

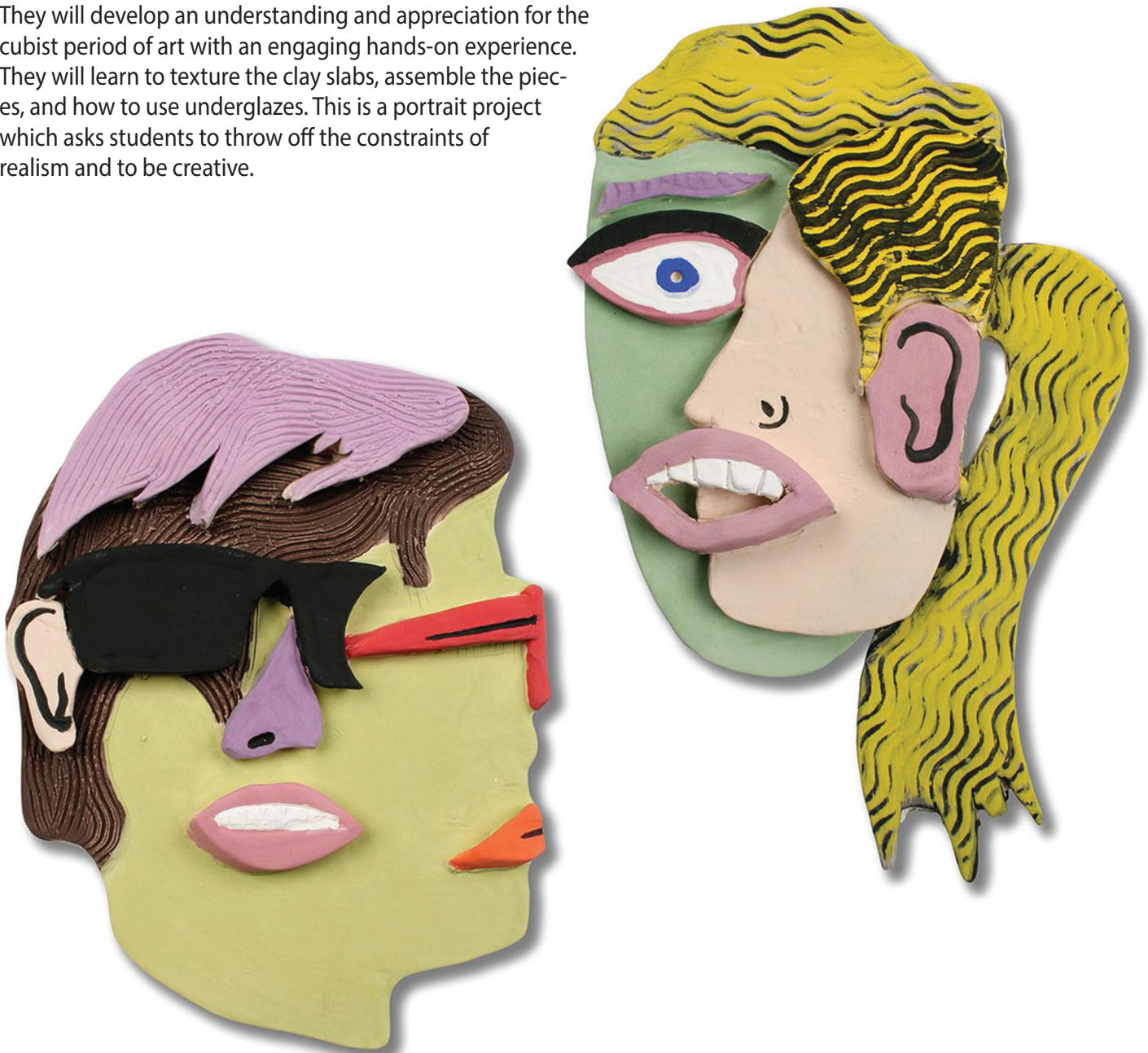
THE CUBIST CLAY PORTRAIT

Combining Perspectives Through Slab Building

by Stephen Creech

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) is considered the most influential artist of the 20th Century. He explored many styles and techniques in painting as well as sculpture, but he is most known as being co-founder of cubism. Cubism is an art style in which the subject is broken down into several facets with several views shown simultaneously. A three-dimensional form is broken down and flattened so you can see all sides at once.

