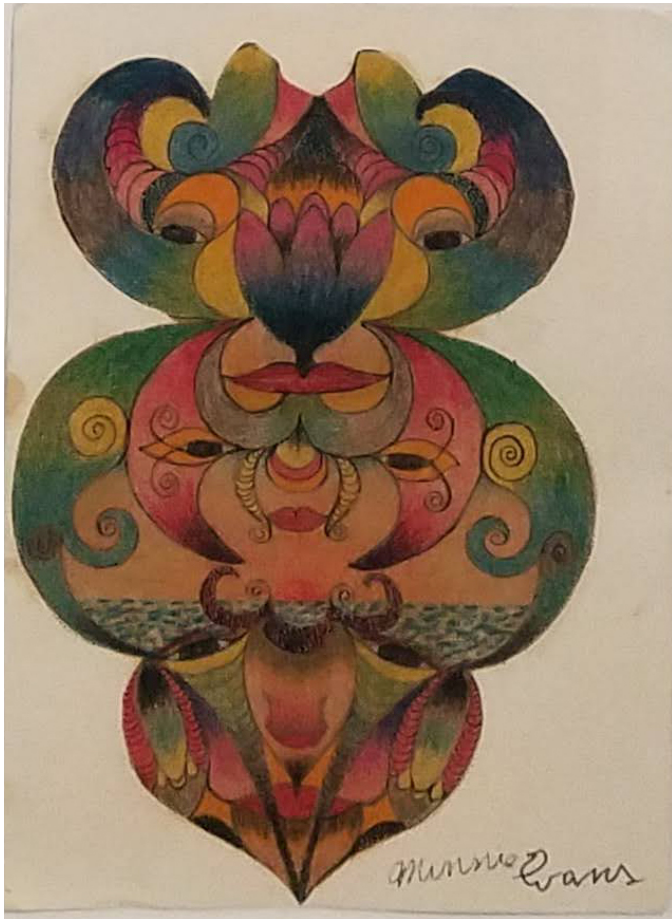




## OGDEN MUSEUM ONLINE LESSONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

### UNTITLED | MINNIE EVANS



MINNIE EVANS, UNTITLED, 1965, MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER, 12 X 8.75"

### ABOUT THE ART

This intimate and imaginative piece inspires the beauty of an exterior garden morphing with the gaze of several curious human faces. Decorative patterns and arabesques are loosely mimicked on either side creating a symmetrical balance of colors and shapes. The careful drafting of the overall shaped is further enhanced by subtle value changes in color.

Born in 1892, Minnie Evans spent most of her life in or near Wilmington, North Carolina. In 1916, Evans began working for a wealthy industrialist, Pembroke Jones, as a domestic in the family home. Her husband was also employed by Jones, and the Evans family lived on the Jones family hunting estate. After Pembroke Jones died in 1919, his widow, Sadie, married Henry Walters and moved to Arlie Estate. Evans continued her employment with the new family. After Walters died, Sadie decided to turn Arlie Estate into gardens. The Arlie Gardens would become one of the most celebrated gardens in the South. After Sadie Jones died, the new owners of the Arlie Gardens hired Evans as gatekeeper for the property. She held the position for the rest of her life, collecting admissions from visitors.

## ART ACTIVITY

### OVERVIEW

Students will create an abstracted self-portrait using symmetry and inspirations from nature that reflects decorative patterns as well as an understanding of value changes in color. This is a great exercise to teach students about the use of their left and right brain hemispheres. Creating the image in one side of the paper calls upon the left hemisphere to orient and reproduce known shapes and objects. Mimicking the drawing as symmetrically as possible on the second side of the paper makes students use their right brain to copy without thinking about representation.



## **SUPPLIES**

Printer or drawing paper

Pencil

Eraser

Crayons, markers or colored pencils

## **PROCESS**

1. Ask students to take a walk around their house or their yard. Notice any plants, flowers, or animals that they see outside. What are the colors and shapes of these plants? How do these living forms overlap or connect with other plants or objects around them?
2. Have students prepare their work area and gather their supplies; paper, pencil, eraser, colored pencils or crayons.
3. Students begin by lightly creasing or folding their paper long ways (hotdog). Then using a pencil students draw an abstract design that begins at the top of one side of the page and ends at the bottom. Remind them to press lightly with their pencil (whisper line vs. shouting line).
4. Once they have created a basic pattern outline from top to bottom on one side, have them carefully recreate the exact same lines on the other side to the best of their ability. Remind them to press lightly with their pencil and be patient. This is the most challenging part of the project.
5. Encourage students to add more detail on either side, keeping the sides as symmetrical as possible.
6. Lastly students color in the interior spaces created by their drawing. Remind them of value change in color. In kid speak these days an example of value change is called 'hombre'. Make sure they include at least four areas in their coloring that moves from dark to light or light to dark in color. Encourage students to try overlapping colors and apply various levels of pressure to each color to draw out the possible range of darks and lights each hue holds.
7. Have students create a title for their piece and sign and date the artwork on the back.





## **KEY TERMS**

**Abstraction** is a non-realistic style of art that uses colors, lines and shapes to express emotions and ideas.

**Organic** shapes are defined as shapes that are irregular or asymmetrical in appearance and tend to have a curvy flow to them. Nearly all shapes found in nature are organic in appearance. Examples are leaves, flowers etc.

**Pattern** is an underlying structure that organizes surfaces or structures in a consistent, regular manner. Pattern can be described as a repeating unit of shape or form, but it can also be thought of as the "skeleton" that organizes the parts of a composition.

**Symmetry** is when the elements of a painting or drawing balance each other out. This could be the objects themselves, but it can also relate to colors and other compositional techniques.

**Asymmetry** In a symmetrical work of art, if an imaginary line is drawn through the center of the work, both sides are exactly the same and balanced in that way. In an asymmetrical work, the two sides are not identical and differ from one another, but the elements are arranged so that there is a sense of balance in the piece.

**Value** is defined as the relative lightness or darkness of a color. It is an important tool for the designer/artist, in the way that it defines form and creates spatial illusions. Contrast of value separates objects in space, while gradation of value suggests mass and contour of a contiguous surface.

***SEE MINNIE EVAN'S **UNTITLED** IN WHAT MUSIC IS WITHIN:  
BLACK ABSTRACTION FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION AT  
THE OGDEN MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN ART THROUGH JULY 5.***

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