



**18-19 Art Curriculum Report
Nicole Batchelor**

Art at Miquon

The Art Curriculum at The Miquon School is designed to allow our young artists to explore and create in a safe, nurturing environment. Technical skills are introduced in an age- and ability-appropriate manner as each child progresses through our program, and these skills are revisited and built-upon in each subsequent year. Individual artist studies and deep-dive investigations into art movements, coupled with contextualized discussion and exploration of art history, contribute to an increasingly broad understanding of both the “how” and the “why” of creating art.

Nursery, 2018-19 Art Curriculum

After experimenting with the schedule and looking for ways to ease transitions and have a longer block of time with children in the Art room, we found a lovely compromise of having Nursery in half groups for forty-five minutes, alternating every other week. The longer class periods allowed for deeper exploration.

Each Art Class began with a story that is connected to what we would be exploring that day. There is often a discussion of media and technique at this point. From there, we move to the tables to begin our work.

We started the year very simply—with just a dot. The dot became a line: thick, thin, wavy, straight. Lines became shapes: shapes needed colors, and so color mixing was explored. We worked with a variety of materials, and in both two and three dimensions. During the early autumn, we watched 29 monarch caterpillars change into butterflies—we had opportunities to study their entire metamorphosis. Nursery children had time to notice colors and patterns, and create both two- and three-dimensional art inspired by these observations. Nursery reinforced their in-class color study with a deeper dive into mixing colors in a variety of media: they had fun mixing primaries to create a vast variety of colors. On other days, Nursery students had the chance to explore different media in art stations (e.g., painting, collage, drawing, dough, building, etc.). Nursery students were introduced to artists such as Eric Carle, Piet Mondrian, and Alma Thomas. They had opportunities to work with clay and learn the basics of constructing with clay while creating clay works connected to other explorations: butterflies when we had monarchs in the art room, self portraits when they were doing their identity study, and flowers as we got to the spring and excitedly noticed all the first blooms of the season.

All Nursery students had their art journals and clay work in the Art and Science show.

At this age, creating art is mostly about process rather than product: children are encouraged to explore and investigate, and to take risks in a safe and supportive environment. Our young artists nurture one another as they each develop their own unique artistic voice.

To see some of what goes on in the Art Room, follow us on Instagram @miquon.art ([instagram.com/miquon.art](https://www.instagram.com/miquon.art))

Kindergarten, 2018-19 Art Curriculum

Art at Miquon provides children with the time, space, and materials with which they may create. It affords opportunities to engage in empathy, stewardship, and problem-solving, along with myriad other valuable, community-positive social activities.

Kindergarten has Art once weekly for forty minutes. Each Art Class begins with a story that is connected to what we'll be exploring that day. There is often a discussion of media and technique at this point. From there, we move to the tables to begin our work.

During the early autumn, we watched 29 monarch caterpillars change into butterflies—we had opportunities to study their entire metamorphosis. We noticed color, pattern, and symmetry—and we had a chance to discuss the needs of the caterpillars/butterflies as we were creating art inspired by our observations. After our butterfly studies, we began to explore color mixing: we worked with primaries to mix an entire rainbow. With our color-mixing skills, we were inspired by the apples Kindergarten picked, and by the work of Paul Cézanne, to create our own still-life “paintings” using oil pastels. We worked with elements of design to create some fantastic mixed-media fall leaves. Owls were a popular topic in Kindergarten this year, so we learned about creating forms from simple shapes, and made our own owl watercolor-resist drawings. We then translated this study into three dimensions to create clay owls, with an emphasis on creating texture and pattern. We furthered our investigation of color into a discussion about the individualized ways colors and feelings can be connected. We looked at Mark Rothko's Color Field Paintings, and created our own “maps” of our feelings about that day using colors. We talked about how art can inspire feelings, and we looked at paintings and drawings of doves and his “Bouquet of Peace” before creating our own bouquets of peace. Extending our investigation of some of Picasso's work, we looked at his drawings and paintings of roosters. We then created our own colorful chickens in celebration of Sherry.

