

THREE-PART ART: Post-tour Activity

PROJECT TITLE: Crazy Collaborative Creatures

CANNON ART GALLERY EXHIBIT & THEME: *Frida Kahlo's Garden*

AGE RANGE: Grades 1-5

ART PROJECT INTRODUCTION:

Drawing inspiration from the live art instruction and the 20th Century Mexican art tradition of alebrijes, students will reimagine their spirit animals and create classroom collaborative drawings of their own hybrid creatures. Using colored pencils, students will create a new creature, inspired by alebrijes, which will then be cut into strips for groups to mix and match their creatures, creating new and unique collaborative creations.

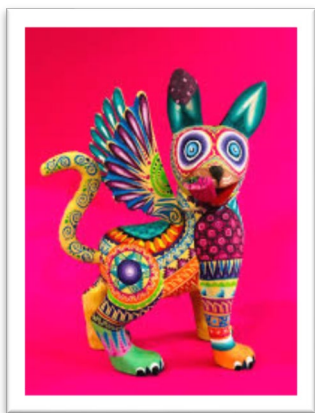
Inspiration Artist: Pedro Linares López

Frida Kahlo admired many Mexican artists, among them, Pedro Linares López, a Mexican artist whose playful animal sculptures known as alebrijes are beloved worldwide as unique products of Mexico's folk-art tradition.

Pedro Linares López was born in Mexico City, Mexico in 1906. His father worked as a papier-mâché sculptor, or cartonero, and he trained Linares to follow in his footsteps. By the time Linares was 12 years old, he had become a skilled craftsman of papier-mâché items like piñatas and the traditional skeletal figures called calaveras which are featured in the annual Day of the Dead celebration.

In 1945, as Linares tells the story, he became very sick and drifted into a fever dream. There he encountered fantastical creatures who shouted in unison a nonsensical phrase "Alebrijes!" Upon his recovery, he set out to represent these mythical beings in sculpture. The sculptures initially met little success, until over time, Linares refined his alebrijes into the well-known colorfully patterned combinations of reptiles, insects, birds, and mammals. In 1990, Linares was honored with the first Mexican National Prize in Arts and Sciences in the category of Popular Art and Traditions.

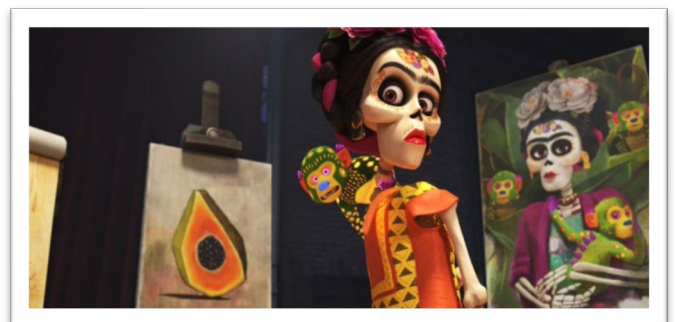
Inspiration Images: [Understanding Art Worlds; learning about what artists make.](#)



Example of an alebrije



Pedro Linares working on an alebrije.



Frida Kahlo with monkey alebrije.
Credit: Pixar's film, *Coco*

ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAM

LESSON PLAN

PROMPT QUESTIONS

1. **OBSERVE** the alebrijes in the images provided. Do they look realistic or fantastical?
2. What parts resemble a realistic animal? Why do you think the artist chose these animal combinations?
3. What animal or animals have meaning to you? How could you put them together to create a new creature?

ART PROJECT VOCABULARY:

Alebrijes- Brightly colored Oaxacan-Mexican folk-art sculptures of fantastical creatures

Fantastical- Strange, weird, or fanciful in appearance, conception

ART PROJECT MATERIALS:

Provided in Art Box:

- Sheet of drawing paper with dotted lines
- Set of colored pencils (included in this kit are 120 colored pencils, 10 of each color, to be used to supplement classroom materials)

Classroom Supplies:

- Additional colored pencils, markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Optional: glue sticks, glue, paper for mounting.

ART MAKING INSTRUCTIONS (step-by-step):

Step 1:

From the Art Box, each student will receive a piece of drawing paper divided into three segments with printed dotted lines. Instruct the students that they will be drawing their person, animal or a creature from their imagination in the three portions of the paper. When they are finished with this drawing they will be cutting the paper into three pieces along the dotted lines.

