ABSTRACTION



Learn about artist Albert Eugene Gallatin and his painting "Composition."Questions for looking and art-making projects can be adapted to suit different grade-level standards.

Engage in slow looking and art-making with these classroom resources. You can view these works of art in the museum, online or on a classroom poster.

Albert Eugene Gallatin (American, 1881 - 1952), "Composition," 1936. Oil on canvas, 20 1/8 × 16 1/8 inches. Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; University purchase. 1973.3018.

QUESTIONS FOR LOOKING

- Look closely at the work of art. What do you see or notice?
- How many different shapes can you find?
- This work of art is an example of abstract art, or art that doesn't show identifiable people, places or things but instead uses shapes, lines and colors to create a composition. What lines do you see in this work? How is the brown line different from the red line?
- Which colors appear to come forward? Which colors feel farther away? How does the arrangement of shapes and colors create the illusion of depth or layers? In contrast, how does this work of abstract art emphasize surface or "flatness"?
- This work is called "Composition." Does it remind you of anything that you've seen or heard before?
- Read the information about the artist and his work on the back of this resource. Look at the painting again. How have your observations and thoughts about the work of art changed?

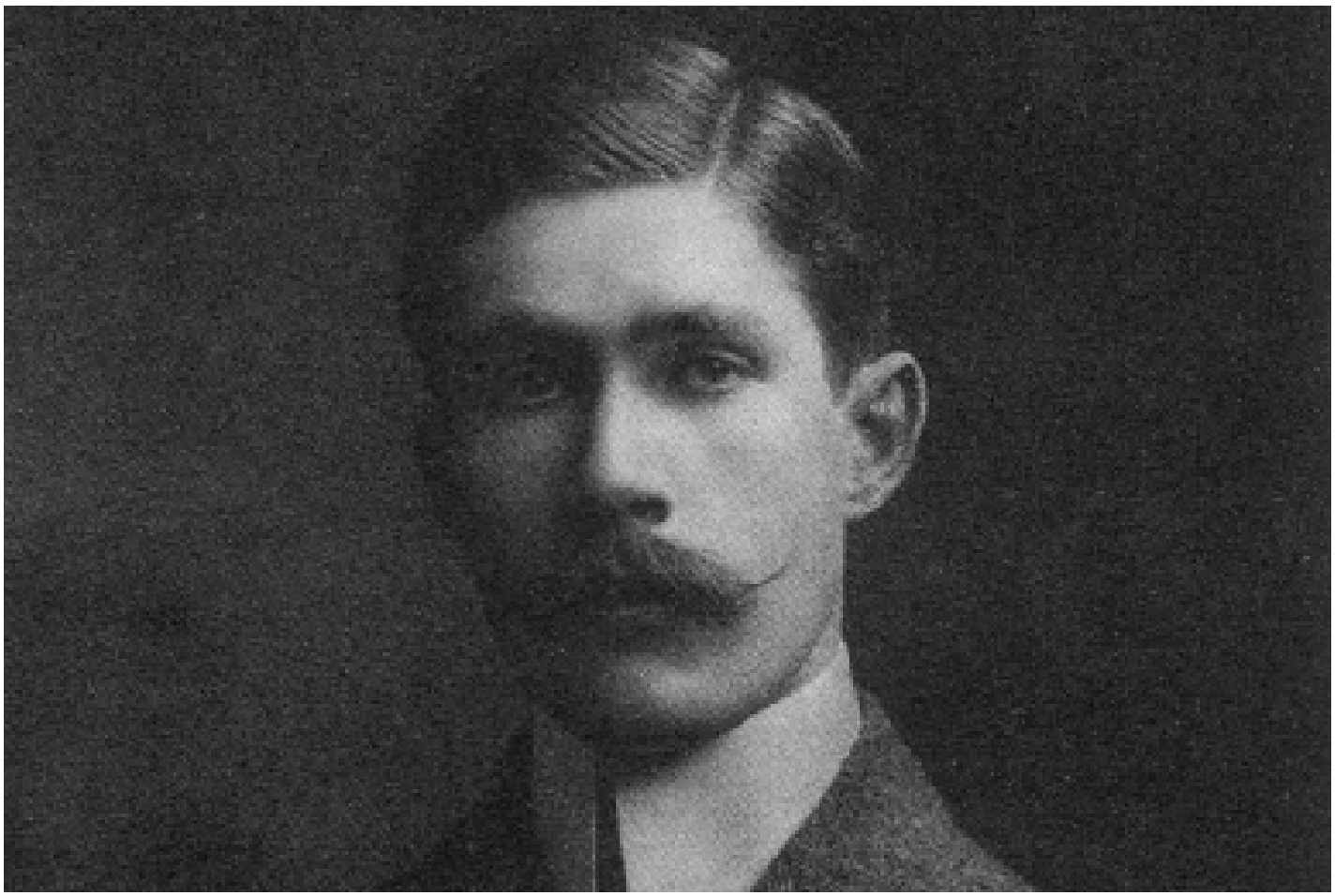
ART-MAKING: TORN PAPER LANDSCAPE

Composition is the arrangement of elements, like shapes, lines and colors, within a work of art. Artists move these different elements around to create balance and visual interest. Using construction paper and glue, tear and layer pieces of colored paper onto a larger sheet of paper, cardboard or canvas to build an abstract landscape. How can you arrange warm or cool colors to create depth? You can also tear images or text from magazines to create unexpected texture and movement in your work.

ART-MAKING: TAPE RESIST

Positive space is the area of interest in an artwork filled with color or form, while **negative space** is the background or the area surrounding the positive space. Create an abstract composition using various widths of tape and any type of paint material, representing positive space with color and negative space with the tape (which you will remove after painting). Overlap the tape to make various shapes and angles. How can the colors you choose create a sense of harmony or contrast?

ABSTRACTION



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Albert Eugene Gallatin was an American art collector and painter who was interested in abstract art. **Abstract art** emphasizes shape, color, line and surface. It usually doesn't look like real things or recognizable objects. Instead, abstract art draws attention to the ways our eyes see and interpret the basic components of art. Gallatin collected the work of both European and American modern artists, such as Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, Charles Biederman and George L.K. Morris. He founded the Gallery of Living Art at New York University to house his growing collection. Gallatin began painting starting at age 55. Inspired by the work of cubist artists, he created his own abstract paintings of geometric shapes and flattened forms.

ABOUT THE WORK

"During the early 20th century, many artists began referring to their works as "compositions," or leaving them untitled. The arrangement of visual elements like shapes, colors and lines, rather than the objects they might represent, became the true subject of the artwork. Gallatin's "Composition" is one such example. It also prompts us to think about color theory. Colors can create the illusion of depth. For example, warm colors tend to seem like they are in the **foreground**, or the front of painting, while cool colors tend to remain in the background.

Georgia Standards of Excellence

Elementary: VA(K-5).CN.1, VA(K-5).CR.1, VA(K-5).CR.3, VA(K-5).RE.1, SS2G2d
Secondary: VA8.CN.1/VAHSVA.CN.1, VA8.CN.3/VAHSVA.CN.3, VA8.RE.1/VAHSVA.RE.1, VA8.CR.1/VAHSVA.CR.1, VA8.CR.3/VAHSVA.CR.3