

SCHOLASTIC

ART

EDVARD MUNCH

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Cover: Edvard Munch (1863-1944) *The Scream*, 1893. Oil and tempera on board, 35 3/4" x 29" National Gallery, Oslo. Photo, Scala/Art Resource

SCHOLASTIC

ART

Maurice R. Robinson, founder of Scholastic Inc., 1895-1982

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A HAUNTED LIFE

“Without fear and illness, I could never have accomplished all I have.” — *Edvard Munch*

“While I was out walking, the sun began to set. Suddenly the sky turned blood-red. Tongues of fire burned above the blue-black water. I stood trembling with fear. At that moment, I felt an endless scream passing through nature.”

Have you ever felt like this? Do you recognize any of these emotions when you look at the cover of this magazine? These words were written by Edvard Munch (*Moonk*), the artist who painted this work over 100 years ago. If you feel you've seen this image before, you probably have, since it has appeared on posters, buttons, album covers, cartoons, and T shirts.

Munch's *The Scream* is possibly the most powerful visual symbol ever created for the anxieties of modern life. During the final years of the last century, when the artist did this work, society was being completely transformed—politically, socially and technologically. New machines like the airplane, the automobile, the telephone, and the radio were changing people's lives.

Modern cities were growing rapidly, and with them a sense of isolation and alienation. And advances in science and psychology were establishing the importance of emotions and the unconscious. Artists of the time like Munch, needed to express their feelings about these disturbing changes. *The Scream* is one of the best known examples

“When I see my own face in the mirror, all my memories return. I lead my life in the company of the dead—my mother, my sister, my grandfather, my father.”
—*Edvard Munch*

Self-portrait with Skeleton Arm, 1895. Lithograph, 23 1/2" x 17 3/4" Munch Museum, Oslo.





of a new kind of painting called *Expressionism*. In this work, Munch doesn't just paint what a person in pain might look like. He sees the world through the eyes of this agonized person. In *The Scream*, the entire landscape is distorted by pain and despair. A ghostly figure clutches its skull-like head in agony. Blood-red lines vibrate around it like shrieks of terror.

Born in Norway in 1863, Edvard Munch knew how a person in emotional pain feels. His mother died when he was 5 and a sister when he was 14. His father was a doctor who saw patients at home. Edvard himself was always in poor health. As he grew up, the artist decided that his family was doomed and that he would die at an early age. Ten years after graduating from the Oslo School of Design, Munch did a strange self-portrait (left). His face emerges from the black background like a skull and he added a skeleton arm at the bot-

tom, dating the work as if it would be one of his last. (The artist lived for 50 years after doing this portrait!)

At the same time, Munch did a kind of family portrait, *Death in the Sick Chamber*

(above). The subject is the death of his sister, Sophie. But everyone is shown at the age they were when Munch painted the work, not the age they were when Sophie died, suggesting that death lives on in the survivors. Sophie is hidden in a chair while the artist turns away from the scene. The characters are frozen against a sickly green wall; the bright orange floor slopes forward as a stage set might. Black outlines and clashing colors add to the sense of tension and anxiety.

**"Illness, insanity, and death were the dark angels that accompanied me all my life."
—Edvard Munch**

Death in the Sick Chamber, 1893. Tempera; oil pastel, 59" x 66" National Gallery, Oslo.

STREETS FILLED WITH SHADOWS

“Nature is not only all that is visible to the eye—it also includes
the inner pictures of the soul.” —*Edward Munch*



In 1885, Munch went to Paris and saw for himself the new French Impressionist paintings he had heard so much about. When he went back to Norway, he did a painting of Oslo's main street. The light, sunny, sparkling work on the right, *Spring Day on Karl Johan*, with its ordinary-looking people and dots of bright color, could have been done by Monet (mo-NAY) or Renoir (ren-WAR) or any of the other French Impressionists. A few years later, when Munch was back in Paris, he received word that his father had died. This event had a great effect on the artist and he wrote, "No longer shall I paint interiors with men reading and women knitting. I will paint living people who breathe and feel and suffer and love."

Compare *Evening on Karl Johan* (left), done in 1892, with Munch's first painting of the street. How has the artist's vision changed? In the earlier work—set during the day—the viewer looks down the street. There is a feeling of depth, the buildings are far away, and the trees give a feeling of open space. The many people strolling through the scene seem calm, happy, and orderly.

Evening on Karl Johan shows the same crowded street, but seen from the opposite direction. Is the crowd in this work happy or calm? They may be orderly for the moment, but do you feel they will

The street scene on the left could not have been created by anyone but Edvard Munch.

Evening on Karl Johan, 1892. Oil on canvas, 33 1/4" x 47 3/4" Rasmus Meyer Collection, Bergen, Norway. Photo, Scala/Art Resource, N.Y.



stay that way for long? Dark figures with vacant, yellow, masklike faces loom toward the viewer under a dark purple night sky. The

slightly tilted government buildings on either side of the street surround the scene, while their yellow windows seem to keep watch from above. The flat shapes, curving lines, and abrupt cropping add to the sinister feeling.

