This exhibition features a selection of 20th century abstract paintings each paired with carefully curated musical composition. Presented together in this manner, the art and music engage visitors in a multisensory experience that simultaneously engenders close looking, contemplation, and a consideration of the connection between visual and auditory art forms.

This resource was created in collaboration with a teacher professional development workshop designed for K-12 art and music educators. It provides educators with tools and teaching strategies for pairing musical selections with works of art to deepen student learning.
Art & Music

The multisensory environments we experience influence our creative processes. Art and Music require both right and left brain thinking and allows students to express themselves creatively. Pairing works of art with music encourages students to make meaningful connections with the artwork, which deepens their learning.

Multisensory Approach
- helps children learn through more than one sense
- includes visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile
- improves essential functions of the brain such as listening skills, movement, vision, tactile recognition, and conceptualization

Music and Art share many of the same descriptive terms, such as repetition, variety, intensity, rhythm, dialogue, balance, and unity.

Keywords

Variety
The quality of being different or diverse

Intensity
The measurable amount of a property, such as force or brightness

Rhythm
A strong, regular, repeated pattern of movement or sound

Dialogue
Taking part in a conversation or discussion between two or more people

Balance
A condition in which different elements are equal or in the correct proportions

Unity
The state of being united or joined as a whole
Definitions

**Rhythm Art**
A principle of design that suggests movement or action. Rhythm is usually achieved through repetition of lines, shapes, colors, and more. It creates a visual tempo in artworks and provides a path for the viewer's eye to follow.

**Rhythm Music**
The combinations of long and short, even or uneven sounds that convey a sense of movement in time. Rhythm refers to the length of time between each major “beat”, or accent, such as in a piece of music. It is the sequence of sounds and silences which make up the rhythm.

**Alternating Rhythm**
Artwork that contains a repetition of two or more components that are used interchangeably. Some alternating rhythm examples include alternating light and dark colors or placing various shapes and/or colors in a repeating pattern. In music, rhythm is created by alternating sound and non-sound over time.

**Random Rhythm**
Artwork that contains repeating elements without a specified order or arrangement. Some random rhythm examples include splatters of paint or shells on a beach. In music, random rhythm is created when groupings of similar patterns or elements that repeat with no regularity create a random rhythm.

**Flowing Rhythm**
Artwork that contains curved or circular elements that give the art movement. Some flowing rhythm examples include flowers, clouds, or waves. In music, a flowing rhythm shows the repeated elements following bends, curves, and undulations.

**Regular Rhythm**
Artwork that contains repeating elements with a specified order or arrangement that can be measured. Some regular rhythm examples include evenly spaced windows or tiles. Any rhythm created from beats within the pattern described by a time signature (e.g. 4/4 “common time,” 3/4 “waltz,” or 2/4 cut time”) is a regular rhythm.

**Progressive Rhythm**
Artwork that contains repeating elements in a pattern that change either in size or color as they repeat. Some progressive rhythm examples include spirals and building blocks arranged from smallest to largest. Visual rhythm is created by repeated positive shapes separated by negative spaces. The repeated shapes are similar to the beats in music.
Goal

The goal of this lesson is for students to learn how to use a multi-sensory approach when viewing artwork, while exploring musical selections that connect with the works of art.

Ohio Learning Standards Addressed

K-8 Standards:

3.C.E  Listen to and explore the music of various styles, composers, periods, and cultures.
2.R.E  Describe how sounds and music are used in our daily lives.
8.C.E  Explore connections between sound and its visual representation.
2.R.E  Describe how music communicates feelings, moods, images, and meaning.
3.R.E  Communicate the importance of music in everyday life.

High School Standards:

2.C.E  Identify musical terms and symbols for articulation and expression.
4.C.E  Listen to and compare various musical styles from the United States, other cultures, and historical periods.
3.R.E  Discuss how the purpose, meaning, and value of music changes because of the impact of life experiences.
4.R.E  Explain how the creative process is used in similar and different ways in the arts.
7.R.E  Evaluate how musical forms and performance practices are influenced by culture and history.
Classroom Activities for Exploring Art & Music

Supplies:
- Black Sharpies/colored Sharpies
- Kwik Stix
- Watercolor paints/tempera cakes
- Water based markers
- Oil pastels
- Salt
- Paintbrushes
- Tagboards

Activity 1: Painting to Music

Become a visual musician! Listen to music and see how you can use line, shape, color, and form to interpret what you are hearing visually!

Step 1
Set up a painting area for each student including watercolor paints, oil pastels, Kwik Stix, and brushes. Students should have plenty of access to water and paper towels for this exercise in order to quickly clean their brushes between paint sessions.

Step 2
Explain to students that they will be painting to a variety of different music. Briefly discuss mood and color, allowing students to identify which colors they think express different emotions. Students are free to assign their own colors and shapes to different emotions. Teachers should encourage students to paint with large brush strokes and free forms, rather than trying to paint representational objects. They can add lines with markers and salt to the paint for added textures.

Step 3
Play pre-selected samples of music for students, allowing 2-3 songs per paint session. Songs should be grouped by mood or tempo, so that students can continuously paint in one color scheme for each session (i.e. group 2-3 fast paced songs together, 2-3 melancholy songs together, etc.).

Step 4
Once the students are done painting, lead students in a discussion of the posted works from each session, allowing them to describe the types of music they heard, what emotions the music inspired, and how their choices of color and form fit the emotions they felt from each piece.

https://open.spotify.com/artist/6MERXsiRbur2oJZFgYRDKz
https://teachrock.org/lesson/drawing-music-hearing-colors-seeing-sounds/

Source: K-12 Teacher & Art Instructor Jamie Sansom
Activity 2: Musical Haikus

“Haiku” is a traditional form of Japanese nature poetry that consist of 3 lines. The first and last lines of a haiku have 5 syllables and the middle line has 7 syllables. Traditionally, haikus are free from rhymes.

Step 1
Both poetry and music can evoke emotions. Play a musical track and ask students what emotion the composer was trying to create.

Step 2
Next, read several haikus and explore the mood each poet was trying to convey. Discuss how certain words can paint a visual picture.

Step 3
Play another song and invite students to write a haiku that reflects the musical piece’s emotion.

Examples of Haikus:

the rising music
promises even weary souls can fly away

Refreshing and cool,

love is a sweet summer rain

that washes the world.

- Peter Galen Massey

- wikibnow.com
Additional Resources

https://artclasscurator.com/rhythm-in-art-examples/
https://longbeachsymphony.org/shared/2017/01/Musical-Definitions.pdf?x60180
https://vanseodesign.com/web-design/visual-rhythm/
http://www.glencoe.com/sec/art/art_talk/students/chapter8.php/al
https://culturacolectiva.com/music/songs-inspired-by-famous-paintings
https://interlude.hk/paul-klee-painting-music/
https://denverartmuseum.org/article/staff-blogs/wassily-kandinskys-symphony-colors
https://teachrock.org/lesson/drawing-music-hearing-colors-seeing-sounds/
https://artclasscurator.com/free-printable-art-appreciation-worksheets/
https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Art-Lesson-Wassily-Kandinsky-Art-