



Maps and Mapmaking for the Artist

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Introduction

Recently I bought myself a new sketchbook. The book sat on the passenger seat of my car as I drove home; the hard black cover securely holding the unblemished paper inside. I felt as though it was staring at me. I could not help but keep glancing at the book, sitting there on the seat - so many possibilities. At 5pm in Charlotte, there is no easy way home - no matter where you live. Traffic reports on the radio may try to help - but they end up sending everyone on the 'alternate route' - creating another cluster. But that day was not nearly so aggravating because I had a travel companion. I opened the book and began 'doodling' - imagining myself in a million places other than where I was. Just when I thought I was going nowhere fast in that traffic nightmare, I ended up 'traveling' everywhere. I easily filled the blank page with images and designs of the world outside this traffic nightmare. What a great start to my summer sketchbook. Or so I thought.

The next few days that same sketchbook sat on my table, waiting. There is nothing more intimidating. I tried to ignore it. Each time I attempted to begin marking the page - I heard a doubtful voice questioning what it was I was attempting to produce. What was that 'thing', which only a few days ago, allowed the endless possibilities of my imagination to flow so freely? Surely the aggravation of being stuck in traffic was not my only source of inspiration?

There have been similar situations and many frustrating days for me as an art teacher when I have asked my students to brainstorm in their sketchbooks and the results proved far from inspiring, other days when ideas fill pages and pages of the crisp white paper. No doubt, art making is hard. To be inspired, to create innovative marks on a page, and to confront personal censure are difficult challenges for artists and teachers alike. It is exactly these challenges that I want to confront in my unit that will use maps and mapmaking as a catalyst for art making.

As I read the outline for this seminar I was immediately struck by the similarities of the challenges of the early explorers/mapmakers and that of art making. The world for them must have appeared both exhilarating and intimidating. The risk these early explorers took combined a spirit of adventure, a knowledge (limited as it was) or sense of place and a great deal of courage and conviction. I believe the nature of art making to be similar. Of course, it does not hurt that the very nature of maps are visual tools! Maps make use of all the elements of art - line, shape, color, texture, value, form, and space- the basic building blocks for a work of art. It is here where I plan to begin my unit.

The very notion of creating works that are both personal and expressive is not an easy concept to teach. My students are obsessed with final products and seeming talented, creative or original. They are quick to identify others in the class as more or less talented than themselves. In doing so they are missing out on so much of what art making is and what it can reveal. The very notion of talent as it is defined (a natural ability to do something well) contradicts the art making process. It is important that they understand that it is the process, the skills that are developed, that will reveal the elusive creative and original artist. It is my intention that this unit serves as part of a larger practice within my classroom to get students to see value in their own voice.

Background information

I have accepted a position at a school that currently exists only as a pile of cement blocks and a few scattered administrative offices near the site. The new Mallard Creek High School is located in the Northwest section of Mecklenburg County, which in our district is one and the same with our city, Charlotte. I am providing background information for the whole district, because I do not have any demographics on the students who will be attending Mallard Creek H.S. Current (non-magnet) student assignment is based on geographic location - neighborhood schools. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District encompasses more than 133,000 students in grades K-12. Nearly half (45.5%) of the students in the district qualify for free or reduced lunch, the federal standard for measuring poverty. CMS is experiencing, on average growth of about 4,000 students per year. Most of this growth is evidenced in the northern and southern portions of the county.

I will be teaching advanced studio (a concentration of drawing and painting), AP art history, and ceramics. This unit is specifically designed for advanced studio art students (Art III, IV, and V). I teach my studio course adhering to the discipline based art education perspective. Instruction includes areas of aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and studio production. I know through experience in teaching upper level art students that it is imperative to provide a variety of artworks and learning strategies that address the ideas and techniques being discussed. It is also a logical and obvious way for students and teachers to make interdisciplinary connections

Objectives

I have developed this unit with an attempt to capture my students' innate spirit of adventure and desire to understand their world. Through a series of 'personal geographies' - or works of art that map their past and future lives- we will explore the history of maps and mapmaking. This unit is designed with four specific arts competency goals in mind.