In this painting, Munch has been able to express new 20th-century feelings about modern city life. The subject of this Expressionist work is no longer a city street, but an emotion. With his leaning shapes, swiftly receding perspectives, menacing skull-like faces, and anonymous, shadowy figures, Munch has visualized the feeling of fear—the fear of a crowd of people in a big city as the sun goes down and night comes on.

The single figure moving alone against the flow of the crowd may symbolize the artist's idea of himself as an outsider. Munch described the feelings that inspired him to create this painting. He had just seen a woman he knew walking toward him in a crowd. But she walked right past him. "I felt so alone," he wrote. "I felt as if people were staring at me, all these strange faces, pale in the evening light."

Edvard Munch painted this street scene early in his career when he was influenced by the most popular artists of the time, the French Impressionists.

Spring Day on Karl Johan, 1889. Oil on canvas, 31 1/2" x 39 1/4" Private Collection, Bergen, Norway.

Preview

THE PAIN OF LOVE

“There is a battle that goes on between men and women. Many people call it love.”—*Edvard Munch*

Munch linked love with death in his life and art. The two women closest to him, his mother and sister, had died when he was young. And he had had several disastrous affairs, one somehow ending with the artist shooting off one of his fingers. In 1892, Munch began a series of paintings on the subject of love. He called it *The Frieze of Life*, “a poem of life, love, and death.”

In the first work (left to right, top to bottom) *The Voice*, a woman stands in the moonlight on a summer night waiting for love. (Munch later wrote that this image was based on his first childhood romance. He had to stand on a hill to look into the eyes of a much taller girl). The vertical trees express the woman’s tension. She finds love in *The Kiss*—the two faces become one shape, but then she betrays the man and runs off with someone else. In *Melancholy*, the man broods under a sky filled with gathering clouds. Land and sea blend together until, in the final image—*The Scream*—the figure and background become one anguished swirl. A swooping diagonal pulls the viewer into the picture and increases the feeling of anxiety.

When this series was first shown, the

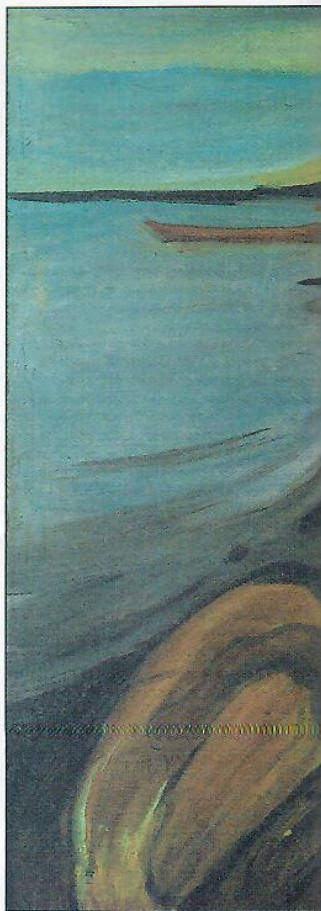
images so outraged critics and the public that the exhibit was closed after a week. One critic called the paintings “visions of a sick brain.” Another dismissed them entirely, saying, “There is nothing to be said about Munch’s pictures. They have absolutely no connection with art!”

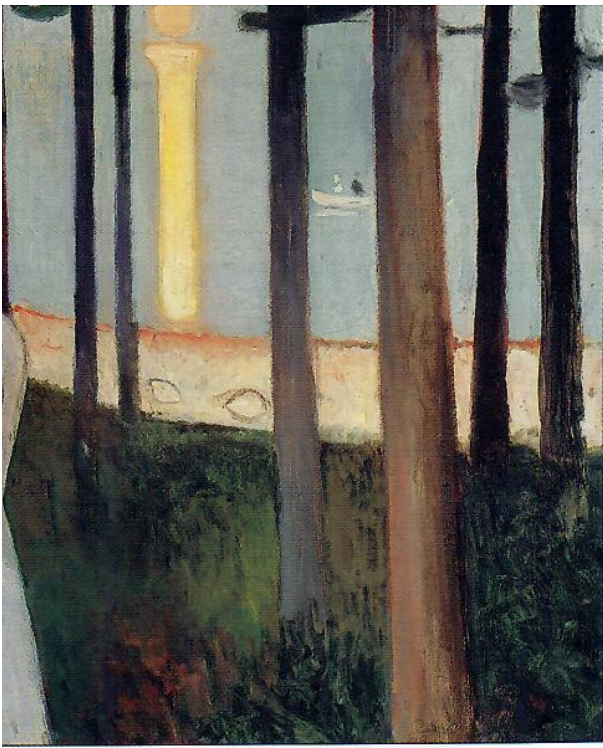
Munch continued to paint his themes—love, betrayal, and death—for the rest of his life, at times combining them all in one picture. In *The Dance of Life* (pages 8-9), the young girl in white on the left reaches out toward life. The central woman in red lives life while she can, and the older woman on the right stands with clenched hands gazing at the center couple. The grinning masklike figure in back clutching a girl in white suggests traditional Scandinavian images of Death dancing with a young girl.

