THE HISTORIC

WOODSTOCK ART COLONY

Art in the Arthur A. Anderson Collection at the New York State Museum

A Lesson in Creating a Sense of Place

For Grades K–5

NYS M New York State Museum

The New York State Museum is a program of | The University of the State of New York | The State Education Department | Office of Cultural Education

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Cover Photo: *Map of Woodstock*, Rudolf Wetterau and Margaret Wetterau, 1926

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ABOUT THESE LESSONS

This lesson is one of three that draw from The Historic Woodstock Art Colony: The Arthur A. Anderson Collection at the New York State Museum. This extraordinary collection represents a body of work that shaped art and culture in New York and forms a history of national and international significance. These lessons serve to aid educators in teaching students about a variety of factors related to art making, including specific methods and techniques, stylistic movements, and the context and impact of *place* in creativity.

The three lessons in this series include "A Lesson in Landscapes" and "A Lesson in Creating a Sense of Place," both designed for grades K–5, and "A Lesson in Lithography & Printmaking," which is designed for grades 9–12.

The New York State Learning Standards met in these lessons are included in each lesson. For more information on the standards visit www.nysed.gov/next-generation-learning-standards.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Woodstock, New York, is home to what is considered America's first intentionally created, year-round arts colony—founded in 1902 and still thriving over one hundred years later. The Woodstock story begins when the artists' colony called Byrdcliffe was established in 1902, focusing on the Arts and Crafts movement. In 1906 the Art Students League of New York, one of the country's most important and progressive art schools, moved its summer school to Woodstock, bringing some 200 students annually to the area. Today, Woodstock continues to attract artists working in a variety of media and approaches, ranging from realism to abstraction—setting Woodstock apart from other art colonies that flourished for a limited time and were centered on a single style.

ABOUT THE ARTHUR A. ANDERSON COLLECTION

Arthur Anderson collected all kinds of things—minerals, reptiles, stamps—while he was growing up in Michigan, and he developed an interest in art when he was a teenager. Later, he was especially captivated by works created by artists working in the Historic Woodstock Art Colony.

Over three decades Arthur collected about 1,500 works of art by almost 200 artists. In 2018 he donated his entire collection to the New York State Museum, where, he wrote, "it can reside in perpetuity and be best cared for, used, and appreciated" by the public. Some one hundred of these works, representing a wide range of artists, styles, and subjects, were on display in an exhibition, *The Historic Woodstock Art Colony*, at the State Museum from November 10, 2018, to December 31, 2019. All of the artworks used in this lesson are in the collection of the New York State Museum.

A LESSON IN CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE

FOR GRADES K–5

THIS CURRICULUM IS ALIGNED WITH THE NEW YORK STATE P-12 LEARNING STANDARDS.

INTRODUCTION

Why an Artists' Colony?

In 1902 the Byrdcliffe Arts Colony was established in Woodstock. The year-round utopian community promoted the Arts and Crafts movement, which originated in late nineteenth-century England as a response to industrialization. The movement emphasized individual, hand-crafted work over mass production. Wealthy Englishman Ralph Radcliffe Whitehead and his American wife, Jane Byrd McCall, along with writer Hervey White and artist Bolton Brown, founded the colony; its name was derived from the middle names of the Whiteheads, who financed the project.

The idea of an artists' colony was not new. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century in central Europe, clustering around Paris and in parts of Germany and the Netherlands, artists began to found village-like communities, outside of cities, in which they could live and work together, socializing and sharing inspiration. Over time, the trend spread to other parts of Europe and leapt across the Atlantic to the United States. Artists were drawn to the Woodstock area because of the natural beauty of the Hudson Valley.

By the summer of 1903, some 30 buildings—including studios, workshops, and housing—were constructed on Mount Guardian near the village of Woodstock. Byrdcliffe drew artisans from across all media: furniture makers, painters, printmakers, photographers, metalworkers, weavers, ceramicists, and others, as well as writers and musicians. Classes were offered, and notable teachers included co-founder Bolton Brown and Birge Harrison, as well as Hermann Dudley Murphy and William Schumacher. The multi-skilled artist Zulma Steele numbered among the students, as did photographer Eva Watson-Schütze, who studied painting there. Initially, the

prevailing style in two-dimensional work was Tonalism, a subtly colored, moody approach to landscape. Many artists were influenced by contemporary European trends.

Byrdcliffe continues to flourish today under the auspices of the Woodstock Byrdcliffe Guild.