In this lesson students will create a cubist style portrait using clay slabs. They will develop an understanding and appreciation for the cubist period of art with an engaging hands-on experience. They will learn to texture the clay slabs, assemble the pieces, and how to use underglazes. This is a portrait project which asks students to throw off the constraints of realism and to be creative.



Lesson Plan Goals and Objectives

- Students will obtain a full understanding of the Cubist Artistic Movement
- Students will learn about the artist Pablo Picasso and be able to recognize pieces and his style of work
- Each student will create their own Cubist style clay portrait
- Students will learn how to use texture and color to create visual interest within a piece of work
- Students will learn basic clay manipulation skills

This lesson is for secondary students but can be adapted for all ages

National Visual Arts Standards

- Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and culture.
- Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes.
- Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others.
- Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines.



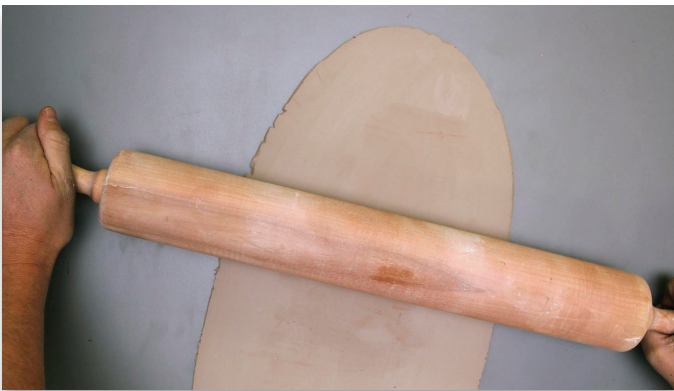
Tools & Materials

- Low Fire (Cone 05) Clay (choose one)
 - AMACO® Versa Clay No. 20 (45030R)
 - AMACO® White Art Clay No. 25 (45015Y)
 - AMACO® Sedona Red Clay No. 67 (45131A)
- AMACO® Velvet Underglazes or AMACO® Liquid Underglazes
- AMACO® LG Gloss Glazes (Cone 05)
- AMACO® Texture Molds
 - Tribal Diamond (32219V)
 - Geo/Floral 6-Pattern Design (32220W)
 - Sandwaves (32225X)
 - MCTM-1 Pre-Columbian (32228C)
 - MCTM-2 East Asian (32229D)
 - MCTM-3 Islamic (32238M)
 - MCTM-4 Aboriginal (32239L)
- AMACO® Wire Clay Cutter (11017N)
- Slab rolling device
 - brent® Mini SRC slab roller (22683B)
 - Hardwood Rolling Pin, 18" (11196M) and
 - Hardwood Thickness Strips (11190F)
- AMACO® Sponge
- Fettling Knife (11192H)
- Scoring Tool (11199R)
- AMACO® Wooden Clay Tools
- AMACO® Ceramic Brushes
- Sketch Book and paper
- Vinegar

Technique



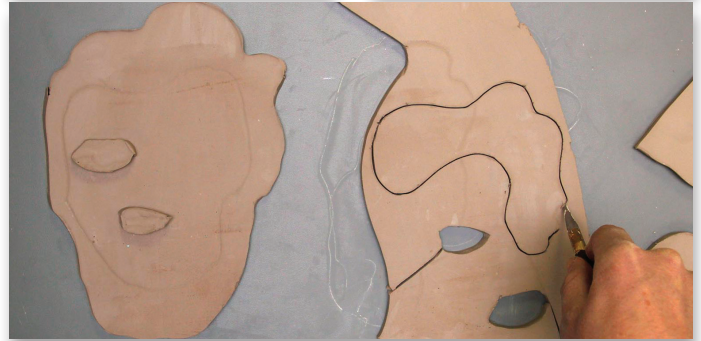
1. Ask your students to sketch a cubist style portrait on a piece of drawing paper. Remind them the key attributes of the cubist style and make sure they are aware that the portrait should be an abstract representation and include multiple features from multiple viewpoints. When finished with their portrait sketch have them break up each feature into a separate drawing. Example: Shape of face, nose, eyes, ears, hair etc.