Step 2:

Have students begin by drawing the head, neck, and shoulders of their creature in the top third section of the page with their pencil. Be sure to have students extend the outer lines of their figure's shoulders down, and just across the first (top) cutline on their paper (**FIG. 1**).

Step 3:

Now students will consider the upper torso, or middle section, of their drawing. From the ends of the lines that students drew down into the middle section of their paper, have the students continue their drawing to create the upper torso and arms in the center section of their paper. The torso, or hip, lines of their figure should extend just over the second cutline into the bottom third section of their page (**FIG. 2**).

Step 4:

The last section of the paper will be the creature's lower torso and legs. From the ends of the lines in the bottom section, have students extend the lines to draw the lower torso and legs of the person, animal or creature in the bottom third of their paper (**FIG. 3**). Have students add any final details to their creature.

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Step 5:

Once all three sections have been drawn, fill in the creature with color. Students may use any coloring materials available in the classroom, as well as the supplemental colored pencils provided in the Art Box. Encourage the students to choose colors that have meaning to them, drawing their inspiration from their Pre-Visit Palette activity.

Step 6:

Once all the areas of the creature are colored in, students will cut their creature into three parts, cutting along the lines shown (FIG. 4, 4A, 4B).

Step 7:

STRETCH and EXPLORE: Now it is time to mix and match! Place students into groups of three. Instruct students to each contribute either their top, middle or bottom cut piece and arrange them to create different hybrid creatures. Do not be discouraged if some of the creature sections do not line up exactly! Enjoy the process of rearranging the sections to see how many different creatures you can create. Encourage students to take time to *observe* all the different creatures their group creates. (FIG. 5)

Step 8: UNDERSTANDING ART WORLDS: Working within your group select a final creature to present to the class. Optional: Glue your finished creature onto a piece of paper and display the finished collaborative creatures in the classroom.

POST PROMPT QUESTIONS:

1. How many different types of creatures was your group able to create?
2. What were your favorite animal combinations? Why?
3. What colors did you use and why?
4. What challenges, if any, did you encounter working within a group? How did you overcome these challenges?
5. Was it difficult to select a final work of art? How did you work together to make a final decision?

ART EXAMPLE PHOTOS:

