



## Notes for teachers

How Art Is Made is a new permanent gallery, opened April 2006. It provides a stimulating introduction to the creative process without being too didactic. It is aimed at young people and families, and at school groups.

These notes give a summary of the gallery contents and suggest how teachers could use How Art Is Made with a class on a visit.

**Please be aware that some of the things here can be touched, but some are old and precious and may be spoilt by touching. If in doubt, ask the Museum Assistant on duty!**

### Gallery 12

#### **Introductory video by Mark Speight**

There is room for a class to sit on the benches and/or floor in front of the wide screen to watch the video.

Mark introduces the range of techniques that are shown in the gallery, and acts as 'taster' to encourage children explore further. He is helped by a group of Birmingham children who make their own art.

NB: if you would like your whole class to watch a more detailed video of an artist talking about one particular technique, you can do this on the wide screen. Please ask the museum assistant to arrange this.

#### **Creative Area**

A full programme of family activity sessions and artists' demonstrations is run throughout the year in this area. Your class may also sit here to do written work or drawing.

#### ***Things to do:***

- ***Watch the video***
- ***Try out the interactive 'Make Your Own Art': children can add a variety of coloured and patterned tiles to a continuously changing work of art.***
- ***Pick up a 'Find the Object' sheet***
- ***Use the books in the resource area to explore an art form***
- ***Colour in an art work***

## Ceramics

The word 'ceramics' is used to describe clay objects that have been fired in a kiln. Clay is very versatile and can be moulded into almost any form. Making pottery by hand goes back thousands of years. Some of the finest hand-made ceramics came from the ancient cultures of China and South America. The potter's wheel was developed in Mesopotamia around 5,000 years ago. With it, potters were able to create an infinite variety of shapes and sizes of pots.

Case 1: Shows the process of making a Raku pot (artist: David Jones 2005)

Case 2: Range of Peruvian pots 500 – 1500 years old

### ***Things to do:***

- ***Watch the video of David Jones talking about pottery making***

## **Gallery 13**

### **Painting**

Painting is one of the oldest forms of expression. People have been painting for over 30,000 years, using coloured earths and minerals to make pictures or to decorate themselves or their possessions. The dry colour powder is mixed with a 'medium' to make it liquid and make it stick when it dries out. Water, oil, acrylic, beeswax and egg yolks can be used as a medium.

Almost anything can be used to apply the paint, but the common tools are the brush, knife, roller and spray gun. Spraying paint is not new! Artists in the Stone Age used hollow reeds to blow paint onto walls of caves.

Oil painting on board: text panel describing the process

### **Paintings on display:**

John Salt	<i>White Chevy, Red Trailer</i>	1975
Robert Perry	<i>Black Country Night</i>	2005
Paul Hill	<i>Little Street Fighter</i>	1995

### **The Artist's Studio**

This display shows some of the tools and methods a Victorian artist would have used.

First the artist sketches out the rough design for the picture. Then drawings are made of the separate figures, perhaps using a 'lay figure' (on display) – a wooden doll that can be posed like the human body. Nude models were used to get the anatomy right; reference books were used to get the historical details correct.

A stretched canvas is placed on an easel that can be moved around the studio and angled to catch the best light.

Drawings are transferred onto canvas as an outline to guide the artist (see Burne-Jones picture).

Then the painting begins! Broad bristle brushes are used to cover large areas, small sable or squirrel hair brushes are used for fine detail. The surface is built up of layers of paint called 'glazes' – letting each coat dry before putting on the next. When the painting is dry, it is coated with a layer of varnish to protect it.

#### Paintings on display:

Henry Room	<i>Self Portrait</i>	c1830
Edward Burne-Jones	<i>The Story of Troy (unfinished)</i>	1872-1898

Also on display: Lay figures, artist's palette, easel with diagrams to explain 'squaring up', jars of pigments, bottles of medium liquids, brushes.

#### **Things to do:**

- ***Watch the video of Robert Perry talking about landscape painting***

## **Stained Glass**

Stained Glass varies in colour and thickness. Glass is coloured using natural minerals or chemicals, and can be painted to make more detailed designs. Different shapes are joined together using lead or copper strips, to create a picture. Stained Glass is an ancient art form. The ancient Egyptians used coloured glass for precious containers. Stained Glass has been used in windows for over 1000 years. In Christian churches, Stained Glass is used to illustrate scenes from the Bible or communicate a moral message.

#### On display

Text panel:	how stained glass is made
Henry Payne	<i>Peace and Goodwill 1922. stained glass panel</i>

#### **Things to do:**

- ***Watch the video of Tim Derbyshire talking about making a stained glass panel***
- ***Make your own stained glass window using coloured shapes, project it on screen above***
- ***Fit together a jigsaw of part of 'Peace and Goodwill' stained glass***

## **Printmaking**

Artists often choose to make prints because the same image can be repeated over and over again. A design is cut or etched into one surface and used to transfer an image onto another surface.

Then earliest known prints came from China around 200AD. Printmaking became popular in Europe during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. There are many ways to make a print, including woodcuts, linocuts, screen printing, etching and engraving.

