimed to increase public awareness of social injustice. He felt extreme realism was necessary to fully convey his ideas. Create two works of art that communicate a social injustice you feel strongly about. Make one of the works very realistic, and make the other totally abstract. What do you do in both works of art to communicate your ideas? Do they both share your social and political views in a powerful way? Which style – realism or abstraction – do you feel most effectively tells the story?

SCULPTURE:

Create cast forms from your own body using Plastercraft or a similar art material. Combine the forms to create a completed sculpture. Mount them on a base. You may or may not want to paint them. How does your sculpture differ from the work of Duane Hanson? How is it similar? What emotions do the sculptures convey? What mood does your sculpture express?

The art material used by an artist drastically affects the appearance of the final work of art. Diane Hanson developed an extremely complex method of construction using resins, paints and even real human clothing and hair. August Rodin (<http://www.rodinmuseum.org/>) was known for casting his portraits in bronze. Michelangelo (<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/accademia/>) carved his figures out of marble. Alexander Calder (<http://www.nga.gov>) made his out of wire. Research sculpture materials that have been used throughout history. Research materials that are being used by sculptors today. Using any material, including found objects, create your personal version of a portrait sculpture. For an additional challenge, make it a self-portrait.

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SCULPTURE (CONT'D.):

Cast your own hand or foot in plaster. Press your hand or foot into an aluminum tray lined with a 2-inch layer of casting putty (available in a can in most hardware stores). When you lift up your hand, you will see incredible details of the impression. Mix plaster according to package directions and pour it into your mold. Let harden and remove. You will have an extremely realistic reproduction of your hand or foot cast in plaster.

PORTRAITURE:

Discuss the idea of portraiture and how it has evolved as an art form throughout history. Look at the variety of styles and methods artists have used to create portraits. Examine the motivation behind the creation of all the portraits you study. Create an original portrait in a medium of your choosing. Compare your style, methods and ideas to those of another artist in history and to a contemporary artist. Create a portrait exhibition including all the portraits created in your class. Take turns writing the text panels for each other's creations.

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Take turns posing alone or with friends to create Hanson-like sculptures. Photograph the poses. What do you need to do to look like Hanson sculptures and not "real" people? What ideas can you communicate through your photographs? Host an exhibition of your work.

DRAWING:

Using pencil, draw one of Duane Hanson's sculptures. Then, go to another gallery in the Museum (or, if you are doing this in the classroom, work from a book or internet image) and draw another portrait using a two-dimensional image for inspiration. Display your two drawings. How does your drawing experience change when drawing from two or three-dimensional images? Discuss your creative process with your classmates.

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Duane Hanson Lessons

Language Arts • Social Studies

Elementary School

DRESS UP:

Dress up in an outfit that is very different from what you typically wear. How does it feel? If these were your everyday clothes, what kind of a person would you be? How would your personality be different? How would you walk? Stand? Sit? Talk? Present yourself to the class – first, the real you, and then the dressed-up you.

Dress up and pose as a “sculpture” that conveys a social issue that you feel strongly about. Have your classmates guess what you are trying to communicate through your pose, your dress, your use of props, etc.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES:

Duane Hanson created many of his sculptures to raise awareness about social problems that existed in his lifetime. Some of these problems include violence, war, alcoholism, accidents, suicide, depression and loneliness. Choose a contemporary social problem that is of interest to you. How can you use art to communicate this theme? How can art improve this social problem? Find out about other artists who have used their art to communicate similar ideas.

Organize your friends, classmates or your school to support an organization that works toward a social problem reflected in Duane Hanson’s work that is still important today. For example, Heifer International (www.Heifer.org) helps address global poverty and SADD – Students Against Destructive Decisions - (www.sadd.org) encourages young people to stay sober. For ideas, look into *The Kid’s Guide to Service Projects* by Barbara A. Lewis and *One World, One Earth* by Merryl Hammond and Rob Collins. How will your service project affect your community?

Host a debate or discussion in the style of a TV talk show. Present both sides of the contemporary social problem you are most interested in for an audience. Discuss the outcome of the debate. What can you learn from researching your problem and presenting it to the class? Did you convince people to share your passion for the issue? Did you change anyone’s point of view about the issue?



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CONTEMPORARY ISSUES (cont'd.):

Artists have often used social issues as inspiration for their work. Vincent Van Gogh's *The Potato Eaters* (<http://www3.vangoghmuseum.nl>), Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* (<http://www.moma.org/>) and Andy Warhol's *Electric Chair* (<http://www.warhol.org/>) are good examples. Look at these three works of art. In addition, find art created by other artists throughout history that also reflects social themes. Compare the images, the artists, the techniques of all the artists and their works. Which artist do you feel most successfully recreates his or her theme? Which artist's work is the most inspiring to you? What specific events in history inspired these artists to create the images they created? What specific events in your lifetime would inspire you to create a work of art that is also a comment on society?

