

Hybrid Self-Portraits:

Collages Inspired by Elizabeth Angrnaqqaq

CREATED BY: Colin Young

TOPICS: Techniques for blending and creating texture with conte and/or chalk pastels; Facial proportions; Collage techniques; Representing aspects of one's personality in a self-portrait

SUBJECT(S): Visual Arts

GRADE(S): 6-8

UNIT DURATION: 2-3 lessons



Elizabeth Angrnaqqaq, *Untitled*, 1981, melton cloth, thread, wall hanging, 26 x 28 inches

OVERVIEW & CULMINATING TASK:

In this drawing and collage activity students think “beyond the horizon” of a traditional self-portrait as they create collages representing themselves with both human and animal features.

Students observe and discuss a textile work by Inuk artist Elizabeth Angrnaqqaq.

Students will learn about facial proportions and using drawing

tools such as pencils and conte to create a self-portrait. They will then cut up this portrait and use collage techniques to combine this self-portrait with animal features of their choice.

BIG IDEAS (What students will understand):

- Through art making, one's sense of identity and community continually evolves (Arts Education)
- Individual and collective expression can be achieved through the arts (Arts Education)

CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES (What students will do):

- Explore relationships between identity, place, culture, society, and belonging through arts activities and experience (Arts Education 6-8)



- Respond to works of art using one's knowledge of the world (Arts Education 6-8)

CONCEPTS & CONTENT (What students will know):

- Elements and principles of art and design including line, shape, and texture (Arts Education 6-8)
- Symbolism and metaphor to explore ideas and perspective (Arts Education 6-8)
- Ethical considerations and cultural appropriation related to the arts (Arts Education 6-8)

INQUIRY QUESTION(S) (What students will keep considering):

- What boundaries exist between the human and animal worlds?
- Are these boundaries imagined or real?
- How do beliefs about these boundaries differ across cultures and communities?
- How can we blur these boundaries in a self-portrait?

FIRST PEOPLES' PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING:

- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

CORE COMPETENCIES (suggested questions for reflection):

- COMMUNICATION: What animal did you choose to include in your hybrid self-portrait? What aspects of your personality does this animal represent?
- THINKING: What do you think you did well in creating your hybrid self-portrait? What would you do differently if you were to make it again?
- PERSONAL AND SOCIAL: What strengths and abilities does the animal you chose to include in your hybrid self-portrait have? How do these connect to your own strengths and abilities?



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MATERIALS & TECHNOLOGIES:

- digital Images of artwork by Elizabeth Angrnaqquaq (see end of document)
- digital projector & computer
- white 11" x 17" sheet of paper (1 per student)
- off-white or manila 11" x 17" sheet of paper (1 per student)
- drawing pencils with soft lead: B to 4B
- erasers
- black and brown conte sticks (or chalk pastels)
- scissors
- glue sticks
- OPTIONAL: photocopier
- OPTIONAL: pre-printed reference images of animals

RESOURCES & REFERENCES:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Angrnaqquaq

DISCUSSION & ACTIVITIES (Teacher Action/Student Action):

CLASS DISCUSSION:

- What is a self-portrait?
- What boundaries exist between the human and animal worlds?
- Are these boundaries imagined or real?
- How do beliefs about these boundaries differ across cultures and communities?
- What is a hybrid? (a thing made by combining two different elements; composed of mixed parts)

VIEW AND DISCUSS ARTWORK BY ELIZABETH ANGRNAQQUAQ:

- Describe the shapes and figures that the artist has included in this artwork.
- Can you see any hybrid figures? What kinds of features has she combined to create these figures?
- To further explore the theme of hybridity, transformation, and self-portraiture, you could optionally view paintings by Frida Kahlo, as well as examples of transformation masks by Kwakwaka'wakw artists

ABOUT ELIZABETH ANGRNAQQUAQ (from Wikipedia):

- Elizabeth Angrnaqquaq (1916–2003) was an innovative Canadian Inuk textile artist active from the 1970s to early 2000s.
- Angrnaqquaq was born in 1916 in the Northwest Territories, Canada in a traditional nomadic camp. She lived a traditional Inuit lifestyle until she and her family moved to Baker Lake, Northwest Territories (now in Nunavut) in the 1950s to avoid poverty and starvation. In Baker Lake, Angrnaqquaq explored textile and mixed-media art practices where she used

stitching as a method for creating figures in fabrics.

- After establishing an art practice in which Angrnaqquaq explored figures of landscapes, animals, and textures through herringbone stitching, she began showing her works at Art Institutions around Canada.

DRAWING SELF-PORTRAIT:

- Discuss facial proportions with class
- Have students draw self-portraits on white 11"x17" sheets of paper using drawing pencils with soft lead (B to 4B), adding details and texture using black and brown conte or chalk pastels
- Students should fill the space of the paper and include both their face and shoulders in their drawing (see student example)



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CREATING HYBRID SELF-PORTRAIT:

- Have students choose an animal that they would like to blend with their self-portrait
- Students may look for images of this animal or use printed reference images provided
- Students may choose to have their drawn self-portrait photocopied or they can use their original drawing for the next step
- Students cut up their original self-portrait and combine it with drawn features of their chosen animal to create a new hybrid self-portrait on the manila or off-white sheet of 11"x17" sheet of paper
- Students use brown and black conte (or chalk pastels) to add details to their original drawing and to represent features of their chosen animals
- Encourage students to fill the entire space of their manila or off-white sheet of



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11"x17" paper. Students may also extend features beyond the edges of the paper (see student examples).

SUGGESTED DESCRIPTIVE FEEDBACK:

- Nora contributes her ideas about works of visual art to the group and asks thoughtful questions about artist's intent, technique, and materials.
- Nora using techniques for drawing a self-portrait using pencil and conte considering facial proportions, and making thoughtful use of shading, texture, and line.
- Nora makes use of metaphor in an artwork by choosing an animal to represent aspects of her own personality.



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