

NORTH TEXAS INSTITUTE

for EDUCATORS on the VISUAL ARTS newsletter

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INTEGRATING ART AND MUSIC

Interdisciplinary Connections: Art and Music

Throughout time and from culture to culture, people have expressed themselves and recorded their lives and history by way of the arts, especially the visual arts and music. The arts — both visual and performing — are always changing, supplying concrete links to the past and offering new interpretations for the future.

In an ever-shrinking world, visual arts and music play an increasingly important and pivotal role in communication between diverse cultures and societies. Providing non-verbal and verbal communication through symbols and sounds, visual and musical representations strengthen interactions while encouraging and enabling universal understanding.

Apart from their power to bridge people, time, and place, the arts serve as a foundational support for interdisciplinary learning. Understanding relationships among the arts and with other subject areas helps students to gain depth in their educational experience; a depth in understanding that carries over into lifelong learning. Through the arts, students learn to identify problems, seek solutions, evaluate situations, make reasoned choices and judgments, and to think in broad-based ways.

Correlation

Correlation shows similarities and differences between content areas. For this reason, vocabulary is an obvious choice for correlation between art and music. Frequently, the same words can be used in both subjects and mean the same or about the same thing; however, at other times the same words can have very different meanings for each subject. For example, the word "rhythm" relates to a similar



North Hill Mount Elementary students in Fort Worth, Texas, examine *The Sources of Country Music*, a painting by Thomas Hart Benton.

concept in both art and music, whereas the word "color" represents a different concept for both.

Recognizing and understanding these similarities and differences in vocabulary usage in art and music is fundamental to demonstrating competence in either or both fields. Providing opportunities for students to use appropriate and correct art and music vocabulary assists with development of written and spoken communication skills.

Integration

Integration is somewhat more complex than correlation. Integration is multi-layered and demonstrates how two disciplines are mutually reinforcing and enriching. An example of integration of art and music can be seen in activities such as documenting how social attitudes are mirrored in the art and music from a particular time. This type of meaningful integration helps students see learning as related end whole, rather than as isolated pockets of

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disconnected subject matter.

Problem Solving

Both art and music rely upon the abilities of students to isolate and analyze a problem, offersolutions, and judge the value or effectiveness of the solution through formative and summative evaluation. Skills learned through art and music, such as planning a well-balanced sculpture or working with a group to create harmony, require that students purposefully think through assignments to reach desirable conclusions. Competency in solving problems demands higher-order thinking skills that can lead to success in school, as well as success in life and work.

Writing in Art and Music

Writing activities lend themselves well to both art and music, providing yet an additional method of communication for students. Much the same as artists and musicians keep journals or sketchbooks, students can keep daily records of their own progress in the arts. Other written work can include critiques of student or masterworks, biographical research, sequencing of events, describing "how to" processes, poetry, or writing stories about art and music.

Art, Music, and Technology

Technology in art and music suggests that whatever technology is available to students and educators will be used to the best advantage for learning in the arts. Therefore, technology in art and music stresses how well students achieve artistic and intellectual objectives rather than how proficient they become with any given technology (for example, drawing software). Given these guidelines, technology in art and music provides students with opportunities to locate and utilize resources (such as Internet research), analyze information, process diverse data, and synthesize information in ways that are logical. The realistic outcome of implementation of technology in the arts should allow students to understand the relationships among technical means (for example, comput-

ers, software, the Internet), artistic process and procedures (for example, research and writing), and an artistic end product (for example, a biography or poem about the researched topic),

Collaborations

The nature of art and music provide a variety of occasions for collaborations among students. Whether in pairs or in larger group, students can learn skills necessary for dealing effectively with others. When working in collaborative groups students learn such concepts as expressing ideas clearly, listening to others, valuing opposing opinions, and contributing as a team member — all important life skills.