The first goal is predominately review for students (who are generally bringing two or more year's of art instruction with them into this class) (NC3). The students will organize the components of a work into a cohesive whole through knowledge of organizational principles of design and art elements. In an advanced studio class, where students achieve artist-like status in their mind/ego far before it's time - this process cannot be emphasized enough! At all stages of art making and with all levels of experience, there is a need to recognize the value of the process. "The function of the overwhelming majority of your artwork is simply to

teach you how to make the small fraction of your artwork that soars. One of the basic and difficult lessons every artist must learn is that even failed pieces are essential"(Bayles & Orland 5).

The second competency goal in this unit involves the development of critical and creative thinking skills and perceptual awareness necessary for understanding and producing art (NC1). A large portion of the assessment for this unit will come from the developments that occur in the students' sketchbooks. They will explore the unique properties and potential of materials and learn techniques for working with each material. The assessment will look for those deliberate choices of media and technique and the relationship to their potential expressive nature.

The third and most direct competency goal I will be focusing on in this unit is choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter and ideas to communicate intended meaning in artworks(NC4). This includes but is not limited to personal experience. Throughout this unit, I will be using the phrase 'personal voice' to describe this objective. I will be using contemporary issues and artists as well as historical events and images showing maps and mapmaking as a catalyst for helping students develop a deeper understanding of the ideas presented. This will serve as foundation and build their confidence as they begin to construct ideas and opinions. This then also ties in with a related goal (NC7), in which the learner will perceive connections between visual arts and other disciplines. The foundation of this lies in one simple belief. I believe in order to formulate original, creative, and thoughtful works, one has to experience the subject holistically. "If art is about self, the widely accepted corollary is that art making is about self expression. And it is- but that is not necessarily all it is. . . (I)in making art you declare what is important" (Bayles & Orland 108).

Rationale

This unit is going to center on concepts of the known and unknown world. This can become complicated depending on what philosophy you choose to employ. However, I don't want to overcomplicate this idea because students often shut down when they think things are beyond their capability. So we will make very factual interpretations here and deal with distortions as they might arise. For instance, the known world is what their name is, what school they attend, where they live, what flavor ice cream they like best, their favorite hair color and so on. The unknown world asks questions about college, what career they will have, will they get married, and places of travel. There are also unknowns when we consider concepts such as talent and creativity. These concepts of the known and unknown are meant to provide students with a way to reflect on ideas about discovery and recognition in the world they live in.

Maps reflect a great deal about the cultural ideals of their time. They are " the graphic representations that facilitate a spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes, or events in the human world" (Woodward - geography.wise.edu). Maps don't only show continents and oceans- there are maps of heaven and hell, mythological places, speculative maps, and maps that attempt to represent the completely abstract, like a map of the soul. All maps are thematic, personal maps even more so. Maps have their own inherent visual qualities of tone, value, and density. Maps also make use of such dominant elements as line and color. In this sense, maps make use of both the literal and conceptual make-up of a work of art.

What ways do we use maps? How do they define their subject? How do they define what is not know or cannot be seen? How do they lie? These questions will help students consider the content of the maps they study, as

well as the potential expressive qualities of the map as a medium.

As opinionated and individual as my students believe themselves to be, their experiences are still limited. Their individualism, especially in the teenage years that I have them, is merely a veil for separation from their parents. They have yet to establish their own worldview, and identify with typical notions of teenage rebellion. As a result, their ability to interpret and express personal beliefs is often as limited.

Pushing them to see beyond trite or obvious imagery in an attempt to express their ideas will be made easier with the study of the characteristics of maps that I have identified. By juxtaposing what is a real, personal experience, and what is not real but is felt, both mapmaker and student can claim a 'personal voice' in their work. Developing a point of view using maps can spark students to both a greater sense of artistic expression and a better sense of who they are in relation to the world.

