

MIRÓ

THE EXPERIENCE OF SEEING

FEB 13 - MAY 26, 2014

**EDUCATOR
RESOURCE GUIDE**

SAM SEATTLE
ART
MUSEUM

MIRÓ: THE EXPERIENCE OF SEEING

EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

These materials are a resource for educators visiting the exhibition *Miró: The Experience of Seeing* on a guided or self-guided visit. Educators are encouraged to develop open-ended discussions that ask for a wide range of opinions and expressions from students. The projects in this guide connect to core curriculum subject areas and can be adapted for a variety of grade levels to meet Washington State and Common Core Standards of Learning as well as 21st Century Learning Skills. Lessons incorporate a range of subject areas like science, math, art, social studies, and geography. Related images for each project are included at the end of this guide. For assistance modifying these projects to fit your classroom, please email SAM's Ann P. Wyckoff Teacher Resource Center (TRC) at trc@seattleartmuseum.org. Additional exhibition information can be found at seattleartmuseum.org/miro. For more information about bringing a group to SAM please visit seattleartmuseum.org/educators or email schooltours@seattleartmuseum.org.

FOCUS ON 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

21st Century Learning Skills are a set of frameworks designed to prepare students for college and careers. Drawn together by over 250 researchers and 60 institutions worldwide, these overarching skills provide tools to help cultivate innovative and adaptive learning. At SAM we focus on the 4 Cs of Learning and Innovation:

1. **Collaboration**¹: The ability to learn and work respectfully and effectively with others, valuing diverse individuals and perspectives.
2. **Communication**: The ability to communicate thoughts and ideas effectively across a diverse range of forms, contexts and media.
3. **Creativity**: The ability to create, discover or explore new ideas and imagine alternative solutions.
4. **Critical Thinking**: The ability to reason using evidence, think abstractly, ask analytical questions and problem solve.

Find out more at p21.org.

ELEMENTS OF ART

Composing the basic building blocks of art, the elements of art (**line, shape, color, space, form, value, and texture**) are tools of the trade for artists. The activities in this guide, using works from *Miró: The Experience of Seeing* and SAM's permanent collection, utilize many of these tools. This guide focuses on the following elements of art:

- **Line**: Defined as a mark between two points. Lines can be horizontal, jagged, vertical or diagonal, straight or curved, thick or thin.
- **Shape**: An object defined by edges that separates one object from another and is either **geometric** or **organic**.
- **Texture**: A surface that stimulates or simulates feelings of roughness, smoothness, and a variety of other sensations depending on the object's physical characteristics.

¹ Definitions for words in bold are found in the glossary at the end of this guide.

- **Color:** A shade generated through the reflection of light on a surface. Primary colors are defined as red, yellow, and blue and cannot be made by mixing other colors; secondary colors are defined as green, orange and purple and are a result of mixing a combination of two primary colors.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EXHIBITION

For me, the essential things are the artistic and poetic occurrences, the associations of forms and idea: a form gives me an idea, this idea evokes another form, and everything culminates in figures, animals and things I had no way of foreseeing in advance. —Joan Miró, 1974²

Miró's sculptures and paintings convey a tension between the human figure and the celestial figure. Breaking down human forms into the essence of line and shape, Miró creates a unique visual universe and language that designates him as one of the top artistic innovators of modern art during the twentieth century.

Son of a meticulous **goldsmith** and grandson of a **blacksmith**, Miró kept a fastidiously tidy studio during his sixty-year career as an artist.³ Contradicting his quiet, orderly character, his works display a rich, expressive imagination that playfully explores line, shape, color, and texture in the context of landscapes, figures, and found object sculptures.

A contemporary and friend to artists like Pablo Picasso and Alexander Calder, Miró's work, despite a whimsical, childlike nature, can at times reflect the political turmoil of post-World War II and the subsequently repressive cultural restrictions put in place by the **Franco** regime after the Spanish Civil War. After the war ended in 1939, Miró returned from Paris to Spain to continue his artistic explorations.

Consistently expanding his tool box of techniques, his early career placed him in the heart of the Parisian Avant-garde and surrealist movements, but his later work involved a clearer dialogue between painting and sculpture. Miró moved to a new studio in Son Abrines, Mallorca, in 1956. An opportunity to rethink his work, his late period shows a deeper investigation of a personal artistic language. Bringing together the largest West Coast exhibition of his work to date, *Miró: The Experience of Seeing* displays over 50 of his late career paintings and sculptures made between 1963 and 1981.

² Miró quoted in interview with Yvon Taillandier, 1974 in M. Rowell, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Boston, 1986, p. 284.

³ Jacques Dupin, *Miro* (Flammarion, 2012), 11.

PROJECT UNITS

UNIT ONE: COLOR AND NATURE: FOCUS ON COLLABORATION

UNIT CONCEPTS

COLLABORATION: The ability to learn and work respectfully and effectively with others, valuing diverse individuals and perspectives.

COLOR: A shade generated through the reflection of light on a surface. Primary colors are defined as red, yellow, and blue and cannot be made by mixing other colors; secondary colors are defined as green, orange and purple and are a result of mixing a combination of two primary colors.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What are some of your favorite colors? Why? How do your favorite colors make you feel? What are some colors that you do not like? Why? How do the colors you do not like make you feel?
- How does a bright color bring attention to something found within a work of art?
- In what ways do colors found in nature inspire cultures when they are creating a work of art?
- What are some ways that people collaborate in their daily life? What are some ways that people collaborate when creating works of art?
- What are some ways that you collaborate in the classroom, at home or outside of school?
- What are some benefits to collaboration? What are some challenges to collaboration?

BACKGROUND

Nature can provide inspiration when creating works of art. Stimulating color combinations abound in the cities, jungles, deserts, and other geographic regions of the world. Colors can symbolize nature and natural objects along with conveying a sense of meaning, as seen in the following works of art. In these works, color has the power to express mood, give meaning, and draw emphasis to a particular area or aspect within a work of art. Based on an artist's color choice, an entirely different perspective on a similar subject, such as a woman and a bird, is possible. Through direct partnership on a work of art or through ideas shared in conversation, artists collaborate in a variety of ways that influence the direction a work of art may take.

