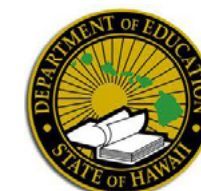


READ A WORK OF ART AS YOU WOULD READ A BOOK

Honolulu
Museum of Art



Teachers Teaching Teachers

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

AT HANAHAU'OLI SCHOOL

Endowed by the
Clarence T.C. Ching Foundation

Art is a powerful pathway into the Hawai'i Common Core

Observe

Look closely and quietly.

Describe

What do you see?

Interpret

What do you think this painting is about and what makes you say that?

Connect

What does this remind you of? Why? What more do you want to know? Why?

Learn more at
HawaiiPublicSchools.org



ON THE COVER:

Hubert Vos

American (1855–1935)
Kolomona: Hawaiian Troubadour (detail),
ca.1898

Oil on canvas
40 x 35 in.

The Artist:

Hubert Vos

BORN IN MAASTRICHT, the Netherlands, in 1855, Hubert Vos wanted to be an artist from the time he was a young boy. In 1893, Vos attended the Chicago World’s Fair and it was life-changing. Fascinated by the diversity of people he saw there, Vos traveled the world and painted many portraits of the people he met. Eventually he attained American citizenship. Vos met and married his second wife—Eleanor Kaikilani Coney Graham. She was a descendant of Kamehameha, born on Kaua’i in 1867, and a travel companion of Queen Lili’uokalani when she met Vos in New York. Vos went on to paint rulers and heads of state throughout Asia, including his most famous subject, the Dowager Empress of China. When he and his wife traveled to Hawai’i, Vos painted a number of works, including *Kolomona: Hawaiian Troubadour* and *Study of Hawaiian Fish*, both in the permanent collection of the Honolulu Museum of Art.

The Artwork:

Kolomona: Hawaiian Troubadour

A troubadour is a singer or one who writes verse to music – a type of poet. Vos’s portrait captures Kolomona with his instrument and an engaging look on his face. The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* newspaper described the painting shortly after it was completed as “a strong piece of work, brimful of life and action.” Kolomona wears the distinctive red shirt of the po’ola, or professional stevedore, who unloads cargo from ships. He also wears a wide-brimmed straw hat and large kerchief around his neck, indicative of a livelihood spent under the sun. Vos’s portrait is more than just a visual snapshot of the person at that time; it captures Kolomona’s presence.

Portraiture dates back to ancient Greece and Rome (800 BC) with artists’ depictions of individuals appearing on coins and in sculpture. Vos painted in a style called realism. In this case he used layers of oil paint to create vibrant, jewel-like tones. These techniques helped him paint everyday life in realistic detail. What does Vos’s portrait tell us about Kolomona?

Observe, Describe, Interpret, Connect (ODIC)

Four simple steps to engage with art:

The key to this looking strategy is to prompt students to describe and report as much as they see, with evidence from within the artwork.

You may be surprised what they come up with given the opportunity to just look.

The hardest part is allowing time to look on their own—resist the urge to share what you see or what you think they should see.

OBSERVE: Start by taking a minute or two to do some silent, close looking.

DESCRIBE: Have students describe what they see, using evidence from within the artwork.

What is the first thing you notice? Where do you see that? Think about the elements of portraiture (facial expressions, eyes, gesture, clothing, setting and objects) as you describe what you see. Use quantity, size, and color words to better describe the elements

INTERPRET: Have students interpret what they see by thinking about the time, place, mood, intention, and content of the painting.

CONNECT: Have students connect the artwork to their own lives to make it relevant.

Does this remind you of something from your own life? Can you relate to what’s going on in this picture? What more do you want to know? If you could ask the artist one question about the image, what would it be?

A Brief History of the ‘Ukulele

When many people think about Hawai’i they imagine warm beaches, sunshine and the beautiful sounds of an ‘ukulele. It wasn’t always that way. The ‘ukulele was first introduced to Hawai’i by Portuguese immigrants in 1879. The instrument we now call an ‘ukulele is a combination of several instruments brought to Hawai’i from Europe by sailors and plantation workers. When Hawaiians first saw the ‘ukulele being played they marveled at how the musician’s fingers jumped like fleas all over the fingerboard. This is how the ‘ukulele got its name, which in Hawaiian translates to “jumping flea.” By the late 1800s the popularity of the ‘ukulele had spread wildly. Hawai’i’s King David Kalākaua became a champion of the instrument, including it in performances at royal gatherings and learning to play himself. (1120 Lexile)

Portraits

Portraits can be used as visual texts filled with symbolism to make the study of people, characters, and biographies more meaningful. Much like photography, portraits can be used to capture and preserve a moment in time.

Six elements of portraiture:

- Facial expression: *What mood or feeling does the person’s face express?*
- Eyes: *Where are the person’s eyes looking?*
- Gesture: *What is the action or the pose of the body?*
- Clothing: *What is the person wearing?*
- Setting: *Where is the person? What is the time period? What is the time of day?*
- Objects: *What else is in the portrait?*

(Steps from Focus 5, Inc. www.artsintegrationconsulting.com)

Honolulu Museum of Art

The museum offers:

- Free guided school tours
 - Teacher resources
 - Lending Collection
 - Outreach programs
 - Art School classes
- To learn more, go to honolulumuseum.org and click on **Learn**

Connecting to Standards

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Hawaii Common Core ELA-Literacy Standard (CCRA.R7)

Understand and apply art materials, techniques and process in the creation of works of art and understand how the visual arts communicate ideas, feelings and experiences.

Hawaii Content and Performance Standards III
Fine Arts-Standard I: Visual Arts

After examining and discussing the portrait using the Observe, Describe, Interpret, Connect (ODIC) process, read about the history of the ‘ukulele and its significance to Hawai’i. You may choose to read the short excerpt in the center, or find something on your own. (resources available at http://honolulumuseum.org/5151-teacher_resources). You may ask students to read the history independently or read it aloud, depending on their grade level.

Ask students to respond to the following:

- Considering when (1898) and where (Hawai’i) the portrait was done, what do you think the artist was trying to communicate? What purpose does this portrait serve? Be sure to include evidence from the portrait and the text in your answer.
- Examine some of Vos’s other paintings from the late 1800s done in Hawai’i (*Study of Hawaiian Fish*, 1898; *Iokepa, Hawaiian Fisher Boy*, 1898). What do you think Vos may have been trying to capture or communicate about Hawai’i through *Kolomona* and his other works?

Visit honolulumuseum.org, click on Learn in the menu and go to Teacher Resources.