I will accomplish this very broad goal by doing several things. First, I will need to address conceptually the 'known and unknown' as it relates to how mapmakers and artists illustrate the world they live in. It may be beneficial to clarify just what I mean by this although I will cover it more thoroughly in the lessons and strategies section of this unit.

Student understanding of what they 'know' of the world they live in will likely be the very literal- people, places and things. So I might start the lesson by asking them what things do they absolutely know? This will spawn a certain type of discussion that can clarify what the known world is. What is 'unknown' is a bit more abstract and will no doubt be a concept that will take a little longer to evolve in a discussion with my students. The moment they leave the classroom could be a potential unknown or it could just be a place they have never been. The unknown could also allude to historical events that they don't know much about. The unknown could also be about experimental techniques and media in art making. It is important to recognize is that this metacognitive process, the self-discovery of what they think about the worlds both unknown and known is essential to students' sense of who they are and why they think the way they do. Without some realization of this their artwork ends up lacking the very distinction they desire.

I am anticipating beginning this unit with a lesson where students will illustrate an experience they have had in relation to finding their way to or around this new school. For example, the map I used to find the school for the first time did not show the street it's on! This is a very tangible subject and one they will be encouraged to think about in the very literal sense but with the scope of venturing into the personal and expressive nature of art making. Students will be provided with census data reports, maps and articles from local publications that identify specific and technical data on the growth in the Charlotte area. What are the effects of such rapid growth, who keeps track of it and how? What are district boundaries and how do they effect the population of the school? What are some of the positive effects on the community in regard to this local building boom and what are some of the negative effects on, for example, the environment?

Seven years ago I was in a position much like I am in now. I was part of a team of teachers that opened a new high school. The experience provided good insight into the kinds of students that step up and become leaders - that is, those who set the tone for the school and help create a specific school culture. I am in the unique position to offer a perspective to my students that will encourage them to consider themselves in a frontier. Students attending this school will inevitably have feelings about their placement in a school with no tradition - no established football team - an empty trophy case - a vast building filled with uncertainty. What elements help establish traditions? If there are no established traditions - what will be the course for creating them? How will events be interpreted and recorded? Who will play a role in establishing and recording them and will the process be inclusive of all stakeholders?

It is interesting to think of those qualities in the context of influential people and recorders of ancient history. It is my intention that this unit will, in part, expose students to the many ways artists attempted to define and understand the world they lived in. Imparting these tools, students can begin to analyze and interpret their world more fully.

Works of study - Ancient Maps

Ancient Greeks seemed to have a deep desire to make all things rational. The Greek word for universe became *cosmos*, meaning, "order." As the Sumerians and later Babylonians first pursued the heavens pattern and movement, they learned to gauge the passing of time and when to prepare for the onset of the seasons. This was not enough for the Greeks; their belief was a much larger capacity for understanding that would enable them to understand the nature of the Earth (Wilford 19). International trade throughout the Greek Isles inspired many of the achievements in cartography. In fact, it was the Greeks who first reasoned the Earth being round and then attempted to measure its circumference. The maps of this time begin with the Ptolemy. He wrote of geography as "a representation in pictures of the whole known world together with the phenomena which are contained therein" (Wilford 30). I think it worth asking whether or not he was attempting to link the known with the unknown, even as the known tapered off into hypothetical regions, such as the Horn of Africa. In Ptolemy's world map, which was republished in 1482 (none of the originals survive), we see the world as he knew it. Europe, Africa, and Asia were the only continents.

Prior to this influx of science and understanding, mythology and religion played an important role in explaining the unknown. In such, the creation of the world was explained with descriptions of beings physically like us but with powers beyond our grasp. Gaea ('mother' Earth) was formed from light and day. Robert Graves attempts to describe the nature of such powers. "The moon's three phases of new, full, and old recalled the matriarch's three phases of maiden, nymph (nubile woman), and crone. Then, since the sun's annual course similarly recalled the rise and decline of her physical powers- spring a maiden, summer a nymph, winter a crone - the goddess became identified with seasonal changes in animal and plant life; and thus with Mother Earth who, at the beginning of the vegetative year, produces only leaves and buds, then flowers and fruits, and at last ceases to bear" (Bernard). The result of such oral traditions is of course that they provide a plethora of work for artisans of the time. These stories are unlike the literal and scientific 'cosmos' Ptolemy represented and it is this dichotomous relationship between representing what we know and what we do not know lies at the heart of this unit's design.

