

Meet the Masters

October Program

Grade 4 First Impressions - Feelings of People in Art

Henri De Toulouse-Lautrec "At the Moulin Rouge"

Pierre Auguste Renoir "In the Meadow"

Artwork Overview:

Auguste Renoir "In the Meadow"

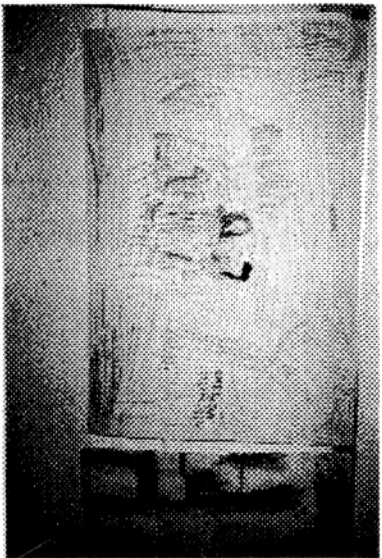
1. Does this painting seem dreamy?
2. What makes it seem that way?
3. Are the colors soft?
4. Does this artist paint in a manner that is crisp, or is it fuzzy?
5. What are the two girls in this painting doing?
6. How do you think the artist felt about the two girls?
7. How did he want us to feel?
8. Can you see a place in the painting where the artist painted a line of yellow and a line of blue close together so that when we look at it, it appears to be green?
9. Can you see other colors painted close together that appear to be violet or orange?
10. Would you like to take a walk through this meadow?
11. How would the ground feel under-foot?
12. What would the weather be like?
13. Would you hear any sounds? Smell any odors? What would they be?
14. Compare and contrast the responses to questions about "In the Meadow" with that of "At the Moulin Rouge".

Hands-on Art Activity: Pastel Drawing (Painting)

Preparation: If time permits students may model for the class in brief poses.

Materials: 12'x18' or larger colored construction paper (any color)
Oil pastels or oil crayon (Cray-pas)
Pencil

1. Look carefully at the two paintings "At the Moulin Rouge" and "In the Meadow", and observe the way each artist used color to express feelings between the people in the paintings. Which painting would you like to enter? Why? How do you think you would feel if you were a part of the scene?
2. Think about a place you like to be, and someone you would like to be with.
3. Using your pencil lightly sketch the people and place, maybe like Renoir's "In the Meadow", if you want to be outside or like Toulouse-Lautrec's "At the Moulin Rouge" if you want to be inside.
4. Oil pastels will appear rich and bright on colored paper, a dark color of paper will show more contrast than a light colored paper.
5. Try to fill in all the space of the paper with shapes and designs.



Clean-up.

Pierre Auguste Renior (1841-1919)

Pierre Auguste Renior was a French impressionist painter. He is famous for paintings of young girls and children, and intimate portraits of French middle-class life at during the 19th century. He painted lively groups in outdoor, colorful surroundings, and often used his friends as models. He frequently painted his wife and children.

Renior was born in Limoges, France. At the age of 13 he was hired as an apprentice at the porcelain factory. Later, he also painted window shades and fans in Paris. But it is for his great masterpieces of impressionist painting that he is remembered today. In Paris, Renior studied at the same studio as Claude Monet, Alfred Sisley, and Frederic Bazille. Together, these four friends traveled the French countryside, painting outdoor scenes in the style that came to be called "Impressionism".

In 1874 Renior and several other artists exhibited some of their works at a public auction. But the paintings were ridiculed and savaged by critics and the public. One early supporter of the Impressionists, the art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, remarked: "The public...saw these great artists but ignorant and presumptuous men trying to attract attention by their eccentricities."

Renior continued to paint in the impressionist style. Soon he sold a few of his works and began to acquire a reputation as a talented portrait artist. Unlike Monet and Pissarro, who painted mostly landscapes, Renior preferred to paint figures. He often used his friends as models, capturing them in moments of relaxed conversation or at festive occasions. He usually painted outdoors in natural light and used bright, pure colors. In his later years Renior was crippled by severe arthritis. But he tied paintbrushes to his hands and continued to paint until his death in 1919.

HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC (1864-1901)



Few artists were more independent than Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. He kept abreast of all that was new in art, yet he followed no trends. Today, his name is synonymous with brightly colored posters and paintings of the "Belle Epoque" — the exciting whirl of social life that brought the 19th century in Europe to a close. Surrounded by costumed dancers, socialites, and the steamy nightlife of Paris, Lautrec observed all with an absolutely steady and dispassionate eye.

Lautrec was born in Albi in 1864, to parents of French nobility. At age nine he moved with his family to Paris, where he began his studies and showed an early talent for drawing. At age 14, he broke both thighs and contracted a bone disease that stunted his growth and left him permanently crippled. As an adult, his physical deformity and his love of flashy, "dandified" clothes made him an oddly striking figure. Lautrec was especially drawn to Montmartre, an ill-famed Paris district lined with bars, cafes, dance-halls, and theaters — a pleasure-seeker's haven. He often used garish colors and grotesque exaggerations to convey the qualities of artifice and excitement that he saw in this atmosphere.

Line — not light or color — was the vehicle of Lautrec's artistic genius. He could capture, in a few quick strokes of the pen or brush, the movement and atmosphere of an entire scene. A good example is his poster, "Jane Avril at the Jardin de Paris," produced in 1893. This uncluttered, linear style showed the strong influence of Japanese art. He diluted his oil paint strongly with turpentine, giving a pure, bright sheen to his colors. These applied in broad, sweeping strokes, often allowing the buff color of his canvas or poster board to show through.

In later life, Lautrec's sociable personality changes. He drank to excess and was repeatedly hospitalized for delirium brought on by alcoholism. He died in 1901 of an illness related to his alcoholism.

About the painting

"AT THE MOULIN ROUGE"

Between 1890 and 1896, Lautrec painted about 30 pictures of the "Moulin Rouge." This famous music-hall housed a ballroom, a gallery, and elaborate gardens where customers could take donkey-rides or ponder a life-size model of an elephant. The Moulin Rouge was sought out by all social classes, by tourists, and by leaders of the underworld. A dazzling "re-opening" of this pleasure palace became the subject of the painting, "At the Moulin Rouge."

The subjects of "At the Moulin Rouge" are real people, all acquaintances of Lautrec. The artist himself appears as the short, bearded man in the background. Oddly, the centerpiece of the painting is the elaborate red-blonde chignon of the woman seated with her back to us.

"At the Moulin Rouge" illustrates Lautrec's uncanny mastery of composition. The bar itself forms an obvious diagonal line that is echoed by the diagonal row of men's top hats. These two lines are offset by the flaring backs of the chairs. The woman in the foreground, known as "Nelly C.," was added after the painting was finished. She is bathed in a greenish glare, which, as one critic noted, makes her "oddly reminiscent of a green and yellow Chinese lantern."