As the new century went on, Munch’s work gained recognition. But as the artist said, “My fame is increasing, but happiness is another thing.” In 1908, one of his increasingly frequent “nerve crises” ended in a breakdown and he was treated at a clinic. The artist continued to paint, but no longer sold his work. He thought of his paintings as his family, and wanted them with him since, as he put it, “I have no one else.” Munch died peacefully in his home in 1944.



A *The Voice*, 1893. Oil on canvas.
© 1996 34 1/2" x 42 1/2".
The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.





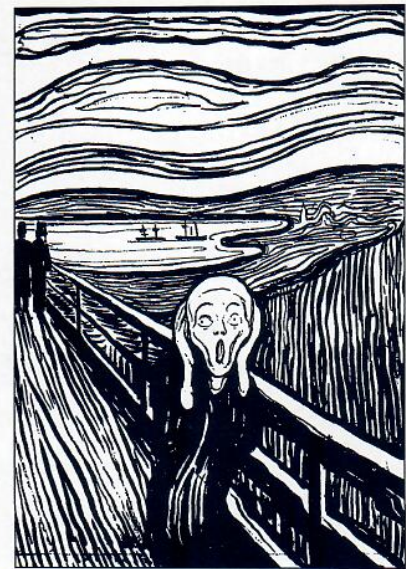
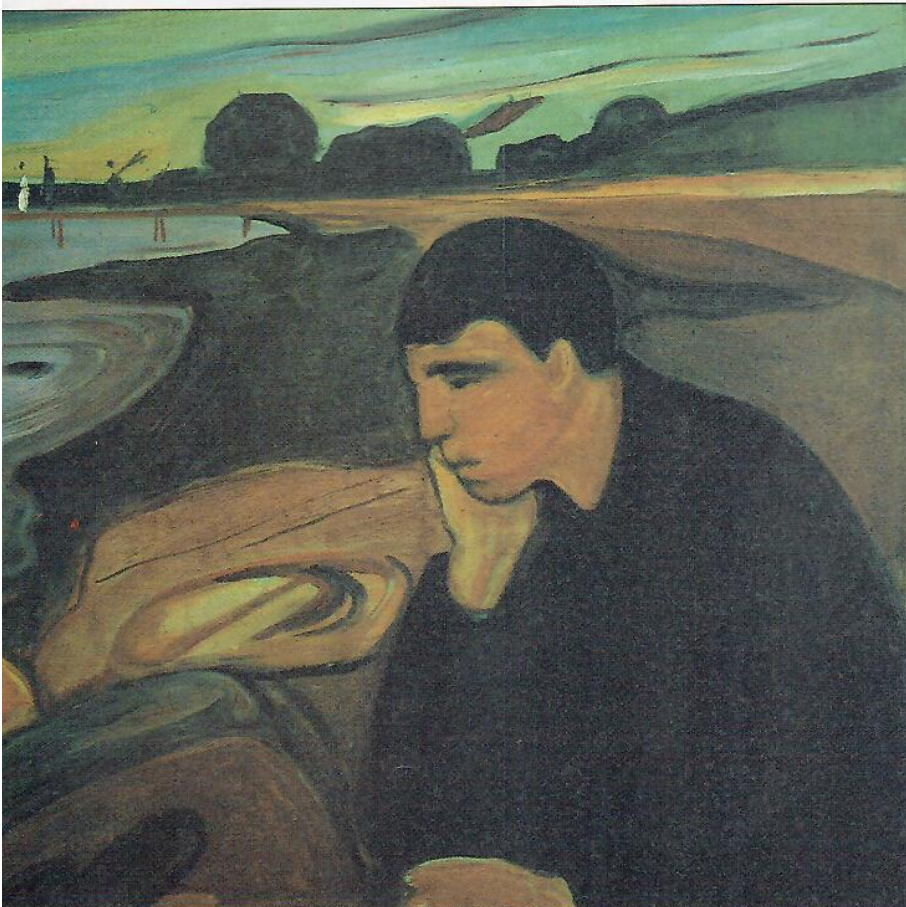
➤
“When they were brought together, suddenly
a single musical note went through them
both—and they became one”—*Edvard Munch*

The Kiss, 1897. Oil on canvas. 39" x 31 3/4". © Munch Museum, Oslo.



◀ “I walked alone by the water under the
long, gray clouds. It was as if everything
had died—a landscape of death.”

Melancholy, 1895. Oil, 25 1/4" x 37 3/4".
National Gallery, Oslo.



▲ *The Scream*, 1895. Lithograph, Private Collection.

