A NIGHT FOR EDUCATORS

FRANK ROMERO’S DREAMLAND

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OBJECTIVE
This packet will provide you with tools and resources to effectively and independently teach your students and focus on Dreamland: A Frank Romero Retrospective exhibition while learning about American pop culture, Latin American heritage, and the Chicano experience. It contains background information, additional resources, handouts and activities, and complete lesson plans related to Frank Romero and Art & Muralism, Cultural & Political Movements and The LA Landscape. Please feel free to distribute this packet to colleagues, parents, and aspiring educators!

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Dreamland: A Frank Romero Retrospective encompasses over 50 years of the artist’s career and is the first solo exhibition of a Chicano artist at MOLAA. Born in East Los Angeles in 1941, Frank E. Romero is one of the founding members of the Los Four art collective and still lives and works in L.A. Through paintings, sculptures, prints, and ceramics, Romero maps the city’s cultural and political terrain through depictions of iconic neighborhoods and the events that formed them. Dreamland celebrates the artist’s lifelong fascination with city and explores the confluence of American pop culture, Latin American heritage, and the Chicano experience.

ABOUT FRANK ROMERO
Frank Romero is a Chicano artist who was born in 1941, grew up and still works in a community on the East side of Los Angeles called Boyle Heights. His paintings, murals, neon and ceramic sculptures, explore the local landscape and give us insight into the events that defined his own experience growing up Mexican-American in East L.A. Romero’s paintings are full of symbols that represent his feelings or the people and places he has seen. In the late 1960s Frank and three other artists formed a group called Los Four. They made art about the political events they had witnessed and their work came to define the Chicano Art Movement. Frank Romero has produced more than a dozen murals in Los Angeles, some in collaboration with the artists of Los Four. His landscapes illustrate a changing Los Angeles, shown through the lens of the personal experiences and political events that affected him as a Chicano artist.
COMMON CORE STANDARDS

The activities and lessons include in this packet address the following standards through classroom discussions, the analyzation of visual images, and the creation of art projects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College &amp; Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading and Speaking &amp; Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KEY TERMS

The following terms are often used in reference to the holiday and appear throughout the packet. Key terms appear in bold in lesson plans and handouts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Character</strong></th>
<th>The mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chicano/a</strong></td>
<td>A label used by some people of Mexican heritage who live in the U.S. to describe their identity. The term is considered political and emerged in the 1960’s as an alternative to the government imposed “Hispanic”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chicano/a Art</strong></td>
<td>The art that was created to support the larger civil rights movement. Chicano/a Art is often political in nature, discusses the Mexican-American experience, and uses culturally specific symbols or images.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collage</strong></td>
<td>In French, Collage means, “To paste” and as a technique was introduced by the Cubist Artists. It is a picture or design made of various media in which most of the elements are “found” materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>Social groups of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Depiction</strong></td>
<td>A picture or description of a time, place, person, object or idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity</strong></td>
<td>How a person defines themselves as an individual or as part of a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Juxtaposition</strong></td>
<td>Placing things near each other that do not make sense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape</strong></td>
<td>An image (painting, drawing or photograph) of outdoor scenery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Los Four</strong></td>
<td>A group of Chicano artists who worked together from approximately the late 1960s to the early 1980s. Los Four included Frank Romero, Carlos Almaraz, Roberto de la Rocha, Gilbert Magu Luján, and Judithe Hernández, among others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Migration</strong></td>
<td>Moving from one place to another, often by a group of people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# KEY TERMS (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement</strong></td>
<td>A coordinated set of group actions or events. In art, movement refers to a group of artists that follow one style or share a common attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mural</strong></td>
<td>A work of art, usually a painting that is made directly on a wall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Museum</strong></td>
<td>A place where objects of artistic, historical, or scientific importance and value are kept, studied, and put on display for the public to enjoy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perspective</strong></td>
<td>The techniques used to create an illusion of space and depth on a flat surface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political</strong></td>
<td>Related to or concerned with politics, current events, and social issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Portrait</strong></td>
<td>A picture of a person. A self- portrait is a picture that an artist makes of himself or herself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retrospective</strong></td>
<td>An art exhibition that shows a collection of art created over the span of an artist’s career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject</strong></td>
<td>Someone or something that an artist depicts in an artwork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symbol</strong></td>
<td>A picture, color or object that suggests or stands in for an idea, belief or another object.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LESSON: With Love, From...

Grades: K – 12th

Frank Romero (US, b.1941)
*Going to the Olympics*, 2011
Oil on canvas, 53 x 144 inches
Collection of James and Rachel Garrison

**Total Time Needed:** 45-60 minutes (excluding warm-up/introduction)

Objectives:
1. Students will learn how Frank Romero tells his story and builds personal, cultural and/or political narratives through his techniques and ways of portraying subjects, symbols and settings.