Known for a limited, but intense palette inspired by nature, Miró typically defines forms in his painted and printed work through the intersection of color and shape. More subtle and similar to some of his **monochromatic** backgrounds used in painting and printmaking, bold color takes a back seat to the natural flavors found in his bronze sculpture colorations. Miró uses accenting **patinas** and the natural element of aging to pigment *Woman and Bird*. Reimagining reality, a common **motif** throughout his career, Miró uses a found plate, furnace door, and cylinder to transform these ordinary objects into a woman's head, torso, and legs. Sometimes, artists need help to make their work and must collaborate with an assistant artist. For over twenty years, ceramic artist **Joan Gardy Artigas** was Miró's assistant and helped to create large scale tile murals by Miró. Artigas, a fellow Catalan, helped create the Miró wall for the Wilhelm Hack Museum in Ludwigshafen, Germany. Designed by Miró, this wall is comprised of 7200 tiles made by Artigas and demonstrates how much an artist can rely on the collaborative process to complete a work of art.

In contrast, color abounds and defines a coat, skirt, bird, skin, and hair in the lifelike hard-paste German porcelain *Woman Holding a Bird*. Colors for enamel decoration on porcelain are derived from nature in the form of metallic oxides—purple from manganese, lead and antimony for yellow, green from copper, and blue from cobalt. The formulas for enamel colors were closely guarded secrets held by the early European porcelain manufactories of the eighteenth century. Part of a series representing the five senses, this figurine embodies sound emulated through the song of a bird. Again, collaboration between the designer and manufacturer is essential to the completion of this work of art.

Taking a more subtle approach and known for his delicate line work along with his smooth, milk-white backgrounds, in *Girl with Bird* Fujita Tsuguji shows how color can shape a viewer's emotional response to an image. Inspired by the color and inferred innocence of a delicate bird found in nature, the girl is in a similarly bright yellow possibly emphasizing her bond with the bird and nature. Working in Paris and friends with Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse and Amedeo Modigliani, Tsuguji lived in France during the same period as Miró and shared similar friends and even applied French oil techniques to Japanese-style paintings.⁴ Directly and indirectly, in possibly a more understated way, his time spent in France influenced the direction of his work and the work of other artists through conversation and friendship.

Collaboration happens in various ways within a work of art or a group of artists. Whether done intentionally or as part of a set of universal themes, artists can use similar subject matter, but add their personal touch to create a unique work of art despite similar subjects. As seen in this section, artists collaborate directly and indirectly through friendship, manufacturing processes, exposure to other artist's work or as an artist assistant. In addition, drawing from and collaborating with nature, artists reflect the observed world, subject matter, color, line, texture, and shape within their works of art.

ACTIVITY

Works of art collaborate directly and indirectly with each other and nature and are influenced by color, line, shape, texture and subject matter found in nature. Through conversation and viewing each other's works of art, artists collaborate to explore similar artistic processes and themes. Using the **exquisite corpse** method, students will collaborate to create a new animal that draws from nature and their imagination. The exquisite corpse drawing process originated among artists in the **Surrealist** communities, of which Miró was a part of, throughout Europe. This process is not only applicable to drawings, but may also apply to writing. Originating somewhere between 1918 and 1920, the Surrealists introduced it as a playful writing process which soon transformed into a tool used in drawing and collage to stimulate new collaborative imagery and ideas.

Materials:

9" x 12" Bristol Board Fadeless or Construction Paper Pencils
Water Based Oil or Wax Pastels Markers

Step 1: Begin by discussing the similarities and differences in the coloring of *Woman and Bird*, *Woman Holding a Bird*, and *Girl with Bird*.

- What do you see in these images (i.e. a woman, a bird, clothing, etc.)?
- What are some similar and different colors within each work of art?
- How does color identify elements within the works?

Step 2: After your discussion as a class, have students create a list, using a variety of sources depicting animal images found in the Pacific Northwest. While making the list, have the students take special note of the colors found in each animal. For instance, the students may observe two birds that are two different colors. Have the students record the colors of several of the same animal species.

Step 3: Once the students have made their lists, have them create an exquisite corpse drawing of an animal. They can create a whole menagerie of new and invented animals. Take into consideration the color choice. How does nature use color to communicate meaning?

Step 4: Create groups of four students each. Have students fold the 9" x 12" or 12" x 18" sheet of white paper into four equal parts leaving the paper folded. Next, using pencil, have the students draw their own head with their lines extending down into the first half inch of the next section. Please have students write their name on the back of each section. Have students outline their drawn section with marker and fill with color. Please give students about 10 minutes total for each section.

⁴ Fujita Tsuguji, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/221563/Fujita-Tsuguji>.

Step 5: Once the first section is drawn, have the students fold back the head panel and pass the drawing to their neighbor on the right. Next, have students draw the torso, then legs, and finally feet making sure to extend the lines slightly into the next panel and folding each previous section so that the next student cannot see the completed sections. Their work should be finished by the time it returns to the student who started the drawing.

Step 4: Using pencil and a 9" x 12" piece of white paper, have students compose an image based on their exquisite corpse drawings. To add color, they may choose from a variety of materials such as, colored construction paper to use as a collage element, water-based oil and wax pastels, or markers.

Step 6: Once the students finish rendering and coloring the animals, have them write a paragraph that explains what the new animal is, their habitat, main food source, their character, strengths and weaknesses, and which animal characteristic is most representative of their personality. When the work is finished, have each student give a brief written or verbal description of the person noting specifics such as clothing, posture, demeanor...etc. For older students, go beyond a visual description and have them define what each panel of the portrait is saying about the person individually and as a whole.

**Related Washington State and National Learning Standards:
Washington State Standards:**

Arts: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1

Communication: 1.1, 1.2

Geography: 3.2

Science: 1.1

Common Core National Standards:

Anchor Standards for Reading English Language:
Craft & Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening:
Comprehension and Collaboration

Anchor Standards for History/Social Studies
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Anchor Standards for Writing: Text Types and Purposes

UNIT TWO: TEXTURE AND MEANING: FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION

UNIT CONCEPTS:

COMMUNICATION: The ability to communicate thoughts and ideas effectively across a diverse range of forms, contexts and media.