Pam Stephens and Nancy Walkup

Interdisciplinary Connections: Art and Music, Take 5 Art Prints,
Crystal Productions 1-800-255-8629

ARTWORKS ABOUT MUSIC

- *At the Piano* by James A. Whistler
- *The Banjo Lesson* by Henry O. Tanner
- *Beethoven* by Andy Warhol
- *Carolina Shout* by Romare Bearden
- *Dancing in Columbia* by Fernando Botero
- *El Rancho Lounge and Twist Palace* by M.A. Jones
- *The Fifer* by Edouard Manet
- *Four Accomplishments* by Okajuma Toyohiro
- *Green Corn Ceremony* by Awa Tsiireh
- *The Lute Player* by Orazio Gentileschi
- *Musk at the Tuileries* by Edouard Manet
- *Musical Forms* by Georges Braque
- *Parade on Hammond Street* by Alan Rohan Crite
- *Out Chorus* by Romare Bearden
- *The Sources of Country Music* by T. H. Benton
- *Still Music* by Ben Shahn
- *Street Musicians* by William Johnson
- *Three Musicians* by Pablo Picasso
- *The Yellow Sound* by Kandinsky

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SUMMARY: NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC EDUCATION

Compiled from:

Dance, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts: What Every Young American Should Know and Do in the Arts, the National Standards for Arts Education, Consortium of National Arts Education Association, Washington, DC, 1994.

CONTENT STANDARD 1: Sing independently or in groups.

CONTENT STANDARD 2: Perform independently or in groups.

CONTENT STANDARD 3: Improvise in a variety of ways with voice and instruments.

CONTENT STANDARD 4: Compose and arrange music using specific guidelines.

CONTENT STANDARD 5: Read and notate accurately with symbols and traditional musical terms.

CONTENT STANDARD 6: Listen, analyze, and describe music from a variety of styles, cultures, and times.

CONTENT STANDARD 7: Evaluate music and performances from a variety of styles, cultures, and times.

CONTENT STANDARD 8: Understand relationships among other content areas.

CONTENT STANDARD 9: Understand historical and cultural significance of music.



ART & MUSIC ACTIVITY

In a newspaper or magazine, locate a review about an art exhibition or a musical performance. Does the review describe the event? Does the review encourage or discourage you to visit the exhibition or performance? What parts of the review are based on fact? What parts are opinion? Words relating to *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, or *why* are usually factual; statements that cannot be proven are opinion. Look closely at an artwork that depicts musicians. Write a review of the artwork as if you had heard the music.

ARTSEGE CURRICULUM STUDIO

ArtsEdge is an educational website established and continued under a cooperative agreement between the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional support from the U.S. Department of Education and the generous contributions of MCI and the GE Fund. The mission of ArtsEdge is to help artists, teachers, and students gain access to and/or share information, resources, and ideas that support the arts as a core subject area in the K-12 curriculum. The section called Curriculum Studio includes curriculum units, lesson plans, activities and other ideas for classroom teaching in the arts. The following ArtsEdge units, available online, integrate art and music.

African Art and Culture Unit

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/student/SIWork/maskspi.html>

This unit presents several lessons designed to familiarize students with Africa, its art, and its culture. Lesson 5 focuses on African music. The unit also integrates math, primarily through patterning and symmetry, and the language arts. It is designed for a 1st-3rd grade audience but may be adapted. The unit can be taught as a whole or distinct lessons can be used to highlight a specific area of the curriculum. (1-3).

Look In the Mythic Mirror: An Integrated Curriculum

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/cs/curricdev/intro.html>

This 10-week curriculum unit for middle school provides a thorough set of lessons, activities, resources, and authentic assessment tools for teachers. The unit integrates language arts, music and visual arts, as well as theater and the Internet.

Making Connections Between Art and Music

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/student/SIWork/colmuspi.html>

In addition to the integration of music and visual arts concepts, this unit also presents an introduction to the scientific concepts of wavelengths. The unit is divided into three lessons in Production/Criticism: (1) Drawing, (2) Collage, and (3) Painting. (developed for high school students).

Vivaldi, The Four Seasons

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/student/SIWork/vivalpi.html>

In this unit, students will learn about the life and artistic contributions of composer Antonio Vivaldi. The unit is divided into three sections of activities: (1) Section 1 focuses on the composer, Antonio Vivaldi; (2) Section 2 focuses on the music of *The Four Seasons*; and (3) Section 3 focuses on the time period and on dance,

Interdisciplinary *Take 5* Art Prints

New!



Each set includes five laminated prints (24 x 18-in.) with background information printed on the back and a comprehensive teacher's guide.

