

Art Masterpiece: *Silver on Black* by Jackson Pollock

Keywords: Abstract Expressionism,
Action Painting,
Tempera

Grade: 2nd

Activity: Marble-rolling Action
Painting

Month: November

Extras: word search



Meet The Artist:

- Jackson Pollock was born in Wyoming in 1912.
- He is best known for the huge paintings he made by splattering, throwing and dripping paint onto his canvas.
- To him, the important part of his art was how he did it. He liked to call his work **Action Painting**-He would tack his canvas to the floor and quickly walk around it while throwing, splattering and dripping his paint.
- He wanted people to see and feel the energy he used when he painted. His goal was to fill his paintings with movement, color and energy. Sometimes the paint created beautiful and colorful shapes, other times - there were no shapes at all. When a painting has no recognizable or natural objects in it, it is called **Abstract**. When abstract art represents a lot of emotions and feelings it is called **Abstract Expressionism**.
- Jackson died in a car accident in 1956. He was 44 years old.
- Today people still recognize his work and the original style he created.

Possible Questions

- How does this painting make you feel?
- What makes you feel that way? Do you think the artist felt that way?
- How many different colors do you see? How do the colors make you feel?
- Pick a line in the print-is it possible to follow it through the painting? Hard to tell where it starts, stops or starts again. Do you think Pollock planned out his art?
- Do you think Pollock used only a brush? What else would he paint with-where does it look that way?
- Why do you think he called his style of art action painting?

About the Work

- *Silver On Black* by Jackson Pollock is valued in the area of \$2 million dollars. The 21.25 x 15.75 inch painting is housed at the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown.

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- Pollock completed the work at his home in Long Island. Jackson did the painting with oil and metallic paint in 1950.

Activity: **Marble-rolling abstract painting**

Tell students that they will be creating an “action painting” in the style of Jackson Pollock who was nicknamed from his revolutionary style, “Action Jackson” and “Jack the Dripper.”

**** Troubleshooting Thoughts ****

Make sure the children don't tilt the box too much while they are rolling the marbles. Make sure volunteers save the boxes for the next class Art Masterpiece class.

Materials Needed: • Twenty-five 12” x 18” flat boxes; • Marbles; • Tempera paint: orange, yellow, green, and red; • 8 1/2” x 11” white construction paper; • Paper towels; • Newspaper.

Process:

1. Each child will receive a box with the 8 1/2” x 11” paper in it and a few marbles.
2. Have the children sign their name on the back before they get started.
3. The parent volunteers will go around the room and drip paint onto the student's sheet of paper one or two colors at a time.
4. The students can begin rolling the marbles across the box and sheet of paper at random.
5. They will see the lines made across the paper from the movement of the marbles.
6. When they are finished have the students place their “action painting” on newspaper to dry.
7. Collect the marbles in a container to rinse and clean.
8. Collect and store in classroom until the art walk.



Project Sample:

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Jackson Pollock Biography

<http://www.paralumun.com/jackson-pollock.htm>

Jackson Pollock was born January 28, 1912 in Cody, Wyoming, United States. In 1930, Pollock made the shift to New York. Here, Jackson enrolled in The Art Student's League. Pollock was then able to find work in the easel painting division of the Federal Government sponsored Works Project Administration. The first exhibition of Jackson Pollock took place in 1943 at the "Art of this Century Gallery". In 1949, Life Magazine did a feature story on Pollock. When one looks at the work of Jackson Pollock, we see the strong influence of Native American art. Both Pollock and Native artists used a similar process. The influence of Native artists on Pollock can be traced to his early days in Arizona, where he witnessed native lore, ceremonies and myths.

Jackson Pollock Biography:

Paul Jackson Pollock (January 28, 1912 - August 11, 1956) was a highly influential American artist. Pollock was an important figure in the abstract expressionist movement. Pollock gained both considerable fame and notoriety in his life. Art historians have thought of Jackson Pollock as a reclusive type artist. His personality was regarded as volatile and Pollock struggled with alcoholism. In 1945, Pollock married the artist Lee Krasner. She became an important influence on his career and also on the artist's legacy. Jackson Pollock died in a car crash. He was 44 years old.

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City gave a memorial retrospective exhibition in December 1956, in memory of Jackson Pollock. Then in 1967, they presented a more detailed exhibition. In 1998 and 1999, MoMA and at The Tate in London, honored the work of Pollock with large-scale retrospective exhibitions.

Jackson Pollock: An American Saga

Jackson Pollock was born in Cody, Wyoming in 1912. Pollock had five older brothers. His parents were Stella May McClure and LeRoy Pollock. His father was originally a McCoy, but later after his parents died and he was adopted by his neighbors, he took their surname. Jackson Pollock grew up in Arizona and Chico, California. In 1928, Jackson was expelled from high school. After that Jackson enrolled at Los Angeles' Manual Arts High School. But Pollock soon found himself expelled from here also. While on surveying trips with his father, Jackson Pollock experienced Native American culture. He moved to New York City in 1930 where he studied under Thomas Hart Benton at the Art Students League of New York. It is felt that Benton's rural American subject matter had a strong effect on Pollock's work. Pollock was then employed by the WPA Federal Art Project from 1935 to 1943.

Pollock married another important American painter, Lee Krasner, in October 1945. In November they shifted to what is now known as the Pollock-Krasner House and Studio in Springs on Long Island, New York. It was a wood-frame house and Pollock made the barn into a studio. It was there that Jackson Pollock perfected the technique of working spontaneously with liquid paint.

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In 1936 Pollock became introduced to the use of liquid paint at an experimental workshop operated in New York City by the Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros. Jackson Pollock later used paint pouring as one of several techniques on canvases of the early 1940s. After moving to Springs, Jackson started laying his canvases across the studio floor. From here, Pollock was able to develop what later became known as his "drip" technique. The drip technique required paint with a fluid viscosity. Pollock turned to synthetic resin-based paints called alkyd enamels, which, at that time, was considered novel medium. Jackson Pollock made use of hardened brushes and sticks to apply the paint. Unlike other artists who painted on an upright surface, Pollock was able to apply paint from all directions to the canvas.

In effect, Pollock was challenging the ways of how to paint.

It was during the 1940's, that Pollock observed Indian sandpainting demonstrations. Mexican muralists and Surrealist automatism also had strong influences on the style of Pollock. It can be said, that Pollocks style was both a mixture of controlled and uncontrolled influences.

From 1947 to 1950, Pollock's completed what has since been regarded as his best paintings. Sometime after 1951, Pollock's started using darker colors in his work. Around this time, Pollock created a collection on unprimed canvases that was painted in black. After this, pollock returned to color. He reintroduced figurative elements. Jackson Pollock made a shift to a commercial gallery. A great deal of interest was building for Pollock's work and demand grew from collectors.

Pollock started to number his paintings instead of giving them names because he did not want people to search for representational elements within his work.

In 1955 Pollock painted *Scent and Search* which proved to be his last two paintings. During 1956, Pollock did not paint at all. On August 11, 1956 at 10:15pm, Jackson Pollock died after he crashed his Oldsmobile convertible. Edith Metzger who was a passenger in the car was also killed in the accident. After Pollock's death, Lee Krasner managed his estate. Jackson Pollock was buried in Green River Cemetery in Springs. There is a large boulder marking his grave.