TEXTURE: A surface that stimulates or simulates feelings of roughness, smoothness, and a variety of other sensations depending on the object's physical characteristics.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Why do you think people use texture in works of art?
- How can textures in works of art communicate a meaning or idea?
- What are the differences between visual and physical texture?
- How does texture communicate an emotion in a work of art? What emotions do you feel when looking at a rough vs. a smooth texture?
- In what ways do works of art communicate meaning? How can that meaning change between different viewers or contexts?

BACKGROUND

Miró found meaning through simplifying and reducing everyday objects and figures into line and shape. He did not pursue sculpture in full force until 1946, although he began incorporating elements of texture in his previous collage and works on paper as early as 1928.⁵ Two-dimensional images can communicate the illusion of texture for the viewer; three-dimensional works are similar and use physical and tactile elements in addition to the visual to communicate meaning, but these traits are not always mutually exclusive.

Assembled from found objects which contradict the rich metals and fine clothing typically associated with a royal class, *The Warrior King* by Miró suggests a figure posing similarly to a mighty king with sword at the ready. Mont-roig and his studio in Cala Major, which he lived in from 1956 until his death in 1983, play an important role throughout Miró's late-career sculptural works. Starting in 1911, Miró began spending summers at his parents newly purchased farmhouse in the rolling coastal hills of Mont-roig, 80 miles south of their home in Barcelona. According to Miró, "When [he's] living in the country [Mont-roig], [he] never thinks about painting anymore. It's sculpture that interests [him]."⁶ His goal is to transform the found objects until their original form and use are unrecognizable and become pure sculpture communicated through texture and composition.

Miró's king echoes in form, but not in the level of detail, the *Plaque: Oba (King) and attendants*. Central in this relief sculpture and in the daily activity of his people, is the **Oba**, king of the **Benin** culture in **West Africa** from over 500 years ago. Ornate regalia convey a sense of opulence found at this time, the height of the kingdom's wealth, carved in the shallow relief bronze casting. While Miró may be stating his possible disdain for kings or trying to humble them through simple materials and course textures, *Plaque: Oba (King) and attendants* displays a sense of power and pride. Notice the prominent sword and staff with smooth textures, often associated with finely crafted uniforms and honed armament. Both sculptures use the bronze medium casting process and texture, but communicate two different meanings and stories.

Textures provide clues in images and objects that communicate visual and physical meaning to the intended audience. Used to intimidate and protect, swirling, spiraling tusk imagery adorns the front of an Asmat war shield. Cultures in Papua New Guinea know how fierce a wild boar is when confronted. No less fierceness comes from the warrior wielding this large carved shield. Raised designs stand out on the carved wooden surface. Stained with natural pigments, such as burned and powdered mussel shells, clays, and crushed charcoal, nails from found driftwood can also adorn the shield's front.

⁵ Joan Miró, quoted in Tomás Llorens, *Miró: Earth*, (Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2008), 153.

⁶ *Ibid*, 153.

Through found object **assemblage**, sculptural processes and textural mark making, works of art can communicate meaning and stories using line, shape, and texture. In essence, works of art are two fold in purpose; they both convey and stimulate diverse communication practices within many cultures throughout the world and beyond.

ACTIVITY:

Expressing communication through writing, verbalizing, conversing and sketching about works of art provides students with valuable tools that can be applied to a variety of learning opportunities throughout life and career. Texture communicates meaning through visual and physical techniques within a work of art. Like many of the artists covered in this section, students will have a chance to use texture and various modes of reflective and observational communication skills to create and talk about observed objects and their own works of art.

Materials:

9" x 12" Bristol Board
Collage Materials

Resourced Texture Material
Markers

Magazines

Step 1: Discuss how texture plays a role in conveying information and meaning within a work of art. Using the following prompts, use several modes of communication to answer the following questions.

- What is texture? Can you name some textures in your immediate environment?
- Can you describe how they might feel if you touched them?
- How does texture communicate meaning within a work of art?

Step 2: Divide the students into groups giving each group a bag with a textural object inside (i.e. rock, crumpled paper, bottle cap, leaf, etc.). Number each bag at each table. Have the students pass the bag around reaching inside. Once the student touches the texture, have them describe it in their groups using the following forms of reflective communication:

- Written Description
- Verbal Description
- Sketching

Step 3: Next, switch object bags with another table. Repeat this until all groups work with all of the object bags. You may also shorten this and have each group work with only one object.

Step 4: Once the students finish their texture observations, reveal the objects so they can see how close they are to accurately representing the evidence. Have students compare and contrast the different modes of communication they used to investigate these objects.

Activity Extension:

Create a found object landscape.

Step 1: Discuss how Miró's work repurposes, reimagines, and reinvents ordinary objects to create sculptures that represent people, places, objects, and animals.

Step 2: First, establish the setting of the landscape, (i.e. urban, rural, classroom, or imaginary).

Step 3: As a class, create a list of what might be in a landscape. Further, break this down into a descriptive list speaking to color, line, and texture. Does this place or the elements in it communicate any specific or significant meaning? Similar to a diorama, have them create a landscape backdrop for their sculptures using construction paper or poster board.

Step 4: In pairs, have the students create their own three-dimensional found object sculptures of people, places, objects, and animals. These sculptures will be simplistic and modeled after Miró's forms. Students should source images from the internet, magazines, and books to use as guides and assemble their own found objects (ask them pay special attention to composition, color choice, and texture). Scale is another choice and is at the discretion of the teacher depending on comfort level and skill. Place these sculptures in the class landscape.

Step 5: Once the students finish their class found object landscape, have them use, in their groups, each form of reflective communication listed above.

**Related Washington State and National Learning Standards:
Washington State Standards:**

Arts: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1

Communication: 1.1, 1.2

Social Studies: 3.2, 5.2

Common Core National Standards:

Anchor Standards for Reading English Language:
Craft & Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening:
Comprehension and Collaboration

Anchor Standards for Writing: Text Types and Purposes

UNIT THREE: LINE AND LANDSCAPE: FOCUS ON CREATIVITY

UNIT CONCEPTS:

CREATIVITY: The ability to create, discover or explore new ideas and imagine alternative solutions.

LINE: Defined as a mark between two points. Lines can be horizontal, jagged, vertical or diagonal, straight or curved, thick or thin.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How would you define a line? How many different types of lines can you imagine or see in your immediate environment?
- What is a landscape? How do artists represent landscapes in their work?
- Describe a familiar landscape. What types of flora, fauna, and/or architectural features exist in your landscape?
- How can line define a landscape visually?
- In what ways do you think a person's immediate environment can inspire creativity?
- How do you think creativity play into an artist's decision-making process when creating a work of art?

