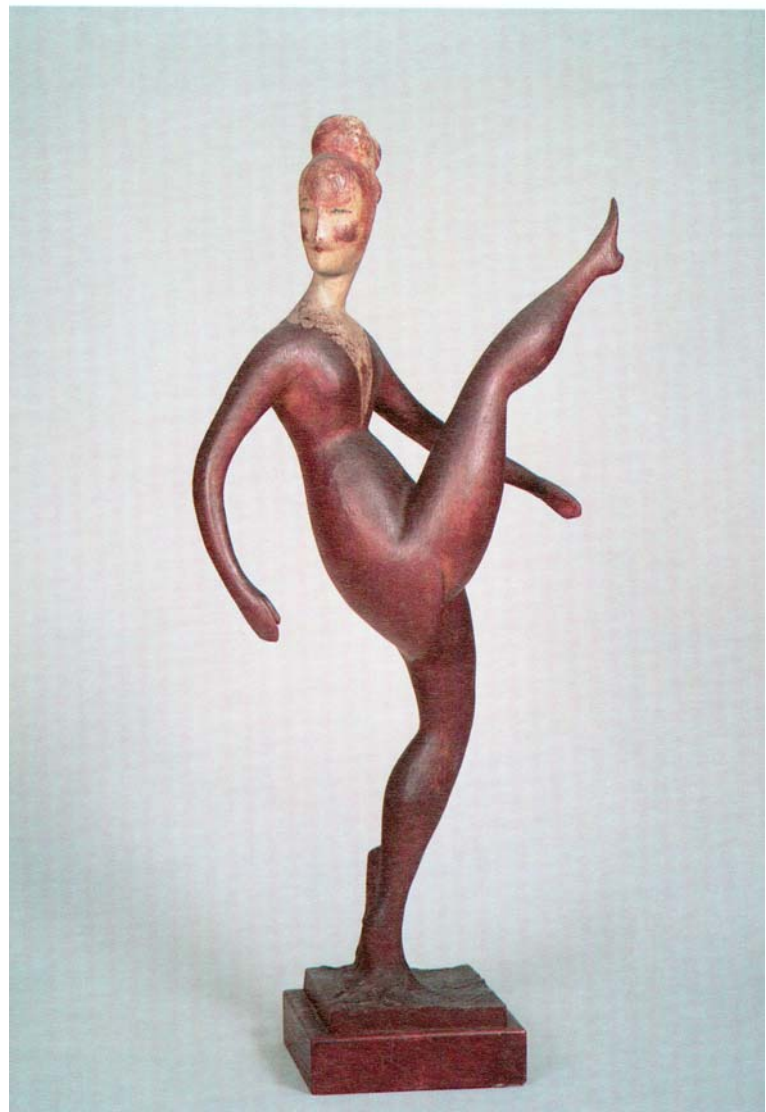


WHITNEY

Elie Nadelman: Sculptor of Modern Life
April 3–July 20, 2003



Teacher Guide
pre- and post-visit materials

Elie Nadelman: Sculptor of Modern Life

April 3–July 20, 2003

These pre- and post-visit materials were prepared by the Education Department of the Whitney Museum of American Art in collaboration with Greer Kudon, 3rd-grade Lead Educator, John A. Reisenbach Charter School, Manhattan; and Ellen Wong, Educator, The Lab School, Manhattan. Special thanks to Eliza Geddes, intern, and Lisa Libicki, Education Department, Whitney Museum of American Art, for their contributions.

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We welcome your feedback!
Please let us know what you think of these materials.
How did you use them?
What worked or didn't work?
Email us at education@whitney.org

Please bring examples of your students' pre-visit work when you visit the Whitney!

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Cover:

Elie Nadelman, *Dancer*, 1920–25. Mahogany, 28 1/4 in. (71.8 cm) high. The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut; Gift of James L. Goodwin and Henry Sage Goodwin from the Estate of Philip L. Goodwin

Dear Educator,

We are delighted that you have scheduled a visit to see *Elie Nadelman: Sculptor of Modern Life*. The exhibition features more than two hundred sculptures in bronze, marble, wood, ceramic, and plaster, as well as works on paper and photographs.

When you and your students visit the Whitney Museum, you will be given a tour of the exhibition by a Museum educator. The enclosed information consists of materials for you to use in the classroom with your students prior to your visit. We have also included projects for you and your students to use after you have seen the exhibition. These projects focus on core curriculum subject areas, including art, English language arts, social studies, math, and technology. They also address New York State Learning Standards. The goal of these materials is to enhance understanding and knowledge of the richness and diversity of American art and culture through research, visual literacy, and inquiry-based learning.

To make your museum experience enriching and meaningful, we strongly encourage you to work with your students in the classroom before your museum visit, using this packet as a resource. The pre-visit materials will serve as the starting point from which you and your students will view and discuss the exhibition.

When you visit the exhibition, you and your students will see a large selection of Nadelman's work. His early sculptures were influenced by a wide array of art historical references, from Greek marbles and terra-cottas to Gothic wood carvings, Art Nouveau, and the sculpture of French artist Auguste Rodin, while his later work consists of fluid, stylized, curvilinear sculptures in which the ancient and the modern merge to form a new aesthetic.