Presenting this abbreviated Greek history to my students provides an introduction to the physical world as it is first explored. This introduction will be used to help students consider things about their own world that they do not know or have never experienced. The imaginative and creative storytelling of the Greeks will be the catalyst for their own exploration of the unknown. Building an understanding of the many dimensions (i.e. philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of the human experience is one of the standards for high school English. The opportunity to work with English teachers who often use Greek mythology in both literary analysis and expository writing ties in directly with the goals of this unit. Through this interdisciplinary link, my students will have the capacity to identify connections, similarities and differences between the visual arts and other disciplines (NC7.01).

Consider those relationships in the Middle Ages - a time when scientific inquiry was all but absent, when oral traditions were the most prevalent means of sharing information. From the fourth to the fourteenth century, attempts to understand unknown worlds often lead to fictional storytelling at its most bizarre and even grotesque. " The *Mappaemundi* is from the Latin *mappa*, a tablecloth or napkin, and *mundus*, the world. The

term can apply to any map of the world" (Wilford 54). These maps were produced in relatively large numbers from the eight through the mid-fifteenth century. Until relatively recently, they were considered "amusing relics of dark-age ignorance and held up to ridicule" (Johnson). Of course as a function of this unit, we are looking at these maps with the notion that they exist as windows into the cultural values of the period, and we can learn a great deal.

I have become particularly fascinated with these *mappaemundi* and will use a number of them in this first section of this unit (contemporary artists make up the majority of the second section). This is not to suggest that maps from the Renaissance, maps from non-European based cultures, or maps from more current world histories, could not be used for this same unit. At one point in the development of this unit I considered using celestial maps and addressing the same ideas of representation of the known and unknown. I also came across a number of maps from Asia that would also serve as good illustrations of this theme.

The perspective of the medieval mapmaker was very different than that of the Greek. Most of the mapmakers were monks and were accountable to the Catholic Church. All reflect Christ at the top of the map (East), and many contain a message, which attempts to deal with the contrast between human and divine time. The iconography and topography of these maps reveal a message not of physical exactness, but of a divine and beautiful world. Most of the maps of the middle ages were circular, though in no way was this based on scientific reasoning. The circle was the most common shape of medieval maps because it is a reflection of Christian doctrine. The city of Jerusalem is notably placed at the center of the majority of these maps.

The Hereford World map, ca.1290 is one of the finest examples of the period and the largest surviving medieval world map. It is believed to have originally served as an altarpiece. The map was likely assembled in England, because of the accurate details of British topography (Barber). It must have been an expensive enterprise, judging from the fine parchment, extensive inscriptions and decorations. When we first look at this map of the ancient world, we recognize those things that identify it as a map (as we know maps to be today). There are 13th century towns identified in detailed illustrations, architectural sites that are recognizable today exist on this map. The map appears to give a sense of direction and space. Rivers and cities are labeled. In fact, the travels of the Apostles and pilgrimage routes have even been identified. Clearly, the artist who created this map had access to the reports brought back by travelers. This has all the markings of a really useful map.

Look a bit more closely, more carefully. Within the map there are strange and almost ominous creatures. They imply uncertainty. Why do they exist? In an otherwise perfectly beautiful and vaguely realistic world, there is a sense that is reality falling apart. If the map was not meant to present a geographically accurate image, what was its purpose? This question is not easily answered and seems to provoke further, more abstract questions about the world we live in.

