

**Painter's Palette Teaching Poster**



*Still Life With Parrots*

(Also known as *Elaborate Tabletop Still-Life with Foodstuffs, Exotic Animals, and Precious Objects*)

Jan Davidsz de Heem

Dutch, 1606-about 1684, active in Antwerp

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936

SN289

**\*Sunshine State Standards: Visual Arts (3-5)**

Skills and Techniques (VA.A.1.2)

Creation and Communication (VA.B.1.2)

Cultural and Historical Connections (VA.C.1.2)

Aesthetic and Critical Analysis (VA.D.1.2)

\*Standards as of 2005 and subject to change



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### **Introduction**

#### **Objectives:**

Students will:

1. Explore the expressive qualities in a painting.
2. Discover how the choice of color and light help establish the mood and style of the artwork.
3. Investigate and express how the combination of subject matter and sensory content establishes the expressive moment of the painting.

The Painter's Palette teaching poster is designed as a resource for classroom teachers to prepare students for a visit to The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art to experience the art galleries and participate in a Painter's Palette theme tour.

During the Museum tour, students will learn more about the Museum's collection of paintings and the use of color in establishing the mood or style of an artwork.

Color has a physical quality that powerfully affects the senses. It may help define an object, or it may stand in its own right. When we face a great expanse of color, whether it is a brilliant blue sky or a large painting in a museum, an initial and spontaneous thrill or mood might be experienced. The color speaks directly to our aesthetic sense. This moment precedes literal recognition. The objective of this teaching resource is to focus on this moment. In doing this, we aim to engage the student's visual power.

Prepare your student to explore the use of color in works of art. Introduce or review artists' palettes, primary and secondary colors, as well as hue, value, brightness, tint and shade.

#### **Explore Color**

Use this reproduction as an exercise in visual analysis. Use the suggested questions and observations as a guide. These questions will offer a variety of responses. Emphasize that student's perceptions are correct as long as they are willing to point out what they are describing in the reproduction and to give reason for their answers.

#### **Ask Students:**

- What is this picture about? What do you see?
- What color is used the most?
- How many different colors have been used?
- Is the general coloring of the painting: strong or weak, primary or secondary?
- How many different shades or tints or one color do you see?
- Can you point out where colors are repeated within the picture?
- Do the colors tell the time of day or season?
- Are there more light or more dark colors in the painting?
- Do the light areas of dark areas stand out most?
- Does the artist use color to indicate distance?



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Does the color used on a particular shape or surface make that surface look flat, rounded, or appear to have more than one side?

### **About the Art**

In the still-life painting, *Elaborate Tabletop Still-Life with Foodstuffs, Exotic Animals, and Precious Objects*, the artist Jan Davidsz de Heem has compiled delicious food, exotic birds, and luxurious goods from around the world. Some people would describe this scene as exotic because at the time that de Heem painted this in 1648 people had never seen many of these things. Merchants from the Netherlands (the country we call Holland today) were traveling to different parts of the world and bringing back marvelous things from nature- exotic birds, rare fruits, sea life and the beautiful objects of gold and silver and glass made by people from other civilizations. People were amazed and fascinated by the natural world as well as hand made objects and this interest is reflected in the painting of the time. Research on this painting has identified two exotic birds, ten insects, three different glasses, four different containers of wine and eleven kinds of fruit. Can you find them too?

### **About the Artist**

Jan Davidsz de Heem (pronounced yan davids day haym) was considered one of the best still-life painters of his time, and his works are highly admired and valued today. He was born in Utrecht (Netherlands) in 1606 but lived and worked in Antwerp (Flanders) for many years and died there in 1684.

He was the best known and most brilliant member of a large family of Dutch still-life painters. His father David de Heem, also an excellent still-life painter, was one of his earliest teachers. Other painters in the family were his brother, nephews and two sons, but none of them achieved his popularity and fame. The family was also part of his studio, and they assisted in working on some of the paintings.

When Jan Davidsz de Heem moved to Antwerp in 1635, he was influenced by the more exuberant styles of the Flemish painters, including Peter Paul Rubens. His compositions became more elaborate and colorful, and he developed the large and lavish still-life paintings of table settings and flower pieces that have made him famous. His works are in many museums.



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### Looking and Discussing

#### Initial Observation

Encourage students to describe the painting, the figures, the foreground, the background, and the objects and what they might symbolize.

#### Open Discussion

Begin an open discussion of the painting by asking students to share their impressions of the work and find visual evidence for their statements.

Use the following visual analysis questions to guide your looking:

#### Description: What do you see?

Tell students they must discover as much as they can about the painting through careful looking. Tell them to pretend they are a detective trying to find out information about the paintings for an important case.

##### Ask Students:

- Who made it?
- How is it made?
- What is the intention of the painting?
- What is the first thing you notice when you look at the painting?
- Does it tell you about a place or time? List everything that you see that tells us about this.

#### Analysis: How is the work organized?

This process is very detailed and technical. It is based on observations and facts. Pretend you are a scientist trying to find out information based on facts.