Before you visit the Whitney, please ask your students to think about these themes:

1. Elie Nadelman's approach to drawing
2. The fusion of the classical and the modern in Nadelman's work

This packet contains two pre-visit projects to choose from in preparation for seeing the exhibition, and two post-visit projects. Also included are topics for discussion, art projects, and writing activities that introduce some of the exhibition's key themes and concepts. Please feel free to adapt and build on these materials and to use this packet in any way that you wish.

We look forward to welcoming you and your students to the exhibition.

Sincerely,

Dina Helal

Head of Curriculum and Online Learning

The ultimate quality of painting and sculpture is plasticity.

Matter has an individual will which is its life. A stone will refuse all the positions we may wish to give it if these are unsuited to it. By its own will it will fall back into the position that its shape in conjunction with its mass demands.

Here is a wonderful force, a life that plastic art should express. Here is a life which, cultivated, enriched by art, will reach a dazzling power of expression that will stir us.

— Elie Nadelman¹

Poland

Elie Nadelman (1882–1946) was born in Warsaw, the youngest of seven children in a Jewish family. Warsaw is in what had been (and is now) Poland, but eighty-seven years before Nadelman's birth, the country had ceased to exist as a nation when Russia, Prussia, and Austria divided it among themselves; Warsaw was in the Russian section. Under occupation, discussions of Polish nationalism were censored, and social, cultural, and economic links among the three occupied zones were suppressed. Visual art became one of the few outlets for national consciousness, though it had to be expressed covertly. Polish artists sought to portray the distinctive character of Polish culture and heritage and to underscore the nobility of the Polish people and the beauty of their country through depictions of Polish history, folk imagery, and the Polish landscape.

Nadelman graduated in 1899 from a Warsaw gymnasium, a German-style academic high school, fluent in Russian and fully conversant with Russian history and literature. With his oldest brother in the family jewelry business and the other a dentist, he was allowed to pursue a career in the arts. Nadelman enrolled in Warsaw's School of Drawing, the city's only art school since the Russian government had abolished formal art instruction in its zone in 1863–64.

The union of art and nationalism was problematic for Jewish artists. They were thought to be ambivalent about Polish independence, and thus were barred or discouraged from full participation in the art world's nationalist mission. The introduction of modernist aesthetic theories in the late nineteenth century offered a way to circumvent this. From the modernist perspective, subject matter and the imitation of nature—which had been the core of the nationalists' visual art—were unimportant; what mattered was personal expression and formal values. While he attended art school in Poland, Nadelman aligned himself with the modernists and took a more formal approach to artmaking.

¹ "Eli Nadelman, Of Paris," *Camera Work*, no. 48, October 1916.

Paris

In 1904, after a brief stay in Munich, Germany, the twenty-two-year-old Nadelman moved to Paris. When he arrived in what was then the center of the European art world, sculpture was dominated by Auguste Rodin. In searching for an alternative vocabulary, Nadelman turned to classical art, finding in the calm repose and simplified geometric forms of early Greek sculpture a way to bypass Rodin's metaphysical subject matter and expressive surface treatment. Nadelman's efforts were rewarded in 1909 when Galerie E. Druet premiered thirteen of his plaster sculptures and one hundred of his drawings. With its radically simplified lines, graceful contours, and stylized distortion of shape, his work caught the attention of the art world and thrust him into the limelight as a young artist of promise.

By 1911, Nadelman was exclusively using curves to create form. With money from the sale of ten sculptures (an entire exhibition's worth) to cosmetics magnate Helena Rubinstein, he began a series of bronze figures and heads which he exhibited to great fanfare in Paris in 1913. Although these works drew their inspiration from a wide sweep of art history, their combination of geometrically stylized facial features and sinuous, graceful contours recalled, in particular, Italian Mannerist bronzes of the 16th century.

New York

Nadelman immigrated to the United States in October 1914, several months after the outbreak of World War I in Europe. He began immediately to work with simplified, tubular forms and everyday subject matter. He announced his new style in December 1915, with the inclusion of two plaster pieces in an exhibition at Alfred Stieglitz's vanguard gallery "291." One piece depicted a horse, the other a young boy in a bowler hat leaning against a tree.

In February 1917, Nadelman mounted a larger exhibit of new work at New York's Scott & Fowles Gallery. The sinuous linearity and streamlined elegance of the idealized heads and stylized animals he included in the show anticipated the Art Deco style that would characterize the sculpture and decorative art of the 1920s. The show was an enormous critical and financial success. Swamped with portrait commissions and orders for versions of his exhibited works in different materials and styles, Nadelman became one of America's wealthiest and most sought-after artists.

Throughout his career, Nadelman's income had depended primarily on portrait commissions. In 1919, however, he married a wealthy American heiress Viola Spiess Flannery. Elevated into a world of money and privilege, he took out memberships in various art organizations and men's clubs and began to host elegant "at home" Sunday soirees in the Eastside townhouse that he and Viola purchased after their marriage.

