
Art Masterpiece: "Stepping Out" Gilbert Lujan

Keywords: Portrait, Tone, Contrast &
Organic Shapes

Grade: 5th

Activity: Self Portrait with a Favorite Animal,
Using Chalk Pastels



Meet The Artist:

Gilbert "Magu" Lujan was born in Texas in 1940 and went to school in East Los Angeles. As a teen he was interested in customized cars, and drew car designs in his spare time. After high school he joined the Air Force and traveled through Europe. He began reading and studying more about his culture. When he was done with his military service, he began to study art in California. He created clay sculptures and worked on projects with other artists as a member of "Los Four."

Meet the Art:

Lujan used pastels on black paper to create a whimsical portrait with a playful tone. In this piece, he gives imaginary and human-like traits to the dog. He frequently painted pictures portraying the happy relationship a person has with their pet. There is contrast between the light and dark colors and the smooth and furry textures. Both figures are made of rounded organic shapes (oval and kidney shapes).

Questions:

- + How do you feel when you look at this work of art?
- + How are the man and the dog similar?
- + How are they different?
- + What textures do you notice?
- + What shapes are repeated?

Project: Self Portrait with a Favorite Animal, Using Chalk Pastels

Materials:

- + 9x12 White or Black Construction Paper
- + Pencil
- + Chalk pastels
- + Fine mist hairspray
- + Small bowls of water

Activity:

Allow students to choose whether they'd like to use a black piece of paper (much like Gilbert Lujan did), or a white piece of construction paper to create their artwork. With a pencil, instruct students to write their name on the back of their paper before drawing their picture. Students will now draw a portrait of themselves with an animal friend. The animal can be a pet, a stuffed animal, or an imaginary one. Ask the students to think about what tone they want to portray in their artwork. Some examples are: happy, funny, thoughtful, excited, shy, silly, etc. What shapes, colors and lines will they use to help portray their tone? When the pencil drawing is finished, use chalk pastels to color in the drawing. Challenge the students to show different textures with the chalk by using smudging, short staccato lines, dots, zigzags, long flowing lines, etc. After the students are finished, take the papers outside and spray each with a fine mist of hairspray to set the chalk and reduce unintended smudging.