

Lesson Plan: Technology

Lesson Name: Van Gogh's Sunflowers

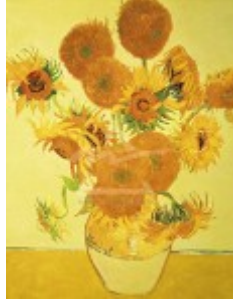
Teacher Name: Susan Foltz

Date of Lesson:

Grade Level: Art Grades 9-12

Subject: Art Appreciation - Vincent Van Gogh

Length of Lesson: 4 days (1 hour blocks)



Instructional Objectives:

- The student will learn to use Adobe Photoshop special effects.
- The student will learn to recognize and appreciate the work of Dutch artist Vincent Van Gogh
- The student will learn to manipulate a digital photograph to resemble the artistic effects created by Vincent Van Gogh.

Sunshine State Standards:

(VA.A.1.4.4) - uses effective control of media, techniques, and tools when communicating an idea in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional works of art.

(VA.D.1.4) - Standard 1: The student assesses, evaluates, and responds to the characteristics of works of art.

Subject Matter Content:

In the late 1860's Dutch painter Vincent Van Gogh created his most famous works of art. His Starry Night has been reproduced as posters and been memorialized in song. During his most productive period he lived in Arles, France and he created wonderful paintings of the French countryside, his room, his personal items and many vases of sunflowers. His paintings are filled with light and color, the texture of the paint is thick and modeled and instantly recognizable for its thick swirls of solid color. His work is unique in its expression and emotional content.

The students will first observe a video about the life and work of Vincent Van Gogh. Then, we will take a photograph of a vase of sunflowers and use Adobe Photoshop to manipulate the photograph until it resembles a Van Gogh masterpiece.

Instructional Procedures:

1. Lesson Initiating Activity (Day 1) – Simon Schama’s Power of Art video on Vincent Van Gogh 45 minutes long. This powerful video is one of the best I have seen to encapsulate the importance of this great artist. It summarizes the important events in his life and analyzes why these painting continue to have great meaning to us today. (1 Day)
2. Core Activity (3 Days) – Manipulate a photograph of Sunflowers to resemble a Van Gogh painting.
 - a. We will start with the following photograph:

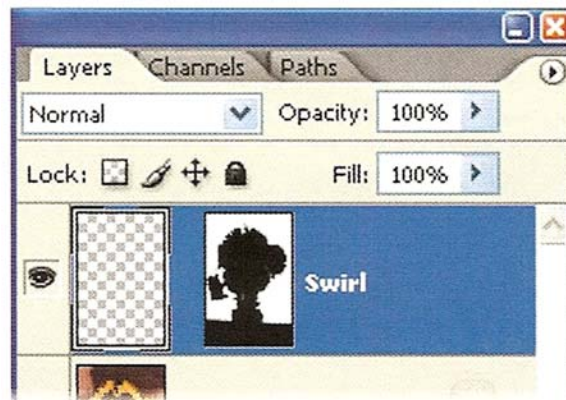


- b. **Create a contrasting background:** The first step will be creating a contrasting background. Use the magic wand tool to select and remove the existing background. Set a low tolerance a click a pixel typical of the area. Hold down **Shift** to add pixels (or **Alt/Opt** to subtract them) from the selection.

- c. **Add a Layer Mask:** When the selection looks correct, click the “Add a new layer” icon in the Layers palette and immediately click the new layer’s “Add Layer Mask” icon. This layer will be used for painting a new swirling background; the mask will protect the sunflowers underneath.

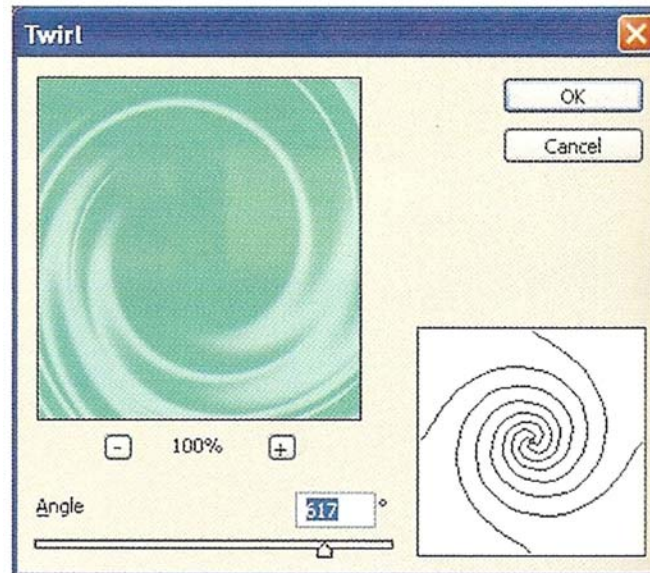


- d. **Unlink the Mask;** Click on the chain between the thumbnail and the mask to unlink them. This stops later steps from affecting the mask.