Painted Plaster Figurines

Between 1917 and 1919, Nadelman created painted plaster figurines of archetypal members of the upper class and of circus performers. While precedents existed for both his subject matter and his use of paint to delineate facial features and clothing, the work baffled most observers, who viewed its mixture of whimsy and contemporaneity as frivolous and vulgar. No plaster pieces ever sold, nor were versions ordered in wood or bronze, as Nadelman had anticipated; all that remains of these figurines are photographs taken at the time.

Wood and Bronze Figures

Undeterred by the public's tepid response to his painted plaster figurines, Nadelman pursued his plan of making multiples of each of them in bronze and wood. His choice of simplified, tubular forms and frozen, universal gestures gave these "genre" pieces a ritualized solemnity and archaic monumentality that was absent from their more whimsical plaster prototypes. Nevertheless, their exhibition in 1925 was financially disappointing. Only one piece—*High Kicker*—sold.

Nadelman began to collect folk art soon after coming to America. In the mid-1920s, he and his wife built a museum to house their vast collection on their estate in Riverdale in the Bronx. Nadelman's extensive collection of folk art, combined with his choice of wood as a material, have led many observers to conclude that his genre figures were inspired by folk art. In fact, his approach was far more complex. Folk art was no more an influence on his genre figures than was art—both high and low—from a wide spectrum of art history and popular culture. Particularly important as artistic sources were the painted wood altarpieces of late Gothic artists Veit Stoss and Tilman Riemenschneider, the paintings of Georges Seurat and Giotto, and the sculptures of Adolf von Hildebrand and in the Temple of Aphaia, with which he had been enthralled as a young artist.

Galvano-Plastiques

By 1925, Nadelman's growing desire to make affordable art led him to experiment with electroplating—a process which gave the appearance of bronze but was not nearly as expensive. The technique involved dipping plaster figures into a bath containing a solution with metal and applying an electric current, which caused the metal to adhere to the plaster.

Nadelman's electroplated figures—which he called by the French name of the process, "galvano-plastique"—originally had a variety of dark-colored finishes, ranging from green to tawny and gold. Nearly life-sized and unpainted, they depicted female circus performers exclusively. Softened contours, indistinct facial features, and meditative poses gave these figures a mysterious, introspective quality, as if they had been caught in moments of private self-absorption rather than public performance. Nadelman's electroplated figures generated scant attention when they were exhibited in 1927; as with his plaster figures, none ever sold in his lifetime.

Papier-mâché Circus Performers

Nadelman extended his fascination with muted features and contours in the over-life-sized sculptures of paired circus performers he created in 1928–29. With his populist instinct for affordable materials still intact, he cast these figures in plaster, laminating papier-mâché over their surfaces to give them the modulated color and delicate sensuality of unglazed terra-cotta. Endowed with a regal and serene equanimity, they seemed detached from the anxieties of the outside world.

Nadelman never intended to enlarge these pieces or reproduce them in other materials. However, two decades after his death, these paired figures were enlarged and carved in marble three times their original size for the New York State Theatre at Lincoln Center, a re-creation that many art historians consider unethical.

Small-scale Ceramics and Papier-mâché

In 1930, Nadelman began creating small-scale versions of his large works in terra-cotta and in papier-mâché for sale to the domestic market. Using molds, he cast multiple versions of a handful of figures, individualizing each of them through color and surface treatment. He did not want to mass-produce identical pieces, but rather to create sets of related works, each sharing a common shape but possessing unique features.

Late Figurines

By 1937, the Depression had wiped out Nadelman's fortune and forced him to sell his folk art collection. He isolated himself from the art world, refusing to lend his work even to group exhibitions. With Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939 and his escalating campaign against its Jewish population—including members of Nadelman's family—the artist's worldview darkened. His last group of sculptures—so small they could be held in the hand and so numerous they seem almost to have been created to fill the void left by the loss of his folk art collection—manifested the shift in his art from emotional restraint and idealism to flux, anxiety, and uncertainty.

By 1940, Nadelman had not exhibited in New York for more than thirteen years. A new generation of artists, dealers, and collectors had emerged who had never seen his work or knew that he existed. Paradoxically, Nadelman's late plasters, with their evocations of uncertainty and contingency, accorded with the art being produced by a younger generation of artists who responded to the onset of World War II determined to bear witness to the unsettling realities of the time and the vulnerability and irrationality they perceived as inherent to the human condition. Neither these artists nor their supporters were aware of Nadelman's late figurines.

Not until the 1960s did the bold immediacy and populist subject matter of Nadelman's late work catch the attention of the art world, who hailed him as a precursor of Pop art and a prophet of modernism. In the 1970s a new generation of artists saw in Nadelman's expressive figures a way to bypass formalist abstraction and re-engage with subject matter.

