CLASS CONNECTIONS

ISSUE 2• 2024-2025

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December 12th, 2024, 6-8 pm

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February 13th, 2025, 6-8 pm

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Huron Mountain Club Gallery
February - March 2025
Opening Reception:
February 13th, 2025, 6-8 pm

Contact:

City Office of Arts and Culture
217 N. Front Street
906-228-0472

Commissioners
(left to right upper): Amy Stephens, Jacqueline Wagner, Brianna Hobbins (Chair)
(left to right lower): Lauren Tilma (Vice Chair), Emily Tobin LaVoy, Alison Taras

Who is MPAC?

Hello! We're the City of Marquette Public Art Commission (MPAC) and are excited to continue a dialogue with classrooms in the nearby area. Our group aims to increase access to art and promote art's ability to educate, inspire, preserve, and enhance cultural heritage and diversity. We also hope to better inform our local schools and realted groups about what's happening across Marquette's art scene. In this series of annual newsletters, we'll continue to spotlight works in the City's public art collection, touch on upcoming art events in our area, and provide connecting lesson ideas and activities for your classroom.

The Commission would also love to see photos of your students interacting with public art, whether it comes from following our lesson ideas or on an arts-based field trip. You can contact us at: arts-culture@marquettemi.gov.
We hope you find these art-based connections engaging and useful!

-Alison Taras, Amy Stephens, Lauren Tilma (Vice Chair)

Collection Spotlight: *Seven Grandfather Teachings*

Where? Entrance of Spear Dock, Matson Lower Harbor, Marquette

When? Date of unveiling: October 6th, 2024

- Located at the entrance to the recent spear dock pier in the lower harbor, Jason Quigno's *Seven Grandfather Teachings* sculpture is the first work as part of the Cultural Trail. The Cultural Trail aims to share the various stories of our community: to honor Marquette's cultural heritage, history, and environment through public art, interpretive signage, and design, along a seven-mile multi-use coastal pathway on the shores of Lake Superior. Quigno is a tribal citizen of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe (Ojibwe: Ziibiwing Anishinaabek) and a lifelong resident of Michigan. His green basalt and kona dolomite stone sculpture is a **non-representational abstract** depiction of the Anishinaabe seven grandfathers: spirits that each taught love, respect, bravery, truth, honesty, humility, and wisdom. Typically the seven grandfathers are represented by a turtle (truth), wolf (humility), bison/buffalo (respect), eagle (love), raven (honesty), bear (bravery), and beaver (wisdom). See the diagram to the right for the order of the grandfathers.

- "The Seven Grandfather teachings are a set of Anishinaabe guiding principles passed down from generation to generation to guide the Anishinaabe in living a good life in peace and without conflict" (Seven Generations Education Institute). According to the artist, "The teachings are not exclusive to the Ojibwe [Ziibiwing Anishinabek] community but are intended for all humanity. The lessons taught by the grandfathers are universal and can benefit anyone willing to learn" (via Marquette Compass).

- On using green basalt and Kona dolomite, Quigno explained, "I choose to use stone from the area because they are unique and only found in the area, and it gives them more power and presence that they were harvested in the land that they sit upon" (via Marquette Compass).

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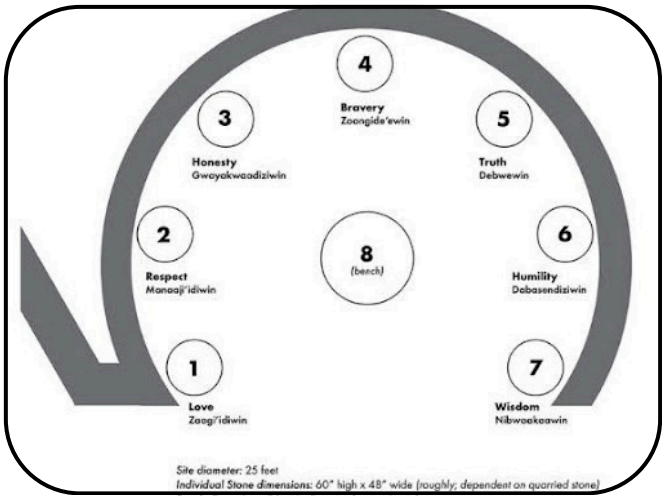

CLASSROOM PROMPT:

- What teachings or values are important to you?

