

-Bare Bones Paper on a Work of Art

prepared by: Lynn Lonze

Title **Woman With Coffee Pot (1958)**

Accession No. 1968/9.88

Artist **David Park**Type of work **Oil on canvas - abstract**Brief Biography of artist:

1912-1961

Died from cancer in 1961

Began painting in 1928

San Francisco Bay area artist

Faculty member at Berkley, California

Mainly drawn to abstract portrait painting

Most works are done in shades of black, taupe, and white with accents.

Background Information and facts to bring out:

Abstract art, developing out of Cubism

Linear in nature

Painted during the last 3 years of his life

More intimate than some of his works

Formal Qualities (art elements & design principles) observed in the work:

The painting's figure is balanced by color, lines, and geometric shapes

The painting is balanced by all the dimensions interacting even though the placement of the figure and action occurs primarily on the right side and down into the lower right corner. The coffee pot brings the "action" toward the center creating a sense succeeding motion in a circular arc. The contour lines create a 3-dimensional aspect much like multicolored shapes have been randomly cut and placed to form a figure and the object which clearly indicate a person and a kettle. The geometric and irregular shapes seem to expand and make the space larger than it might "need" to be. Positive and negative space are balanced, but not equal values. The intensity of the colors shift and are fragmented giving the painting a shimmering quality, or to some a feeling of disintegration. The colors appear, to me, to be dull or possibly just not typical. The artist used colors that I am not typically attracted to. There are sharp demarcations of color, pastel lines and muted, blurred overlapping applications of color. I have not been able to fathom the reason for the artist's choice of color. The texture appears uneven and irregular due to the use of lines creating shapes that, while angular, are not identical. The unity of the painting is maintained by the artist's use of color.

Expressive Qualities felt in the work:Questions to ask:

1. Does your mother, grandmother, other family member use a coffee pot that looks like this? (It looks more like a teapot to me.)
2. What does your coffee pot look like?
3. Have you ever been "formally served" coffee? Something else (tea, hot chocolate?)
4. Was it a special occasion?
5. When you look at this painting, does it make you feel happy, scared, bored, intrigued, puzzled?
6. What children's stories, nursery rhymes can you recall where a woman serves children food--Snow White, Hansel & Gretel, etc.—children's shows, movies, & cartoons.
7. What was the purpose of these actions?
8. Can you think of a little girl who was going to take food to her grandmother?
9. Does this painting remind you of any of the above?
10. If you were going to write a story about the painting, what would you write?

Using the work in a tour:

If I was taking 5th graders on a tour I might select this painting and have discussion revolve around "What story does it tell?" I could also have them describe and count shapes.