Vocabulary

Abstract/Abstraction	A work of art that is not recognizable as a picture of a person, place, or thing. However, an abstract work of art may reflect an emotion, a sensation, or some aspect of the real world that has been generalized, simplified, distorted, or rearranged.
Bronze	An alloy, or mixture, of copper and tin. It is often used for cast sculpture.
Bust	A picture or sculpture of a person that includes their head, neck, and shoulders.
Classical art	Art that relates to the ancient Greek or Roman world.
Cross hatching	Lines that crisscross each other. They are used in drawings to show shape and volume.
Figurative	Works of art that depict recognizable subjects such as a person, place, or object. Figurative also refers to representations of the human figure.
Form/Formalism	A work of art's formal qualities are its overall design or organization. Form or visual elements in a work of art include color, shape, size, and structure.
Galvano-plastique	The French name for electroplating plaster—a process which gives the appearance of bronze without the accompanying cost. The technique involves dipping a plaster figure into a bath containing metal and applying an electric current, which causes the metal to adhere to the plaster.
Marble	A type of stone formed when limestone turns into hard crystals due to intense geological pressure and heat.
Modernism	Modernism describes art created from about the 1860s through the 1970s. It began as a response to the urbanization and industrialization of Western society and often challenged the values and beliefs of the middle class. During this time artists viewed contemporary events, feelings and ideas as viable subjects for their work, rather than limiting themselves to historical or biblical events. These works were often made in unsettling new styles.
Patina	The coating on the surface of an object, such as the green film that covers the surface of bronze or copper when it has been outside for a while. A patina usually forms or is applied later, from age or chemical processes, or is added by an artist.
Postmodernism	The diversification of styles and concerns that came with end of modernism; the term is often applied to art from the 1970s through the present. Though this term can refer to many different things, it generally represents a shift away from modernist ideals of reductiveness and uniformity in art and art theory. Postmodern artists are often interested in recognizing and appropriating art of the past.
Representation	A work of art that depicts a recognizable subject—a person, place, or thing.

Vocabulary (continued)

Sculptor	An artist who makes sculpture.
Sculpture	A three-dimensional work of art. Sculptures are not usually hung on the wall. You can often look at a sculpture by walking all the way around it.
Volume	Literally, volume is the amount of space a three-dimensional object takes up. In art, it also refers to <i>how</i> a 3-D object occupies space, and to the representation of a 3-D object on a flat surface.

Objective:

To explore Elie Nadelman's approach to drawing



The Bird, 1907–9. Ink on paper, 25 1/4 x 19 3/8 in. (64.1 x 49.2 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase, with funds from Philip Morris Incorporated
Photograph by Sheldon Collins

I am asked to explain my drawings. I will try to do so, although form cannot be described. Modern artists are ignorant of *the true forms of art*. They copy nature, try to imitate it by any possible means, and their works are *photographic reproductions*, not works of art. They are works without style and without unity.

It is form in itself, not resemblance to nature, which gives us pleasure in a work of art.

But what is this true form of art? It is significant and abstract, i.e., composed of geometrical elements.

Here is how I realize it. I employ no other line than the curve, which possesses freshness and force. I compose these curves so as to bring them in accord or in opposition to one another. In that way, I obtain the life of form, i.e., harmony. In that way I intend that the life of the work should come from within itself. The subject of any work of art is for me nothing but a pretext for creating a significant form, relations of forms which create a new life that has nothing to do with life in nature, a life from which art is born, and from which spring style and unity.

From significant form comes style, from relations of form, i.e., the necessity of playing one form against another, comes unity.

I leave it to others to judge of the importance of so radical a change in the means used to create a work of art.

(Signed) Elie Nadelman²

² "Photo-Secession Notes: The Photo-Secession Gallery," *Camera Work*, no. 32, October, 1910.

Suggested Discussion with Students:

Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:

The arts: 1, 2, 3, 4; English language arts: 1, 3, 4

Note to Educators: Select a video that features people and/or animals in motion and play it for students in the classroom. Pause the video, then discuss what can be seen.

Which parts of the body are in motion?
How is movement frozen in time?

Have students research how movement is expressed and portrayed in different media. For example: in music videos, on television, and in comic books and cartoons. Explore the techniques used to express movement (speed, slow motion, etc.) in each of these media and make sketches. Have students present their drawings to their classmates, and discuss their findings.

For younger students:**Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1; English language arts: 1, 2, 3

Note to Educators: Play the game of “Freeze” with your students. Have students stand up and move around until you say “freeze.” Students “freeze” in whatever gesture or movement they were making at that moment. If you see a student move after “freezing,” ask them to look for an interesting pose another student is frozen in and describe it to the class. Ask him or her what the other student’s previous move might have looked like, and what the next move might be.

Suggested Project:

Lines and Curves

Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:

The arts: 1, 2

Supplies: Paper; pens; pencils; tracing paper; sports and dance magazines; scissors

For his drawing *The Bird*, Elie Nadelman used lines and curves to show the movement of a bird. He also used cross hatching (crisscrossed lines) to describe its shape or volume.

Suggested Project (continued):

Note to Educators: Ask students to find an image of an athlete or dancer in a magazine or on the Internet. Have students clip their selected picture and trace it onto a sheet of paper using both straight and curved lines. They should focus on the lines of movement in the image or the parts of the body that are in motion.

