

Anthropomorphic Paintings

Animal

By Sharon Gale working with KS1 & KS2 students at the Weston Park Art Club



Context

This painting activity looks at giving human characteristics to animals. Anthropomorphism is making something which is not human, more human like. Think of Miss Piggy, Mickey Mouse and the characters created by Beatrix Potter as an example.

Ancient civilisations used anthropomorphism as a literary device when storytelling and in the art they made. The oldest example of an animal-shaped work of art is the Lowenmensch figurine. It's about 35,000 - 40,000 years old and is a sculpture of a human figure with the head of a lion.

To introduce students to anthropomorphic animals, we looked at the paintings of two contemporary artists who use anthropomorphism in their work, Ken Hoffman and Svjetlan Junakovic. Hoffman uses colour and texture to great effect whilst Junakovic's anthropomorphic characters are adorned in historical costume.

This project, on this occasion, had to fit in a two and a half hour time slot, but with more time, students could investigate their fashion and history ideas more thoroughly.

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