BACKGROUND

From gender to geography, creativity comes from many internal and external influences experienced in life. Returning repeatedly to the countryside for long periods throughout his career, Miró began using landscape as a catalyst for creation to stimulate his creativity (see previous section for more information about Mont-roig).

Mont-roig, its blue water and sky, sharp white bluffs accented with red soil and green scrub brush, laid a lifelong foundation for his visual vocabulary. *Landscape*, by Joan Miró, painted 63 years after his first stay in Mont-roig, uses the earth's **contour lines**, found in the mountains and ploughed fields, as creative inspiration to define and direct the viewer's eyes to areas throughout the work.

Traveling to rural areas can be a form of creative stimulation that many artists experience. *Mount Rainier, Bay of Tacoma–Puget Sound*, by Sanford Robinson Gifford shares some similar line work with Miró. Gifford traveled to the Pacific Northwest in the summer of 1864. Some months after returning to his studio in New York City, he painted from memory a view of *Mount Rainier, Bay of Tacoma–Puget Sound*. Gifford, awestruck by Mount Rainier's majestic peaks, impressive size, and distinctive profile visible on a clear August day, uses delicate pencil work to suggest the contours of the mountain.

Other artists move below the earth to find creative motivation for line. Digging deep underground, *Anooralya (Wild Yam Dreaming)* by Emily Kam Ngwarray, depicts the intricate tendrils of the yam found throughout the area of her homeland Utopia station in Australia. Influenced by their role as guardians of local resources, Australian Aboriginal women paint their bodies and canvases with ceremonial lines inspired by their immediate environment.

An important component for Miró and other artists, line is one foundation of image making. Used to represent imagery and ideas realistically or abstractly, line can be sparse or complex when recording nature accurately or reinterpreting it creatively in an **abstract** approach.

ACTIVITY:

Miró uses line to creatively reimagine landscapes, people, animals and objects in unique ways. Using a variety of materials, students will create landscapes inspired by the works of Miró.

Materials:

9" x 12" Bristol Board (Thick multimedia paper)	Watercolors	Acrylic Paint
Water Soluble Oil or Wax Pastels	Crayons	Markers

Step 1: In small groups, students will make a landscape using only contour lines based on those seen in Miró's work. Ask them to focus on how to represent realistic objects, people, and animals using line in a creative and imaginative manner. In Miró's work, for example, the outline of a circle can describe a head or torso and a simple line or rectangle can suggest an arm or leg. Have students focus on the minimal information needed to convey an object or person.

Step 2: Gathering images of landscapes, objects, people, and animals from books, online, and other sources, have students either trace or draw these images. Ask students to focus on the interior and exterior contour lines.

Step 3: Once students assemble their images, have them compose a landscape using only line. Similar to Miró's work, students will divide the shapes within their landscape into multiple areas reducing the shapes to their basic forms using straight and curved lines. Have students create a color wash for the background using water colors making sure to cover the entire sheet of 9" x 12" Bristol board.

Step 4: After the composition is complete, have the students share their work with the class stating their initial inspirations and how they took creative liberty to change or augment the line work.

Related Washington State and National Learning Standards:

Washington State Standards:

Arts: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1

Communication: 1.1

Social Studies: 3.3

Common Core National Standards:

Anchor Standards for Reading English Language:
Craft & Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening:
Comprehension and Collaboration

Anchor Standards for History/Social Studies
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

UNIT FOUR: SHAPE AND SYMBOLISM: FOCUS ON CRITICAL THINKING

UNIT CONCEPTS:

CRITICAL THINKING: The ability to reason using evidence, think abstractly, ask analytical questions and problem solve.

SHAPE: An object defined by edges that separates one object from another and is either geometric or organic.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What shapes and symbols can you find in your classroom, at home, or on your way to or from school? What are some examples of **geometric** and **organic** shapes?
- Why do you think a culture develops symbols? How can symbols share meaning and understanding?
- How can works of art allow us to think critically about ceremonies, daily practices, politics, and histories of different cultures?

BACKGROUND

Filled with animals, people, places, and the environment, Miró's early paintings hold a wealth of information to encourage critical thinking. Miró reimagines his world, creating complex systems of **biomorphic** and abstract shapes filled with symbolism that construct an invented universe.⁷ At the base of his visual representations lies a set of shapes and symbols given new life as daydream dialogues reflecting, influencing and challenging reality.

Giving equal importance to bug, bird, and person, Miró depicts bodies represented and broken down into their most basic shapes. Connected through line, Miró allows shapes within his work to change and become something other than their original state. Capturing the pure essence of objects, people, and places, but without the qualities of realism, he finds himself "seized with a panic like that of a hiker who finds himself on paths never explored."⁸ Exploration of image through shape is strikingly evident in *Woman, Bird and Star (Homage to Picasso)* by Miró. Beyond using some similar themes, Miró and Picasso shared a visual language and at one point lived in the same Catalan region in Spain. Introduced through their mothers, both spent time in Paris influencing each other's work directly and indirectly. In *Woman, Bird and Star (Homage to Picasso)*, every aspect uses critical thinking skills to distill the image down to its elemental qualities while still suggesting the subject. Looking closely, one can see the outline of a woman, bird and star, but, like a good poem, the imagination needs to fill in the rest.

Shapes can help tell stories through symbolism. Possessing supernatural powers to alter things using his hands and through song, Dukwbut (duck-we-buth), the Wolf Chief, hovers above the night sky as a moon in *Song for the Moon* by Shaun Peterson. Asking the viewer to think critically about the moon's role within the Coast Salish world along with using traditional Coast Salish **form line design** shapes, Peterson tells the story of the Wolf Chief who resides on earth to look after the Puyallup people. He uses song to communicate the activities of the people to the absent moon on its return.

When telling stories through symbolism, shape takes many forms both simple and complex. In *Bull Necklace's* construction, both shape and color help infuse meaning, along with stimulating critical thinking through story, in the intricately assembled bead work. Color placement is very important to the construction of these works made by women for specific people in their community. Each colored shape holds a symbolic key to comment on their relationships: red means danger, white means milk, and blue means sky. Representing the universe, most of their jewelry, including the *Bull Necklace*, is circular in shape.