Take 5: Art and Music

Crite, *Parade on Hammond Street*
Benton, *The Sources of Country Music*
Bearden, *Out Chorus*
Warhol, *Beethoven*

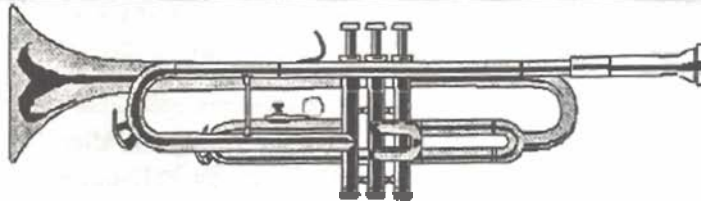
Jones, *El Rancho Lounge & Twist Palace*
CP-6087 \$44.00

A comprehensive approach to art naturally and logically includes interdisciplinary connections. The Interdisciplinary Take 5 Art Prints assist teachers in making such connections as students create, investigate, appreciate, and question art. Five new Take 5 sets are available from Crystal Productions.

Additional Interdisciplinary Take 5 sets:

Art and Science • Art and Social Studies
Art and Math • Art and Language Arts

Order from crystalProductions • P. O. Box 2159 • Glenview, It 60025 • 1-800-255-8629



MUSIC RESOURCES ONLINE

ArtsEdge

Online curriculum units, lessons and activities that combine visual arts with math, science, social studies, language arts, foreign language, dance, music, and theater are available on this site. The visual art and music selection includes such topics as African culture, jazz, American culture, music criticism, medieval music, myth, and the rhythm of insects. Useful for teaching K-12. Visitors may submit new ideas for lessons. Easy to browse by grade level or subject title.
<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/>

Music Education On-line

Created by the Children's Music Workshop, this site is most useful as a source for articles written about K-12 music education and for links to instrumental, choral, and general music, music education, music institutes, and music products sites. Extensive music education links include topics like teacher time savers, music learning theory, the environment and music, music dictionaries, technology in music education, music therapy, and music related to various countries (Italy, America, and Israel to name a few). Also provides a chatroom

and bulletin board to share your discoveries about music education.

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/2405/index.html>

Lesson Plans Page

Over 300 lesson plans for K-12 math, science, social studies, art, language arts, music, and physical education, as well as a multidisciplinary section. One lesson in particular combines music, art, and language arts. Allows visitors to submit new lesson plans. Simple presentation is easy to navigate.
<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/>

Elementary General Music

The classroom page provides music lessons, generally for grades 4 or 5, varying from themes and tone colors, to major and pentatonic scales, to melodic contour. The Relationships among the Arts lesson combines music with visual arts. Also contains pages related to research, browsing and setting up a music curriculum. Allows visitors to submit their own informa-

<http://www2.potsdam.edu/CRANE/campbemr>

INTEGRATING MUSIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Music is important to all of us, even though it is an occupation for only a few of us. Many teachers would like to use music in their classrooms, but are unsure of how to begin. Those trained in DBAE realize that integration of the arts into the wider curriculum must be meaningful in order to be of value. This requires careful planning.

Meaningful integration involves valid connections between two content areas. The most obvious relationship between subject areas is not necessarily the best one, nor is it always a true connection. If cowboys is a topic of study within the classroom, we might immediately think of using the Lone Ranger Theme as a connection since students might already have a familiarity with the music. However, the work is actually an overture from the opera *William Tell*, by *Giacchino Rossini*, and has nothing to do with cowboys. A better choice is the folk song *Goodbye Old Paint*, which was actually sung by cowboys. Aaron Copland's music from the ballet *Rodeo* depicts life on a Western ranch and uses the melodies of several Western folk songs in its score.

Valid integration focuses on concepts which are important to each content area. In the example above, while social studies investigates the role of the cowboy in the history of the American West, music is concerned with how composer

Aaron Copland wrote music to reflect the life of the cowboy. A question common to both disciplines might be whether our understanding of cowboys is based on facts or romanticized images presented in literature, film, and music. Do *Goodbye Old Paint* and *Home on the Range* present a realistic view of cowboys? What about Copland's *Rodeo*?

The best resource to help you integrate music in your classroom is the music teacher at your school. Music educators have a thorough knowledge of music literature and the musical development of your students. They are usually eager to help colleagues who want to use music effectively, but generally are not familiar with the details of the curriculum at each grade level or subject area. Joint planning is the means for creating a shared understanding of your goals for students and appropriate musical works.

