



OGDEN MUSEUM
OF SOUTHERN ART



Robert Reed, *San Romano, Monticello, Brick II*, 1982, Aqua-Tec on canvas, 84x72".

**OGDEN MUSEUM
ONLINE
LESSONS FOR THE
CLASSROOM**

**SAN ROMANO,
MONTICELLO, BRICK II I
ROBERT REED
GRADES 2-8**

ABOUT THE ART

This vibrant and chaotic painting is one from a series of paintings inspired by the Renaissance artist Paolo Ucello's work *The Battle of San Romano* (c. 1438 – 40). Reed saw this painting in the National Gallery of London in 1979 and was deeply moved by "The activity, the clash, the pomp, and circumstance... the organized confusion was something that I identify with very much," he said in 1986. "I began to develop a vocabulary which became the vocabulary through which I speak now, but it came directly from those paintings."¹

Robert Reed was born in 1938, in Charlottesville, VA. Reed was a painter and printmaker known for his geometric abstraction. Reed was a student of the Bauhaus artist Josef Albers from whom Reed developed his penchant for vibrant colors. In the summer of 1960, Robert Reed attended the art division of the Yale Summer

¹ ContemporaryAnd. (n.d). Retrieved April 30th, 2020. Robert Reed: San Romano Series. <https://www.contemporaryand.com/exhibition/robert-reed-san-romano-series/>



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School of Music and Art, a program he later directed from 1970 to 1974. He was appointed to the faculty of Yale University School of Art's Department of Painting and Printmaking in 1969 and became the first tenured African American professor in the history of the Yale University School of Art, teaching both undergraduate and graduate programs for nearly fifty years until his death in 2014. Reed was included in a large painting exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1973, and also in the inaugural exhibit at the new Whitney Museum of American Art in 2015.



Paolo Uccello, The Battle of San Romano, c.1483 - 40, oil on canvas.



ART ACTIVITY

OVERVIEW

Students will use masking tape and paint to create a two-dimensional, geometric abstract painting inspired by Robert Reed's, *San Romano, Monticello, Brick*. Students will compare and contrast Reed's painting to that of the Renaissance painting *The Battle of San Romano*, by Paolo Ucello. Students will use these two works as they develop their own layered, dynamic and colorful composition.

SUPPLIES

- Thick multimedia or water color paper
- Masking tape, (wider than 1 inch works best)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Paint: watercolor, acrylic, tempera or markers
- Paint palette or plate, paintbrushes, cup for water, paper towels
- Hair dryer if you have one around the house

PROCESS

1. Ask students to look at the image of Ucello's painting above and compare it to Reed's painting. Do they notice any similarities in diagonal lines, action or repetition in the two paintings? What are some differences between these two works of art?
2. Ask students to prepare their work area.
3. Have students begin with their piece of paper and the roll/s of masking tape. Apply strips of the masking tape from one side of the paper to the other. Rub the tape down lightly, pressing harder on the edges of the tape. Repeat this process many times in varying directions. Encourage students to use scissors to create thinner and thicker lines. Introduce the concept of *RESIST*, that wherever a piece of tape is applied, the paint will resist, that area will stay white.
4. Once students have covered their paper with many bisecting tape lines ask them to fill in the un-taped areas with color. Paint is advised but students can use anything including markers, colored, pencils or even crayons.
5. When all of these areas are complete, let the paint dry completely. Students can use a hair dryer to speed up the process, but make sure to keep the dryer at least 8" away from the paper surface. If the dryer is placed too close to the paper it will make the tape harder to remove later.
6. Have the students carefully remove the tape. This becomes more difficult with the more layers of tape you add, so encourage them to add no more than 10 different lines/layers of tape. If the tape peels up the paper, instruct the student to lay the tape back down and try removing it from the opposite direction so that the paper does not tear.
7. Once all of the tape is removed, ask students to look at the work and turn it in all four directions. Have them choose their favorite orientation, and then use a pencil to make an arrow on the back pointing up to the top of their work.



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8. Repeat the process again, reapplying tape in new areas, filling in with paint, drying, and un-taping. The paper can only handle one or two rounds of this process, but a canvas can do many more.
9. When students are done adding layers of tape and colors make sure all of the tape is removed.
10. Have students create a title for their piece and sign and date the artwork on the back.

KEY TERMS

Painting is an artwork made on a surface such as canvas or wood with oil or acrylic pigment; usually “2D”.

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

Geometric Abstraction is a form of abstract art based on the use of geometric forms sometimes, though not always, placed in a flat space and combined into non-objective (non-representational) compositions.

Line is a basic Element of Art where marks moving in a space between two points gives the viewer the ability to visualize the stroke movement, direction and intention based on how the line is oriented.

Rhythm is a Principle of Art that uses pattern and repetition to create a feeling of movement and flow in a work of art.

Movement is a Principle of Art used to create the impression of action in a work of art. Movement can apply to a single component in a composition or to the whole composition at once. Visual movement is dependent on the other elements and principles of art.



SEE ROBERT REED'S *SAN ROMANO, MONTICELLO, BRICK*, 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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