Whether abstractly representing the human and animal form, used as a story telling component or a visual representation of elements within a culture's environment, shape and symbolism help

⁷ Marko Daniel and Matthew Gale, *Joan Miró: The Ladder of Escape*, (Thames & Hudson, 2012), 50.

⁸ *Ibid*, 51.

communicate visually the many aspects of our collective human condition as symbol and decoration within many cultures. Stimulating critical thinking, artists use images to communicate many different stories and ideas.

ACTIVITY:

Each of the artists in this unit uses shape, symbolism and critical thinking to communicate through image and story. Critical thinking plays a decisive role in determining what shapes will convey most effectively the intended story and image. In this activity, students will design a symbol that communicates something found in their room or school.

Materials:

9" x 12" Bristol Board Fadeless or Construction Paper Acrylic Paint
Collage Materials Markers

Step 1: First, as a class, discuss the use of symbols in works of art found in the images of this section.

Step 2: To create connections to meaning and the process of how cultures utilize shape to make symbols, discuss how transportation and directional symbols use shape and symbolism to concisely convey meaning. Using the American Institute for Graphic Arts' passenger and pedestrian symbols at www.aiga.org/symbol-signs/, draw one of the symbols on the board and ask students to identify its function. Use the following questions to begin the discussion:

- What do you think the drawing on the board represents?
- What other symbols can you think of?
- What is the purpose of a symbol?
- What do you think are some traits of a good symbol (i.e., positive, easy to identify, clear and clean)?

Step 3: After the class discussion, have the students break into small groups to design a symbol to communicate something specific in their classroom. Some examples could be symbols for a computer, trash, book, wipe board, eraser, desk, etc.

Step 4: Have each group use the following questions:

- What does your symbol represent?
- Why would your symbol be useful to help facilitate communication in the classroom?
- What colors and shapes would symbolize your symbol?
- What are the essential shapes needed to communicate your symbol to the classroom?

Step 5: Use pictures of an actual object or place and reduce them to simple lines and shapes to complete a rough sketch and then decide on a color palette.

Step 7: Once the sketch is complete, have each group complete a final rendering on 9x12" Bristol paper using marker, paint, fadeless or construction paper or collage materials depending on the direction and look the students are trying to attain. The symbol should be at least 4" or more in size.

Step 8: When finished, have each group write a short paragraph describing their symbol and place this on the back of the symbol. Next, place all of the symbols where each group believes they should live within the room or school and then let the other groups guess the name of the symbols.

**Related Washington State and National Learning Standards:
Washington State Standards:**

Arts: 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 4.2, 4.4

Communication: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1

Common Core National Standards:

Anchor Standards for Reading English Language:
Craft & Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening:
Comprehension and Collaboration

Anchor Standards for Writing: Text Types and Purposes

RESOURCES

More information can be found in SAM's online collection at seattleartmuseum.org/emuseum. Unless noted otherwise, resources listed below are available for loan from the Ann P. Wyckoff Teacher Resource Center (TRC) at the Seattle Asian Art Museum.

Exhibition information can be found at: seattleartmuseum.org/miro

Books for Students:

Art Is . . . the Elements of Art and Principles of Design for Children by Kubit, Glenna. Glenview, IL: Crystal Productions, 2013. N 7440 K83

Artist in Profile: Surrealists by Bolton, Linda. Chicago: Heinemann Library, 2003. N 6494 S8 B583

Landscape and the Environment by Bingham, Jane. Chicago: Raintree, 2006. N 8213 B56

The Little Story of Joan Miró by Duran i Riu, Fina and Bayés, Pilarín. Barcelona, Spain : Editorial Mediterrània, 1997. N 7113 M5 D87

Miró: Earth and Sky by Blanquet, Claire-Hélène and Miró, Joan. New York: Chelsea House, 1994. N 7113 M5 B3

Sculpture: Behind the Scenes by Pekarik, Andrew. New York, NY: Hyperion Books for Children, 1992. NB 1143 P45

Resources for Educators:

Miró: The Experience of Seeing: Late Works, 1963-1981 by Aparicio, Carmen Fernandez, et. al. Princeton: Yale University Press, 2014. On order.

African Art and Culture by Bingham, Jane. Chicago: Raintree, 2004. NX 587 B56

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Joan Miró: Selected Writings and Interviews by Miró, Joan and Rowell, Margit. New York : Da Capo Press, 1992. N 7113 M5 M5 1992

Pacific Northwest Landscape: A Painted History by Harmon, Kitty and Raban, Jonathan. Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2001. ND 230 W3 H27

Paris: The Luminous Years: Toward the Making of the Modern by Tomei, Concetta, et. al. PBS Distribution, 2010. *DVD format. ca. 120 min.* VIDEO N 6850 A3

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Online Resources:

Inside Scoop: Joan Miró by NGAkids. www.nga.gov/kids/scoop-miro.pdf

Joan Miró by the Art Story. www.theartstory.org/artist-miro-joan.htm

Joan Miró by MoMA Learning. www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/artists#m

GLOSSARY

Abstract: Not representing any one particular object or form. Can have varying interpretations and does not necessarily reflect reality.

Assemblage: The act of bringing together two- and three-dimensional found objects to create a work of art.

Benin: A country in West Africa, whose official language is French, with the majority of people living in the southern portion of the country. Their current government is a representative democratic government which means that the President of Benin is the head of state and government.

Biomorphic: In works of art, images or objects that resemble organic forms found in nature.

Blacksmith: Someone who uses iron or steel to make objects through hammering, bending, and shaping.

Catalonia: Bordering France and including the coastal regions along the Mediterranean Sea, an independent region of Spain that has its own language, religious and cultural practices along with a diverse climate and geography. After recovering their cultural and political autonomy from the Franco regime oppression in 1978, became Spain's most dynamic economic region. Miró and Picasso are from this region.

Ceremony: A formal event performed on a special occasion.

Collaboration: The ability to learn and work respectfully and effectively with others, valuing diverse individuals and perspectives.

Color: A shade generated through the reflection of light on a surface. Primary colors are defined as red, yellow, and blue and cannot be made by mixing other colors; secondary colors are defined as green, orange, and purple and are a result of mixing a combination of two primary colors.