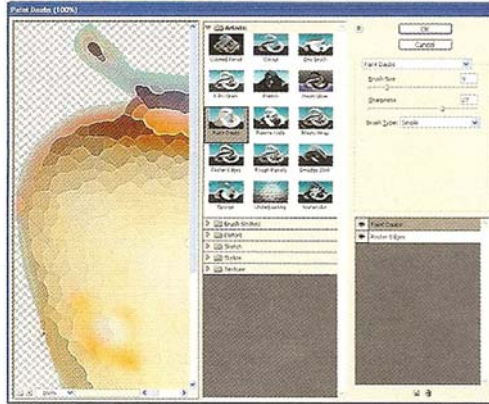


- e. **Paint the Background:** Set the foreground color to turquoise, and fill the layer with **Edit + Fill**. Use the Brush tool to paint onto the layer but use a slightly different shade of the same color. There is no need for artistic skill – random strokes will do the trick.
- f. **Create Twirls:** Choose the **Marquee** tool (shortcut M) and select an area – the smaller the area the tighter the swirls will be. From Photoshop’s Filters menu, select **Distort>Twirl**. As you drag the

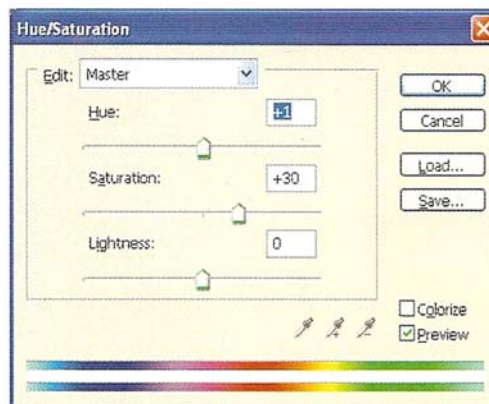
Angle slider you will see a preview of how Photoshop will twirl the selection. When you are happy with the result click OK.



- g. **Create more Twirls:** Make a new selection and apply the Twirl filter again. Vary the sizes and angles of the twirls and repeat this process until every part of the background has been affected. You can save time by using **Ctrl/Cmd + F** which reapplies the same filter settings.
- h. **Create a Vase Layer:** Activate the Magic Lasso and zoom in to select the vase and tabletop by dragging around them. Use **Ctrl/Cmd + J** to copy them into their own layers.
- i. **Paint the Vase:** With these elements in separate layers you can begin to paint. Use the Brush tool to randomly paint with the brush or you can choose **Filter>Filter Gallery** and click on the "New Effect Layer" icon at the bottom right of the dialog box. Try applying multiple layers simultaneously. In the example poster edges created cracks on the vase while Paint Daubs smeared the colors.



- j. **Paint the Table:** Using the same tools as above paint the table gold and apply a filter to texturize the tabletop.
- k. **Top Half of Vase:** Van Gogh's vase has a line halfway across. Select the top half of the vase and add a strong border using **Edit>Stroke**. Use **Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation** to fine-tune the color. Make the top half gold and the base beige.



- l. **Merge the Layers:** Hold down the **Alt/Opt** key and select **Merge Visible** from the Layers Palette menu.
- m. **Sunflowers:** Select **Filter>Artistic>Poster Edges**. Turn the Posterize slider down and adjust the edges to match the image. Adjust the values lower.



3. Your final result should look like this:



4. **Closure Activity:** Essay on Vincent Van Gogh. The student will write a 1 page essay on Vincent Van Gogh addressing the following questions. What were 5 important events in Van Gogh's life? Which painting affected you the most, why? What is the mood of the painting you liked? What influence did Van Gogh's madness have on his art? Do you think you need to be crazy to be a great artist?

What was the most challenging part of the Photoshop assignment? If you were to start this lesson over again, what might you do differently? Were you satisfied with your final result?

5. **ELL, ESE, gifted etc.** Persons needing extra time for the project will be allowed to return outside class time to complete their work.
6. **Classroom Management:** I will be circulating the room to visit with each student at their computer to check on progress and to help direct them to describe classroom management procedures used to facilitate the delivery of this lesson and the questions you will ask throughout the lesson.

Materials & Equipment:

Copy of Simon Schama and the Power of Art DVD

Access to Computers with Adobe Photoshop

Assessment & Evaluation: (10pts)

- Essay
- Authentic Evaluation of Artistic Product

Are all steps represented? Does final work resemble the sample?

Follow-Up Activities:

I will bring in copies of books of Van Gogh's work from the library and my personal collection for the students to look through while in the classroom.

Resources:

Jon Beardsworth, Photoshop Fine Art Effects Cookbook for digital photographers, Ilex Press., 2006