THE DANCE OF LIFE



BY EDVARD MUNCH



MASTERPIECE
OF THE
MONTH #1

SCHOLASTIC
ART

“On a bright summer night, a young couple are dancing. They look into each other’s eyes. . . . Behind them, a crowd of people are whirling and the moonlight casts its spell over all.”

—Edvard Munch

PAINTING STATES OF MIND

How are lines used to express each of these artists' emotions?



“The emotions are sometimes so strong that I can create a painting almost without knowing it.”—Vincent Van Gogh

Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890). *The Night Café*, 1888. Oil on canvas. 28 1/2" x 36 1/4". Yale University Art Gallery. Bequest of Stephen Carlton Clark.



< Gesture Paintings

Contemporary American artist Susan Rothenberg says, "I like to add and take paint away and see what happens. Things seem to just appear on my canvas."

While the images created by some artists are very clear, Susan Rothenberg's ghostly world, like that in *The Green Ray* (left), is hard to make out. Munch and the artists whose works are shown here use black outlines, flat shapes, and clashing colors to express emotion. Rothenberg

builds her images with a series of spontaneous brushstrokes. Her dark and light strokes move the eye around the canvas so the whole surface appears almost alive. In this work, two grotesque figures seem to dance across the canvas. Or perhaps they are floating on wires like puppets, controlled by the yellow figures behind them. The artist doesn't explain the painting, saying only, "I don't want to tell a story. I want to paint feelings."

"Every brushstroke is a surprise."—Susan Rothenberg

Susan Rothenberg, *Green Ray*, 1984. Oil on canvas, 84" x 107". Edward R. Broida Trust. Sperone Westwater Gallery, N.Y.

< Strokes of Passion

Compare the painting (left) created by late 19th-century Dutch artist Vincent van Gogh (van GO) with the one by Edvard Munch on page 3. Both paintings are set in rooms, but do you think the room is the real subject of each work? What kind of feelings do the clashing color opposites, the swooping lines, the great expanse of floor, the slashing

yellow strokes, the exaggerated shadows, the distorted perspective, and the empty chairs suggest to you? The artist said about this work, *The Night Café*, "I have tried to express that the café is a place where one can ruin oneself, go mad, or commit a crime."

Van Gogh, who was born a few years before Munch, had a short, troubled, but highly cre-

ative life. A very intense and emotional artist, his feelings were expressed in every brush stroke. Munch saw some of Van Gogh's paintings in Paris and was greatly influenced by the raw emotions they communicated to him. He must have

seen *The Night Café*, because when explaining his own theory of color many years later, he used the following example, "If you want to paint an emotional mood—with a billiard table—then you must use a bright crimson red."

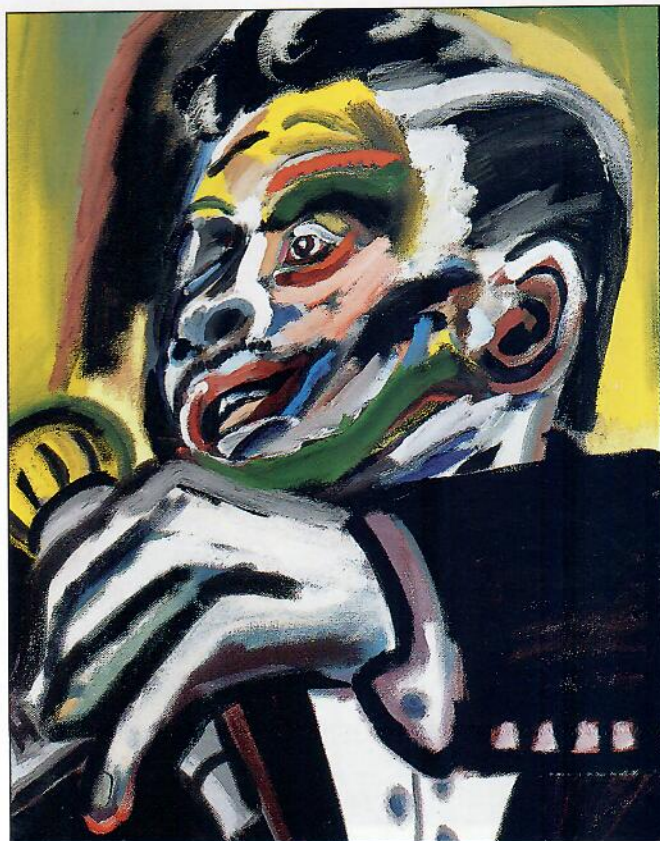
Musical Brush Strokes >

In almost all of his paintings, contemporary African-American artist Frederick Brown expresses his love of music. When he was growing up in Chicago in the 1950s, the artist's father was friendly with many well-known blues musicians such as Muddy Waters and Jimmy Reed. Brown studied art in college, taught for a few years, then moved to New York to become a painter. During that time, he worked on multimedia projects with jazz giants Ornette Coleman and Anthony Braxton.