Disillusioned with what he felt was a restrictive artistic environment, Hervey White left Byrdcliffe in 1904. He purchased a nearby farm and established what would become the Maverick Arts Colony, a community more bohemian than Byrdcliffe. Early on, the colony attracted mostly writers and musicians, though by the 1920s visual artists of wide-ranging approaches had a large presence too. In 1910 White launched the Maverick Press, which published original literary and artistic material. A theater and concert hall also graced the grounds.

In 1915 White staged the first Maverick Festival, which would provide the main economic support for the colony. Held annually on the night of the August full moon, the festival featured music, dancing, food and drink, and attendees dressed in creative costumes. It is often seen as the forerunner to the famous Woodstock Music & Art Fair that was held in Bethel, New York, in 1969. Every summer Maverick Concerts still take place in the concert hall built by Hervey White in 1916.

There was much overlap of artists, both students and teachers, among the various organizations in Woodstock. As painter Birge Harrison noted, the foundational desire for an arts community at Woodstock was “to develop a number of individual painters and not to develop a ‘school,’” or single style. Still, while a wide range of subjects was undertaken by these artists, the beautiful natural setting became the main source of inspiration for many working there.

OBJECTIVES

This lesson encourages students to consider community and place in their role in creativity. Students will use observation skills to discuss Historic Woodstock artworks using newly introduced vocabulary.

Students will examine the 1926 *Map of Woodstock*, landscape paintings, and portraits. They will create their own artworks, inspired by the Woodstock map and will include a variety of techniques and details in their work. Students will present and discuss their artwork using art vocabulary and concepts. They will compare and evaluate the features of different artworks. Students will make connections between people and places in art.

FEATURED WORK

RUDOLF WETTERAU (AMERICAN, 1890–1953) AND MARGARET WETTERAU (AMERICAN, 1894–1989)
Map of Woodstock, 1926
Ink on board
20 x 28 ½ in.

This hand-drawn map features many local landmarks, landforms, and the homes of dozens of artists living in Woodstock in 1926. The map was done in ink on board by twentieth-century American artists Rudolf and Margaret Wetterau.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

RUDOLF WETTERAU (1891–1953) AND MARGARET WETTERAU (1894–1989)

Husband and wife artists Rudolf and Margaret Wetterau split their time between New York City and Woodstock.

Born and raised in Nashville, Tenn., Rudolf's first job was as a cartoonist for the *Nashville American* newspaper. After moving to New York City, he studied at the Art Students League and was a member of the Society of Illustrators, Art Directors Club, and Salmagundi Club fine art center. As vice president of an advertising agency, his ads appeared in many magazines, including *Life*, *Popular Science*, and *The Arts*. Rudolf was also publisher of the 1924 Woodstock Almanac.

Margaret Wetterau was born in New York City, where, before her marriage to Rudolf in 1915, she worked as an actress. The year of their marriage, the Wetteraus moved to Paris to study art. Upon their return to the United States the following year, the couple lived briefly in Chicago, where Rudolf resumed his career as an illustrator in advertising. Both he and Marge exhibited works at the Art Institute of Chicago (she in 1916–1917 and he in 1924), and after returning to New York became members of the Woodstock Artists Association. In Woodstock, and often under the auspices of the Woodstock Guild of Craftsmen and local schools and libraries, Margaret for many years ran popular adult and children's art and art appreciation programs in stenciling and puppet making, and also designed costumes for local theatrical productions.

RELATED ARTWORK

GEORGE BELLOWS (AMERICAN, 1882–1925)
Eugene Speicher Drawing on a Stone, 1921
Lithograph on paper
11½ x 8½ in.

VOCABULARY

compass rose – A circle showing the principal (cardinal) directions printed on a map.

cardinal directions – The four main points of a compass: north, south, east, and west.

horizontal lines – Run left to right across a page or plain.

vertical lines – Run up and down a page or plain.

intersecting lines – Two lines that cross and share exactly one point.

land feature – Naturally formed features, such as plains, plateaus, mountains, valleys, hills, etc. Also called "landforms."

scale – Size relationship, proportion, or ratio of the length in a drawing to the length of the real thing.

colony – A place where a group of people with similar interests live together.

collaboration – The action of working with someone to produce or create something.

subjective – Based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions.

VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

WARM-UP

Starting with a brainstorm activity, ask your students:

- What is a map?
- What is a map's purpose?
- What types of features do we find on maps?

GUIDED PRACTICE

To support class discussion and visual thinking strategies while examining maps, have the students identify features in Rudolf and Margaret Wetterau's *Map of Woodstock* (p. 4). Remind students that maps are subjective, like any form of art, and that maps can reveal a lot about the time, place, and artist who produced it.