Communication The ability to communicate thoughts and ideas effectively across a diverse range of forms, contexts and media.

Contour Lines: In art, the outline of an object or person.

Cosmology: The use and study of the universe for purposes of science, ceremony, storytelling, or navigation and helps answer questions about how the world came to exist and perpetuates.

Creation Story (Myth): A narrative used by many cultures throughout history to tell how the world began. These stories vary and are particular to and defined by each culture.

Creativity: The ability to create, discover or explore new ideas and imagine alternative solutions.

Critical Thinking: The ability to reason using evidence, think abstractly, ask analytical questions and problem solve.

Culture: That which defines a group of people based on learned behavior, languages, values, customs, technologies, and art; the sum of attitudes, customs and beliefs that distinguish one group of people from another.

Exquisite Corpse: A collection of images where each person contributes a portion to the drawing based on what is done in the previous participant's portion of the unseen section. Once all of the participants contribute to the work, the full image is revealed.

Form: Created by the combination of shapes that give the appearance of volume and mass in the world, along with showing height, width and depth in space. Some examples are cubes, pyramids, spheres, or cylinders.

Form Line Design: Particular to Northwest Coast Native Americans, this style of design incorporates ovoids, u-shape and s-shaped forms to create flat, graphic abstract representations of animals.

Franco Regime: The period in Spanish history from 1936 to 1975 led by Francisco Franco, which suppressed individual cultural expressions and practices in favor of a unified Spain.

Geometric Shapes: Comprised of linear edges that can be counted.

Goldsmith: Someone versed in the fabrication and properties of working and making objects from gold.

Identity: A distinguishing characteristic or personality of an individual that makes a person unique.

Joan Gardy Artigas: Ceramic artist and assistant to Joan Miró for twenty years. He helped Miró and other artists create large scale murals comprised of ceramic tiles.

Line: Defined as a mark between two points. Lines can be horizontal, jagged, vertical or diagonal, straight or curved, thick or thin.

Monochromatic: Various shades of one color using black, white or umber to make lighter or darker.

Motif: In a work of art, an idea, subject or image that is repeated and developed.

Oba: Meaning “King” in the Yoruba language found in the West Africa republics of Nigeria, Benin and Togo.

Organic Shapes: Shapes that have natural edges that are a combination of curved and angular lines.

Patinas: A chemical or natural process to color metal.

Space: The area within, around and between that defines that object. In art, space can be achieved through creating a three-dimensional illusion on a two-dimensional surface. Space can also be considered the positive and negative areas within, around or between an object.

Shape: An object defined by edges that separates one object from another and is either **geometric** or **organic**.

Surrealist: Best known for creating works of art and writings that emulate a dreamlike state or stream of consciousness beginning in the 1920s. Often featuring the element of surprise, artists painted photo realistic works configured in nonsensical compositions that involved objects from everyday life.

Symbol: An object, or act that represents an idea or action.

Texture: A surface that stimulates or simulates feelings of roughness, smoothness and a variety of other sensations depending on the object’s physical characteristics.

Value: The use of light and dark, shadow and highlight, in an artwork. Some people also refer to the lightness and darkness in an artwork as tints (light) and shades (dark).

West Africa: A semi-arid region found in the western most regions of Africa, it is a crossroads to many different groups of people.

STANDARDS

WASHINGTON STATE STANDARDS

The Arts

1. The student understands and applies art knowledge and skills.

To meet this standard the student will:

- 1.1 Understand art concepts and vocabulary.
- 1.2 Develop arts skills and techniques.
- 1.3 Understand and apply arts styles from various artist, cultures and times.

2. The student demonstrates thinking skills using artistic processes.

To meet this standard the student will:

- 2.1 Apply a creative process in the arts.
- 2.3 Apply a responding process to arts presentation.

3. The student communicates through the arts.

To meet this standard the student will:

- 3.1 Use the art to express and present ideas and feelings.

4. The student makes connections within and across the arts to other disciplines, life, cultures and work.

To meet this standard the student will:

- 4.2 Demonstrate and analyze the connections among the arts and other content areas.
- 4.3 Understand how the art impact and reflect personal choices throughout life.
- 4.4 Understands how the arts influence and reflect culture/civilization, place and time.

Communication

1. The student uses listening and observation skills and strategies to gain understanding.

To meet this standard, the student will:

- 1.1 Use listening and observation skills and strategies to focus attention and interpret information.
- 1.2 Understand, analyze, synthesize or evaluate information from a variety of sources.

Math

- 2.2F Create and state a rule for patterns that can be generated by addition and extend the pattern.

Social Studies

5. SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS The student understands and applies reasoning skills to conduct research, deliberate, form and evaluate positions through the process of reading, writing and communicating.

- 5.3 Pre-writes to generate ideas and plan writing.

Social Studies: Geography

3. The student observes and analyzes the interactions between people, the environment and culture.

To meet these standards the student will:

- 3.3 Examine cultural characteristics, transmission, diffusion and interaction.

Social Studies: History

4.3: Understands that there are multiple perspectives and interpretations of historical events.

To meet these standards the student will:

4.3.1 Analyzes and interprets historical materials from a variety of perspectives in Ancient history.

Science:

2: Inquiry

To meet this standard, the student will:

6-8 INQC: Investigate: Collecting, analyzing and displaying data are essential aspects of all investigation

Writing

1. The student understands and uses a writing process.

To meet this standard, the student will:

1.1 Prewrites to generate ideas and plan writing.

2. The student writes in a variety of forms for different audiences and purposes.

To meet this standard, the student will:

2.1 Adapts writing for a variety of audiences.

4. The student analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of written work.

To meet this standard, the student will:

4.1 Analyzes and evaluates others' and own writing.

COMMON CORE NATIONAL STANDARDS

English Language Arts Standards

Anchor Standards for Reading English Language

Craft and Structure

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

1. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Anchor Standards for Writing

Production and Distribution of Writing

6. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach.

Text Types and Purposes

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization and analysis of content.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively and orally.

Anchor Standards for History/Social Studies

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.



UNIT ONE: COLOR AND NATURE: FOCUS ON COLLABORATION

Image from *Miró: The Experience of Seeing*

Woman and Bird, 1970, Joan Miró, Spanish, 1893-1983, lost-wax casting, patinated bronze, 48 1/16 x 18 7/8 x 5 1/8 in., Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, © Successió Miró /Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York /ADAGP, Paris 2014.



