Artistic Responses to the Gilded Era: Morris, Iannelli, and Torres

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Rethinking the Gilded Age & Progressivisms: Race, Capitalism, & Democracy, 1877-1920 NEH Summer Teacher Institute

By examining the work of three GAPE-era artists (Morris, Iannelli, and Torres), students will glimpse the historical tensions, economic opportunities, and challenges faced by artists/designers of the period.

The British artist, philosopher, and socialist William Morris founded the Arts and Crafts movement as a response to the inhuman working conditions of the Industrial Age and the poor design of the mass-manufactured objects of the Victorian era. Morris believed that individual human craftsmanship made both happier workers and better products. His aesthetic and political philosophies were influential even in the United States, and his philosophies and products (textiles and wallpapers) were adopted by progressives with means—including key social reformers such as Jane Addams. But meeting his exacting standards of individually crafted products meant his prices were beyond the means of the middle class. Although Morris was financially successful, he and his followers could never compete economically with mass manufacturing.

Subsequent artists, including Alfonso and May Iannelli, were inspired by the opportunities, forms, and innovations of the Industrial Age. They moved away from natural forms and the handmade to embrace the geometry of the machine age, applying these theories to graphic and product designs and creating a new visual vocabulary for the era.

The unfortunate by-products of the industrial era (waste and obsolescence) were the materials of a new generation of artists, as exemplified by the immigrant ceramic artist Jesus Torres, who worked out of Jane Addams's settlement, Hull-House. At Hull-House, the arts and crafts were used to build community amongst the immigrant community and create income opportunities for migrants. Torres used his ceramics knowledge in his collaboration with Chicagoans Miller and Kogan to renovate dilapidated urban housing, creating vibrant examples of Mexican Modernism from largely scavenged materials.

Students will examine slides of the artifacts to discern the socioeconomic influences that shaped the art and discuss. Studio art activities include creating a relief print emphasizing repetition, pattern, and simplification of shape and color. Mathematics students will analyze the prints and identify geometric relationships and vocabulary. Finally, students will write a reflection.

General Information	Grade Level: 8-12 Subject Area/Class: Studio Art (STEAM connection through manufacturing) Time Required: Flexible - 2, 45 min. lessons for academic content, 4-6 additional 45 min. lessons for studio production and reflection. Skills Taught: 1. Inference from primary sources about industrialization's influence. 2. Collaboration, discourse, critique, and discussion techniques. 3. Studio Art: Relief Printmaking, including pattern, repetition, composition, and color. Production methods for multiples. 4. Geometry: Lines of inference, rotation, translation, and reflection.
Introduction	By examining the work of three GAPE-era artists (Morris, Iannelli, and Torres), students will glimpse the historical tensions, economic opportunities, and challenges faced by artists/designers of the period. The British artist, philosopher, and socialist William Morris founded the Arts and Crafts movement as a response to the inhuman working conditions of the Industrial Age and the poor design of the mass-manufactured objects of the Victorian era. Morris believed that individual human craftsmanship made both happier workers and better products. His aesthetic and political philosophies were influential even in the United States, and his philosophies and products (textiles and wallpapers) were adopted by progressives with means—including key social reformers such as Jane Addams. But meeting his exacting standards of individually crafted products meant his prices were beyond the means of the middle class. Although Morris was financially successful, he and his followers could never compete economically with mass manufacturing. Subsequent artists, including Alfonso and May Iannelli, were inspired by the opportunities, forms, and innovations of the Industrial Age. They moved away from natural forms and the handmade to embrace the geometry of the machine era, applying these theories to graphic and product designs and creating a new visual vocabulary for the era. The unfortunate by-products of the industrial era (waste and obsolescence) were the materials of a new generation of artists, as exemplified by the immigrant ceramic artist Jesus Torres, who worked out of Jane Addams's settlement, Hull-House. At Hull-House, the arts and crafts were used to build community amongst the immigrant community and create income opportunities for migrants. Torres used his ceramics knowledge in his collaboration with

