

## Lesson Plan:

### Perfecting Our Identity Paintings

#### Advance Art-High School

### Introduction:

This art lesson relates to the work of Stuart Netsky. It is part of an abstract painting unit that also covers the art of Tomory Dodge and Jered Sprecher. The individual lesson plans focus on the Idea of concept throughout a body of work (paintings) executed through different techniques as demonstrated by the specific artists. This is the last lesson of the unit. The two previous lessons relate to visual culture and environment whereas this one ends with focusing inward.

### Objectives:

After completion of this lesson, the student should be able to:

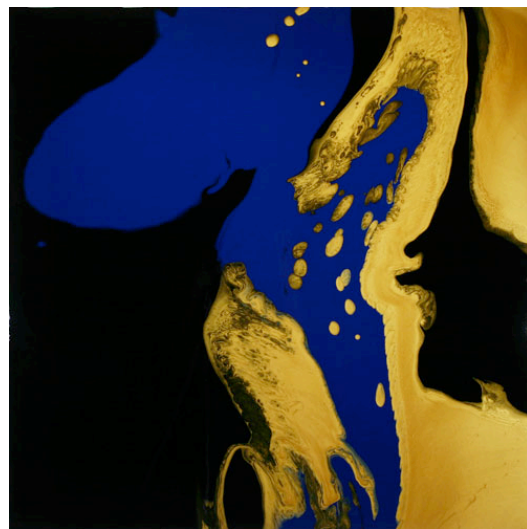
1. Show an understanding of Netsky's intent and style.
2. Demonstrate painting techniques in a similar vein as Netsky.
3. Utilize and begin to demonstrate concept in art.
4. Relate the concept to personal experience and/or expression.

### Instructional Objectives:

The student will review the concepts of focus inward and studying beauty, idealism, and nihilism used by Stuart Netsky in a teacher led discussion. The student will choose only colors, shapes, and patterns painting to perfect their identities. The students will also discuss their finished product during a critique on the end of the lesson.

### Vocabulary:

- Idealism/Perfection
- Nihilism
- Beauty
- Alternate painting materials



Stuart Netsky *They All Kissed the Bride*, 2006  
enamel and resin on aluminum 60 x 60 inches

### Materials/Media:

- Sketchbook-to sketch out ideas
- Canvas (stretched)
- Gesso
- Acrylics or Oil paints
- Alternate painting materials
- Brushes
- If using oil, cleaning supplies
- Paint palettes
- Rulers
- Charcoal
- Graphite
- Copy paper (for imagery source)
- Smocks
- Water container

## Instructional Procedures:

### 1. A. **Set -**

The teacher will show the work of Stuart Netsky and explain his intent. His work is a reflection of his self. Decades ago he worked with alternative materials as paint such as lipstick, eye shadow and nail polish. His choice of material and bold colors reflect his search for perfection, idealism and beauty, which has become an obsession in our popular culture. The teacher will explain that his concept drives his production. As the students develop as artists and prepare for portfolio review, it is important to begin a body of work that relates through a particular concept or meaning. The teacher should remind the students, that no matter what, artists always have the option to look inward as inspiration.

**B. Key Questions** – After finishing the set the teacher will ask the students a series of questions while looking at the images of Stuart Netsky’s art.

1. Do you remember seeing this piece at the museum?
2. How did it make you feel when looking at it? What gave you that feeling? The subject matter? Color? Shapes, Lines, and Movement? Size?
3. Knowing Netsky’s artist statement and reasons for creating his paintings, do you think he was successful in this painting? Why or why not? How so?
4. Why is concept important in art?
5. What is beauty? Idealism? Nihilism? How does our popular culture influence our ideas of beauty and perfection?
6. What is your idea of beauty and idealism?
7. What colors, shapes, forms, lines, and material would best describe your personal quest to perfect your identity?

## Who Made It?

### Stuart Netsky Biography

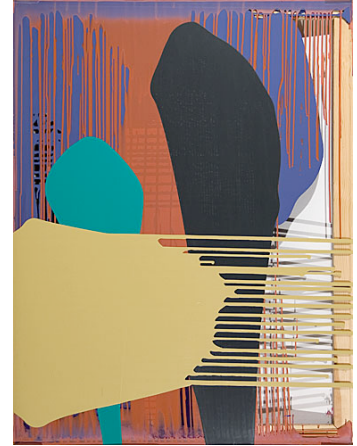
*At the core of my work are the themes of identity, vanity, and vulnerability. My work draws upon our obsessions as revealed by our popular culture - the extreme idealism*

*on one hand and nihilism on the other - and looks at our obsession with altering, augmenting or otherwise perfecting our identities. True beauty and understanding can arise from art.*

Retrieved from <http://www.fleisher.org/exhibitions/challenge/?artist=netsky>, November 2009.

On his show New Paintings. Release by Locks Gallery.

January 7, 2006, Philadelphia, PA—A new series of abstract paintings by acclaimed Philadelphia artist Stuart Netsky will be on view at Locks Gallery from February 3rd through the 28th, 2006. The opening reception will be held Friday, February 3rd from 5:30–7:30 pm. Admission is free and open to the public. This series of ten large-scale paintings are Netsky's most ambitious to date. Their silken surfaces are created from pours of enamel paint and resin. The vivid colors recall his earlier, molten lipstick and nail polish paintings, but are now super-sized and more declarative as abstract paintings within the modernist tradition.