POETRY:

Choose a Duane Hanson sculpture that particularly inspires you. Write a modern *cinquain* that describes what you see and feel when looking at the sculpture. You may write about the sculpture itself or the person being represented in the sculpture.

[The modern *cinquain* is based on a word count of words of a certain type.

- Line 1 - one word (noun) that is a title or name of the subject or the sculpture
- Line 2 - two words (adjectives) describing the subject or the sculpture
- Line 3 - three words (verbs) describing an action related to the subject or the sculpture
- Line 4 - four words describing a feeling about the subject or the sculpture
- Line 5 - one word referring back to the name of the subject or sculpture]

Write a sensory poem about your favorite (or least favorite) Duane Hanson sculpture. What do you see, feel, hear, smell or taste when you look at his work? Write one descriptive line per sense. Organize them so they create a poem.

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Duane Hanson Lessons

Visual Arts • Middle School / High School



GRAPHIC ARTS:

Duane Hanson's earliest sculpture dealt with violent, controversial subjects including abortion, war, street derelicts, alcoholism, suicide, rape, murder and depression. He chose to convey these issues using "hyperrealistic" sculptures. How could you use the graphic arts – collage, printmaking or computer-aided design – to convey a similar message? Discuss the relationship between the graphic and sculptural depictions of these difficult themes. Which are more powerful? Which messages can reach a broader audience?

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES:

Duane Hanson's sculptures were so realistic that they are called "hyperrealistic." Through his creations, he aimed to increase public awareness of social injustice. He felt extreme realism was necessary to fully convey his ideas. Create two works of art that communicate a social injustice you feel strongly about. Make one of the works very realistic, and make the other totally abstract. What do you do in both works of art to communicate your ideas? Do they both share your social and political views in a powerful way? Which style – realism or abstraction – do you feel most effectively tells the story?

SCULPTURE:

Create cast forms from your own body using Plastercraft or a similar art material. Combine the forms to create a completed sculpture. Mount them on a base. You may or may not want to paint them. How does your sculpture differ from the work of Duane Hanson? How is it similar? What emotions do the sculptures convey? What mood does your sculpture express?

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(<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/accademia/>) carved his figures out of marble. Alexander Calder (<http://www.nga.gov>) made his out of wire.

Research sculpture materials that have been used throughout history.

Research materials that are being used by sculptors today. Using any material, including found objects, create your personal version of a portrait sculpture. For an additional challenge, make it a self-portrait. Using still

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photographs create a documentary or photographic essay about how the sculpture was created.

PORTRAITURE:

Discuss the idea of portraiture and how it has evolved as an art form throughout history. Look at the variety of styles and methods artists have used to create portraits. Examine the motivation behind the creation of all the portraits you study. Create an original portrait in a medium of your choosing. Compare your style, methods and ideas to those of another artist in history and to a contemporary artist. Create a portrait exhibition including all the portraits created in your class. Take turns writing the text panels for each other's creations.

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Take turns posing alone or with friends to create Hanson-like sculptures. Photograph the poses. What do you need to do to look like Hanson sculptures and not "real" people? What ideas can you communicate through your photographs? Host an exhibition of your work.

FILM:

Working in a group, make a film or other video production that conveys the power and passion of a contemporary issue that disturbs you. Watch *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962, not rated), *Cool Hand Luke* (1967, no rating), *Little Big Man* (1970, rated PG-13), *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975, not rated), *The Elephant Man* (1980, not rated), *The Color Purple* (1985, rated R), *Dead Man Walking* (1995, rated R), *Rabbit Proof Fence* (2002, rated PG), *In America* (2002, rated PG-13), *Walk on Water* (2004, rated R), *The Sea Inside* (2004, rated PG-13), *Crash* (2004, rated R), and *Traffic* (2005, rated R) for inspiration.

Duane Hanson: Real Life 9/16/06 – 1/14/07

Duane Hanson Lessons

Language Arts • Social Studies

Middle School / High School



INFLUENCES:

Duane Hanson's work was influenced a great deal by artists of the past, including Hans Holbein, Tilman Riemenschneider and Roman portrait sculpture. Research these three artists / styles. Study Hanson's portraits. Write an essay describing the evidence you see of these influences on Hanson's work. Include style, subject matter, theme and materials in your discussion.