UNIT ONE: COLOR AND NATURE: FOCUS ON COLLABORATION

Image from the Seattle Art Museum's Collection

Woman holding a bird, ca. 1751-57, German, Berlin manufactory, Hard paste porcelain, Seattle Art Museum, Gift of Martha and Henry Isaacson, 76.130.



UNIT ONE: COLOR AND NATURE: FOCUS ON COLLABORATION

Image from the Seattle Art Museum's Collection

Girl with Bird, Fujita Tsuguji, Japanese, 1886 - 1968, Woodblock (restrike), Seattle Art Museum, Gift of Frances and Thomas Blakemore, 98.53.121, © 2014 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.



UNIT TWO: TEXTURE AND MEANING: FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION

Image from *Miró: The Experience of Seeing*

The Warrior King, 1981, Joan Miró, Spanish, 1893-1983, lost-wax casting, patinated bronze, 48 5/8 x 24 3/16 x 15 9/16 in., Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, © Successió Miró /Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York /ADAGP, Paris 2014.



UNIT TWO: TEXTURE AND MEANING: FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION

Image from the Seattle Art Museum's Collection

Plaque: Oba and attendants, ca. 1550–1650, Nigerian, Benin, Cast bronze (cire perdue), 18 1/2 x 15 1/2 x 4 in. (47 x 39.4 x 10.2 cm), Seattle Art Museum, Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company, 81.17.496.



UNIT TWO: TEXTURE AND MEANING: FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION
Image from the Seattle Art Museum's Collection

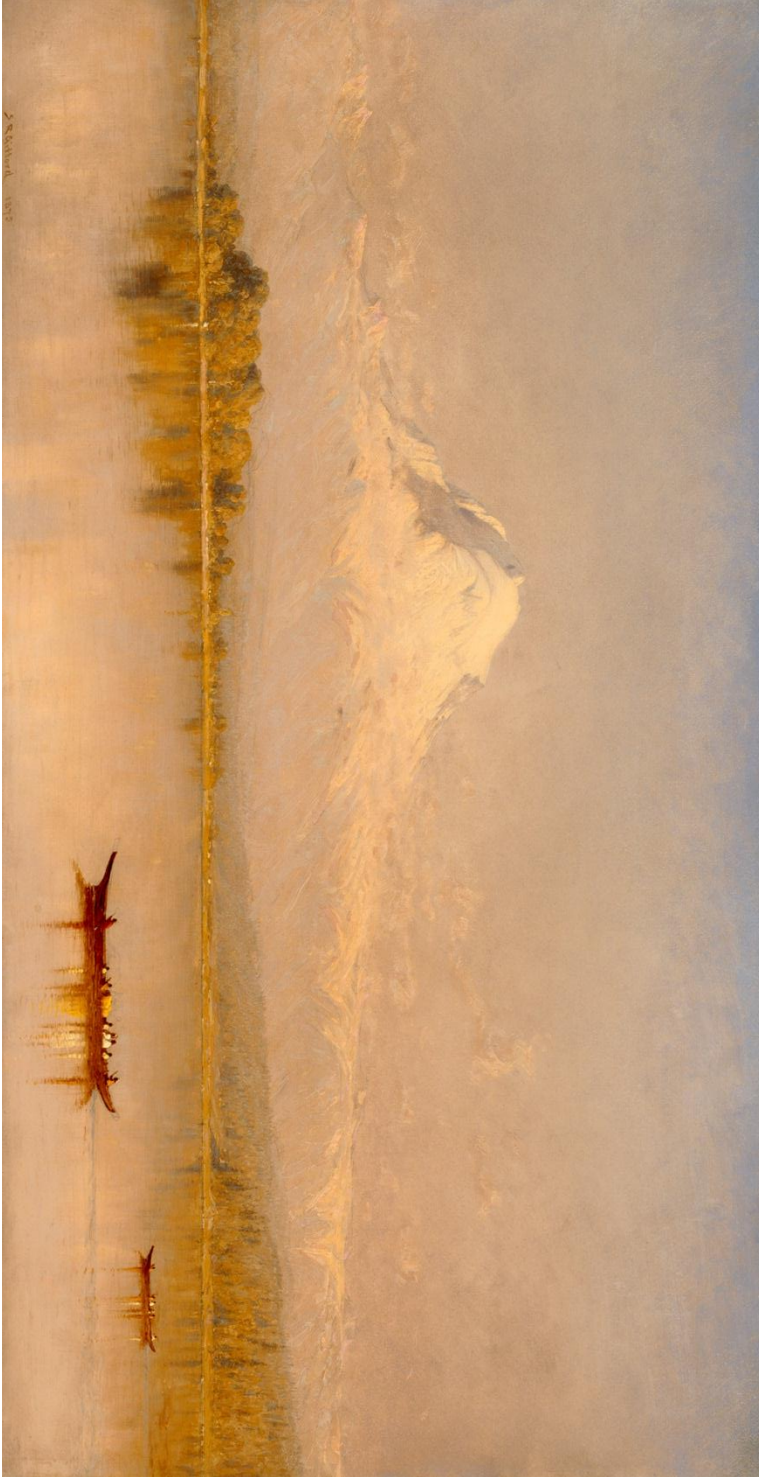
Asmat shield, early 20th century, Asmat, Wood and pigment, 85 1/2 x 25in. (217.2 x 63.5cm), Seattle Art Museum, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Griffin, in honor of the 75th Anniversary of the Seattle Art Museum, 2004.240, Photo: Susan Cole.



UNIT THREE: LINE AND LANDSCAPE: FOCUS ON CREATIVITY

Image from *Miró: The Experience of Seeing*

Landscape, 1974, Joan Miró, Spanish, 1893-1983, acrylic and chalk on canvas, 96 1/16 x 67 1/2 in., Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, © Successió Miró /Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York /ADAGP, Paris 2014.