The theme of the Last Judgment is predominately illustrated at top (East) of this map. Those who are saved and those who are damned bear witness to Christ. The image is both dark and fearful. The map of the world is held down with "four thongs containing letters which together spell out 'MORS', or death" (Barber 60). The four cardinal points are marked by bizarre looking creatures and wind, appears as the head of an animal. Other mythical creatures abound this map on land and sea. Mermaids, unicorns and dragons surround a headless man in Africa. These images are difficult to see because of the age and condition of the map, yet they imply a foreboding feeling of the lands and seas beyond.

It is a theme that seems to exist throughout time and one that we all have experienced. In an otherwise recognizable and comfortable space, you feel that certain something. It may or may not be a tangible

'something', though it could be. I know as a student on the first day of school, just making it to the right class on time can bring great relief. But then reality changes, there is no one you know in the class. What do you do? Images are powerful ways to help us explore and define ways to understanding so much of our world. They can provide a sense of comfort, control (in an uncertain world), and faith. Using historical references in a studio art setting provides me with the tools that will help my students' identify the many possibilities that exist.

The Ebstorf World map ca. 1284 was one of the largest maps of the Middle Ages and was drawn on thirty goatskins hides that were sewn together. Like the Hereford map, this was a public work of art and was derived from the same Classical and ancient biblical sources. There is a much different tone set in this work. No longer is the body of Christ presiding over our world from the outside, here the body of Christ *is* the whole world "in an attempt to symbolize His experience on earth. . .the hands and feet emerge from the map with the rivers and seas serving as His blood vessels" (Barber 58).

This is a more hopeful view that is supported by the rather playful depictions of the creatures in the lands and seas beyond. What does this view of the world tell us about this artist? Six years and just a few lands away, we get a sense of understanding that is very different. In the Ebstorf map, we get a sense that the artist feels confident in depicting the world as he knows it, a place of great comfort, within 'the body of Christ'. Like the Hereford, the Ebstorf map has us consider our own perspective and how that can shape the world we create for ourselves.

There is a sense that the early mapmakers were caught between science and their spiritual beliefs as they attempted to render their world. On one hand, we have the images presented on the cathedral walls that were meant to show the grandeur of Creation. On the other hand, we have the real and scientific attempt to define the physical world. References to creatures beyond the world of the known have been tied to Pliny the Elder and Solinus, who were Roman writers of the early part first and third centuries. They wrote extensively on these images, often placing their strange and monstrous creatures in factual geographic locations. We can read tales of griffons in Asia, one-legged men in India with feet so large they often doubled as a parasol. In Africa, Solinus writes about ants as big as mastiffs and rivers that boiled over from the heat of the region, where temperatures were hotter than fire.

The belief in (or images of) such monsters continued to be seen on maps into the eighteenth century. This was in part, a result of those powers within the church - those who commissioned such works- who did not want dispute the veracity of these descriptions. It is thought that these Christian thinkers concerned themselves with more spiritual matters. Saint Francis warned, "There are many brothers who strive to acquire knowledge. . .Those brothers whom curiosity drives to science will find, on the Day of Judgement, that their hands are empty" (Wilford 44).

The stories and subsequent illustrations of strange animals and monstrous races literally impacted, for many centuries, the explorer's attempts seek a truer picture of reality. Why leave home when such a rich resource for images there? How much does what we read and hear influence our perspective on those things we have not personally experienced? It is just this kind of fantasy that my student's are fascinated with and should be a great point of discussion. It is this kind of analysis and interpretation that they will be asked to put into their own artwork.

While the past two examples I have provided date relatively close together (within six years), it is by no means an idea that cannot be applied to more contemporary mapmakers. In fact, we can fast forward the mapmaker as a scientist and artist into the twenty-first century and open the door to the ways in which our

modern world is revealed through maps. This is really a continuation of what we could describe as subjective-type mapping, the main difference being intent of the artist. The contemporary works I will discuss were intended to function in the world of modern art. Here, as modern art, we are confronted with questions about our understanding, interpretation, and rational of the world. Modern artists are using maps to question what we know in the scientific and political world.