2. Using a slab roller or rolling pin, roll out a slab of AMACO® clay approximately 1/4" thick.



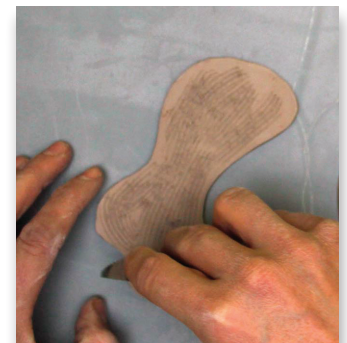
3. Have the student lay the drawing of the individual features on top of the slab of clay and trace each shape onto the clay with a pencil or end of brush. The pressure from the pencil will transfer the outline onto the slab.



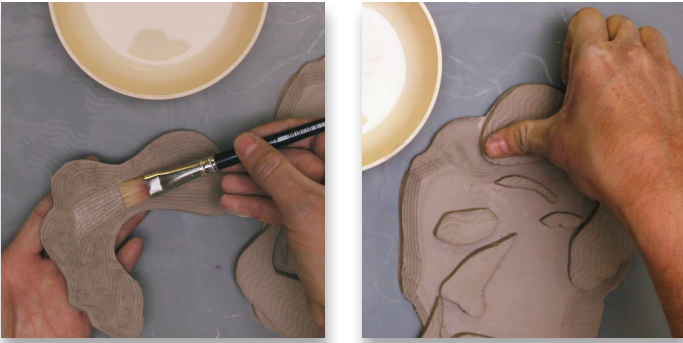
4. Next, have them remove the paper and cut out each individual shape with a clay knife.



5. Apply different textures to each piece/shape of clay. Use the AMACO® Texture Slab Molds to create intricate cultural patterns or simply apply textures using found objects or other clay tools.



6. Score the main piece where the features will attach. Also score the back of the individual features.



7. Brush small amount of vinegar (used instead of slip for attaching) on scored places and attach.



8. Once all of the pieces are reassembled, each student should have a cubist style portrait that resembles their original sketch on paper but now in 3D relief made of clay.



9. Next, have the students begin applying AMACO® Velvet Underglazes or AMACO® Liquid Underglazes to different areas or features. The underglazes can be applied directly onto the wet clay prior to bisque firing. Choose colors that will cause the various features and planes to recede or “pop” as desired.



10. Once completely dry, bisque fire all of the portraits to a witness Cone 04.

Optional

11. Have the students coat the entire portrait or specific features with 3 coats of a transparent AMACO® LG glaze. The transparent glaze will allow the underglaze to show through on the different areas and features creating a unique and varying look.

12. Fire the glazed pieces to a witness Cone 05.

Glossary

3-Dimensional: Forms that have many sides and can be described in terms of depth, width and height.

Cubism: Artistic movement where objects were broken up, analyzed, and reassembled in abstract form.

Glaze: A liquid composed of clay and silica that creates a fused glassy coating when fired to high temperatures in a kiln.

Pablo Picasso: A Spanish painter (1881-1973) who is most recognized for starting the Cubism arts movement.

Relief: Raised, sculpted area from a flat background.

Slip and Score: Process of joining 2 pieces of clay by texturing each piece slightly with little cuts where they will be joined then applying slip (watered down clay) and pressing together to form a strong bond.

Underglaze: Liquid colored clay that is put on ceramics before a glaze is applied. It has no flux (glass former) therefore it stays exactly where you put it and does not flow. It is great for painting and decorating.