UNIT THREE: LINE AND LANDSCAPE: FOCUS ON CREATIVITY

Image from the Seattle Art Museum's Collection

Mount Rainier, Bay of Tacoma - Puget Sound, 1875, Sanford Robinson Gifford, born Greenfield, N.Y. 1823; died New York City 1880, Oil on canvas, 21 x 40 1/2 in. (53.34 x 102.87 cm), Seattle Art Museum, Partial and promised gift of Ann and Tom Barwick and gift, by exchange, of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Brechemin; Max R. Schweitzer; Hickman Price, Jr.; in memory of Hickman Price; Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection; Mr. and Mrs. Norman Hirsch; and the Estate of Louise Raymond Owens, 90.29, Photo: Paul Macapia



UNIT THREE: LINE AND LANDSCAPE: FOCUS ON CREATIVITY

Image from the Seattle Art Museum's Collection

Anooralya (Wild Yam Dreaming), 1995, Emily Kam Ngarrarray, Australian Aboriginal, Anmatyerr People, Utopia, Central Desert, Northern Territory, ca. 1910 - 1996, Synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 59 13/16 x 48 1/16 in. (152 x 122 cm) Seattle Art Museum, Gift of Margaret Levi and Robert Kaplan, 2000.157, © 2013 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VISCOPY, Australia.



UNIT FOUR: SHAPE AND SYMBOLISM: FOCUS ON CRITICAL THINKING

Image from Miró: *The Experience of Seeing*

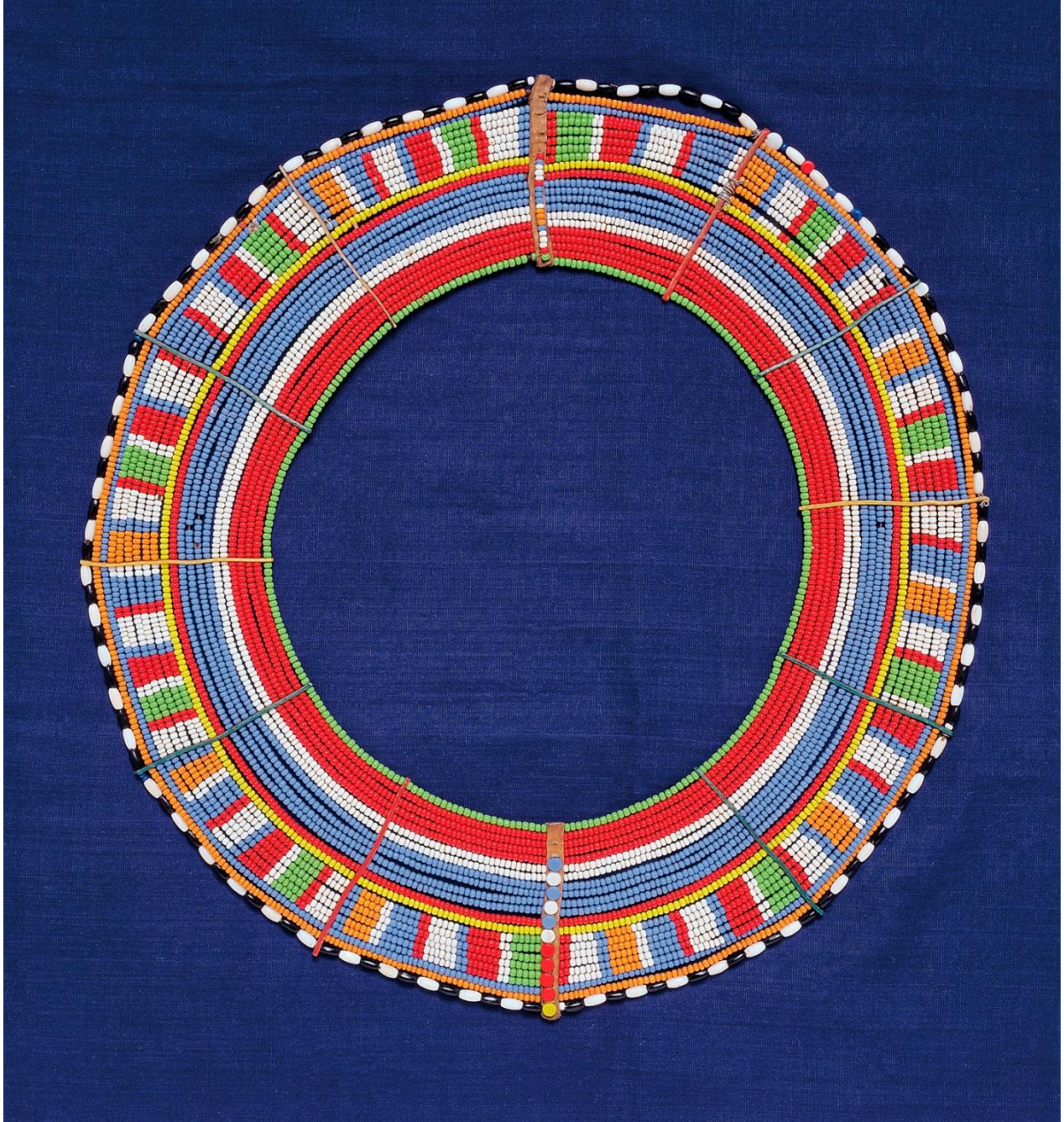
Woman, Bird and Star (Homage to Picasso), February 15, 1966 / April 3-8, 1973, Joan Miró, Spanish, 1893-1983, oil on canvas, 96 7/16 x 66 15/16 in., Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. © Successió Miró /Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York /ADAGP, Paris 2014.



UNIT FOUR: SHAPE AND SYMBOLISM: FOCUS ON CRITICAL THINKING

Image from the Seattle Art Museum's Collection

Song for the Moon, 2002, Acrylic on canvas, Shaun Peterson (Qwalsius), Tulalip/Puyallup, born 1975, 101 x 42 x 1in. (256.5 x 106.7 x 2.5cm), Gift of the Seattle Art Museum Docents, in honor of the 75th Anniversary of the Seattle Art Museum, SC2006.13, Photo: © Shaun Peterson. Photo: Elizabeth Mann.



UNIT FOUR: SHAPE AND SYMBOLISM: FOCUS ON CRITICAL THINKING

Image from the Seattle Art Museum's Collection

Bull necklace (Norkiteng) Nalepo ene Matinti, Maasai, Kaputiei section, Merrueshi community, Wire, glass beads, plastic
Diameter: 13 1/2 in. (34.3 cm), Seattle Art Museum, General Acquisition Fund, 2000.12.2, Photo: Paul Macapia.