Joslyn Art Museum

**Comprehensive Study Lesson Plan**

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**1st Quarter – Modern and Contemporary Art**

**Focus:** *Beyond Realism: The Works of Kent Bellows 1970-2005*

Special exhibition on view at Joslyn Art Museum, September 25, 2010 – January 16, 2011

**Objectives:**

- Discover various artists throughout history by studying contemporary artworks by Kent Bellows and identifying those artists' traits that Bellows accentuated.
- Learn the fundamental components and skills to create portraiture.
- Realize that a subject in a portrait may have a have a pre-established narrative, and understand how to develop its character description.

**Instructional Strategies that Strongly Affect Student Achievement – Robert J. Marzano**

- 01 Identifying similarities and differences
- 02 Summarizing and note taking
- 03 Reinforcing effort and providing recognition
- 04 Homework and practice
- 05 Nonlinguistic representations
- 06 Cooperative learning
- 07 Setting goals and providing feedback
- 08 Generating and testing hypotheses
- 09 Activating prior knowledge

**Resources:**

Check out the Teacher Support Materials online for additional resources.

**Suggested Materials:** Kent Bellows teaching poster, Bellows’ images, various sizes of white paper, pencils, digital camera, still life materials/objects, eggs, dry pigments, tempera paint, paint brushes.

**Vocabulary:** asymmetrical, figure, hyper-realism, luminosity, narrative, portraiture, realism, stack, still life, symmetrical, tempera, transpose.

**Procedure:**

- **Engage:** Three images, two clues, one question. Show students three Kent Bellows images. Have them write down two clues per image talking about who he is. Students should then write down one question they would want to ask Bellows.

- **Art Talk:** Bellows was inspired by various artists such as Thomas Eakins and Gustav Klimt. Sometimes he would include these artists' elements in his artworks [refer to Two Sisters]. Discuss possible reasons why he would do that. Refer to NAC teaching poster for additional information and sources.

- **History:** Who was Kent Bellows? Refer to the Gallery Talk with Kent's sisters Robin Griess and Deb Wessellmann at the October 2010 Third Thursdays for Teachers. Also refer to the Bibliography and Webology in Teacher Support Materials for additional information.

- **Aesthetics:** Create a visual scavenger hunt using Bellows' artworks. There could be numerous themes. Art history references, pop culture, random items, clues about Bellows. Bring your students to the Museum to do the hunt in person.
• **Production:** Beyond the Stick Figure. Show your students the basics of realism by creating a portrait. Refer to the lesson taught by Julie Daigle at the October 2010 Third Thursdays for Teachers.

• **Other:** Musical tie to Bellows' artworks. Play for students Beethoven's Symphony #5 Mvmt 1. Talk about the way he develops the four-note phrase, especially in the development section, where he repeats, transposes, inverts, stacks, sequences, stretches and shrinks the theme first to two notes, then to a back and forth exchange reducing the theme to single notes. How does this compare and/or contrast with selected Bellows' artworks?

• **Close:** One person, two traits, three objects. Have students think about one person or themselves. Decide on two traits that represent that person or themselves. Then gather three objects to represent each trait to create a still life.

**Extensions:**

• **Cultural Connections:** Bellows' technique is considered hyper-realism. Show students various Bellows' images. Have students discuss whether his images project real life. Keep in mind that many of his compositions were sets that he created. Is that real? Transition the discussion to compare and contrast reality tv versus reality. What is real?

• **Fine Arts:** Recreate a still life or create a background to use in a self-portrait. Show students the *Self-Portrait with Wine Glass (Gluttony)* to give them an idea of a very carefully staged still life or show them Target to give them an example of creating a background. Students may take a digital image of themselves or drawing classes may draw a self-portrait with either the set or background.

• **Language Arts:** Bellows was interested in film. Show students various Bellows' images or better yet, bring them to see the special exhibition. It has been said that his subjects (characters) in his artworks had a pre-established narrative-what is that narrative? Have them choose one image and develop a character description for the character. Take it one step further and write a script for the image.

• **Math:** Symmetrical vs. Asymmetrical. Asymmetry is prevalent in Bellows' work. Have students look at his images and use as an example of asymmetry. This lesson could connect with reflection and rotation - all geometry for 6th grade and higher. The symmetrical vs. asymmetrical can be for the lower grades.

• **Science:** Bellows was known to create his own egg tempera. In *Kitchen Counter II (Dirty Dishes)*, students will see his paint-making materials. Using egg yolks, dry pigments and water have students create egg tempera. Then have them study it by comparing it to tempera paint in a bottle. Does the egg tempera have a higher level of luminosity than the store bought tempera paint?

**Selected References:** Go online to Teacher Support Materials and review the Bibliography and Webology.