The Locks Gallery exhibit coincides with a twenty-year retrospective, *Imitation of Life*, organized by the Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery at the University of the Arts. Netsky's first mid-career survey encompasses painting, sculpture and photographs - marking the first time his abstract paintings of the past decade will be shown together with his earlier, conceptual work.

Netsky has had over a dozen solo exhibitions in Philadelphia and New York since 1990. His first museum survey, organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia in 1993, included a multi-part installation referencing the AIDS epidemic and issues of vanity and mortality. Netsky's work has been in recent exhibits across the U.S. including *Mind Over Matter: Reworking Women's Work* (Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, NM); *Influence, Anxiety and Gratitude* (List Visual Arts Center, MIT, Cambridge, MA); and *Show* (Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA).

The artist received graduate degrees in sculpture from the University of the Arts and Tyler School of Art. Netsky teaches design at Drexel University and Philadelphia University.

Images retrieved and review of show from [http://www.locksgallery.com/artists\\_works\\_select.php?aid=21](http://www.locksgallery.com/artists_works_select.php?aid=21), November 2009.

### **Classroom Strategies** Day One Idea Forming and Prepping the Canvas

1. Review the artwork and concepts of Stuart Netsky.
2. Allow the students brainstorm ideas of beauty, idealism, nihilism, and how they would want to perfect their identity through art. Also, inform the

students to brainstorm about what materials they can add into their painting to make it more personal to their own aesthetic:

- a. Is it rough? Smooth?
  - b. Is it more representational or rely more on feelings?
3. Remind the students to think of concept and meaning as well as their larger body of work for their portfolio.
  4. Give the students time to research their imagery.
  5. Ask the students to find their imagery and write and draw ideas in their sketchbook to be ready for following class.
  6. Monitor the class and talk to the student one by one about their ideas.
  7. Demonstrate how to prep a canvas by priming with gesso.
  8. Allow the student 15 to 20 minutes to prime their canvases.
  9. Allow for 5-10 minutes of clean up.

### ***Classroom Strategies Day Two and Three*** Sketching on Canvas

1. Review the concepts covered in the previous class.
2. Demonstrate how to take part of an image and deconstruct it to the basic elements (review elements of design) and how those relate to one another to create the principles of design (review concepts).
3. Explain that the students should first sketch out the general shapes onto the canvas before they even paint.
4. Monitor as the student sketch their ideas on the canvases.
5. Clean up five minutes prior to end of class.

### ***Classroom Strategies Day Four-Eight*** Painting the Canvas

1. Review concepts and art every day before production work time.
2. Conduct a small critique of work in progress and concepts to help any students that may be struggling with their ideas.
3. Cover safety and proper use of paints before any students begin.
4. Demonstrate painting techniques-mixing colors, adding acrylic mediums, using different sized brushes.
5. Allow the students quite a bit of freedom to paint in their personal aesthetic.
6. Monitor painting progress and give ample time for completion.
7. Allow up to 10 minutes each class period for clean up

### ***Classroom Strategies Day Nine*** Critique

1. Monitor a class wide critique.
2. Ask the students first to swap projects and write 3 things they like and 3 things to improve the work
3. Place all of the works on the tables and critique the work (about 3-4 minutes per work).

## Practice and Review:

- The students will review the artist Stuart Netsky throughout the process, addressing his techniques and concepts.
- The students will review how concept and visual culture can heavily influence an artist's work.

## Learner Involvement:

- Students will answer and ask questions during the discussion.
- Students will be picked as volunteers to help pass out the supplies.
- Students will be encouraged to give feedback to the critique and be expected to talk, at least briefly, about their own piece and how it relates to the artist.

## Learner Environment:

- Teacher will need to prepare by gathering examples of Stuart Netsky's art found on the Knoxville Museum of Art website as well as the Locks Gallery website:  
[http://www.locksgallery.com/artists\\_works\\_select.php?aid=21](http://www.locksgallery.com/artists_works_select.php?aid=21).
- Teacher will need to prepare by either buying pre-stretched canvas boards or frames or stretching canvases.
- Teacher will need to make sure all accommodations have been made for special needs learners.

## Closure:

- Close with positive statements about each student's work but also enough constructive criticism to help them successful create a body of work for their portfolio.
- All students should fill out a self-reflection/evaluation sheet.
- Students will receive a rubric that scores their individual work.

## Alternative/Supplemental Activities:

- This project relies heavily on looking inward to one's own self, ideas about beauty and popular culture. It is very reflective. Keeping a daily journal of thoughts and observations as well as feelings would go nicely with this project. Even using an interdisciplinary approach and working with a creative writing or English teacher would only enrich their experience.

### Evaluation:

**Informal:** Teacher will walk around the room to make sure the students understand the assignment. Teacher will check individually (time permitting) with each student.

**Formal:** Teacher will grade students according to rubric.

### Reteaching:

- Teacher will go over the artist at successive intervals in the future.
- Teacher will ask students in successive lessons if they remember the artist Stuart Netsky and what he did in his art work
- Teacher will remind students of this project and encourage the student to relate every project in aesthetic, style, and/or concept for their portfolios, citing specific examples of student work that stood out to those individual students.

### References:

[http://www.locksgallery.com/artists\\_works\\_select.php?aid=21](http://www.locksgallery.com/artists_works_select.php?aid=21)

<http://www.knoxart.org/index.html>

<http://www.fleisher.org/exhibitions/challenge/?artist=netsky>

### State Standards for Visual Arts:

9-12 Grade: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2