Whether or not your school has a music teacher, the teacher editions of current music textbook series contain many ideas for curriculum correlation at each grade level. As is the case with any publication, they may not necessarily provide the best examples of meaningful integration; therefore, critical examination and reflective dialogue with colleagues is needed. Thoughtful planning, implementation, and refinement of practice lay the foundation for integrating music in the classroom successfully as a strategy which can benefit students for years to come.

*Dr. Lee D. Harris, Asst. Professor of Music
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga*

ART - O - GRAM

What Is That Musical Instrument?

How many of these musical instruments can you identify? Draw a line that connects the name of the instrument to the picture it identifies. How many other musical instruments can you name?



Saxophone



Harp



Piano



Drums



Violin



Guitar



THE SOURCES OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Thomas Hart Benton, 1884-1975, American
1975, acrylic on canvas over masonite, 6' x 10' x 4½"
Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum
Nashville, Tennessee

About the Artwork

American regionalist artist, Thomas Hart Benton, was born April 15, 1889 in Neosho, Missouri where from his childhood he was immersed in local and national politics. The artist's great uncle, for whom he was named, was the first senator from Missouri. Benton's own father was a United States Representative. Rather than follow in the footsteps of his father and great uncle, however, Benton became an artist.

At the age of 17, Benton took his first job as a cartoonist for a Joplin, Missouri newspaper, but left a year later to attend the Art Institute of Chicago. His studies at the Art Institute were brief, and within another year the artist had moved to Paris, France. Four years in France introduced Benton to a variety of avant-garde art styles. Upon returning to the United States, Benton — now about 22 years old — lived in New York City before joining the United States Navy to serve as a draftsman during World War I.

As a draftsman, Benton drew plans for military equipment and machinery. Becoming intrigued with the shapes, forms, and lines of these objects, Benton soon abandoned the abstract track that his art had taken in France and began to

develop the brand of realism for which he became well known. After his discharge from the Navy, Benton returned to New York City where he taught at the Art Students League and became interested in the work of the Mexican muralists, especially the murals of Diego Rivera. Benton began to create monumental artworks and by the 1930s was recognized as an important American muralist.

In 1935, Benton returned to Missouri where he was named Director of Painting at the Kansas City Art Institute, a post he held for six years. Outing his tenure at the Kansas City Art Institute, Benton completed one of his most challenging murals, A Social History of Missouri, for the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City.


After leaving the Institute, Benton maintained his residence in Kansas City and continued to pursue his art — both murals and smaller canvases — throughout the rest of his life. In 1975, at the age of 84, Thomas Hart Benton suffered a fatal heart attack. An appropriate close to an artist's life, Benton died with paintbrush in hand, studying his just-completed mural, The Sources of Country Music.

The Art

The Sources of Country Music speaks realistically and in a straightforward way to an American tradition: country music. Based upon Southern rural traditions in instrumental music and cowboy songs, country music is indigenous to the United States. The simplicity and directness of the sounds of country music are represented in Benton's mural through a realistic