#### Prints and blocks on display:

Japanese Cherry Woodblock c 1840

Hiroshage	<i>Famous Teahouses of Edo: Two Geishas climbing into a boat</i>	1849-1851 Coloured woodblock print
Michael Rothenstein	<i>Red Leaves</i> 1989	Two woodblocks One finished woodcut print
Raymond Teague Cowen	<i>The Valley of the Piave at Sottocastello</i>	1938 Etching and etched copper plate
Jean Vaudeau	<i>Diffusion</i> 2001	Etching

**Things to do:**

- ***Make a rubbing from the carved wooden block***
- ***Find the design in the woodcut above***
- ***Arrange the carved blocks to create a woodcut design***
- ***Make a rubbing to see the results***
- ***Explore the layers on the printing press – blanket, paper, printing plate, roller***
- ***Watch the video of Jean Vaudeau talking about printing: etching***

## Drawing

Many of the artistic processes described in this gallery begin with drawing. Drawings can also be finished artworks in their own right. They can be made using all kinds of materials, including chalks, crayons, charcoal, pens and pencils. Ancient Egyptian craftsmen made sketches on fragments of pottery. The significance of drawing grew in the Renaissance when artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael and Michelangelo became famous for their drawings. Many artists enjoy drawing as the materials are cheap and readily available, and it allows them to experiment with ideas.

Drawings on display:

John Downton	<i>Child with Roses: A study</i> c1935
Richard John Stubbington	<i>Figure Study: Young Woman in Full-Length Dress</i> c 1905
Bridget MacDonald	<i>The Young Men, after Giorgione, 1992</i>

Text panel and graphics explanation of charcoal drawing.

**Things to do:**

- ***Watch the video of Bridget Macdonald talking about charcoal drawing***

## Bronze Casting

Bronze is a metal alloy made from a mix of copper, tin and other metals. It can be melted and made into sculptures. It is very strong when it cools and can be made into almost any shape. The process often begins with a clay model - bronze casting is a way of capturing the natural effects of modelling in a more durable material. People have made things from bronze for over 5,000 years. Ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans made all sorts of useful and decorative objects out of bronze.

### On display:

Ron Dutton                      *Medals cast in bronze 1982-1995*

Henry Moore                  *Warrior with Shield 1953-4*

### **Things to do:**

- ***Touch and feel the displays showing how a bronze medal is made – wax original, plaster casts, resin cast, bronze finished product***
- ***Watch the video of Ron Dutton talking about bronze casting***

## Wood Carving

Wood can be carved to produce sculpture, decorative features or everyday items. Different types of wood can be used, varying in colour, texture and grain. Artists may choose to work in hard wood eg oak, mahogany, walnut, or softwood eg pine, cedar. Each has different characteristics, suggesting different possibilities to the sculptor.

### On display

Juginder Lamba              *Love Supreme 1995*

Thomas Kendall              *Dead Canary on a Lace Handkerchief 1837*

Bill Ming                      *Against the Tide 1984*

Original piece of bog-oak tree trunk

Woodcarver's tools

### **Things to do:**

- ***Watch the video of Juginder Lamba talking about wood carving***

## **Jewellery**

Jewellery is any ornament worn by a person - it can be for decoration, good luck, or remembrance. Jewellery can symbolise wealth, status or love. It is an art form with practical as well as decorative function.

Early jewellery was made from shell, bone and feathers. Later on, metals were used, which can be shaped into rings, earrings, bangles, necklaces and nose studs. Metal Jewellery can be decorated, engraved or set with precious stones.

### On display

Text panel explaining the process of making silver rosary beads.

Display of jeweller's tools

Rita Patel (born 1966)

*Rosary rings and bangle, necklaces*

### ***Things to do:***

***Watch the video of Rita Patel talking about jewellery making***

## **Textile Art**

Textile is any cloth made from yarn, thread or fibre. Textiles have been used for thousands of years to keep warm and to decorate the body. Textiles are also used to decorate the home and places of worship. Many materials and techniques are used – eg weaving, felting, knitting, braiding. Textiles can be printed, dyed, embroidered or sewn with sequins and beads.

### On display

Text panel explaining weaving on a loom.

Stacey Harvey- Brown

*Shoal 2004-5 (Woven silk panel)*

Kei Ito

*Between Matter and Memory 2001*

*Woman's Top 2005*

Agbada - Tunic

Nigerian, Yoruba, late 20<sup>th</sup> century

Textile strips

Nigerian, Yoruba, late 20<sup>th</sup> century

### ***Things to do:***

- ***Touch the green woven silk material***
- ***Gently feel the twisted and pointed fabric of the woman's top by Kei Ito***
- ***Watch the video of Stacey Harvey-Brown talking about weaving***

## How is that made? Videos in Gallery 13

These films can be viewed by two children at a time, who can listen to headphones at the video stations in Gallery 13.

Each video consists of the artist talking about how they design and make their work, which is also on display in the gallery.

Each video runs for about 5 minutes

If you are focussing on **one** art form and would like your whole class to watch one of these videos on the big screen in Gallery 12, please ask the Museum Assistant on duty

Jewellery making	Rita Patel
Pottery	David Jones
Landscape painting	Robert Perry
Making stained glass windows	Tim Derbyshire
Weaving	Stacey Harvey-Brown
Wood carving	Juginder Lamba
Print making: etching	Jean Vaudeau
Charcoal drawing	Bridget Macdonald
Bronze casting	Ron Dutton