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Title: Muse to Muse

Lesson Plan by Nancy Mitchell

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Audience: High School, College, or Continuing Education Writing or Art Classes

In-Class Time: Two ~50 Minute Sessions

Objectives:

1. Determine the emotional tone of the visual art in a broadside from the portfolio (“Highlights” is a good one) and how it’s achieved via material choices of genre, color, marks, form, and shape images, medium (collage, paint, ink, etc.) and composition.
2. Identify how the poem translates and mirrors the emotional tone of the visual image via poet devices such as sound, line length, meter, imagery, genre, form (stanzas), and composition superimposed on the visual field.
3. Understand how both the materials of the visual image and poetic devices together create a dynamic and original work of art that enhances the value of each and creates a richer more complex experience for the viewer/reader.
4. To demonstrate understanding of the above by creating collaborative works of art.

Lesson Suggestion:

1. Choose a broadside from the portfolio and determine its emotional tone.
2. Make a list of the artistic materials, medium, and composition and the corresponding poetic devices which mirror and support the tone.
3. Using simple materials—drawing paper, crayons, scissors, and newspaper text—have students create a work of art that articulates an emotional tone. The pieces should not be signed.
4. The instructor will collect the pieces and then distribute them to the students.
5. For the next class assignment, students will write a poem in response to mirror/reflect the tone of the visual piece using the poetic devices above.

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6. Before the next class, students will e-mail the instructor their poems, without their names on them.
7. The instructor will print the poems, and hand them out to the students in the following class.
8. Students will respond to the poem with a piece of visual art to be completed in class, which the instructor will collect.
9. Before class, the instructor will pair the poems with the visual responses.
10. Students will—and this is always a ton of fun— try to guess which poem and visual image has responded to their work.
11. Students will discuss their choices in response to the triggering ekphrasis.
12. If there is time and space, exhibit the paintings and read poems.