At the end of the 1980s, Brown felt he wanted to paint the great jazz musicians of the past, so he traveled to the South to do research. His portrait of Junior Wells (right) captures the freedom and spontaneity of jazz music. The black diagonals move the eye across the asymmetrical composition, while the yellow area of negative space on the left balances the more complex facial area on the right. The multicolored, freely painted brush strokes capture the soulful rhythms of the blues.

"Painters and musicians have the ability to strike a universal chord in the heart."—Frederick Brown

Frederick Brown b. 1945. *Junior Wells*, 1989. Oil on canvas, 36" x 30". National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian, Washington, DC., Photo, Art Resource, N.Y.



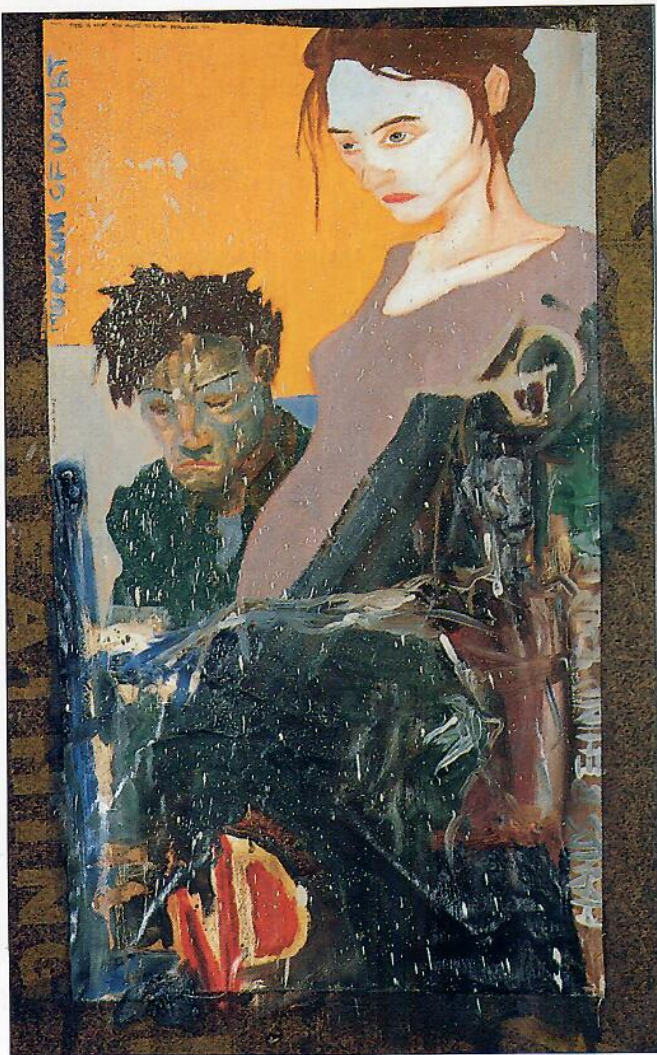
We select our Artist of the Month only from among Scholastic Art Award winners. In order to enter, ask your teacher to write for entry deadlines and rules books to: The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, 555 Broadway, New York, NY 10012-3999. *Scholastic Art* magazine does not have a separate competition.

Jeremy Holden

A PERSONAL VISION

Jeremy Holden created this powerful Scholastic Art Award-winning figure study (below) when he was a 17-year-old senior at Bethlehem Central High School in Delmar, New York. This year, he will

be entering the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. Jeremy is passionately involved in his art and like Edvard Munch, his paintings are extremely intense. As you will see, he and Munch share some very definite opinions on art and life.



■ **How did you first become involved with art?**

I've always created art. I can remember drawing pictures in the fifth grade to impress girls. But I first looked seriously at art when I began painting during my sophomore year in high school. Before that, I was just drawing comic strips or showing off.

■ **What satisfaction do you get from creating art?**

I'm usually *not* satisfied. There's always something I'm trying to achieve with a certain piece. Until I can make the statement or set up the emotional dialogue I want the piece to have, I'm not satisfied. I think I'm only just becoming interested enough at my