2. Students will use different stencils to create their own tempera postcard filled with symbols.

**Key Terms:** Depiction, Identity, Landscape, Subject, Symbol

**Themes to Explore:** Landscape-setting, family, cultural and personal symbolism, Collective Memory

**Postcard Materials / Resources:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Student</th>
<th>Optional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Postcard Template</td>
<td>Paint (tempera or acrylic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pencils, markers, crayons</td>
<td>Assorted stencils, colorful paper/magazines for collage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pair of scissors</td>
<td>Glue for collage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Templates:** Building My Postcard, Postcard Templates, Symbol Templates

**Optional Warm-Up Activities:** Present *Reading Signs & Symbols Powerpoint*, share postcard examples, or read *Postcards From Pismo* to students.

**Before the Lesson:** Use the warm-up activities listed above. Students can use the Building My Postcard Template to brainstorm the place, feeling, and message of their postcards.

**Lesson**

**Introduction (5-10 minutes)**
- Distribute Materials.
- Explain that students will make postcards based on the landscapes and symbols that are important to them.
- **Optional Brainstorm:** Use the Building My Postcard Template to discuss what kind of settings/locations they would choose or invent for their postcards and why – Why are those locations important for them and why would they send greetings from there? Their postcards can include a variety of symbols, portraits or characters. This is an opportunity to discuss what they think is important and to use their imaginations!
LESSON: With Love, From… (cont.)

OPTIONAL: Demonstration / Explanation (5-10 minutes)
- If using paint, explain or demonstrate how to paint with tempera or acrylic paint.
- Show how to create stencils of letters or symbols by drawing shapes and cutting around the outlines.
- Display how to cut shapes to create abstract imagery and color fields.

Creative Expression (30-45 minutes)
- Students will create their own postcards.
- Circulate the classroom and answer any questions the students have about the activity and provide assistance as needed.
- As students finish, they can write a message to the person to whom they would/will send their postcards.

Reflection (5-10 minutes)
- Have students compare/contrast their postcard symbols and characters.

Discussion Questions:
- Who did you have in mind when creating your postcard and why?
- What symbols did you use to communicate a message or a feeling? How would they react?
- Were there challenges working with this medium and/or tools?

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

Pen-Pal Play: Have your student expand on their short description for their postcard by having them write a short creative story to accompany their artwork. Or even have them write a play they can perform in groups!

Postcard Pop-Up: Students can create a 3-D version of their landscape in the form of a shoebox diorama. A section of the classroom can display the 2-D and 3-D versions of each student’s landscape.
LESSON: Mapping My Neighborhood
Grades: 3rd – 12th

Objectives:
1. Students will learn how Frank Romero uses the Los Angeles landscape, subjects and symbols to tell stories and portray who he is and where he comes from.
2. Students will use mixed-media collaging to create a map of their local neighborhood, filled with characters and symbols to tell a story about where they are from.

Key Terms: Collage, Community, Identity, Landscape, Juxtaposition, Subject, Symbol

Themes to Explore: Landscape as a geographic place that tells a story, Perspective, Culture, Migration

Materials / Resources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Student</th>
<th>Per Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 piece of construction paper</td>
<td>Paint (tempera or acrylic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 glue stick (or 1 bottle per table)</td>
<td>Assorted stencils, magazines, colorful paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pair of scissors</td>
<td>Coloring and writing tools (pencils, markers, crayons, pastels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ruler, compass (optional)</td>
<td>Images of maps for reference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Optional Warm-Up Activities: Present Reading Signs & Symbols OR What is a Landscape? Power Points, examine different types of maps, landmarks and landscapes, and discuss what their neighborhoods look like or what they say about where they are from. Complete the My Communities handout to narrow down a setting.

Before the Lesson: Use the warm-up activities listed above. They can be presented the day before the lesson or immediately before students begin the project.

Lesson

Introduction (5-10 minutes)
- Distribute materials.
- Discuss with students what kind of map they want to create or invent and why. What location, characters, landmarks and symbols would they choose? Have any of them moved (migrated) to a different place? Encourage them to use their imaginations!
LESSON: Mapping My Neighborhood (cont.)

Demonstration / Explanation (5-10 minutes)
- Demonstrate the process of collaging – make sure the entire surface is covered.
- Introduce a prepared example and explain how your map includes different shapes, proportions, etc.

Creative Expression (30-45 minutes)
- Students will create their mixed-media collage maps.
- Circulate the classroom and answer any questions the students have about the activity and provide assistance as needed.
- When students are done, they can write a sentence or two about what inspired their maps, landscapes, symbols and characters. This can be written at the bottom or back of their artwork.