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Lesson Summary

Title <i>The Sources of Country Music</i> by Thomas Hart Benton	
<p>Objectives</p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize the contributions of regionalist art and artists to American culture and history through observation, exploration, and discussion of Thomas Hart Benton's <i>The Sources of Country Music</i> and other regionalist masterworks. recognize that art and music reflect time, place, and culture. appropriately use art and music vocabulary. 	<p>Procedure/Production</p> <p>Research</p> <p>Music has played an important role in cultures throughout time. Identify unusual or not commonly known musical instruments, research the instrument, and report about the country of culture or origin, the instrument's design and sound, and how the instrument is used.</p> <p>Procedures for Creating an Original Percussion Instrument</p> <p>What is a percussion instrument? Identify three or more criteria for creating a percussion instrument. Using newspaper, cardboard, found objects, and masking tape as needed, build a framework to build a papier mâché paste percussion instrument. Cardboard rolls with both ends enclosed can contain dry beans, rice, small stones, or other rattle-producing materials for a percussion instrument that is shaken. Plastic margarine containers or similar objects can become an instrument to strike.</p> <p>Newspaper can be rolled, bent, crushed, and taped to the framework to create a form. Found objects can be attached with masking tape to the basic form to create unusual surface qualities. When the basic form is complete, prepare for the papier mâché process by tearing newspapers into narrow, short strips.</p> <p>Dip one strip at a time into the papier mâché paste, wipe off excess paste, and smooth onto the form. Cover the entire form in the same way, allowing each strip to overlap. Apply five to ten layers for strength. A final layer of brown or white paper towels will prevent newsprint from showing through. Allow to dry, and then paint or decorate as desired.</p> <p>Interdisciplinary Connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a step-by-step guide to designing and creating a musical instrument. Research the inventions that are shown in <i>The Sources of Country Music</i> that might have assisted with the spread of country music from the South.
<p>Materials and Preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> newspaper cardboard tubes found objects beans, rice, small stones, or other small, non-perishable hard objects masking tape papier mâché paste <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take-5 Study Prints, Interdisciplinary Connections: Art and Music, Crystal Productions, Aspen, CO 1-800-255-8629 	
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Thomas Hart Benton: An American Original</i>, by H. Adams, Alfred A. Knopf. <i>Renegade Regionalists: Grant Wood, Thomas Hart Benton, and John Stuart Curry as Independent Modernists</i>, by J. Dennis, University of Wisconsin Press. 	
<p>Motivation</p> <p>Display <i>The Sources of Country Music</i> and ask students to describe it. What does the painting tell us about the characters? The place? The time? What clues has Benton provided to help answer these questions? What musical heritages does Benton show as the sources of country music? How are these musical heritages shown? What traditional and non-traditional musical instruments and sounds might be heard in the scene? How is a visual rhythm created in the image? How is rhythm in art similar to rhythm in music?</p>	
<p>Vocabulary</p> <p>Country music – based on the folk style or cowboy music of the Southern and Western United States.</p> <p>Regionalism – art style that shows regional characteristics such as place, customs, and people.</p> <p>Rhythm (Visual) – Methodical pattern created by any of the elements of art.</p> <p>Rhythm (Musical) – Methodical pattern of notes.</p>	<p>Evaluation/Outcomes</p> <p>Review the criteria for creating a percussion instrument. To what extent does the percussion instrument meet that criteria? How does this percussion instrument reflect the time, place, and culture in which it was made?</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>

ART & MUSIC TIMELINES

The use of **timelines** in art and music illustrate the **close associations** that both of these subjects have with each other as well as **with the other arts, humanities, and sciences**. Through **timelines**, students can easily visualize **chronological relationships** throughout history and among **societies and cultures**. **Contrasting and comparing art and music with each other and other subjects for specific eras or over broad time periods** helps students to view concepts **globally and as a whole**, rather than as **independent and local**.

The **timeline** included here is designed as a **starting point** for students to **begin exploration** between art and music, **diverse cultures**, and **historical periods**. Art and music **styles** are placed within general **time frames** with **representative artists and composers** for each style. Teachers and students are encouraged to **adapt and expand the timeline** in a **variety of ways**.

Journal Activity

Duplicate the **timeline** on the opposite page or ask students to **create their own**. Throughout the **school year** enter all artists, styles, and cultures that are **studied**. **Reflect** upon the changes that are seen between **times, places, and cultures**.

Research Activities

1. In the **empty row on the timeline**, add another subject such as **dance, theatre, art materials or tools, musical instruments, architecture, science, literature, world history, or mathematics**. List two or more **entries** for each **time period**.

- What impact has one subject had upon the others?
- What causes art and music styles to change?
- How does the art of a time period reflect the society in which it was made?
- How do inventions or innovations of a time period reflect the art and music of the time?
- What effects have diverse cultures had upon art and music?

2. In the empty row **list three or more characteristics** of each art style.

- Show assorted **study prints**. Ask students to **locate clues** within the **images** to help determine **what style or time period** the art belongs. After the images have been arranged on the **timeline**, determine if any **seem out of sequence**. Why?
 - Listen to **music** to identify **style characteristics** and then determine placement on the **timeline**.
 - How have art **materials** changed over time? How have **musical sounds or instruments** changed over time?
 - How are the **images and music the same**? How are they different?
 - **Classify** art objects by type such as **three-dimensional, two-dimensional, abstract, or realistic**. **Classify the music by ideas** such as **melodic, atonal, symphonic, or**

pop.

- Based upon clues found in the art and music, who can be an artist? Who can be a composer or musician?

Writing Activities

Locate a **work of art** and a **musical composition** from the same style or time period. Describe the **work of art** and the **musical work**.

