

Clementine Hunter: Memory Paintings**Pre- and Post-Visit Activities:
Clementine Hunter: Memory Paintings****Overview:**

These activities, which support the Staten Island Museum's lesson "Clementine Hunter: Memory Paintings", introduce students to the art of 20th century African-American artist Clementine Hunter.

Background Information for Educators:

Clementine Hunter (approx. 1887-1998) lived and worked most of her life on the Melrose cotton plantation near Natchitoches, Louisiana. She was a descendant of slaves, and her work included picking cotton, harvesting pecans, and working in the plantation kitchen. She did not start painting until the 1940s when she was already a grandmother. Her first painting, executed on a window shade using paints left behind by a plantation visitor, depicts a baptism in Cane River.

Hunter painted at night, after working all day in the plantation house. She used whatever surfaces she could find, drawing and painting on canvas, wood, gourds, paper, snuffboxes, wine bottles, iron pots, cutting boards, and plastic milk jugs.

Working from memory, Hunter recorded everyday life in and around the plantation, from work in the cotton fields to baptisms and funerals.

At the time Clementine Hunter was painting and exhibiting her work, segregation laws kept her from attending some of her own gallery shows. Though she first exhibited in 1949, Hunter did not garner public attention until the 1970s when both the Museum of American Folk Art in New York and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art exhibited her paintings. She received an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

Vocabulary:

- Arts Colony - A community where artists can live, collaborate and inspire each other's artwork.
- Folk Art - A type of visual art that is created by hand by the people of a specific culture or community, and is not influenced by academic styles.
- Memories - things and impressions recalled from the past.
- Plantation - A large farm where crops (like coffee, tea, sugar, cotton, bananas) to be sold are grown by workers who live on that land.
- Threshing - The separation of the edible (nuts) and non-edible (branches) parts of crops.

Before Your Visit:

Grades K-2

1. Suggested books:

Clementine Hunter: Memory Paintings

Art from Her Heart: Folk Artist Clementine Hunter, by Kathy Whitehead

2. Memory and Movement Game

Think about something you do or places you visit every day. Follow along to some of these movements!

- Walk into your school (stomp your feet and move your arms side to side like you are walking)
 - Clementine Hunter liked to paint people and places she saw in everyday life.
- Reach for something up high (stand on your tippy toes and stretch your arms above your head)
 - Before becoming a painter, Hunter would help pick pecans from tall trees.
- Freestyle move! (Think of a fun or funny memory and pose like it's happening right now)
 - Students will observe each other's poses and the Teacher will call on some to share the story behind their pose. Just like the people in Hunter's paintings, each pose tells a story!

Grades 3-8

Suggested books:

- *Talking with Tebé: Clementine Hunter, Memory Artist*, edited by Mary E. Lyons

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Name: _____

Date: _____



Pre Visit Thoughts	Post Visit Thoughts
What is this?	What is this?
Who made this?	Who made this?
Why?	Why?
What does it mean to you?	What does it mean to you?

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