Reflection (5-10 minutes)
- Gallery Walk: Have students leave their work on the tables and have them walk around the room to look at each other’s work.

Discussion Questions:
- Have them draw comparisons and connections to their artwork and Romero’s artworks, how are they similar and how are they different?
- Do they look at their communities and neighborhoods in a different way? How would they describe where they live / where they come from?

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

Friend Guide: Have students create a tourist map of their neighborhood for their friends and fellow classmates, indicating their favorite restaurants, shops and landmarks!

Migration Story: Expand the project to create a larger map/genealogy. Using a map of the world, ask students to trace their family’s migration (Unless the student belongs to one of the First Nations that settled in California, they should be able to trace their family back to at least another state/continent). Do they know where from where their families originally came? Students may interview family members to figure out their migratory history. How far did their families have to travel to arrive in Los Angeles? Have students compare/contrast maps and discuss the discoveries that they made about their origins. Would they ever leave Los Angeles? Why or why not?
LESSON: ARTivism
Grades: 7th – 12th

Frank Romero (US, b. 1941)
Detail from *History of the Chicano Movimiento*, 1991
Acrylic on canvas (triptych), 80 x 252 inches
Courtesy of Carnegie Art Museum, City of Oxnard

Total Time Needed: 45-60 minutes (excluding warm-up/introduction)

Objectives:
1. Students will discuss how Frank Romero portrays subjects, cultural and political movements, and identity.
2. Students will design protest signs and develop phrases and symbols that reflect the topics that matter to them the most.

Key Terms: Character, Chicano/a Art, Community, Identity, Political

Themes to Explore: Artist’s POV, Culture, The Chicano/a Experience, Los Angeles, Politics, Social Justice

Materials / Resources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Student</th>
<th>Per Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 piece of construction paper</td>
<td>Paint (tempera or acrylic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 glue stick (or 1 bottle per table)</td>
<td>Assorted stencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 piece of cardboard (optional)</td>
<td>Coloring and writing tools (pencils, markers, crayons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pair of scissors</td>
<td>Images of protest posters and popular symbols for reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 wooden stick (popsicle or skewer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Optional Warm-Up Activities: Present *Reading Signs and Symbols Powerpoint*, analyze popular slogans students have seen around their communities on posters or billboards, discuss current events and recent protests. Complete the *My Communities Handout*.

Before the Lesson: Use the warm-up activities listed above. They can be presented the day before the lesson or immediately before students begin the project.
Lesson

Introduction (5-10 minutes)
- Introduce Frank Romero’s work to students, and talk about his background and involvement with Los Four.
- Discuss how his work and identity are Chicano/a—which is both an art and political movement—and how it can be compared to other identity labels.
- Discuss what kind of phrases or slogans they would choose or invent and why—how do they relate to the topics they want to highlight?

Demonstration / Explanation (5-10 minutes)
- Demonstrate the process of letter stencil-making.
- Introduce a prepared example and explain how your protest sign includes different letter shapes and proportions.

Creative Expression (30-45 minutes)
- Students will create their protest signs.
- The teacher will circulate, offer suggestions, and answer any questions from students.
- When students are done, they can write a sentence or two about what inspired their poster message. This can be written at the back of their artwork.

Reflection (5-10 minutes)
- Have students display their protest signs, and do a gallery walk around the room to see what their classmates created.
- Select a few to discuss or ask for a few volunteers.
- Discuss the messages they are portraying and issues they believe in the most.

Discussion Questions:
- Did the students understand the theme of place and identity in art?
- Did students understand the concept of Chicano Art and illustrating cultural and political movements?
- Are students able to identify elements of art in pieces from the exhibition and apply them to their own artworks?

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS
Spoken Word: Students can expand on the poster by writing a short story that accompanies their artwork. Students could also create poems about the message on their protest poster, and take turns to perform them.
Protest Pop-up: Organize an exhibition or teach-in with your students based on their posters. Students can discuss the issues they selected to highlight with fellow students or write a short statement for exhibition. Create an interactive activity by having visitors vote anonymously on the top three issues facing their generation.
**ACTIVITY: COMMUNITY MURAL**

*Grades: 3rd – 12th*

Los Four (Gilbert “Magu” Luján, Roberto de la Rocha, Frank Romero)

*Los Four Collective Mural (without Carlos), 1994*

Mixed media on wood panels, 144 x 192 inches

Courtesy of the AltaMed Art Collection

**Total Time Needed:** 30 minutes - 45 minutes

**Objectives:**
1. Students will discuss how Frank Romero uses symbols to tell a story.
2. Students will design a mural ‘square’ that, when put together with their classmates’ other squares, makes a collaborative mural.