- What are the characteristics of that style in art? in music?
- How are the characteristics different?
- How are they the same?
- Infer what types of art and music were created before the Renaissance.
- What reasons can be cited for these inferences?
- Predict what types of art and music will be created in the twenty-first century. What reasons can be cited for these predictions?
 - Do all artists and musicians from the same time period necessarily produce art or music of that period's style? Why or why not?
 - Not all art historians or musicologists give the same dates for time periods of styles of art and music. Why would this be true? Would it be possible to pinpoint the exact date that romanticism ended and modernism began? Why?

Collaborative Activity

A wall-sized timeline **elaborates upon** the smaller version and **furnishes opportunities** for small group collaborations that **evolve into whole-group collaboration**.

Assign one time period or art style to collaborative groups of three students. Include in the timeline three topics: art, music, and social studies. Encourage traditional research processes such as encyclopedia and book searches, but also encourage Internet visits to museums or other sites.

Ask each collaborative group to:

- identify three or more representative artists, works of art, musicians or composers, musical works, and world events.
- write a brief biography of each artist and musician or composer.
- write a short explanation of the world event.
- provide illustrations such as portraits of the artists and musicians or composers.
- provide examples of music.

On a large wall such as a hallway in the school, use tape or yarn to enlarge and reproduce a similar timeline as the one included here. Ask students to arrange biographies, illustrations, and other materials on the timeline.

How have art and music changed over time? How have social events impacted art and music? What predictions can be made about future art and music styles?

ART AND MUSIC TIMELINE

	1500s and before <i>Renaissance</i>	1600s <i>Baroque</i>	1700s <i>Neo-Classical</i>	1800s <i>Romantic</i>	1900s <i>Modern</i>	2000s and after <i>Postmodern</i>
Artists	da Vinci Raphael Rubens	Caravaggio Rembrandt Leyster	Hokusai Chardin Hiroshige	Constable Heade Bierstadt	Crite Bearden Benton Warhol James	
Musicians	Gabrieli di Lasso	Handel Bach Vivaldi	Mozart Hayden Beethoven	Brahms Dvorak Musorgsky Wagner	Schoenberg DeBussy Ellington Copland Messiaen	

Take-5 Study Prints, *Interdisciplinary Connections: Art and Music*

Crystal Productions

1-800-255-8629



Thomas Hart Benton's clay model for *The Sources of Country Music*

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setting, the bustling action, the accurate costumes, and in the authentic characters themselves. Through this artwork, Thomas Hart Benton provides a narrative history that documents many of the origins of country music, including African American spirituals, the blues, cowboy songs, and church music.

The Sources of Country Music is an acrylic painting that is more than 10 feet wide and 6 feet tall. To create the realistic characters and movement in the mural, Benton first researched country music, instruments, and the people who played the music. After taking many photographs and drawing numerous sketches, Benton then made a clay model — actually a diorama — of the scene that he used as a source reference during the painting process. His careful attention to detail and perspective is seen throughout the painting. Upon close observation, viewers will see that each musician plays the same note.

An underlying message of this painting is one promoted by the philosophy of the American regionalist artists of which Benton was a member. Other regionalists included Grant Wood and John Steuart Curry. By way of their work, the regionalists sought to concentrate upon those aspects of American society that told a non-idealized history of the United States. This notion, to the regionalists' way of thinking, helped instill pride in American history and folklore while maintaining a candid, realistic, and sometimes critical or satirical point-of-view. The mainstream art world was generally critical of the American regionalists' ideals, however, and accused the movement of having a narrow focus.

In January of 1973, cowboy singer Tex Ritter asked the artist to create a painting for the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville, Tennessee. The idea intrigued Benton and he soon settled upon the idea of showing the roots of country music. A large acrylic painting, *The Sources of Country Music* (6' x 10' x 4 1/2"), was the final work that Benton attempted and, as such, demonstrates the artist's skillful story-telling abilities coupled with a refined painting technique.



Pam Stephens

CHILDREN'S ART BOOKS ABOUT MUSIC

Beethoven Lives Upstairs by Barbara Nichol, illustrated by Scott Cameron, Orchard Books.

Charlie Parker Played Bebop by Chris Raschka, Orchard,

Crocodile Smile: 10 Songs of the Earth As the Animals See It by Sarah Weeks, illustrated by Lois Ehlert, HarperCollins Juvenile Books.

Give Me Bach My Schubert (It Could Be Verse) by Brian P. Cleary, illustrated by Rick Dupre, Lerner Publications Company.

How Sweet the Sound: African-American Songs for Children by Wade Hudson et al, Scholastic Trade.