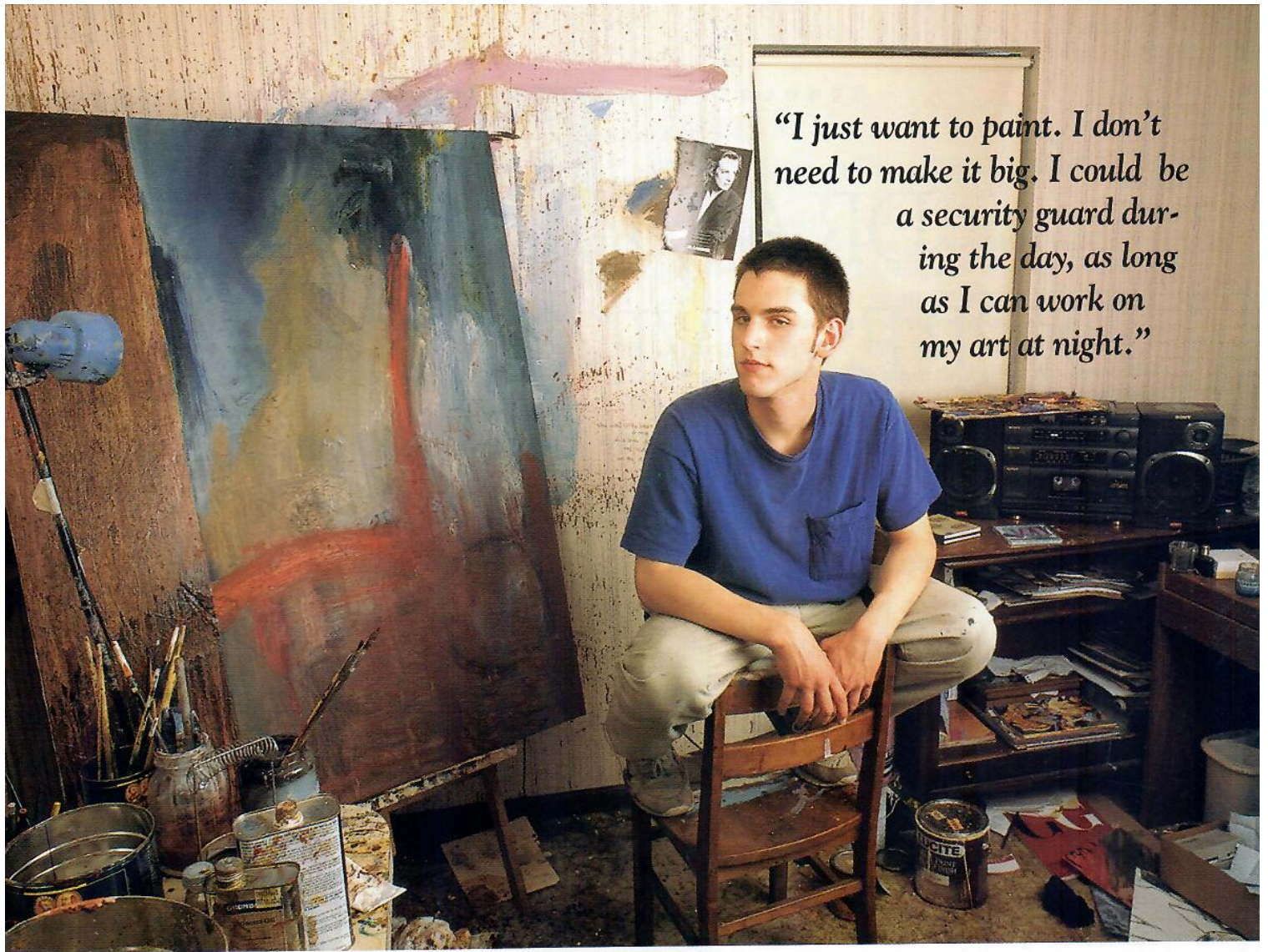
painting to be able to do that.

■ **How did you come to make this award winning painting?**

I painted it when I was in an experimental studio art course that was taught by the district art supervisor. There was no assignment. Your grade was your productivity; how hard you worked. And you got to work any way you wanted to—you could sculpt, paint, whatever. It allowed you to explore your major area of interest in art without being restricted by a dictated curriculum.

■ **Where did you get your idea?**

Most of my work is abstract. But when I did this one, I was into the paintings of an artist who worked during the early



“I just want to paint. I don’t need to make it big. I could be a security guard during the day, as long as I can work on my art at night.”

Photo: Hans Pennink

1900s.* His figures are thin and gaunt, and I liked the expressive lines he used. He didn’t need to paint an exact representation to express a figure’s emotional angst. In terms of the idea of the two people in my piece, I think that’s for the viewer to figure out. I don’t like to interpret my figures. And I really don’t feel comfortable talking about my creative process. It’s a very personal thing. I know what the painting means to me. The viewer knows what it means to him or her. I would like to leave it that way.

■ **Who are the two people?**

The pose of the two figures is a statement of my opinion of the relationship between

males and females. The woman is in a very authoritative pose. She stands up tall while the male is seated below her. And she is staring straight ahead. The fact that the woman is pregnant is important. The fact that she’s dressed in pinkish clothing is also meaningful. And the fact that the male is older than she is and that his face is the color it is is also relevant.

The painting is an investigation of the relationship between men and women. I usually start out with a general feeling, then as I do the piece, I build on my thoughts and expand and reestablish my point if I feel it’s still relevant. I don’t necessarily come to a conclusion. My paintings are a way of

exploring my initial idea.