**Key Terms:** Chicano/a Art, Community, Los Four, Symbol

**Themes to Explore:** Artist’s POV, Collaboration

**Materials / Resources:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Student</th>
<th>Per Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Mural Square Template</td>
<td>Coloring Tools (pencils, markers, crayons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pair of scissors</td>
<td>Assorted stencils (OPTIONAL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pencil &amp; eraser</td>
<td>Blue painters tape or masking tape.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Optional Warm-Up Activities:** Present *Reading Signs and Symbols Powerpoint.* Complete the *My Community* handout to reflect on who they are as a classroom.

**Lesson**

**Introduction (5-10 minutes)**
- Introduce Frank Romero’s work to students, and talk about his background and involvement with *Los Four*.
- Discuss the types of symbols Frank Romero and *Los Four* use.
- Explain that students will create a collaborative mural. Every square will represent an individual student to talk about the collective whole. It should include symbols, words, and images that are important to them.

**Creative Expression (20-25 minutes)**
- Using the *Community Mural Square Template*, have students design their own square.
- When they are finished, they should cut it out with scissors. Help them place tape on the back of their square and place it on an empty wall. You may also use pins to place them on a bulletin board.

**Reflection (5-10 minutes)**
- Have students discuss the meaning of their final mural. Did they use similar symbols? What do they think of the final piece? Does it accurately represent who they are as a group?
Building My Postcard

For this project, you will create a postcard to send to a loved one. Before you design your final postcard, use this sheet to brainstorm the place from which it will be sent. Each block should have a quick sketch, or a description, of what you want to include in your final drawing.

**TIP:** Work from the bottom, up!

- **A Place** (It can be real or imaginary, a place you’ve been or a place to hope to visit):
- **A Symbol** (a simple image that represents the feeling of the place):
- **A Message** (What you want to say to the person who receives the card):
MY SYMBOL

What the symbol means to me:

What the symbol may mean to someone different from me:

Me:

Someone Different:
MY COMMUNITIES

Write in the different communities that you may belong to in the target below. Draw yourself in the center circle. As the circles move from the inside out, write in words and draw in symbols that represent the communities that you participate in. The closer to “you” the more important they are in your life. You can include groups related to your hobbies, your school & classmates, extracurricular activities, cultural or spiritual traditions, your family, or online communities.
COMMUNITY MURAL SQUARE

Create a mural square that represents you. Include symbols and colors that are meaningful to you. When you are finished, cut it out of the page.
# MY FAVORITE ART WORK

Name of Piece: _____________________________________________ Year: _______

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What story or stories is this artwork telling?  
  When did this event take place? | How have things changed or not changed since this event took place? |

Redraw or describe favorite art piece here.

- Why does it stand out to you?
- What questions do you have for the artist?
- What other information do you need to know in order to better understand the artist's message/perspective?
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

LOS ANGELES
- Closing of Whittier Boulevard—LA Times
- Silver Dollar Café
  https://www.laconservancy.org/locations/silver-dollar-bar-and-caf%C3%A9
- Walking Tours through East Los Angeles http://www.elaguide.org/
- Urban History & Visual Culture of Los Angeles
  http://dh101.humanities.ucla.edu/DH101Fall12Lab3/exhibits
- Evergreen Cemetary & Cultural Diversity in Los Angeles
  204 N Evergreen Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90033

THE CHICANO MOVEMENT
- Video clip and writing prompts for students about the situation of Mexican American students in Los Angeles in 1960s, to learn about the Chicano Movement, civic participation and activism.
  http://www.albany.edu/jmmh/vol3/chicano/chicano.html
  http://immigrationtounitedstates.org/415-chicano-movement.html
- Article about the story of the 1968 walkout by high school Chicano students in East Los Angeles to protest academic prejudice and dire school conditions: “Walkout: The True Story of the Historic 1968 Chicano Student Walkout in East L.A.”.
  https://www.democracynow.org/2006/3/29/walkout_the_true_story_of_the
- Information Slideshow http://www.slideshare.net/kryackey/chicano-movement-power-point-1

ART & ACTIVISM
- Los Four: A Retrospective Exhibition
  http://repository.library.csuci.edu/bitstream/handle/10139/5021/A%20Retrospective%20Exhibition.pdf?sequence=1
- Ruben Salazar Project
  http://rubensalazarproject.com/2012/04/17/mapping-salazars-life/
- UFW Oral histories
  https://libraries.ucsd.edu/farmworkermovement/medias/oral-history/
- Oral History with Carlos Almaraz
  https://libraries.ucsd.edu/farmworkermovement/media/oral_history/CARLOS%20DAVID%20ALMARAZ.pdf

THE CHICANO EXPERIENCE
- LA in the Zoot Suit Era (Discovery guide with teaching curriculum)
  http://research.pomona.edu/zootsuit/en/zoot-suit-la/
- Lowrider History https://msu.edu/~torresm2/ch10.html