Open Studio // April 2019

Fracture by Albert Paley & *Bayadere* by Pierre Arman

Today we will explore two late 20th-century sculptures that have a lot in common. See if you can discover how *Fracture* and *Bayadere* are alike, and also how they differ.

By the *LOVE* sculpture on the main floor, proceed down the stairs to the lower level to view Albert Paley's *Fracture*.

- Can you guess what this sculpture is made of? It looks like wood, but it's actually **weathered steel!** This artist is known throughout the world for his ability to form metal into exciting works of art.
- Why do you think Paley called this sculpture *Fracture*? What title would you give it? Why?

Look at the various shapes and lines of *Fracture*. Do the shapes remind you of anything you might see in nature?

- **Abstract works** such as this don't need to "mean" or "represent" anything specific. We can simply use our imaginations and enjoy the energy and movement of the forms and lines.
- Artists use lots of different kinds of lines in their works, for example: **straight**, **wavy**, **diagonal**, **flowing**, and **jagged**. What lines do you see in *Fracture*?

When Paley is creating his large, abstract sculptures, how does he know where to place the various parts?

- It's all about playing around and experimenting until he is satisfied with the results--much like when you build something with legos, form shapes out of clay, or doodle on a piece of paper. After awhile, it just feels right!

Across the gallery is a sculpture made by Pierre Arman called *Bayadere: Sliced Bronze Cello*.

The word **"bayadere"** means a female dancer.

- How does the cello look like it is dancing?
- Why might the cello look more like a girl than a boy?

Just like Paley's *Fracture*, Arman took shapes and arranged them into interesting forms and patterns. It's as if the cello were in pieces, and Arman put its geometric parts back together so we see the back, front, inside, and outside--all at the same time. This 20th-century style is known as **Cubism**.

- One of the most famous cubist artists is **Pablo Picasso**. How is Picasso's painting of three musicians on the left similar to Arman's *Sliced Cello*?

This sculpture also explores the idea of **asymmetry**, which means that one side isn't the same as the other.

- Are both sides of your face exactly the same? Actually, no, they are just a little different.
- We see asymmetry all throughout nature. For example, fiddler crabs have one big claw and one small one, and an owl's differently-sized ears are not placed symmetrically on its head. Can you think of other examples of asymmetry in nature?

Now return to the Art Studio, where you will create your own cubist self-portrait.

Studio // Cubist Self-Portraits

Today you can create a cubist self-portrait with many of the same characteristics as Arman's cello--geometric forms pieced together in fun ways that show different perspectives all at the same time. You are free to use the template provided. Or if you like, you can create your own face shape.

On the whiteboard at the front of the Art Studio are portraits by Picasso that you can use as inspiration.

- First, draw the various parts of your face and head on each of the geometric shapes provided. For example, you might choose a rectangle for one eye and a circle for the other, and then draw each of your eyes from different angles.
- After you have drawn all aspects of your face, head, and hair, glue them to your face template in crazy, fun ways.
- Now finish your face with bright, exciting colors that match your own personality.