■ **Did you work from models or from imagination?**

All of my work is from my head. It’s hard to get models, and I refuse to work from photographs because I guess I feel that’s cheating. It’s not original. Someone else took the photo, and you just copied it.

■ **What were you trying to express with this painting style?**

I think a lot of kids in high school paint by numbers. They try to hide the brush strokes so all the lines will be clean. I use paint the way it comes. If I want a feeling of movement, the strokes should go with that movement. If I paint thin, the piece is flat. Painting thickly

gives the work expression. It brings it to life.

■ **How do you see your life as an artist?**

Ideally I would like to win a grant, endowment, or scholarship so I can go to Europe for a few years and paint. Then I want to get an apartment in New York. I’m a city person.

The way I look at it, I don’t need to make it big. I just want to paint. I could be a security guard during the day, as long as I can paint at night. Eventually I plan to settle down in Santa Fe, because the art scene is amazing. All the work that blows my mind comes from Santa Fe. I think I’ll end up there. Plus, I like the climate.

* Austrian Expressionist painter Egon Schiele (1890-1918).

DRAWING AN EXPRESSIVE PORTRAIT

Use a ruler and a pencil to create Expressionist figures like the ones

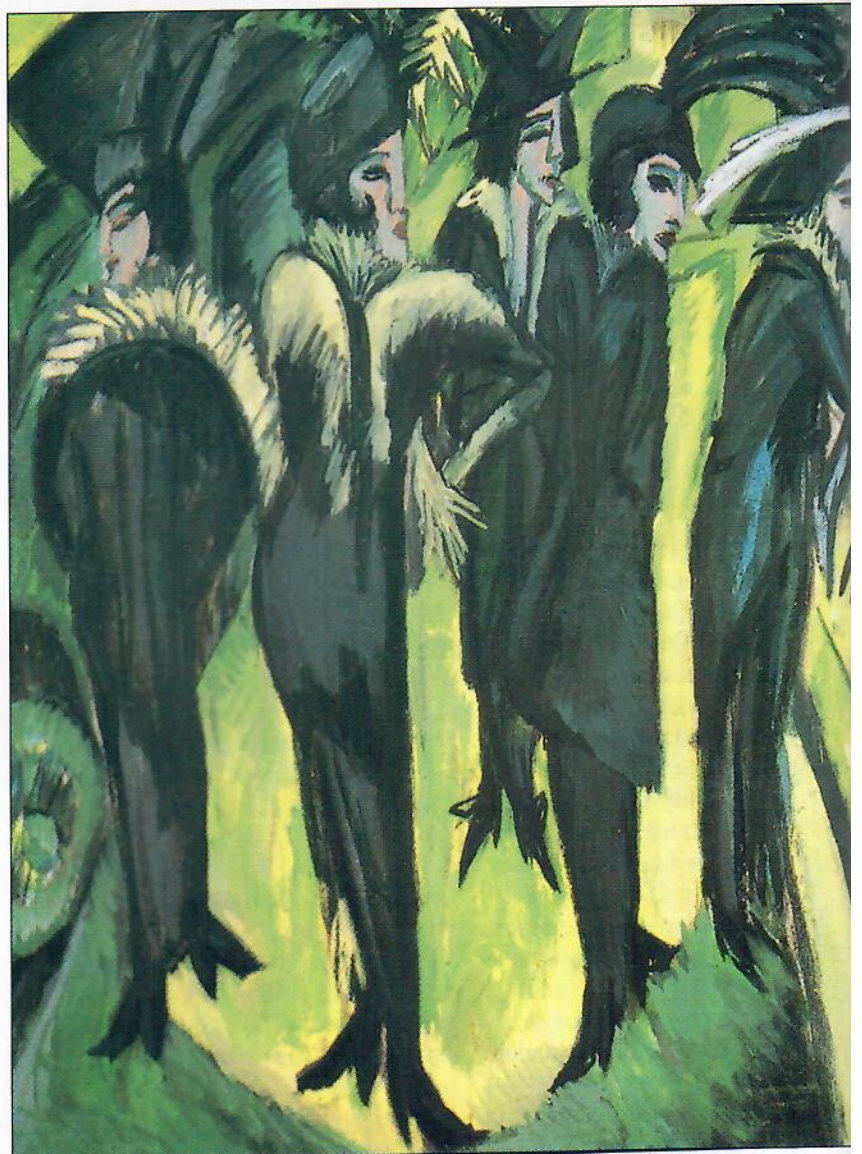
If you look again at this month's cover, you may notice that Norwegian artist Edvard Munch used *line* in certain ways to communicate a particular emotion to the viewer. In Munch's paintings like *The Scream*, nearly all of the lines are *curved*. But many other painters — like German Expressionist Ernst Kirchner, who did the painting *Five Women in the Street* (right)—used *straight* lines to create a harsh, angular feeling.

In this workshop, you'll use only straight lines as you create a highly expressive portrait.