Students should ask themselves:

- What is going on in this map?
- What makes me think that?
- What more can we find?
- What story is this map telling? What is its focus?
- What information is given? What information is left out?
- What is important to the artists? What is the artists' connection to Woodstock?
- What does the map tell us about the people living there?
- What does the map tell us about the year 1926?

This dialogue will help encourage the use of new vocabulary and understanding of art concepts.

VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

EXPANDED DISCUSSION

Examine George Bellows' artwork, *Eugene Speicher Drawing on a Stone* (p. 6). Bellows chose to depict Speicher, his friend and fellow artist, working on a lithograph stone, preparing a print. Both Bellows and Speicher worked with Bolton Brown, who was known for his innovations in the field of lithography. Bellows, Speicher, and Brown were all artists who lived in Woodstock, and their homes can be found on the Wetterau *Map of Woodstock* (p. 4).

- What does this lithograph tell us about the artists' connection to the physical location of Woodstock?
- What does this artwork tell us about the connection between artists?

INDEPENDENT STUDY

For further discussion, have students respond to the **"Related Artworks"** section found at the end of this lesson.

ARTMAKING ACTIVITY

DESIGN A MAP OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Have students design a map, without referring to another one for reference, of their community from their own perspective.

Materials: Pencil, Paper

Ask the following questions at the start of the activity:

- What places in your community do you go to on a regular basis?
- How do you get there?
- Draw and label landmarks like your home, school, grocery store, park, etc.

Alternatively, younger students could be asked to map their school community.

- What places in your school do you go to on a regular basis?
- How do you get there?
- Draw and label landmarks like your classroom, lunchroom, gym, etc.

Lesson Tip

- This lesson can be tailored to focus on different subject areas. Refer to the cross-curricular extensions to see if you would like to include them in your students' design challenge.

Wrap-up

Have students present their maps to the class. What did they include, and why?

As a class, discuss elements and features that were included by the majority of the class in their maps.

- What things were different?
- What might an individual map tell us about the person who made it?

Advanced Practice

Students can discuss ways to collaborate and merge ideas together to make a master map.

- Take a large roll of paper and help the students plot locations.

ARTMAKING ACTIVITY

OPTIONAL CROSS-CURRICULAR EXTENSIONS

- **Math Extension**: Encourage students to draw locations to scale and discuss how information can be presented in a scaled illustration.
- **Social Studies Extension:** Have students describe where places on the map are in relation to one another and the connections between places. Compare a modern map of Woodstock to the historic map.
    - What do both have?
    - What is left out?
- **Science Extension:** Have students interpret information from the historic Woodstock map to identify the location of natural landforms and waterways.
- **ELA Extension:** Have students examine any informational text on the maps. Students should describe places with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly during their wrap-up presentation.

    Written Reflection:

    - Why did you include these places?
    - How did you decide what to include on your map and what to leave off?

RELATED ARTWORKS

George Bellows (American, 1882–1925)
Four Friends, 1921
Lithograph on paper
10¼ x 8 in.

In this lithograph, Bellows depicts his circle of artist friends in Woodstock, including Leon Kroll, Eugene Speicher, Robert Henri, and Bellows himself. All four men spent time living in Woodstock, and both Speicher's and Bellows' homes can be found on the *Map of Woodstock* along with places they all spent time.

Florence Ballin Cramer (American, 1884–1962)
Cramer Homestead in Winter, 1926
Oil on board
20 x 24 in.

The location of this building can be found on the Wetterau *Map of Woodstock* from 1926.

Grant Arnold (American, 1904–1988)
Old Risely [sic] *Barn*, 1936
Lithograph
10 x 14 in.

The location of the barn can be found on the Wetterau *Map of Woodstock* from 1926.

NEW YORK STATE LEARNING STANDARDS

Enduring Understanding

- **2.3:** People create, respond to, and interact with objects and places in ways that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives.

Essential Questions

- **2.3:** How do objects and places shape lives and communities? How do artists and designers determine goals for designing or redesigning objects, places, or systems? How do artists and designers create works that effectively communicate ideas or influence people's lives?

- **10.1:** How does art attune people to their surroundings? How does artmaking contribute to awareness and understanding of one's life and the lives of others in the community?

Education Standards

- **VA:Cr1.1.2:** Collaboratively brainstorm multiple artmaking approaches to an art or design problem.

- **VA:Cr1.2.4:** Work individually and collaboratively to set goals and create artwork that is meaningful and has purpose to the makers.

- **VA:Cr2.3.3:** Individually or collaboratively construct representations, diagrams, or maps of places that are part of everyday life.

- **VA:Cn10.1.1:** Create works of art about events in home, school, or community life.

Interdisciplinary Connections

- Visual Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, ELA