We looked at—and created art inspired by—other artists, such as Alma Thomas, Leo Lionni, and Juan Quezada . On other days, Kindergarten children had the chance to explore different media in art stations (e.g., painting, collage, drawing, dough, weaving, building, etc.). We made two visits up to our Artist's Loft, and had the opportunity to use the Object Library and draw in sketchbooks. Kindergarten had more opportunities to work three-dimensionally: they created clay plant pockets and chameleons, and they had a chance to connect to their in-class study of Mexico to create coil pots after learning the traditional style of the Casas Grandes people. They also collaborated on four papier-mâché piñatas.

While Sherry worked with Kindergarten to make their first self portraits of the year, I had the special honor of continuing the lovely tradition, and guided students in the creation of their second and third self portraits. Children really took their time to notice detail as they used mirrors and a variety of drawing media to create their lovely works.

All Kindergarteners had their art journals, Peace Bouquet Paintings, and clay work in the Art and Science show. They helped set up their clay pieces, and they created artfully-designed leaves for their clay chameleons to rest upon.

Throughout the year, children are encouraged to explore and investigate, and to take risks in a safe and supportive environment. Our young artists nurture one another as they each develop their own unique artistic voices.

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First/Second Grade, 2018-19 Art Curriculum

Art at Miquon provides children with the time, space, and materials with which they may create. It affords opportunities to engage in empathy, stewardship, and problem-solving, along with myriad other valuable, community-positive social activities. Art speaks where words are unable to explain. Art encourages students to develop critical thinking skills, self-awareness, and self-expression.

First and Second Graders have Art once weekly for forty-five minutes. Most classes begin with a story that is connected to what we'll be exploring that day. There is often a discussion of media and technique at this point. From there, we move to the tables to begin our work.

At this stage, children are beginning to develop an increasing understanding that Art is both process and product-oriented, even as the primary focus remains on process. The idea that Art is a safe place to try out new ways of self-expression is emphasized and supported in a nurturing, non-critical environment. Children continue to develop their craft: they are introduced to new tools, materials, and artistic conventions, and are able to build upon previous experiences. The importance of organization and care for tools, materials, and our studio is emphasized, as is the knowledge that art skills and understanding improve through practice.

Our year in the Art Room started slowly and intentionally. We took time to notice and wonder about the changes that had been made to our space, to reflect on our experiences of the recent past, and to allow ourselves to become excited for new explorations. We reviewed where to find things, and discussed what it means to work together in a studio. We talked about the importance of sharing materials and ideas, as well as taking care of ourselves, each other, and our space. The children in First through Sixth grades thoughtfully collaborated to consider what the Art Room should feel like, and came up with a lovely list—“When We are in the Art Room, We are: Peaceful, Patient, Kind, Calm, Supportive, Considerate, Mindful, Thoughtful, Creative, Artful, Positive, and Welcoming.”

Each child took some time to contemplate themselves as artists, and they created pieces that began, “I am an artist when...” These works became lovely illustrations of their self-affirmation and this exploration set the tone for the year we'd spend together noticing, wondering, and creating. We revisit this idea every year: it helps remind us that we—as artists—are observers of the world around us, and it allows children to reflect upon the growth they've experienced.

During the early autumn, we watched 29 monarch caterpillars change into butterflies—we had opportunities to study their entire metamorphosis. We noticed color, pattern, and symmetry—and we had a chance to discuss the needs of the caterpillars/butterflies as we were creating art inspired by our observations. As the weather warmed in the spring, we had another opportunity to watch a different species of butterfly—in this case the painted lady—develop from caterpillars and be released.

Throughout the year, we continued to explore the elements and principles of design using a variety of media and methods in developmentally-appropriate and cumulative fashion. We worked both two- and three-dimensionally, and connected to artists, art movements, and cultural art relevant to our studies. Each grade band had many opportunities to delve into a diverse selection of projects that become increasingly-involved as Miquon Artists

progress through their years, with each successive year building upon the skills and content knowledge cultivated in earlier grades.