The Maestro Plays by Bill Marting, Jr., Illustrated by Vladimir Radunsky, Harcourt Brace.

Making Instruments: 6 Instruments You Can Create by Eddie H. Oates, illustrated by Michale Koelsch, HarperCollins.

Making Musical Things by Ann Wiseman, Charles Scribner's Son.

Meet the Orchestra by Ann Hayes, illustrated by Kamen Thompson, Harcourt Brace.

The Philharmonic Gets Dressed by Karla Kuskin, illustrated by Marc Simont, HarperCollins,

Roland the Minstrel Pig by William Steig, Harper & Row.

Salsa by Lillian Colon-Vila, illustrated by Roberta Collier-Morales, Arte Publico Press.

The Sandy Bottom Orchestra by Garrison Kellor, illustrated by Jenny Lind Nilsson, Disney.

Ty's One-Man Band by Mildred Pitts Walter, illustrated by Margot Tomes, Four Winds Press.

Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin by Lloyd Moss, illustrated by Marjorie Priceman, Simon & Schuster.



The ArtLinks Inquirer

A Student Newsletter of the North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts

Summer 1999

The Sources of Country Music

The Artwork

American artist Thomas Hart Benton was born in 1889 in Neosho, Missouri. Benton's great uncle was the first senator from Missouri and his father was a United States Representative. The artist spent much of his childhood living in Washington, DC, where he learned much about art and artists.

At the age of 17, Thomas Hart Benton became a cartoonist for a newspaper in Joplin, Missouri. He left this job to study art in Chicago and then later moved to Paris, France, to work as an artist there. During World War I, Benton joined the United States Navy where he drew plans for military equipment. Following WWI, the artist taught drawing in New York City and then moved to Kansas City, Missouri to teach painting.

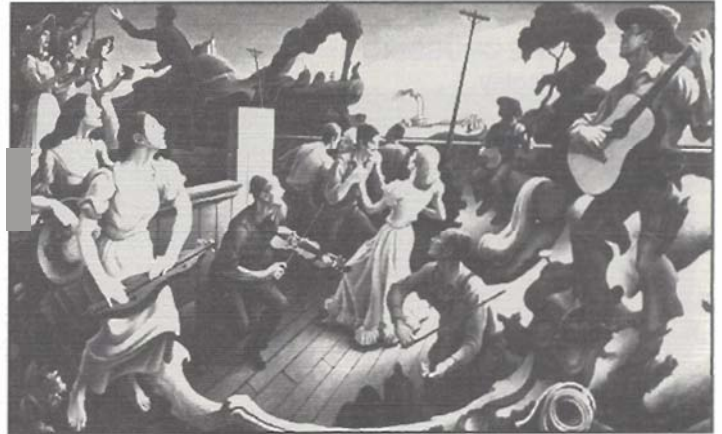
Thomas Hart Benton is best remembered as a regionalist artist — an art style that tells about American places, people, events, or customs. Benton died from a heart attack in 1975, a paintbrush in his hand, shortly after completing his mural, *The Sources of Country Music*.

About the Art

The Sources of Country Music is an acrylic painting that is more than 10 feet wide and 6 feet tall. To create the realistic characters and movement in the mural, Benton first researched country music, instruments, and the people who play the music. After making many photographs and sketches, Benton then made a clay diorama that he referred to as he painted. Benton's deliberate attention to detail is seen throughout the painting. If you took carefully, you will see that each of the musicians plays the same note.

Activities

1. What musical instruments can you identify in



Sources of Country Music, 1975

Thomas Hart Benton
Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Nashville, Tennessee

Benton's painting? What other sounds might be heard in the mural?

2. Select a character in the mural and write a story for the local newspaper from that person's point-of-view. Be sure to mention the music that you hear.

3. As a class, dramatize *The Sources of Country Music* as a "living painting." Paint a large backdrop that depicts the background of the painting. Assign roles for actors, assemble costumes, and borrow musical instruments. Present the living painting with appropriate country music, such as *The Wabash Cannon Ball*.

4. As a class, create a "regionalist" mural that depicts musical and other artistic traditions of your region of the United States.

5. The three best known American regionalist artists were good friends. They were Thomas Hart Benton, Grant Wood, and John Steuart Curry. Locate paintings by each of these artists.

How are the paintings alike? How are they different?

Why would these artists be known as regionalists?

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