

**Title:** Creating your symbol of safety and happiness

**Lillian Pitt** – Pacific Northwest Native American Artist (born 1944) Lillian Pitt is a Native American artist from the Big River (Columbia River) region of the Pacific Northwest. Born on the Warm Springs Reservation in Oregon, she is a descendent of Wasco, Yakama, and Warm Springs people.

She is one of the most highly regarded Native American artists in the Pacific Northwest. Her works have been exhibited and reviewed regionally, nationally and internationally, and she has been the recipient of numerous awards and distinctions.

Primarily a sculptor and mixed media artist, Lillian’s lifetime of works include artistic expressions in clay, bronze, wearable art, prints, and most recently, glass. The focus of her work draws on over 12,000 years of Native American history and tradition of the Columbia River region. Regardless of the medium she chooses to use, Lillian’s contemporary works are all aimed at giving voice to her people.

*My first early personal vision grew from the discovery of “She Who Watches,” (Tsagaglal) a petroglyph of a female chief changed into a rock by coyote who lived along the Big River. “She Who Watches,” once overlooked the village of N’xluldix, the home of my grandmother. She Who Watches is an enduring symbol of female wisdom, peace and prosperity. Tsagaglal serves as a personal and professional inspiration for me and my family. Archetypal images provide points of reference to achieving balance with us, our community, and our world. – Lillian Pitt, 2012*

Likening her task as an artist to that of the trickster Coyote, Pitt said, "My work is medicine for me, but most of the time it's play."

*Everything I do directly honors my ancestors and gives voice to the people, the environment and the animals. In our tradition, the creator, “Naami Piyap” says we are caretakers of the land and are the voice of the land and the life upon it. That is our law. - - Lillian Pitt, 2012*

## **Vocabulary**

**Petroglyphs** are images created by removing part of a rock surface by incising, picking, carving, or abrading, as a form of rock art.

**Pictographs** are art painted on rock surfaces, as opposed to petroglyphs that are carved or incised. Some times referred to as petroicons.

**She Who Watches** (Tsagaglallal) Pronounced SHAG-o-lol the petroglyph that inspired Lillian Pitt to focus on art that honors her ancestry

**Symbol** - a material object representing something, often something immaterial; emblem, token, or sign.

**Celilo Falls** – (seh-LIE-lo) – the ancient gathering spot and marketplace near current day The Dalles, Oregon. Larger than Niagara Falls by volume, Celilo Falls was a major fishing location as well as the world’s largest marketplace for 10,000 years. It was dammed by the US Government in 1957 and can no longer be seen.

**Objective:** Create a mask of someone or something that makes you feel safe, happy and protected. It can be a real person, an animal or image from nature, or you can create a unique image based on something you identify with in nature or something that has a strong influence in your life.

Since this is an emblem of self, you should avoid using trademarked images, logos, and other existing designs.

### Student Learning Assessment

<p>Learning Objectives</p> <p><i>What I want my students to know and be able to do.</i></p>	<p>Assessment Criteria/Formative Assessment Checkpoints</p> <p><i>What I will observe in my students – traits that can be seen and/or heard.</i></p> <p><i>When I can check-in/observe this?</i></p>
<p><b>1.</b> Learn about the life and art of Lillian Pitt</p>	<p><b>1.</b> Students will be able to tell their parents who Lillian Pitt is, why she is an important artist, and what styles of art she is known for.</p> <p><i>Check-in:</i> conversation with students, ask these questions of the class at conclusion of lesson.</p>
<p><b>2.</b> Understand what 2-dimensional means.</p>	<p><b>2.</b> Students will be able to identify two-dimensional drawings, and three-dimensional masks and sculptures.</p> <p><i>Check-in:</i> During the reading of the book and when observing the PowerPoint, point out the 2-dimensional drawings and the three-dimensional masks and sculptures, ask students to identify.</p>
<p><b>3.</b> To create a mask in 2-dimensions first, while considering how it will fold</p>	<p><b>3.</b> Students use paper mask blank and paint it to create their personal symbol.</p>

together.	<i>Check-in:</i> during the hands-on art project, ask students if their mask is in two-dimensions or three?
<b>4.</b> To experience creating dimension by folding paper.	<b>4.</b> Students demonstrate their understanding of 3-D by folding their flat mask shape into 3-dimensions  <i>Check-in:</i> observed during the hands-on art project.
<b>5.</b> Identify and create a mask that has personal meaning for themselves, one of safety, happiness and confidence.	<b>5.</b> Students create a unique mask. <i>Check-in:</i> during the art project, ask students to explain their creative choices

### **National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts**

#### *Creating*

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

#### *Connecting*

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Who wears masks?

Why do people wear masks?

How can you create a mask?

How can you make your mask unique?

#### **Project:**

Set up: For each student, provide watercolor pallets, and a paper mask. Make the array of tissue paper available. Scotch tape in dispensers, and nametag stickers to be used to label for the Carnegie Picture Show. Ask students to get out their own pencil .

1. Show first slide of PowerPoint introducing Ms. Pitt.
2. Then read the students the copy of the book.
3. Show students her artwork on the PowerPoint (second slide to end)
4. Tell students that they are going to be making their own masks, which will represent a person, thing, or animal (real or imagined) that makes them feel happy, safe and confident. Ask them not to use a character created for TV or movies, or comics.

5. Ask students to spend a minute or two sharing with their neighbor who/what they might be painting. Possibly share the mask you have created and discuss why you chose the subject matter and a little bit about your artistic process.
6. Hold up mask blank and discuss what two-dimensional means (possesses the dimensions of length and width but does not possess depth.) Demonstrate folding the mask while pointing out that once folded, it is three-dimensional. Talk about folding the mask just a little for not much depth, a lot for an even rounder shape, or not at all, if that is preferred.
7. Briefly discuss the use of tissue paper. It can be glued on flat, bunched up, and glued on to create texture, used for the effects of ears, hair, fur, etc.
8. Pass out masks, paint palettes, brushes and water in yogurt cups, nametag stickers and scotch tape. Ask students to put their name, grade, teacher and school on sticker provided (they will put these on after mask is finished)
9. Circulate the room, answering questions, assisting with paint mixing, and talking about students' subject matter.
10. After students are done painting, assist students with taping their masks together, applying tape to the back side of the mask. If masks are too wet to tape, set aside in a teacher-designated space to dry, and ask if students can have some time later to complete the project.

### **Closure**

Ask the students the name of the artist studied. Ask them to name one of the tribes she is an ancestor of. Ask students to volunteer to share their masks and tell a little bit about why they chose their subject.