First and Second graders this year studied the work of Wassily Kandinsky, Eric Carle, Vincent van Gogh, the quilters and quilts of Gee's Bend, and Robert Indiana—among that of many other artists. They explored several types of media and art-making techniques, including—but not limited to—collage, the mixing of primary colors and tints, experimenting with different types of paints and drawing implements, different types of mark making, and ceramic sculpture. Additionally, young artists often were able to work outside: the importance of being in, working with, and being inspired by nature is central to each child's Miquon experience.

All First & Second grade students had the opportunity to look through their art portfolios and choose two works of art that they wanted to display in the Art Show, as well as having their Gee's Bend-inspired quilt blocks, ceramic narwhals, unicorns, and turtles in the show.

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Third/Fourth Grade, 2018-19 Art Curriculum

Art at Miquon provides children with the time, space, and materials with which they may create. It affords opportunities to engage in empathy, stewardship, and problem-solving, along with myriad other valuable, community-positive social activities.

Third and Fourth Graders have Art twice weekly for forty-five minutes. At this stage, children are developing an increasing understanding that Art is both process and product-oriented, and their technical skills are advancing. The process becomes more detail-oriented, and Art History becomes a more integral component of the curriculum. Miquon artists at this age have sketchbooks in which they might work out ideas, take notes, or use however best supports their creative process. Art encourages students to develop critical thinking skills, self-awareness, and self-expression. Art speaks where words are unable to explain.

Though our Third and Fourth Grade artists are growing their understanding of art and art-making techniques, it is central to their experience that the Art Room is a safe place to try out new ways of self-expression—and this is emphasized and supported in a nurturing environment. Children continue to develop their craft: They are introduced to new tools, materials, and artistic conventions, and are able to build upon previous experiences. The importance of organization and care for tools, materials, and our studio is emphasized, as is the knowledge that art skills and understanding improve through practice. They are also encouraged to notice connections between their own work and others' artwork as they develop a deeper understanding of the concepts of art and advance their abilities to envision what cannot be observed, and to imagine what's possible.

Our year in the Art Room started slowly and intentionally. We took time to notice and wonder about the changes that had been made to our space, to reflect on our experiences of the recent past, and to allow ourselves to become excited for new explorations. We reviewed where to find things, and discussed what it means to work together in a studio. We talked about the importance of sharing materials and ideas, as well as taking care of ourselves, each other, and our space. The children in First through Sixth grades thoughtfully collaborated to consider what the Art Room should feel like, and came up with a lovely list—“When We are in the Art Room, We are: Peaceful, Patient, Kind, Calm, Supportive, Considerate, Mindful, Thoughtful, Creative, Artful, Positive, and Welcoming.”

Each child took some time to contemplate themselves as artists, and they created pieces that began “I am an artist when...” These works became lovely illustrations of their self-affirmation and this exploration set the tone for the year we’d spend together noticing, wondering, and creating. We revisit this idea every year: it helps remind us that we—as artists—are observers of the world around us, and it allows children to reflect upon the growth they’ve experienced. Third and Fourth Grade children had an increasingly-wide range of media with which they were able to create these works.

During the early autumn, we watched 29 monarch caterpillars change into butterflies—we had opportunities to study their entire metamorphosis. We noticed color, pattern, and symmetry—and we had a chance to discuss the needs of the caterpillars/butterflies as we were creating art inspired by our observations. We learned of the studies of pioneering female artist, scientist, and explorer Maria Sibylla Merian—she is best known for her in-depth exploration and explanation of the life cycles of butterflies. As the weather warmed in the spring, we had another opportunity to watch a different species of butterfly—in this case the painted lady—develop from caterpillars and be released.