##### Ask Students:

- How do two different paintings compare?
- How are they similar and how are they different?
- How is the use of color important?
- What kind of emphasis is used in the painting?

#### Interpretation: What is happening?

Tell students they have to find out what the artist is trying to communicate. Interpretation appeals mostly to our sense and emotions. Ask students to pretend they are newspaper reporters to find out the answers.

##### Ask students:

- What is the message of the painting?
- What kind of mood or feeling is expressed in the painting?
- Make a list of all the words that could be used to express the mood found in the painting.



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### **Judgment:**

What do you think of the work of art?

Express your reaction to the painting. This process of evaluation is subjective based on your knowledge and experiences. Pretend you are an art critic judging the artwork.

### **Ask Students:**

- Does the painting communicate its intended message?
- Explain how this is accomplished.
- Do you like the painting? Why or why not?
- Do you think it is effective? Why or why not?



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### **Suggested Classroom Activities:**

#### **Explore Color Families**

Present a lesson on color families. Begin by conducting a science experiment during recess. Your test case will be another class on the playground! Ask the teacher of the class to line up the students so your class can study the effect of the colors the students are wearing. Line up your class parallel to the other class and a good distance away. Ask your students that following questions:

- Which color(s) do you notice first?
- Which color(s) jumps out at you?
- Which color(s) appears to go back or away?

#### **Create a Color Wheel**

Work with your students to construct their own color wheels. Have students color the families and label each family on a sheet of paper. Each color wheel should have a warm color family, a cool color family, and a neutral color family. Ask students to point out and name warm, cool, and neutral colors in their environment.

#### **Experiment With Color**

Provide students with small squares of different colored paper (i.e. red, yellow, green, white, gray, brown, and black.) Ask students to play with these scraps, placing the red piece next to the white piece, or the red next to the brown. Ask students to determine which color makes the red more vivid.

Next have students put the red on its opposite or complimentary color green. Ask students to explain how the different combinations affect their eyes. Invite students to think about and discuss the mood or feeling the combinations produce.



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### A Time Line from 1600 to 1800

A time line is a very useful device for graphically illustrating art history or any other kind of history because it gives students a visual representation of consecutive events.

To use a time line, a student must know how to read dates and understand their meaning. The length of the time line, as well as the span of the intervals, is determined by the subject and the period of history which it illustrates.

Since art can be considered a reflection of its time, it is important to study some of the events that occurred in the time period 1600-1800. Tell the students that they will make a time line. Tell the students that the paintings they will see on a tour of the Museum were painted approximately three hundred or more years ago. Invite your students to help construct a class time line.

### 1600-1800 The Baroque Era

Art historians have named this time period "Baroque." The Baroque era began in Rome at the dawn of the seventeenth century. It spread rapidly through Spain and her colonies, Flanders, Southern Germany, Austria, and France. Much of Baroque art is characterized by intense naturalism and direct emotional appeal.

#### 1605-1616

Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote*.

#### 1607

First English settlement in North America.

#### 1609

Galileo invents the telescope.

*You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him to find it for himself.*

#### 1609-1619

Johannes Kepler, astronomer and mathematician, establishes planetary system.

*In theology we must consider the predominance of authority; in philosophy the predominance of reason.*

#### 1611

King James Bible translated.

#### 1618-1648

Thirty Years' War.

#### 1620

The Pilgrims land at Plymouth Rock.



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### 1623-1662

Blaise Pascal, French scientist and philosopher.  
*Man's greatness lies in his power of thought.*

### 1628

William Harvey describes circulation of the blood.

### 1632-1677

Spinoza, Dutch philosopher.  
*"To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end in life".*

### 1642

Montreal founded.

### 1670

Minute hands first appear on watches.

### 1685

J.S. Bach and George Frederick Handel, German music composers, born.

### 1687

Sir Isaac Newton, scientist, develops law of gravity and spectral light theory.  
*"If I have ever made any valuable discoveries, it has been owing more to patient attention than to any other talent".*

### 1690

Steam engine invented.

### 1706

Benjamin Franklin, American statesman and inventor, born.

### 1707

United Kingdom formed.

### 1707-1778

Carolus Linnaeus, Swedish botanist.

### 1719

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

### 1720-1790 Rococo

Rococo refers to the art of the early eighteenth century, derived from the French *rocaille* (pebble), referring to the small stones and seashells used to decorate the interiors of grottoes.



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Such shell forms are the principal motifs in Rococo ornament. Rococo is pre-eminently a style of interior design, furniture, and accessories employing the characteristic delicate S-curve line. Paintings are characterized by lighter, pastel colors and delicate brush strokes.

### 1726

Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

### 1732

George Washington, later first president of the United States of America, born.

### 1743

Thomas Jefferson, later third president of the United States, born.

### 1756-1763

Seven Years' War: England and Prussia vs. Austria and France, called French and Indian War in America; French defeated in Battle of Quebec, 1769.

### 1769

James Watt patents steam engine.

### 1774

Priestley discovers oxygen.

### 1775

Antonio Vivaldi, Italian music composer, born.