For younger students:**Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1, 2; English language arts: 1, 3, 4

Note to Educators: Ask students to work with a partner. Have student partners experiment with different ways of describing movement. Each student in a pair should give the other directions on how to get from one point in the classroom to another, or from one point in the school to another. Ask students to come up with at least three distinct methods of instructing the other student to get from point A to point B. Here are four approaches:

1. Written or spoken step-by-step directions. For example: 1. Take five steps towards the chalkboard. 2. Turn ninety degrees to the right, etc.
2. Written or oral instructions based on landmarks. For example: Walk until you reach the chalkboard. Turn right. Go through the classroom door and continue until you reach the trophy cabinet. Etc.
3. A schematic diagram like the kind a coach might use to outline a football play, or the kind sportscasters draw to show a play.
4. A detailed sketch or drawing.
5. Acting out the necessary movements, i.e., follow the leader.

Suggested Project (continued):**Lines, Curves, and Shapes****Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1, 2, 3, 4; English language arts: 1, 2, 3

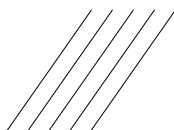
Supplies: Paper; pens; pencils; conté crayons; graphite sticks; charcoal; pastels

Note to Educators: Have students choose a bird or a flying insect and make a drawing of it from memory, using just straight and curved lines. Experiment with different drawing media such as charcoal, conté crayons, or graphite sticks.

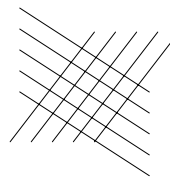
Have students think about how they would express a fast or slow movement, a repetitive movement, and the direction of the movement. Students could also add hatching and cross hatching to show volume. Discuss students' drawings and the ways in which they expressed movement.

Hatching

Hatching is drawing thin lines that are parallel—going in the same direction.

**Cross hatching**

Cross hatching is drawing lines that crisscross each other.

**Birds****Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1, 2

Supplies: Paper; pencils

Note to Educators: Ask students to work with a partner for this project. Have students make bird wing shapes with their hands. They could also create shadows of the movement of a flying bird on a wall or horizontal surface. Encourage students to experiment with different bird wing shapes that express movement. One person can put their hands down while the other partner draws around them to create images of flying birds. Once one pair of hands are drawn, students could also move them slightly

Suggested Project (continued):

and their partner could draw around their hands again to create a visual representation of movement. Students could color their drawings and display them as a continuous mural or frieze on a classroom wall.

Journal of Shapes**Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1, 2; English language arts: 1, 3, 4; Math, science and technology: 1, 7

Supplies: Journals or notebooks; pens; pencils; digital or 35mm cameras; magazines; scissors; glue sticks

Note to Educators: Ask your students to do this project as a class or homework assignment. Choose a geometric form and have students look for shapes with it in their classroom, on the way to or from school, or at home—for example, curved, round, circular, or cylindrical shapes (such as pencils, pens, rolls of tape, paper clips) or square, cubed, and rectangular shapes (such as books, desks, windows, doors, bookshelves). Have students record the shapes they find in a notebook or journal by making drawings, or with a camera.

In class, hand out small sheets of paper and ask your students to make a drawing of one shape that they have seen, filling the whole sheet of paper. Make a wall of students' shape drawings in your classroom. Students could also find images of similar shapes in magazines and add them to the picture wall. Have students categorize the images and arrange them according to similarity of shape. Discuss the types of shapes that students found. How are the shapes of things similar? What makes them different?

Objective:

To examine the fusion of classical principles and modernism in Elie Nadelman's work



Early Ideal Head, c. 1916–17
Marble, 17 in. (43.2 cm) high
Collection of Max Palevsky
Photograph by Douglas M. Parker Studio

In 1910, Elie Nadelman began working on a group of marble heads and figures inspired by the work of fifth-century B.C. sculptor Praxiteles. Using a vocabulary of idealized features and schematically patterned hair, the artist portrayed a timeless, impersonal serenity and detachment from everyday life. His London exhibition of ten of these idealized marbles attracted the attention of cosmetics magnate Helena Rubinstein, who purchased the entire show. She installed these pieces in her home and beauty salon—along with other Nadelman works she purchased in subsequent years—as emblems of the perfect beauty with which she wanted her own products associated.

Classical art

Art that relates to the ancient Greek or Roman world.

Modern art

“Modern art” and “modernism” are used to describe new ideas and styles of art made from about the 1860s through the 1970s.

And in speaking of lines the question presents itself, what is Form? What is perfect Form? What is perfection in Art? The Artist finally understands that only the lines which have a significance are perfect, and that the lines without significance, of which he made use before, are incapable of perfection.

If a piece of string is thrown on the ground it will form each time a new sinuous line. Can we call these haphazard lines, these forms, perfect forms?

We cannot: since these forms have no meaning, they are incapable of perfection.

But if we take this same string and try to enclose as much space as possible within its length we obtain a circle. We have there a line *with a significance*, perfect that is, containing in itself the *idea* of perfection.

–Eli Nadelman³

From the introduction to “Exhibition of Sculpture by Eli Nadelman,” Wm. B. Paterson Gallery, April 1911 (excerpt)

Suggested Discussion with Students:

The visual images, forms, styles, words, and myths of the ancient world and classical culture are embedded in the names of the stars and the planets, in Western language and literature, and in our everyday life.

What do you think of when you hear the word “classical”? When you hear the word “modern”? Why?