Throughout the year, we continued to explore the elements and principles of design using a variety of media and methods in developmentally-appropriate and cumulative fashion. We worked both two- and three-dimensionally, and connected to artists, art movements, and cultural art relevant to our studies. Each grade band had many opportunities to delve into a diverse selection of projects that become increasingly-involved as Miquon Artists progress through their years, with each successive year building upon the skills and content knowledge cultivated in earlier grades.

Third and Fourth graders this year studied the work of Wayne Thiebaud, Wilson Bentley, Piet Mondrian, and Faith Ringgold—among many other artists. They explored several types of media and art-making techniques, including—but not limited to—mixed media, observational drawing, painting, printmaking, and ceramic sculpture. Additionally, young artists often were able to work outside: the importance of being in, working with, and being inspired by nature is central to each child’s Miquon experience.

Throughout the year we had Open Studio days during which children self-select their activities. Their choices often were to spend more time exploring a favored media, subject, and/or technique, e.g., drawing, painting, weaving, building, etc. This also offered children the freedom to spend additional time on works of art they had already started, but felt to them “unfinished” in one way or another. Access to our Artists’ Loft and Object Library increases as children move through the grades at Miquon. As Third and Fourth Graders, artists have the opportunity to work more independently in our Artists’ Loft, where they might choose to draw items from the Object Library, or to weave.

All Third and Fourth grade students had the opportunity to look through their art portfolios and choose two works of art that they wanted to display in the Art Show as well as having their pattern printmaking pieces and their creative and thoughtfully crafted clay animals and mixed media habitats on display. Students were integral in the set up of their habitats: they considered how best to show them, and to invite viewers to see all the details. They also had the opportunity to have a preview of the Art Show. This gave us a chance to practice being in a gallery space—observing, reflecting, and discussing work in a thoughtful way. Furthermore, many Third and Fourth Grade artists were inspired—by seeing the art from fellow Miquon students—to create their own new works.

We ended our year collaborating with Science to research and create the first edition of a Miquon Field Guide that we will add to in the years to come.

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Fifth/Sixth Grade, 2018-19 Art Curriculum

Art at Miquon provides children with the time, space, and materials with which they may create. It provides opportunities to engage in empathy, stewardship, and problem-solving, along with myriad other valuable, community-positive social activities.

Fifth and Sixth Graders have Art twice weekly for forty-five minutes. At this stage, children are developing an increasing understanding that art is both process and product-oriented: that is to say, it is no longer suggested that merely the experience of making art is the ultimate goal of learning about art, but that developing a sense of art appreciation can allow one to recognize that art can be a very powerful tool for communication and self-expression within our larger community. They are becoming increasingly aware that art is everywhere, and that it matters. The creative process becomes more detail-oriented, and Art History becomes a more integral component of the curriculum. Miquon artists at this age have sketchbooks in which they might work out ideas, take notes, or use however best supports their creative process.

Though our Fifth and Sixth Grade artists are growing their understanding of art and art-making techniques, it is central to their experience that the Art Room is a safe place to try out new ways of self-expression, and this is emphasized and supported in a nurturing environment. Art encourages students to develop critical thinking skills, self-awareness, and self-expression. Art speaks where words are unable to explain. Children continue to develop their craft: they are introduced to new tools, materials, and artistic conventions, and are able to build upon previous experiences. The importance of organization and care for tools, materials, and our studio is emphasized, as is the knowledge that art skills and understanding improve through practice. They are also encouraged to notice connections between their own work and others' artwork as they develop a deeper understanding of the concepts of art and advance their abilities to envision what cannot be observed, and to imagine what's possible. There is an awareness growing within the artists that they are creating works that convey ideas, feelings, or personal meaning through the use of visual language. There is an emphasis on the ways artistic expression might change with individual choices of ideas, media, and techniques, and students are encouraged to make choices that best suit the feeling and/or message that they are hoping for their work to convey.

