



Affiliated with the national Young Audiences
Arts for Learning network



Content Standards

Social Studies

Students begin to understand how families lived long ago and how they live in other cultures.

Students study the Western Hemisphere, its geographic features, early history, cultural development and economic change.

Culture, heritage and democratic principles are explored, building upon the foundation of the classroom experience.

Visual Art

Recognize that people from various times and cultures create works of art to be looked at, valued and enjoyed.

Explore a range of art concepts and artworks and construct meaning about the works.

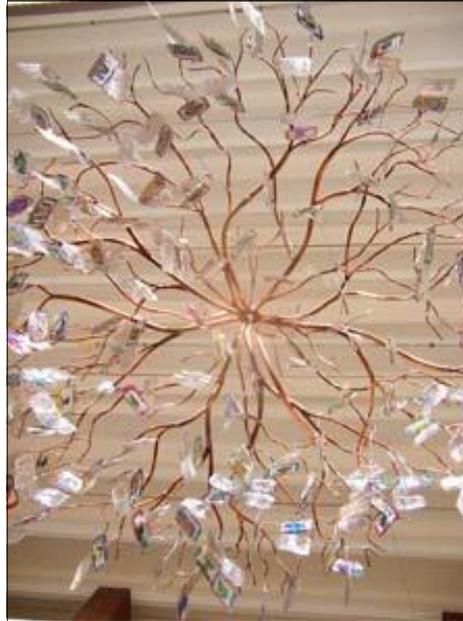
Connect making art with individual choice and understanding personal cultural identity.

The Tree of Life

Educator Guide

Enriching the lives of children and promoting creative learning by uniting arts and education

About the Program



The Tree of Life is a theme of clay sculpture created in central Mexico. It often combines elements from local folklore and important symbols of its community. This hands-on program led by teaching artist **Augusto Bordelois** will explore this theme as it relates to Mexican culture as well as how it can relate to the students' lives. It not only reinforces students' understanding of nature and the importance of preserving

trees and animals as a way of preserving human life, but also is an opportunity of acquiring information about how other cultures represent their surroundings.

Objectives

1. **Demonstrate** team work and decision making skills.
2. **Learn** about other cultures (Mexican).
3. **Explain** the syncretism of Aztec expression and Catholic religion that gave birth to this folk form of art.
4. **Understand** the relationships in a particular ecosystem or social system (based on the theme that they decide to explore in the project).

Before the Program

What is a Tree of Life? Who were the Aztec people? Who colonized them? Where do they live now? Where is Mexico?

Research should be done depending on the theme of the sculpture.

Show Mexico in the map and the size of the pre-Columbian Aztec empire.

After the Program

Research about pre-Columbian Aztec empire, their art, architecture, social structure, religious belief, etc.

Use what the students learned from the lesson as a jumping off point to discuss the art and culture of other societies.

Vocabulary

The Tree of Life: A theme of clay sculpture created in central Mexico

Clay: A heavy, sticky material from the earth that is made into different shapes and that becomes hard when it is baked or dried

Sculpt: To carve, model, or make by using the techniques of sculpture

About Augusto Bordelois

Augusto C. Bordelois (Havana, Cuba, 1969) graduated from the University of Havana with a major in English Language and Literature. He has also studied sculpture, ceramics, costume design for theatre and cinema, classical drawing and painting. He has designed costumes and floats at different carnivals in Cuba and also at Parade the Circle in Cleveland, Ohio. He has created many public art pieces across northeast Ohio. He has written and illustrated short stories for children and teacher activities guides. His visual artwork has been awarded much national and international recognition.

Resources

Ancient Aztec Art

www.aztec-history.com/ancient-aztec-art.html

Augusto's Website

www.augustofineart.com

The Tree of Life

[www.treeoflife.net.au/Tree-of-Life-Craft-\(Mexico\)-from-Tree-Of-Life.net.au.html](http://www.treeoflife.net.au/Tree-of-Life-Craft-(Mexico)-from-Tree-Of-Life.net.au.html)



About the Center for Arts-Inspired Learning

Through a balance of demonstration and audience participation, the Center for Arts-Inspired Learning teaching artist performances and workshops introduce students to an art form, support various curricular areas, and inject excitement and wonder into the school day.