What objects or buildings do you think are influenced by classical Greek culture?

Where do you encounter visual references from the ancient world in everyday life?

Which companies and businesses use classical names or references?

Which brand of sneakers is named after a mythological figure?

Which cars, cameras, and watches have names from mythology?

Why do you think these companies and businesses use classical or mythological names? What associations do these names have?

Which buildings do you know that have elements of Greek or Roman architecture?

On or inside which buildings do you see mythological figures?

What works of art have you seen that depict scenes from the ancient world?

³ “Eli Nadelman, Of Paris,” *Camera Work*, no. 48, October 1916.

For younger students:

Suggested Discussion with Students:

Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:

English language arts: 3, 4; Social studies: 2

Note to educators: With your students, read a selection of stories from both ancient and contemporary times (see Suggested Reading list below). Use the questions below as a guide to compare the classical and the modern.

What do you think of as modern or new?

What do you think of as ancient or old?

What is old in history?

Can you tell the difference between something modern and something old?

How?

Where do you find ancient things?

Suggested Reading

- | | |
|--|---|
| D'Aulaire, Ingri and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire | <i>D'Aulaire's Book of Greek Myths</i> . New York: Doubleday, 1962. |
| Bendick, Jeanne | <i>Archimedes and the Door to Science</i> . Bathgate, North Dakota: Bethlehem Books, 1997. |
| Chelepi, Chris | <i>Growing up in Ancient Greece</i> . Mahwah: New Jersey: Troll Associates, 1993. |
| Colum, Padraic | <i>The Children's Homer</i> . New York: Pocket Books, 1982. |
| Fanelli, Sara | <i>Mythological Monsters of Ancient Greece</i> . Cambridge, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 2002. |
| Lasky, Kathryn | <i>The Librarian Who Measured the Earth</i> . New York: Little Brown & Co, 1994. |
| Scieszka, Jon | <i>It's All Greek to Me (Time Warp Trio, 8)</i> . New York: Viking Children's Books, 1999. |
| Sharman-Burke, Juliet | <i>Stories from the Stars: Greek Myths of the Zodiac: An Abbeville Anthology</i> . New York: Abbeville Press, 1996. |

Sutcliff, Rosemary	<i>The Wanderings of Odysseus: The Story of the Odyssey</i> . New York: Delacorte Press, 1996.
Williamson, Joanne	<i>Hittite Warrior. Bathgate</i> . North Dakota: Bethlehem Books, 1999.
Winterfeld, Henry	<i>Detectives in Togas</i> . New York: Odyssey Classics, 1990.
	<i>Mystery of the Roman Ransom</i> . New York: Odyssey Classics, 2002.

Suggested Project:

Ancient Presence

Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:

The arts: 1, 2, 3, 4; English language arts: 1, 3, 4

Supplies: Paper or journals; pens; pencils; digital or 35mm camera

Note to Educators: As a homework assignment, have students explore the presence of the ancient world in contemporary life. Whenever they see or hear a reference to the ancient world in a TV program or advertisement, they should record it in a journal. Have students clip magazine and newspaper advertisements of products with mythological names. Ask them to document classical architecture and sculpture they see with a camera or make a sketch. After they have kept their journals for a week or longer, have students share their findings with the class. What references to ancient culture did they discover?

Changing Styles

Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:

The arts: 1, 2, 4; English language arts: 1, 3, 4

Supplies: Magazines; school yearbooks; computers with Internet access; printer; scanner; bulletin board or wall

Note to educators: Have students find images of hairstyles and accessories in hair and fashion magazines or on the Internet. They should look for images from the early twentieth century to the present. Students should also look at hairstyles and accessories in school yearbooks, both current and old. Photocopy or scan the images. Make an image wall or bulletin board of hairstyles in your classroom. Have students categorize and arrange the images in chronological and stylistic groups. Discuss how the shapes and forms of hairstyles have changed over time. Are any styles repeated? Which ones? Which contemporary hairstyles have been adapted from non-Western cultures? From previous styles? Have students write brief descriptions of their findings.

Suggested Project (continued):**Classical Contemporary****Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1, 2, 3, 4; English language arts: 1, 3, 4

Supplies: Paper; tracing paper, vellum, or Denril; pens; pencils; magazines; scissors; glue sticks; computer with Internet access; software that can combine and manipulate image and text such as Microsoft Word, Photoshop, PowerPoint, or Hyperstudio; scanner; printer

Note to educators: Ask students to find an image of a classical Greek head or bust, a contemporary hairstyle or fashion image, and a third head image from another culture or era. Students could use images from their image wall or bulletin board of changing hairstyles. Have students combine these images as a collage on paper or make a digital image that they can print out. Next, have students make a drawing or tracing of their collage or image on translucent paper such as vellum, Denril, or tracing paper. Have students visually connect the ancient and the modern imagery by making a new drawing that emphasizes the similar shapes and forms in the objects that they selected. Display and discuss students' work. How have they combined the classical and the contemporary in their collages or digital images? In their drawings?

Ideal Head**Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1, 2, 3, 4; English language arts: 1, 3

Supplies: Paper or journals; pens; pencils

Sometimes Elie Nadelman called his heads "ideal"—something that is considered perfect.