VOCAB:

What is **non-representational** or **abstract art**?

- Something that is non-representational does not have easily recognizable subject matter, that is, it does not show the physical appearance of beings, places, or things such as the Seven Grandfather animals. Abstract art is non-representational.

CONNECTIONS:

- Click ***here*** for extensive lesson plans, activities, and resources on the teachings, organized by grades 1-2 and grades 3-6.

Collection Spotlight: *Elfin Skimmer*

© Kids Cove Facebook page

Where? Kids Cove,
Mason Lower Harbor, Marquette

When? Date of installation:
September 16th, 2024

- You can find Brian Wignall's *Elfin Skimmer* sculpture at the new all-inclusive Kids Cove Playground entrance in Mattson Lower Harbor Park. The ribbing cutting ceremony for Kids Cove took place on October 14th, 2024. This 12-foot sculpture is made of aircraft grade aluminum and stainless steel, which, according to the artist, gives "it extra strength and durability for the Marquette year-round weather conditions." You can fully move around this **three-dimensional** artwork.

- The goal of the sculpture is to create a sense of wonder and joy to reinforce the positivity of play while honoring Joani Reynolds Miller, a retired preschool teacher who had a vision of making life for children with disabilities more inclusive in our community. Why a colorful dragonfly? Wignall explains, "The sculpture is colored purple, Joani's favorite color, and reflects her love for dragonflies—creatures that fascinated both her and myself" (via Marquette Arts and Culture Office).

- Additionally, Michigan has 169 species of dragonflies! Several species can be found in Marquette, like the elfin skimmer, which the sculpture is modeled after. They play an important role in our ecosystem such as managing biting insect populations as predators and feeding frogs and birds as prey. Culturally, dragonflies symbolize wisdom, change, transformation, light, and adaptability in life.

CLASSROOM PROMPT:

- What does it mean to have empathy?

VOCAB:

What are **three-dimensional** artworks?

- Three-dimensional artworks have height, width, and depth. You can view them from several angles and sides.

CONNECTIONS:

- For teaching empathy through disability awareness, grades 6-8, click ***here***.

- The link to other Kids Cove resources can be found ***here***.

Installation Spotlight: *Oscillation*

Grand Rapids, USA
© Nicole Abbett

Where? Marquette Commons, Marquette

When? On view:
December 10th, 2024- January 5th, 2025
Illuminated daily, 7 am-10 pm

- *Oscillation* is an interactive light and music installation made up of **color**-changing crystal-like forms "that uses sight, sound, and movement to spark spontaneous inclusive community activity and social interaction through open-ended play" (Creos). The installation reacts similarly to a Theremin, an electronic musical instrument that you can play without physical touch. According to the creators, the design studio The Urban Conga, "as you walk toward the piece, it plays different sounds and pitches depending on your distance from it. And as you move and dance around it, colors reflect and refract light in different ways based on your angle and position" (Creos).

- *Oscillation* will provide light and wonder during the dark, winter months. Several cultures and belief systems celebrate light during the winter. Locally, *Oscillation* will be part of the larger, city-wide "Winter Light Festival." For information on "Winter Light Festival" events please click here.

CLASSROOM PROMPT:
- How do you celebrate with light?

VOCAB:
What is **color**?
- Color is the visual response to different wavelengths of sunlight identified as red, green, blue, etc. Color has three properties: hue, saturation, and brightness.

CONNECTIONS:
- For celebrations of light around the world click ***here***.

© The Urban Conga