IDEALIZATION:

Duane Hanson was interested in depicting urban life. He did not idealize his subject matter. Instead, he emphasized the often commonplace, even seedy, side of his subject matter. Create a work of art in which contemporary people are not idealized. Work in two or three dimensions.

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Spend a day in a local town or at your school. Create a series of photographs of people you see who may inspire Duane Hanson if he were alive today. Combine the photographs in a visual display – power point presentation, DVD, CD, book, poster, etc.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE ARTS:

Duane Hanson was interested in getting his subject matter from everyday life. He chose to work in portraiture. What other visual artists emphasize(d) every day life in their work? What about musicians? Filmmakers? Authors? Research parallels you can find in all these arts media.

TIMELINE:

Artists through time have created sculptures inspired by the human form. The earliest known human sculpture is the Venus of Willendorf, discovered in Austria in 1908. It is thought to date to 24,000 B.C. Recent human sculptures involve plastics, metals, and even animatronics. Create a timeline of human sculptures, from early history to contemporary times. Include visual images, dates and historical data to make your timeline as informative as possible. Present the information to your class. How have the sculptures changed over time? What influences in society and technology affect the work artists do when working with the figure? What do you predict will happen in the future?

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REALISM:

Duane Hanson's sculptures are extremely realistic. Find a two-dimensional artist whose portraits are equally realistic. Create a visual display comparing the works of the two artists. Include biographical, historical and artistic information in your project.

THEMES:

One of Duane Hanson's primary themes was to show sympathy and empathy in his works of art. Choose one Duane Hanson sculpture that you feel best exemplifies these qualities. What has Hanson done as an artist to make you "feel" for the person portrayed in the sculpture? Write about sympathy and empathy as they are evident in this work.

POINT OF VIEW:

Write a narrative from the point of view of one of the people portrayed in a Duane Hanson sculpture of your choosing.

LOOKING BACK:

Duane Hanson lived in the 20th century, and through his art portrayed an important segment of American culture. If you were going to go back in time to another important period in history and record it in sculptural form, what time period would you return to? What would your art look like? What if you traveled to another place? Witnessed another culture? Create a sculpture based on your interpretation of society in another period of history, culture or geographical location.

Emotions

Duane Hanson's sculptures convey a lot of emotion.

Below please find a list of emotions. Go into the Duane Hanson exhibition and match the emotions with the sculpture you think they most closely represent. There are some spaces at the bottom of the list for you to come up with your own emotions, too!

Happy

The sculpture is: _____

Depressed

The sculpture is: _____

Bored

The sculpture is: _____

Excited

The sculpture is: _____

Serious

The sculpture is: _____

Emotion: _____

The sculpture is: _____

Emotion: _____

The sculpture is: _____

Emotion: _____

The sculpture is: _____

Emotion: _____

The sculpture is: _____



ACTIVITY SHEET

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Museum Mystery

Can you find these items in Duane Hanson's sculptures?

Name that sculpture!

- 1. Sponge _____
- 2. Paint roller _____
- 3. Connect four _____
- 4. Salt shaker _____
- 5. Art work _____
- 6. Baseball hat _____
- 7. Pom-pom _____
- 8. Hawaiian shirt _____
- 9. Feather duster _____

Now, on the other side on this paper, draw one of the sculptures in the exhibit. Which one was your favorite? Why?

National Art Standards Content 3,5. PA Arts & Humanities Standards 9.3,9.4.



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Be a Journalist

Newspapers have a variety of reporters who write different types of articles. These articles give the newspaper balance, and guarantee that there is at least one article for every reader that will be of interest.

Choose a sculpture in the Duane Hanson: Real Life exhibition. Write an article or create an entry about it for a newspaper using one of the following formats:

- World News
- Local News
- Business Column
- Interview (Q & A)
- Sports Column
- Classified Ad
- Editorial
- Entertainment
- Obituary
- Crossword Puzzle
- Advice Column
- Comic Strip
- Political Cartoon
- Commercial Advertisement
- Other

As a final project, combine all the articles, news pieces and artwork to create an entire newspaper featuring the people represented in Duane Hanson's sculptures.

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Characteristics of Hanson's Art

Duane Hanson was a master of realistic sculpture. He also wanted to make some very serious statements about modern culture through his art. Below are some statements that may have been said by Hanson about his work. Look at the sculptures in the exhibition. Note the sculpture that you feel most accurately represents the statement, and cite evidence to support your opinion.

Statement: I want my sculpture to be realistic.

Sculpture: _____

Evidence: _____

Statement: I want to perfect meticulous detail in my sculpture.

Sculpture: _____

Evidence: _____

Statement: I want to depict a real life situation.