Contemporary maps

Jaune Quick -to -see Smith is an active member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation and an Indian rights advocate. Her work directly addresses the issues of race, politics, the environment, and biculturalism. In the painting *Indian Country Today*, 1996, she collaged newspaper clippings on these contemporary topics and then overlays the iconographic contours of the United States. The borders and names of the states are applied with a wash-like technique - completing the transformation of a land formally roamed and named by other inhabitants. They are recognizable, but upon closer inspection, the layers reveal another truth.

Modern British artist Simon Patterson takes this idea of what we know through such as the recognizable image of the London Underground Map, and in a subversive move, challenges our "spatial orientation and formations of identity" (the-artists.org) In his work, *The Great Bear*, the Underground Map becomes something else; tube riders travel among figures in popular culture and history - with transfers to comedians, newscaster, and saints- through the end of the twentieth century. It is up to the viewer to make connections between these people and the development of identity. How do we learn about people we have never even met? What kinds of associations do we make in an attempt to 'get to know them'?

Joyce Kozloff 's works from a 1995 exhibit entitled *Crossed Purposes* explore mapmaking and the human elements that are hidden with in maps. The work is a richly layered maps that shows actual continents and oceans. These works are textured and decorative, inscribed with quotes from popular culture that reflect on the ideas of and the effects of colonization. Her intent is to discover, reveal and interpret the world and the exploits of the empires within it. In another work entitled *Targets*, this concept of empires exploitations upon the world becomes an idea in which you are literally surrounded. *Targets*, is a walk-in globe whose interior is lined with aeronautical charts of the countries the United States has bombed since 1945. The map becomes a power political statement, unavoidable to the viewer within it. The 'personal voice' in Kozloff's work is strong. The subtle nature of the images allows a place for reflecting of our role in matters larger than our own personal space.

In the recent work of Matthew Cusick, we see antique maps that are reconfigured to look like the superhighways of today. This juxtaposition and layering of maps from early US textbooks provide a subtle commentary on America's infrastructure. The thickly layered maps reconfigure the landscape into a web of roads, which have destroyed the once vast frontier and enable the consumption of fuel.

All of these maps (ancient and contemporary) employ line and color in varying degrees of intensity and order. The ancient maps often used a flattened or twisted perspective to render a particular image with as much accuracy and detail a possible. Modern artists like Matthew Cusick have taken advantage of the inherent visual qualities of tone, value, and density to emphasize depth within the compositional space. These and other elements within maps hold great possibility when using them in an artistic manner. The following lessons explore some of these possibilities.

Lessons and strategies

Each of the lessons described in this unit will include a sketchbook and 'process journal' component. As stated earlier, the process of art making is a principal part of this unit. For the sake of organization and clarity I will label lessons as 'process journal', sketchbook, and the culminating assignment as 'final work.'

For a number of years, I have been working with my students in what I call 'process journals.' The idea is simple and the results, spectacular. The book entitled *A Humument*, by Tom Phillips (1987) is the source for this idea. The author purchased an old Victorian novel from a used bookstore and proceeded to treat each page with different art materials and techniques. In doing so, he transforming each page in the novel, *A Human Document* into richly decorated, and individual works of art.

I require my students to bring to class an old book (any old, hardcover discarded book will do, but it is recommended that the pages have limited illustrations or photographs which tend to be distracting). The book becomes a 'process journal' as we paint, draw, collage, and even tear pages. An aspect of this 'process journal' that makes it different from the traditional sketchbook is the inclusion of the text that is already on the page. Applying an otherwise flat or translucent material onto a page full of text, adds a new depth and dimension (both literal and often symbolic) to the page. The original text may or may not be revealed in the end, though quite often it becomes an integral part of the design. The possible uses and adaptations of such a book are vast. The journal is a source of artistic innovation and inspiration in the difficult field of art making. I have found, more often than not, my students are more attached to their 'process journals' than they are some the final products they create.

Lesson: Travel experience. Mixed media.

