

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

ROOFTOP SCHOOL “ART IS...” ORIGAMI SILHOUETTE ACTIVITY

ART ACTIVITY CREATED FOR ROOFTOP SCHOOL'S “ART IS... ILLUMINATION” STUDY
6A & 6B Session #2 – August 31 & September 3

LINE OF INQUIRY: How do artists use contrast & perspective to illuminate our world?

GUIDING QUESTION: How do artists use materials to explore color, light & shadow?

Supplies: Origami paper (black, gray, yellow)
Large piece of paper for attaching origami with silhouette
CD & Music: Madama Butterfly
Silhouettes: Mission Blue Butterfly, Cio-Cio San, Dot & Roxane

I. WHAT IS A SILHOUETTE?

Students will learn about the *silhouette*, a popular style of portraiture in 18th century Europe.

silhouette

1. shadowed contour: an outline of somebody or something filled in with black or a dark color on a light background, especially when done as a likeness or work of art
2. something dark on light background: something lit in such a way as to appear dark, but surrounded by light, or the effect produced by such lighting

[Late 18th century. < French, after Étienne de Silhouette (1709-1767), French finance minister]

As French finance minister in the late 1750s, Étienne de Silhouette gained a reputation for stinginess, and silhouette came to be used for anything skimped. Prior to the advent of photography, silhouette profiles cut from black card were the cheapest way of recording a person's appearance.

II. MISSION BLUE BUTTERFLY

Show the students a silhouette of a butterfly and ask them to identify the object.

The Mission Blue Butterfly, now an endangered species, was first discovered in Twin Peaks in 1937.

Remaining populations of Mission blue butterfly are found in only a few locations around the San Francisco Bay area in California: the Marin Headlands (Marin County), the Skyline ridges (San Mateo County), San Bruno Mountain (San Mateo County), and possibly at Twin Peaks (San Francisco County). The historical distribution of the species probably encompassed much of the coastal scrub/grassland habitat of the northern San Francisco peninsula and Marin County. Population: The San Bruno Mountain population is estimated at 18,000 adults. The Skyline Ridges support approximately 2,000 adults, and there may be as many as 500 at Twin Peaks. The Marin Headlands population has not been estimated, but is significant.

http://www.parksconservancy.org/our_work/stewardship/endangered.asp?species=476



What would an operatic version of the story of the Mission Blue Butterfly look like? Explain to the students that they will be exploring the art form of opera this year with San Francisco Opera. Opera is an Italian art form first invented at the end of the 16th Century.



SAN FRANCISCO OPERA EDUCATION

III. PAPER FOLDING - ORIGAMI BUTTERFLIES

Students will learn about the Japanese art of Origami (from *ori* meaning "folding", and *kami* meaning "paper").

Origami is the traditional Japanese folk art of paper folding, which started in the 17th century AD and was popularized in the mid-1900s. It has since then evolved into a modern art form. The goal of this art is to transform a flat sheet of material into a finished sculpture through folding and sculpting techniques, and as such the use of cuts or glue are not considered to be origami.

- Teach the students how to make an origami butterfly out of paper.
- Explain how the flat two dimensional piece of paper is transformed into a three dimensional object through folding. The object is an abstraction; it has a form that we recognize as a butterfly.
- Point out the play of light and shadow on the form.



The folded origami butterflies will be used to make a silhouette of Cio-Cio San, also known as Madama Butterfly.

The earliest documented reference to origami in Japan is in a 1680 poem written by Ihara Saikaku that reads, "*Rosei-ga yume-no cho-wa orisue*" (The butterflies in Rosei's dream would be origami) according to K's Origami which cites that Saikaku referred to *Ocho Mecho* (male and female butterflies) as "*orisue*," an origami model used to "wrap sake bottles mainly at the wedding ceremony."

IV. COMING ATTRACTIONS

- Show the students three silhouettes of women in very distinct dress – *Dot* in Seurat's painting *Sunday in the Park*, *Roxane* in *Cyrano*, and *Madama Butterfly* (Historians of costume also use the term when describing the effect achieved by the clothes of different periods)
- Explain how, through costumes in theater and painting, the form gives the viewer a great deal of information quickly, but then as one looks closer, the information beyond the silhouette gets filled in.

Students will be informed of upcoming Field Trips and Dress Rehearsals:

JAPANESE: The Japanese Print in the Era of Impressionism

Setting: Paris, France. Late 1800's-early 1900's.

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER FIELD TRIPS

MADAMA BUTTERFLY by Giacomo Puccini

Setting: Nagasaki, Japan. 1904

FINAL DRESS REHEARSAL – SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9 AT 2 PM

CYRANO de BERGERAC by Franco Alfano (1936)

Setting: Paris, France. 1640.

FINAL DRESS REHEARSAL – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21 AT 6 PM

ROOFTOP SCHOOL “ART IS...” ORIGAMI SILHOUETTE FOLLOW-UP

ART ACTIVITY CREATED FOR ROOFTOP SCHOOL’S “ART IS... ILLUMINATION” STUDY
6A & 6B Session #2 – September 7 & September 10

LINE OF INQUIRY: How do artists use contrast & perspective to illuminate our world?
GUIDING QUESTION: How do artists use materials to explore color, light & shadow?

Supplies: Completed Origami Silhouette
DVD: Opera Imaginaire *Un Bel Di* and *Movistar* commercial



I. ORIGAMI SILHOUETTE

- Share the Origami Portrait of Cio-Cio San made from the folded origami butterflies made by the students.
- Play the Opera Imaginaire animated short – *Un bel di* from Madama Butterfly
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ofaoLKPz7c>
- Tell students that the animator condensed the story of the 3 hour opera into a short film. Give students a chance to write their version of the plot of Madama Butterfly based on the animation.
- Students share their stories.

II. MADAMA BUTTERFLY - CIO-CIO SAN

Show clips from operatic versions of Madama Butterfly featuring Patricia Racette as Cio-Cio San. Compare the San Francisco Opera 2007 production with the Met’s 2008 production. Explain how, unlike the animated short or a movie version, the same opera can be done many different ways and each different singers interprets a role in their own way. If there is time, show the movie version starring Ying Huang as Cio-Cio San.

II. EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

Show commercial *Movistar: Bicicletas - Compartida, la vida es más*— a completely different musical style can merge with opera. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=upVoTi-IJ6k>
Ask the students to pay attention in the next week — Where do you hear opera?