Sculpture: _____

Evidence: _____

Statement: I want to observe and realistically portray society.

Sculpture: _____

Evidence: _____

Statement: I want to represent "Ugly" American types.

Sculpture: _____

Evidence: _____

Statement: I want the people in my sculptures to stare vacantly into space.

Sculpture: _____

Evidence: _____

Statement: I want my art to comment on contemporary life (his lifetime, not ours).

Sculpture: _____

Evidence: _____

Statement: I want to express empathy and sympathy for my subject matter.

Sculpture: _____

Evidence: _____

Statement: I want my work to disturb the viewer.

Sculpture: _____

Evidence: _____



Duane Hanson: Real Life 9/19/06 - 1/14/07

Duane Hanson Vocabulary

Additive/ Subtractive Process: The layering process of color in which the artist adds or takes away color to reach a specific end.

Aesthetic: (also esthetic) Perceived beauty in both form and appearance.

Archetype: An original idea, symbol, pattern and/or design upon which all other similar things are patterned. Collectively, and over time, these ideas, symbols, patterns and designs become social norms to which all other ideas, symbols, patterns and designs are tested against.

Armature: A framework serves as support for a sculpture.

Avant-garde: Works that can be characterized as unorthodox and experimental.

Bondo: A mixture of polyester resin and fiberglass that produces a translucency like human skin.

Bronze: a) Any of various alloys of copper and tin in various proportions, sometimes with traces of other metals. b) Any of various alloys of copper, with or without tin, and antimony, phosphorus, or other components. *

Casting: To form a substance into a particular shape by pouring it into a mold.

Controposto: The twisting of the human figure on its axis, often used to portray inner torment or dynamic action.

Counterfeit: An imitation that is made with the intent to deceptively represent its content or origins. Most frequently describes forged money or documents, but can also describe clothing, pharmaceuticals, art, sculpture or any other manufactured item.

Fiberglass: A material consisting of extremely fine glass fibers, used in making various products, such as fabrics, insulators, and structural objects or parts. *

Movement: The suggestion or illusion of motion in a painting, sculpture, or design. *

In-the-round: Sculpture that requires no wall support and can be experienced from all sides.



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Intolerance: Refusal to be aware of and value differences in beliefs or opinions.

Introspective: To examine one's own sensory and perceptual experiences.

Mold: A hollow form that shapes a substance.

Found Materials: Art made from materials that are preexisting and not formally referred to as artistic mediums.

Ideal: The idea of something that is perfect; something that one hopes to attain.

Illusion: Perception of something objectively existing in such a way as to cause misinterpretation of its actual nature. *

Ordinary: Of no exceptional ability, degree, or quality. *

Perceive: To realize directly through any of the senses, especially sight or hearing.

Photorealism: An artistic movement and style of the late 1960's, and 70's that stressed such accurate renderings of subject matter that the images that were produced looked as if they were photographs. See also "Superrealism".

Plaster of Paris: A white powder that forms a paste when it is mixed with water and then hardens into a solid, used in making casts, molds, and sculpture. *

Pop art: A movement that first emerged in Great Britain at the end of the 1950s as a reaction and rejection of the seriousness of abstract expressionism. British and American pop artists employed a common imagery found in everyday life (such as comic strips, soup cans, and Coke bottles) to express formal abstract relationships.

Positive space/ Negative space: The juxtaposition of the subject of a piece of art (positive space) and its background (negative space).

Prejudices: Detriment or injury caused to a person by the preconceived, unfavorable conviction of another or others.

Reality: The quality of what one perceives to be actual or true.

Resin (polyester casting resin): Any of numerous physically similar polymerized synthetics or chemically modified natural resins including thermoplastic materials and thermosetting materials that are used with fillers, stabilizers, pigments, and other components to form plastics. *

Roman Joint: Is a technical term pertaining to a specific structural joint for sculpture making. In figurative sculpture, this joint allows the two parts to be separated and then rejoined at a precise location. **

Sculpture: Any three-dimensional form created as an artistic expression. Sculpture is primarily concerned with space: occupying it, relating to it, and influencing the perception of it.

Stereotypes: A preconceived (not based on research or experience) standardized, group-shared idea about the alleged essential nature of those making up a whole category of persons, the most significant of such group-shared ideas being without regard to individual differences among those making up the category and usually being emotionally charged.

Superrealism: Also known as Hyperrealism, this term is synonymous with Photorealism in painting, but is specific in use with sculpture. Superrealists used real people for casting and created true to life forms of the human body. John DeAndrea and Duane Hanson are excellent representations of this style.

* <http://dictionary.reference.com/>

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