	Chicagoans Miller and Kogan to renovate dilapidated urban housing, creating vibrant examples of Mexican Modernism from largely scavenged materials. Students will examine slides of the artifacts to discern the socioeconomic influences that shaped the art and discuss. Studio art activities include creating a relief print emphasizing repetition, pattern, and simplification of shape and color. Mathematics students will analyze the prints and identify geometric relationships and vocabulary. Finally, students will write a reflection.
Institute Theme(s)	The American Dream
Learning Objectives	Studio Art Objectives: Patterned Relief Print 8th VA: Cr1.2.8 a. Collaboratively shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present-day life using a contemporary practice of art and design. Advanced HS Levels VA: Cr1.2.IIIa. Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices, following or breaking established conventions, to plan the making of multiple works of art and design based on a theme, idea, or concept. Advanced HS Levels VA:Cr2.1.III. Experiment, plan, and make multiple works of art and design that explore a personally meaningful theme, idea, or concept. Advanced HS Levels VA:Pr4.III. Critique, justify, and present choices in the process of analyzing , selecting, curating, and presenting artwork for a specific exhibit or event. Introductory HS Levels VA:CN10.1.I. Document the process of developing ideas from early stages to fully elaborated ideas. Intermediate HS Levels VA: CN10.1.II. Utilize inquiry methods of observation, research, and experimentation to explore unfamiliar subjects through art making.
Pre-Lesson Preparation	Build upon your basic knowledge of the history of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era by familiarizing yourself with the work of the three key artists in the lesson through reading and viewing the resource materials. Teachers incorporating the studio arts printmaking component should gather materials. Teachers can lead a simple printmaking exercise using paper, premade stamps, and stamp pads or a more elaborate relief print lesson as time, materials, and expertise allow.

	Alternatively, a ceramics lesson could be used as a studio connection. Geometry skills can be taught by incorporating mathematical vocabulary and analyses of the student art as linked in the resources
Lesson Activities	GAPE Daily Lesson Activities_Evans.docx
Assessment	1. Students will participate in discussion via a pair and share technique reporting to the class to answer guiding questions inspired by imagery in the slideshow. 2. Studio Art students will create a relief print inspired by Iannelli's methods that shows use of pattern, repetition, and color to express their response to a specific environment. 3. Geometry students will analyze the student art prints demonstrating vocabulary and mathematical competency. 4. All students will write a reflection discussing their reasons for selecting their shapes, colors, and composition. 5. All students will participate in a critique of the professional and student art projects.
Links to Resources	Artistic Responses to the Gilded Era: Morris, Iannelli, and Torres The Story of Cotton: Part 4: The Legacy of Indian Textiles DIY: Block Printing At Home | Fabric Printing Technique The Ancient Art of Jaipur Block Printing, and What It Means to India - The New York Times William Morris - The Revival of Handicraft Frederick Winslow Taylor, The Principles of Scientific Management, 1910 excerpts William Morris - Preface to Arts and Crafts Essays William Morris Chintzes - Laura's Beau William Morris and Wallpaper Design · V&A Rotary Screen Printing VS Roller Printing

	The Art of Alfonso and Margaret Iannelli | Chicago News | WTTW Adler Planetarium Sculptural Relief Panels | Artwork | Chicago Park District City of Chicago: Modernism's Messengers: The Art of Alfonso and Margaret Iannelli https://chicagodesignarchive.org/project/19c-19 Modernism's Messengers: The Art of Alfonso and Margaret Iannelli 'Everyday Modern' Explores Iannelli's Industrial Product Designs | Chicago News | WTTW Jesus Torres at Hull-House Kilns | Terra Foundation for American Art Review of Pots of Promise: Mexicans and Pottery at Hull-House, 1920-40 Glasner Studio Virtual Tour — Edgar Miller Legacy Jesús Torres & Mexican Traditional Handicraft — Edgar Miller Legacy Edgar Miller and the Handmade Home - CityFiles Press A Method for Creative Design | National Museum of African American History and Culture Fabric Printing with Multi-Sided Relief Blocks
Extension Activities (Optional)	Films: These classic titles expose the worst of the Industrial Age. *Modern Times*, Charlie Chaplin Director *Metropolis*, Fritz Lang Director Field Trips: Hull-House Museum - Chicago, Illinois trip Adler Planetarium - Chicago (for Iannelli building reliefs) Art Institute of Chicago (for Gilded Age art and textiles) Contextual Reading: "'The Decorator Works for the World!' Edgar Miller and early Twentieth Century Ideologies of the Artist-Designer" by Barbara Jaffee, Ph.D.

	https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5353cb51e4b0c64d5e6e0410/t/5dd6e01821c70d2a207af928/1574363175244/Jaffee_The+Decorator+Works+for+the+World.pdf "ART AND LIFE: THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT IN CHICAGO, 1897-1910" by BRUCE ROBERT KAHLER Dissertation retrieved from Purdue University.