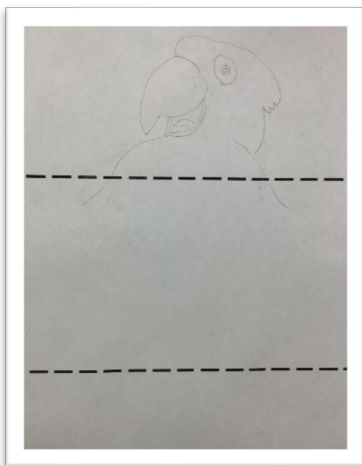


FIG. 1

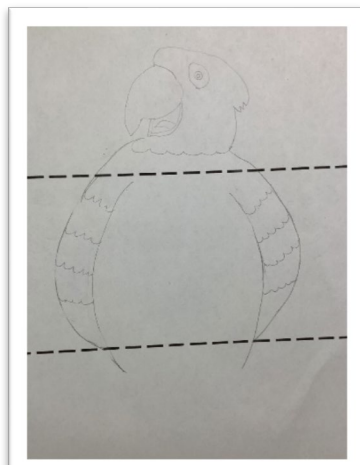


FIG. 2

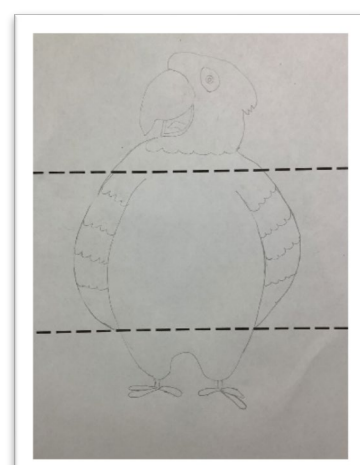


FIG. 3

LESSON PLAN

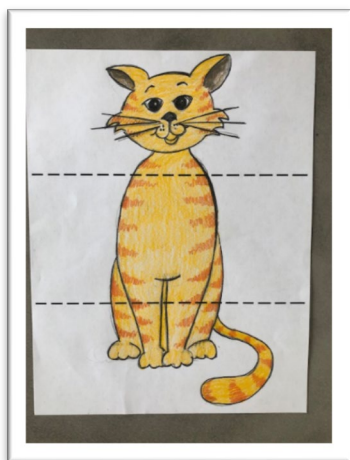


FIG. 4



FIG. 4A



FIG. 4B

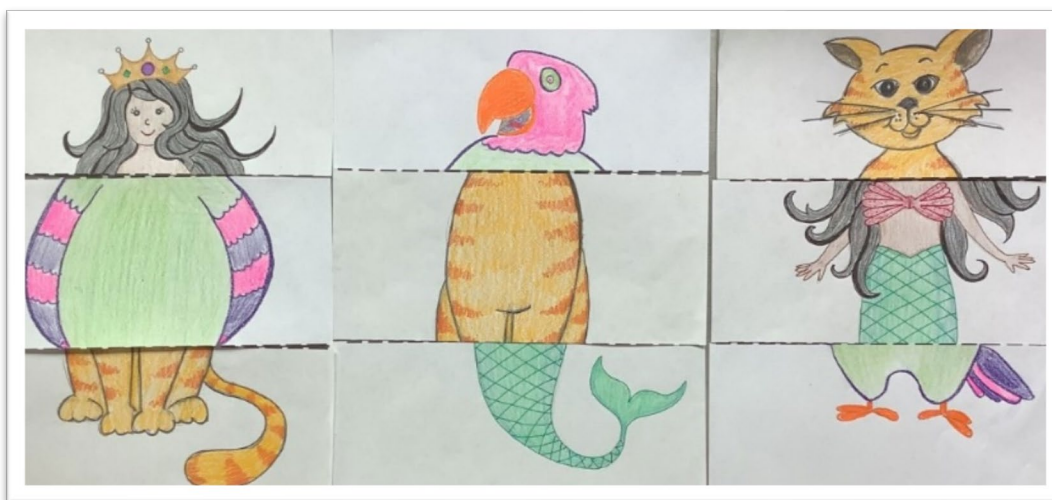


FIG. 5

ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAM

LESSON PLAN

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Studio Habits of Mind

UNDERSTANDING ART WORLDS: Learning about what artists make

The 20th Century Mexican art tradition of alebrijes, will inspire students to work together independently as well as collaboratively to create new and unique artworks.

I Can Statements:

- I can learn from other artists by looking closely at their art.
- I can interact as an artist with other artists.
- I can observe art from other cultures.
- I can create art inspired by other culture's art.

STRETCH AND EXPLORE: Playing, trying new things, making mistakes, and learning from them.

Working within a group allows students to explore artistic collaboration and problem-solving skills.

I Can Statements:

- I can take risks and try things I have never done before.
- I can play with materials and techniques to discover new ways of working.
- I can explore concepts to find new ways to express my ideas.
- I can use my mistakes to find new ideas and to figure out where I could change how I work.

OBSERVE: Looking closely and noticing

This project encourages students to exam realistic and fantastical elements in alebrijes and then apply those observations to their own artwork.

I Can Statements:

- I can notice details in the world around me.
- I can view my own work closely to find areas to keep and to improve.
- I can examine other artists' artwork to get ideas.

ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAM

LESSON PLAN

California Art Standards for Visual Arts

CREATING—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize Artistic Ideas and Work

- 1.1 ENDURING UNDERSTANDING - Creativity and innovative thinking are essential life skills that can be developed.
 - 2.VA:Cr1.1 - Brainstorm to generate multiple approaches to an art or design problem.
 - 3.VA:Cr1.1 - Elaborate on an imaginative idea.
 - 4.VA:Cr1.1 - Brainstorm individual and collaborative approaches to a creative art or design problem.
 - 5.VA:Cr1.1 - Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art-making.

CONNECTING—Anchor Standard 11: Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding

- ENDURING UNDERSTANDING - People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with and analysis of art.
 - 1.VA:Cn11 - Understand that people from different places and times have made art for a variety of reasons.
 - 3.VA:Cn11 - Recognize that responses to art change depending on knowledge of the time and place in which it was made.
 - 4.VA:Cn11 - Through observation, infer information about time, place, and culture in which a work of art was created.