The goal for this lesson is to have students identify and apply contrast in both the writing and art making. This lesson will also introduce students to the unit goal (NC 4) in which a range of subject matter and ideas will be explored to communicate intended meaning in art.

As you read the following sketchbook and process journal assignments, note that they will be happening at the same time. I will break the ninety-minute class into two parts and these activities will be completed over a few days.

Sketchbook

Students will be asked to write a descriptive narrative about an experience they've had traveling in and or around the school campus. (Traveling is defined for this assignment as going from here to there!) This narrative can be as broad in its scene as my own example of madly trying to find the road this new school was built on, on a map of Charlotte that did not even have the road it's on charted; or as specific as trying to find a certain classroom on the first day of school.

A strategy for getting art students to complete any 'non-art-making-product' in the studio is through modeling. I will begin to tell my story, emphasizing adjectives that help set the tone to my story. As I am telling the story, I will be asking students to jot down adjectives I use that helped set the tone of the story. This will help them quickly focus in on the thing I most want them to do in their own story. Once this story has been told and a list created, the class will discuss what they thought the tone was. I will lead a discussion on how in writing;

tone invariably influences the image that is pictured in our mind.

Student will be asked to take a few minutes to discuss his or her own travel experience with each other. Finding time for students to casually discuss personal events such as this is an essential part of the creative process. Not only does this allow them a certain level of freedom from teacher lead instruction, it subconsciously creates a dialogue within themselves about tone, sequence, and visual references. This period of open discussion is monitored closely for on-task conversation and timed, usually with music playing. When the music stops, student will be prompted to write their narrative.

I will introduce *The Allegory of the Cave*, a story found in Plato's work, *The Republic* as a way to introduce contrast (in writing and in art). This story is one that I have used with art students on other occasions and feel will work well here. The story does a great job placing the reader deep inside the world within the cave. The human experience as Plato saw it provides a great parallel for this unit's exploration of the known and unknown. What is the mood or tone of the story? What kinds of art elements would visually describe this mood? Does the story imply the use of color or is it black and white? Are the lines severe or soft edges and what kind of space is implied - deep or shallow? If we were to change certain adjectives, can we change the tone of the story? (Provide an example sentence here for students to work with) What visual elements should then be changed? I have a number of illustrations of this story from a variety of sources (including online image searches) and will use them to model how artists have illustrated the tone of this work (with particular emphasis on contrast).

Students will trade their story with a partner. The partner will list the adjectives used and will briefly describe the tone of the story. Upon returning each other's stories, the writer will decide if the tone that was interpreted by the reader is in fact, one they intended. They will be given time to change these narratives if they want to. It is fine to embellish the story, the actual experience itself is not so important. Students will be asked to select two or three of the most visually interesting sections of their narrative and create illustrations of them using pencil or other 'dry' media (this will likely be a homework assignment). I use the term illustration very loosely here - there is no design criteria other than the final image should show the viewer a scene from the narrative.

I use the term open-ended drawings stringently with my students; if I'm not careful I will end up with all Japanese animation - every time. I make sure to send them off with some specific objectives in mind. In this case, emphasis will be placed on creating strong visual contrast with the material they choose.

Process Journal

There are number of collage techniques that will be introduced to students for this assignment. I will provide one example here that will likely be new to most high school students. There are of course, other collage techniques that can and will be used, but for the sake of this entry, I will describe one and cite in my bibliography books that use techniques suitable for high school art students.

Students will be provided with photocopied maps of the school building, road maps of the surrounding neighborhood, and maps of the city of Charlotte. Using these images, students will be introduced to the process of gel transfers. A gel transfer derives its name from the transfer of an image from paper onto the surface of the acrylic gel. The resulting image is translucent. The transfers will be organized and glued on the pages of the process journal. The result will be a text page with an overlay of the map. This may look very busy and even flat - and I would agree that this step alone is not the best use of the transfer image - but remember the function of the process journal is to explore different media and its potential expressive

qualities. There will be opportunity for student to explore design solutions as well as incorporate color and additional layers of media that will work with the gel transfer to create contrast and depth on the page.