- What would your ideal head look like?
- Would it have hair? No hair?
- Would its eyes be open or closed? Why?
- Would it be smiling or not?

Suggested Project (continued):

Draw an ideal head.

What did you choose to include in your ideal head? What did you leave out?
Why?
Is it a head of a man or a woman? How can the viewer tell?
What expression or emotion does the face show?

Clay Heads**Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1, 2; Math, science, and technology: 1, 7

Supplies: Self-hardening clay (black, red, or gray); a chopstick

Note to educators: Ask students to work with a partner for the first part of this project. Have students explore proportion by making a clay head based on their partner's head. Students can use their index fingers to trace or measure the "latitudes" or widths of their faces. Generally, the distance from the top of the skull to the bridge of the nose is approximately the same as that from the bridge of the nose to the bottom of the chin. The eyes are located on each side of the bridge of the nose; eyebrows line up with the tops of ears; the bottom of the nose lines up with earlobes.

To make clay heads, use self-hardening clay and a chopstick. Have students make a ball of clay that fits in the palm of their hand. Use the chopstick to poke eyes in the center of the ball. Pull out the nose. Pull out the lips. Pull out the ears. To add hair, take bits of clay and make spirals, wedges, strands, etc.

For younger students:**Ancient/New****Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1, 2, 4; English language arts: 1, 3, 4

Supplies: Students' found objects; paper; pens or pencils; magazines; computers with Internet access; printer; bulletin board or wall

Note to educators: Ask students to bring two small objects—one old and one new—to class. Make a classroom display of students' objects. Ask students to write a label and a text for each of their objects. Labels can include the student's name, a name or title for the object, what the object is made of, and its size.

Or ask students to find images of ancient or old objects and new objects. Ask students to create a display of their images on a wall or bulletin board in your classroom. Have students categorize objects according to their age.

Classical Contemporary

Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:

The arts: 1, 2, 3, 4; English language arts: 1, 3, 4

Supplies: Paper; tracing paper, vellum, or Denril; pens; pencils; magazines; scissors; glue sticks; computer with Internet access; printer

Note to educators: Ask students to find an image of a Greek classical head and a contemporary hairstyle or fashion image. Have students combine these images as a collage on paper. Next, have students make a drawing or tracing of their collage or image on translucent paper such as vellum, Denril, or tracing paper. Have students visually connect the ancient and the modern imagery by making a new drawing that emphasizes the similar shapes and forms in the objects that they selected. Display and discuss students' work. How have they combined the classical and the contemporary? How have they combined the classical and the contemporary in their collages? In their drawings?

Objective:

To examine gesture and movement in Elie Nadelman's sculpture



Tango, c. 1920–24. Painted cherry wood and gesso, three units, overall 35 7/8 x 26 x 13 7/8 in. (91.1 x 66 x 35.2 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase, with funds from the Mr. and Mrs. Arthur G. Altschul Purchase Fund, the Joan and Lester Avnet Purchase Fund, the Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch Purchase Fund, the Mrs. Robert C. Graham Purchase Fund in honor of John I.H. Baur, the Mrs. Percy Uris Purchase Fund and the Henry Schnakenberg Purchase Fund in honor of Juliana Force
Photograph by Jerry L. Thompson

Elie Nadelman carved this couple dancing the tango in cherry wood. The tango is a ballroom dance from Argentina that became a fad in America just before World War I. One partner leads the other in different steps, swirls, twists, and turns. The artist wanted to focus attention on the dancers' movement, so he painted in some details, but he left some things out. *Tango* is a primary example of Nadelman's fusion of classical sculpture and popular American subject matter. Natural, unpainted cherry wood is used to define the bodies and outer garments, while the hands, faces, and the man's shirt are painted in white gesso or other colors. Nadelman avoided depicting the most recognizable tango step, where the dancers stride forward with hands joined and arms clasped tightly around each other's back. Instead, he selected a moment in the dance when the couple separates.

Suggested Project:

Tableau Vivant

Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:

The arts: 1; English language arts: 1, 3, 4

Supplies: Magazines; school yearbooks; computers with Internet access; digital or Polaroid camera; printer; scanner; bulletin board or wall

A tableau vivant (living picture) is a scene acted out by a group of people with gestures and in silence. A tableau vivant is like a moment in a play, but frozen in time, and without words or movements or actions. Examples might include a line of people waiting for a bus, two people having an argument, or a scene from a television show or a painting.

Note to educators: Ask students to work in small groups for this project. If possible, connect topics for tableaux vivants to students' curriculum studies—for example, English language arts, foreign language classes, or social studies.

Have students find an image that they could use to create a tableau vivant. They should not show the image to other groups. Ask them to use their bodies and objects available in the classroom to re-create the scene. Have each group present their tableau to the class. Can the audience describe the image that the students are creating? Take a Polaroid or digital photograph of their tableau. When all of the groups have presented their work, display and discuss students' selected images and the photographs of their tableaux. How did students interpret the images that they selected?