Our year in the Art Room started slowly and intentionally. We took time to notice and wonder about the changes that had been made to our space, to reflect on our experiences of the recent past, and to allow ourselves to become excited for new explorations. We reviewed where to find things, and discussed what it means to work together in a studio. We talked about the importance of sharing materials and ideas, as well as taking care of ourselves, each other, and our space. The children in First through Sixth grades thoughtfully collaborated to consider what the Art Room should feel like, and came up with a lovely list— "When We are in the Art Room, We are: Peaceful, Patient, Kind, Calm, Supportive, Considerate, Mindful, Thoughtful, Creative, Artful, Positive, and Welcoming."

Each child took some time to contemplate themselves as artists, and they created pieces that began "I am an artist when..." These works became lovely illustrations of their self-affirmation and this exploration set the tone for the year we'd spend together noticing, wondering, and creating. We revisit this idea every year: it helps remind us that we—as artists—are observers of the world around us, and it allows children to reflect upon the growth they've experienced. Fifth and Sixth Grade children had an increasingly-wide range of media with which they were able to create these works, and were encouraged to dive deeper into the thoughts and feelings that formed their visual expression.

During the early autumn, we watched 29 monarch caterpillars change into butterflies—we had opportunities to study their entire metamorphosis. We noticed color, pattern, and symmetry—and we had a chance to discuss the needs of the caterpillars/butterflies as we were creating art inspired by our observations. We learned of the studies of pioneering female artist, scientist, and explorer Maria Sibylla Merian—she is best known for her in-depth exploration and explanation of the life cycles of butterflies. As the weather warmed in the spring, we had another opportunity to watch a different species of butterfly—in this case the painted lady—develop from caterpillars and be released.

Throughout the year, we continued to explore the elements and principles of design using a variety of media and methods in developmentally-appropriate and cumulative fashion. We worked both two- and three-dimensionally, and connected to artists, art movements, and cultural art relevant to our studies. Each grade band had many opportunities to delve into a diverse selection of projects that become increasingly-involved as Miquon Artists progress through their years, with each successive year building upon the skills and content knowledge cultivated in earlier grades.

Fifth and Sixth Graders this year studied Paul Cezanne, Wilson Bentley, Islamic Design, and Japanese Nōtans—among many other artists and art movements. They explored several types of media and art-making techniques, including—but not limited to— observational drawing, gesture drawing, atmospheric perspective paintings, radially symmetrical printmaking, and ceramic sculpture. Additionally, young artists often were able to work outside: the importance of being in, working with, and being inspired by nature is central to each child’s Miquon experience.

Artists had the opportunity to dive deeply into a multimedia exercise in reflection and self-expression. Each child chose an animal to which they felt a particular connection. After a brief written passage about what animal and why, they began their visual study through drawing, and in preparation for the acrylic painting and ceramic sculptural mask based upon their chosen animal. They also had an opportunity to showcase their growing ability to self-reflect, and to persevere, in the creation of their zen drawings. These pieces were begun with the knowledge that they were going to be revisited throughout the year—essentially as a centering meditation and/or chance to experience a peace and calm that might encourage introspection, or perhaps a quiet discussion with peers about process.

Throughout the year we had Open Studio days during which children self-select their activities. Their choices often were to spend more time exploring a favored media, subject, and/or technique, e.g., drawing, painting, weaving, building, etc. This also offered children the freedom to spend additional time on works of art they had already started, but felt to them “unfinished” in one way or another. Access to our Artists’ Loft and Object Library increases as children move through the grades at Miquon. As Fifth and Sixth Graders, artists have the opportunity to work independently in our Artists’ Loft, where they might choose to draw items from the Object Library, or to weave.

All Fifth and Sixth grade students had the opportunity to look through their art portfolios and choose two works of art that they wanted to display in the Art Show as well as having their radial symmetry prints, acrylic animal study paintings, and accompanying ceramic animal masks. They also had the opportunity to have a preview of the Art Show. This gave us a chance to practice being in a gallery space—observing, reflecting, and discussing work in a thoughtful way. Furthermore, many Fifth and Sixth Grade artists were inspired—by seeing the art from fellow Miquon students—to create their own new works.

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