



I can make ART



like

I can make ART like MAUD LEWIS

Maud Lewis drew on her happiest memories to paint delightful pictures of her world. Despite being stricken with physical disabilities from an early age, the celebrated Nova Scotia folk artist found joy in painting scenes of country life on canvases, greeting cards and on the very walls of her tiny one-room home.

In *I Can Make ART like Maud Lewis*, a group of Grade 6 students is inspired by her incredible life and work. With the help of folk artist Kyle Jackson, they create a folk art painting of their own downtown neighbourhood.

Informative, deeply touching and filled with the magic of creation, *I Can Make ART like Maud Lewis* shows both the power and simple pleasure of folk art.

I Can Make ART is a series of six short films that take a kids'-eye view on a diverse group of Canadian visual artists.

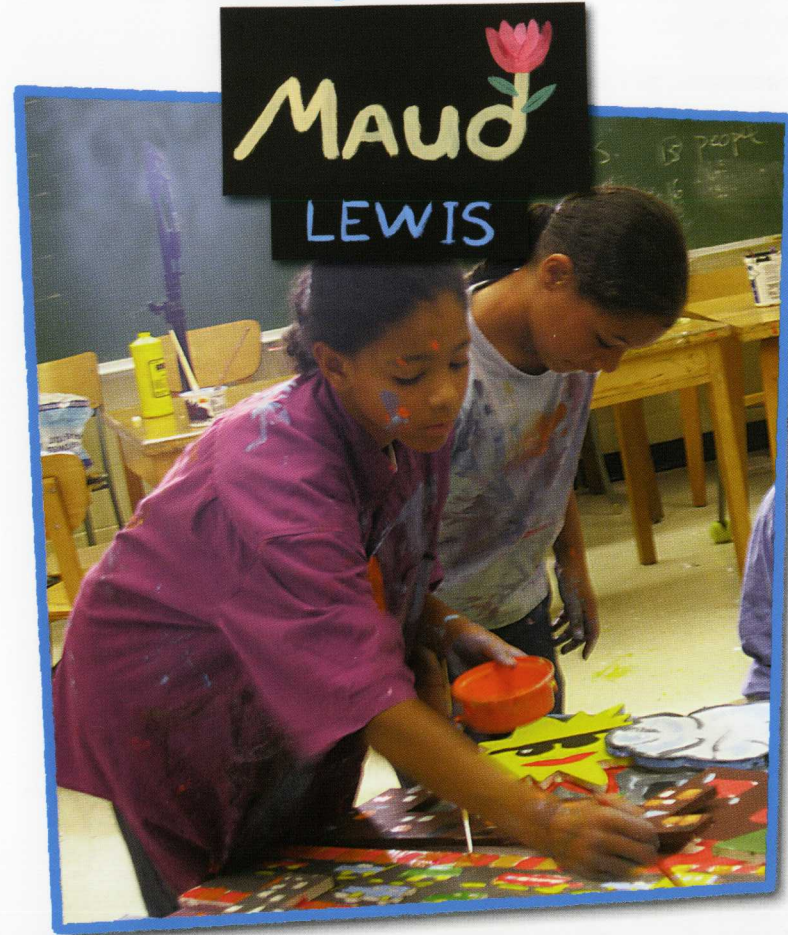
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Director of Photography KENT NASON
Editor JOEY CALUGAY
Music Composed by ERIC LEMOYNE

Other films in the series:
I Can Make ART like Andrew Qappik
I Can Make ART like Emily Carr
I Can Make ART like Kai Chan
I Can Make ART like Marcelle Ferron
I Can Make ART like Ron Noganosh

User's guide included on inside of videojacket.
For more information on the series,
visit <www.nfb.ca/icanmakeart>.

12 minutes 3 seconds

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I can make ART like Maud Lewis

Kids explore the work of celebrated folk artist Maud Lewis and create their own folk art painting.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Art is a powerful vehicle across the curriculum and can be integrated into other subjects.