Moving Figures

Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:

The arts: 1, 2, 3, 4; English language arts: 1, 3, 4; Social studies: 1

Supplies: Rolls or large sheets of black and/or white photographic backdrop paper, bulletin board paper, kraft paper, or butcher paper; pencils or markers; overhead projector or slide projector; scissors; glue; tape

Note to educators: Ask students to work in small groups for this project. Consult your dance teacher or have students research different contemporary and twentieth-century dances. Ask them to find out what influences dances have had on each other over time.

Suggested Project (continued):

Have students use an overhead projector to make dance silhouettes. Ask them to tape sheets of backdrop paper onto a classroom wall. The paper should be about seven feet high and taped to the floor at the bottom. Position the overhead or slide projector so that it will cast life-size or almost-life-size silhouettes on the wall.

Two students in the group should act as dance partners and pose to create a silhouette against the wall. The other students can use pencils or markers to trace the outline of the silhouettes on the backdrop paper.

Student groups could cut out their silhouettes and attach them to another roll of different colored backdrop paper, or leave their traced silhouettes as drawings. If students cut out their silhouettes, have them connect all of their dance poses. Discuss the dance shapes and forms that students produced.

Students can make a phosphorescent wall by painting a white 4 x 8 foot board with phosphorescent paint. After the paint has dried, have students pose in dance movements close to the board, then turn off the lights so that the wall is in darkness for three to five minutes. When the lights are switched on, students' shadows should be visible on the phosphorescent wall. For best results, experiment with a variety of poses and length of time that students hold their poses.

For younger students:**Dance Partners****Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:**

The arts: 1, 2, 3, 4; English language arts: 1, 3, 4

Supplies: Paper or cardboard; colored pencils or crayons; scissors; paper clips; tape; pencil

What dances do you know?

What type of music do you dance to?

What do you wear when you dance?

Note to educators: Ask students to make a pair of dancing figures. Students can model their dancers on themselves, or on dancers they have seen. Draw a figure dancing on paper or cardboard. Cut out your dancing figure. Join two paper clips together by looping them through each other. Tape one paper clip to the back of your figure's head and the other to the end of a pencil. Make a partner for your dancing figure. Find some music to play. Move the pencils to make the figures dance!

What details of a real dancer are missing?

What details did you include?
How did you show that the figures are moving?
In which direction would your dancers move next?

Objective:

To create sculptures in multiples



Figure, c. 1938–46. Plaster, 7 5/8 x 2 5/8 x 2 1/8 in. (19.4 x 6.6 x 5.4 cm). Estate of Elie Nadelman, courtesy of Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, New York
Photograph by Paul Waldman

Throughout his career, Nadelman was intrigued with the idea of creating unique but related sculptures. In the beginning of his career, he would commonly replicate a piece in different sizes or materials, sometimes years after creating the original shape. Later in his life, he would differentiate multiples of the same image by varying their color and surface treatment.

Nadelman's last group of sculptures were miniature figurines that he sculpted in plastilene, a non-hardening clay, and then in plaster, a process that generated multiple versions of the same image. After the cast plaster figurines hardened, he reworked

them, sometimes drawing on them with pencil, more often carving them with a penknife, file, or fork. Nadelman would sometimes eradicate whole limbs and faces in the course of modifying a figure; for other pieces, he added pellets of plastilene to rebuild a piece, which he then recast. By improvising in this way, and by abandoning smooth surfaces and idealized geometric forms, Nadelman brought to his art a sense of the mysterious and the irrational.

Suggested Project:

Multiple Sculptures

Subject areas and New York State Learning Standards addressed:

The arts: 1, 2

Supplies: Found objects; sand used for construction; cardboard boxes; papier-mâché or Celluclay; modeling clay or Sculpey; plaster of Paris; Hydrostone (casting material); plasticine; water; Pam or vegetable oil; paint; brushes; shoe polish; cloth

Note to educators: Ask students to make two or more sculptures using a found object and a mold. Ask students to use materials such as plaster of Paris, clay, or papier-mâché so that they can produce multiple sculptures that are identical or slightly different from each other. Have students find small objects with details—such as a shell, a brush or toothbrush, a small plastic toy, or a doll or action figure head. Students can also make multiples by direct sculpting in their selected medium, or they can sculpt in an intermediate material such as water based clay, make a mold of it, and then use that mold to cast any number of additional sculptures in different materials.

Or students could make multiple sculptures that fit in the palm of their hand. (See the Clay Heads project on page 14.)

Papier-mâché

Mix flour, water, and strips of newspaper.

Plaster of Paris

To make a mold, put sand in a box. Press a small object into the sand and remove it, creating a distinct impression. Spray Pam non-stick coating or a thin layer of vegetable oil on the inside of the mold so that the sculpture can be easily removed. Mix plaster of Paris (two parts plaster to one part water) and pour it into the mold before it sets. Let the plaster dry for fifteen to twenty minutes.

Suggested Project (continued):

Plasticine or soft clay

Embed a small, detailed object in the clay or plasticine and fill the mold with plaster of Paris.

Use paint or shoe polish to add a patina to the surface of the sculptures.

View and discuss your multiple sculptures with the class. How are they similar? How are they different? Was it easy or difficult to make similar multiples? Why?

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