Final work

The final work will be a minimum 18"x24" and should take five to seven class periods to complete. Part review and part introduction, the works of the contemporary artists described in the rational section of this unit will be analyzed in a slide presentation. The class will discuss the content, tone, contrast, and the manipulation of media of these works as they begin to formulate a plan for their own final piece. This final work is a culmination of the activities done in both their sketchbook and their process journals. Students will be asked to incorporate a variety of techniques including drawn, painted, and collaged images in the final work, which will visually narrate the travel story they first wrote about.

Lesson: Symbolism - decipher the key to your map. Illustration. (Color Pencil)

Every art teacher I know struggles with trying to get all students to complete a work of art at the same time. I am certainly no different. On a day that we have a scheduled critique I discretely keep my fingers crossed as students pin up their final products, desperately hoping I did not rush them or that the one or two students who work at a snail's pace found time to get the work done. My solution is twofold. I always run 'in process' critiques during the working stages of a final project. Students get a fresh perspective on the work they are doing and we can all keep up with how much time is needed to get the work done. The second strategy I use is to slowly introduce ideas and concepts (usually as a warm up exercise during the first part of the class) for a new assignment, as they get closer to finishing what they are working on. This allows those students who work more quickly some additional time to draw or experiment with new materials and techniques. In the case of this lesson, they will be asked to create symbols that represent places in the world they know and symbols that represent contemporary issues in the world (they know). The latter is a bit ambiguous and will be clarified as you read further; I will provide example drawings of both to students as they begin working. Magazines, books and maps will be used extensively in this lesson, a good supply of each is necessary.

The idea for this illustration is to describe the world today, according to your personal truth. It is ultimately a commentary (personal voice), which reflects the world that is known by the artist.

To begin this map illustration, students are going to be sent on a scavenger hunt. They will be asked to research maps from the middle ages. In particular, they will be looking for exotic and bizarre creatures that are so prevalent on the *mappaemudi*. The stories and subsequent illustrations of strange animals and monstrous races certainly impact our perception of the world at the time they were made. I will be asking my students to consider the nature of such images and the influence they have on our perception of that world. How much does what we read and see influence our perspective on those things we have not personally experienced? Hidden in these themed maps is a world full of truths and unknowns.

It is just this kind of fantasy that my students are fascinated with and should be a great point of discussion. It is also the kind of analysis and interpretation that I want them to put into their own artwork.

Students will develop variations on the images found on the *mappaemudi* as they begin to learn about why they existed. It will be important to address the larger context of these (little) images and direct students to see how they are in fact, symbols that express the values and ideas of the times in which they were created. Why do the images appear in the places that they do? Why do they look so unlike us, in many cases frightening? What function did these maps actually serve? For their illustration, students will be asked to

consider the same questions in the context of our world today.

What sort of events and issues are important to the world you (as the mapmaker) live in and how can you best illustrate these ideas? If you were asked to draw the world that you live in, what would it look like? Will you illustrate the entire planet, the United States, Charlotte, or Main Street? Population, the environment, war, and poverty are some contemporary issues that fit within this lesson and should initiate some opinions when introduced as possible map themes. How is the theme of the map best illustrated? What symbols will you create to represent the theme of the map? What kinds of boundaries best describe the world you are showing us? What colors (if any) best suite this map?

Student will select the drawing surface that best reflects the theme of their map. A map that deals with environmental issue for example may be created on a recycled piece of cardboard. They could chose to draw on top of an existing map or begin their drawing on a crisp sheet of white drawing paper. The sizes of this work will then, also vary for each student. One of these unit goals is to explore the unique properties and potential of materials and learn techniques for working with each material. They will be asked to carefully consider the choice of material and its relationship to the expressive nature of the theme in their map. Color pencil will work well because of its ability to show detail though other material with a similar quality may also be used (depending on the drawing surface that was chosen).

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