Materials

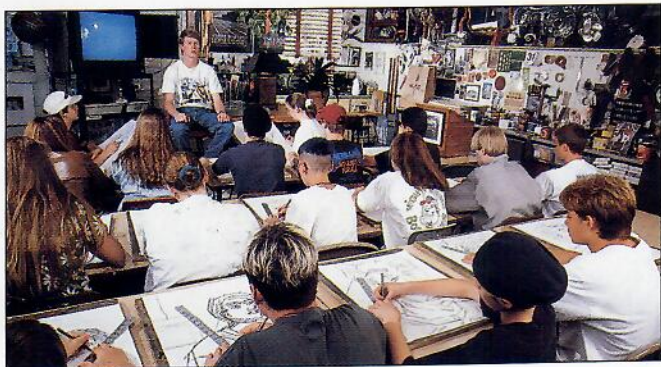
- Drawing board
- No 6B soft graphite stick (or Ebony pencil)
- 18" x 24" 60lb white sulfite paper
- Metal straight edge (minimum 12")*
- Toilet paper

* Wood rulers tend to pick up and smear graphite. Plexiglass scrap strips—available at lumber and hardware stores, usually at no cost—will work well.



German Expressionist Ernst Kirchner used *straight* lines to communicate emotion.

Ernst Kirchner (1880-1938). *Five Women in the Street*, 1913-15. Oil on canvas, 47 1/2" x 35 1/4" Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Germany.



shown in the painting below.

Starting Out

Set up a model so everyone can see him or her. (You can use a mirror and do a self-portrait if you prefer.) You might want to use a floodlight to emphasize the planes of the face. Begin by doing a *blind contour drawing* of the model's head and shoulders. To do the drawing, look only at the model. Imagine your pencil is touching the edges of the model and start to draw *without looking* at the paper. Don't spend longer than ten minutes on your drawing.



Step 2

Put the drawings up and discuss the results, especially **proportion** and **placement of facial features**. **Distortion** and **exaggeration** will naturally occur in your contour drawing. Discuss ways of using these qualities to express various emotions. Do another, more careful contour drawing on which you spend about 20 minutes.

Step 3

Working from the model and your drawing, use a graphite stick and straight edge (or ruler) to draw the contour edges. Remember that the primary goal of this project is not to produce a modeled portrait but to visually communicate expression. Your drawing should be an angular, geometric interpretation of the face. Accurate proportion is very important. Work large, using the entire paper. Make sure that these straight angles accurately represent the model's facial features. Don't let them become a stereotype.

Some Solutions

While all your lines will be straight or **geometric**, there can be a great variety in the kinds of straight lines you use and the ways in which you combine them. Will your lines be **long**, **short** (dots), **thick**, **thin**, **vertical**, **horizontal**, **diagonal**, or a combination of all of them? Will you create **texture** by drawing **parallel lines** or will they **overlap** (**crosshatching**)? Will your composition have a main **focal point** (such as the eyes)? Will it be **symmetrical** (the same on both sides) or **asymmetrical** (different on each side, but visually balanced)? Consider using background objects to break up the space and focus attention on the figure. Consider leaving openings in the outside contours to allow **negative space** to appear to flow inside the **positive shape** (the drawing).









Prepared by Ned J. Nesti Jr., Art Instructor, Morrison (IL) High School.
Photos by Larry Gregory.

Drawings by Anthony Wright, Nicholas Alvarado, Damien Beveroth.

Page 16. A. D. E. Scala/Art Resource; B. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; F. National Gallery, Oslo

“SUDDENLY THE SKY TURNED BLOOD-RED. TONGUES OF FIRE BURNED ABOVE THE BLUE-BLACK WATER.”

As you can tell from this statement, for Edvard Munch the natural settings of his paintings echoed and communicated the emotional state of his figures. His water, trees, and especially his skies are as expressive as any of the people in Munch's works. Below are details of skies from paintings featured in this issue.

Can you identify the page each sky can be found on?
 A___ B___ C___ D___ E___ F___

From the following list, can you identify three graphic techniques Munch used to create each of these skies? For example, E contains 1. organic shapes; 2. horizontal lines; and 3. related colors.

1. Organic shapes
2. Horizontal lines
3. Related colors
4. Curved lines
5. Warm colors (reds, oranges, yellows)
6. Diagonals
7. Value contrasts (light vs. dark)
8. Negative space with positive shapes
9. Geometric shapes
10. Color opposites (red/green; yellow/purple; blue/orange)
11. Dots
12. Tints (white added to color)
13. Shades (black added to color)
14. Repeated shapes
15. Rough texture
16. Vertical shapes
17. Cool colors (greens, blues, purples)

A _____ B _____ C _____
 D _____ E _____ F _____

Can you think of three different adjectives that might describe the mood of the painting each detail is from? (Turn back to the page each painting is on.) For example, A. (on pages 4-5) could be ominous, sinister, foreboding.

A _____ D _____
 B _____ E _____
 C _____ F _____