

Art Cycle

Newsletter November



How does an artist come to paint abstract art? What inspires them? What is their process in creating an abstract piece? These are all questions that the 8th grade Art cycle classes were facing with their recent watercolor painting assignment. The challenge was to create an abstract watercolor painting inspired by the great American artist Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986). O'Keeffe wasn't interested in capturing exact details in her close up views of her subjects ranging from flowers to bleached cow skulls. Rather, she used intense, non- naturalistic colors to create an almost abstract beauty.

To mimic O'Keeffe's style students drew inspiration from floral motifs as well as real animal skulls that were in the Art room. By drawing large with great value and detail, they were then able to pick a small section of their drawing to enlarge. Using the grid method the students enlarged their drawings on to their watercolor paper. In the meantime, twelve different watercolor techniques were demonstrated by Mrs. Pessolano. Before painting the students created a watercolor study choosing six techniques that they found interesting, later on their final painting they had to incorporate three of these. Sea salt, wet in wet and watercolor resist were by far the most popular of the twelve techniques. Using bright intense colors much like O'Keeffe the students painted their abstract pieces. The final pieces were not supposed to look like the original skull or flower; instead they were large bright intense abstract pieces.

With her subjective colors and simplified shapes, O'Keeffe wanted to portray what she called "magical realism".

O'Keeffe once said, "I found that I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say in any other way- things that I had no words for." O'Keeffe's paintings typically related to objects in nature