Related subjects: language arts/celebrations/history/geography/social studies/mathematics

Suitable for ages 9-12

OBJECTIVES

To discover the art and influences of folk artist Maud Lewis.

To create a folk art painting that reflects the children's community and experiences.

To consider line, shape, colour and composition.

PREVIEWING TIPS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Look at examples of Maud's paintings and other kinds of folk art, such as carvings, quilts, furniture, toys or game boards. Discuss the following points:

What is folk art? Why is this type of art important to cultural identity? Apart from the list above, what other items do you consider folk art? What experiences influenced Maud's life and work? Do you think Maud had a difficult or easy life as an artist?

MAKING A FOLK ART PAINTING

Maud Lewis painted scenes of rural Nova Scotia from memory. In this activity, students work independently and in teams to picture their world and create a collective 3D folk art painting on foam core.

Materials

- Markers, coloured pencils, newsprint or manila paper (for first sketches)
- White foam core (small thin sheets for objects and large thick sheets for background)
- Large utility knife (teacher use only)
- Tempera paint
- Polystyrene foam cups and plates (for holding paint and as palettes for mixing)
- Paintbrushes (small, medium and large)
- Tubes of acrylic caulking for attaching foam core (try to find a strong, water-based, quick-drying, low-odour adhesive)
- Newspaper to cover work tables

Design session

Have students discuss their world and what elements they will represent in their painting (people, local landmarks etc.). Write ideas on the chalkboard. Have each student select one element and sketch their ideas on paper.

Teacher set-up and preparations

Cut pieces of foam core into rough shapes, the approximate size and shape of the elements the students will be creating.

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Re-recording
SHELLEY CRAIG
GEOFFREY MITCHELL

Sound Recordist
ARTHUR MCKAY

Prepare a large piece of foam core for the background of the painting by joining several sheets of thick foam core. Join the sheets by applying duct tape to the back. Then reinforce the seams with additional overlapping strips of foam core. Make the background a 1 × 2 m. For safety, adults should do all cutting.

Arrange tables in groups or rows and cover them with newspaper. Set aside places for the finished paintings to dry. Set out brushes, water and paint palettes.

Painting session

Have students select a piece of foam core, then design and paint their object. To simplify trimming later, students can paint a thick outline around their shape.

Trimming

Once pieces are painted and dry, trim off the excess foam core. Plan a work break to allow drying and trimming time. Don't try to trim too closely or with too much detail. This is time-consuming and can cause fragile corners and edges to break.

Assembly

Lay the background board flat on a table and have students place their pieces on it.

Start with the central elements, and then add the smaller ones. Remind students that pieces will need to overlap to fit. Stress that co-operation is crucial and encourage discussion throughout the process, trying different arrangements to see the effect.

Finishing

Once everyone agrees on the arrangement of the pieces, divide the class into smaller groups for gluing everything down and for painting the background.

For gluing, use a strong, water-based, quick drying and low-odour adhesive. (Acrylic caulking works well.) Students may need to add small bits of foam core to level some of the pieces. Paint all edges and the background a dark colour to provide a good contrast for the other colours in the painting.

To unify the work and add more colour, consider adding other painted elements such as a patterned border, a name sign or weather elements like clouds or a rainbow. Have students sign all around the edge of their finished painting.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

After the project is completed, give students a chance to look at the work. Then hold a group discussion:

- How does your work reflect you? Maud's inspiration?
- Describe the colours used in the work.
- What was most difficult about the process? What was most fun?
- How does the finished painting compare with the original idea?

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Research different kinds of folk art objects and the materials used to make them.
2. Find out about folk art traditions and artists in your community.
3. Plan a field trip to an art gallery, museum or an artist's studio.
4. Invite an artist to come to your classroom.

For more information, visit the I Can Make ART Web site at <www.nfb.ca/icanmakeart>.

