

## ***Pre-Visit Activity***

<b>Title:</b> <i>Facial Structure &amp; Decoration</i>
<b>Subjects:</b> <i>Language &amp; Visual Arts</i>
<b>Grade:</b> <i>7-12</i>
<b>Time:</b> <i>One class duration</i>

### **Introduction:**

As one views this collection of images it becomes clear that Jamie Wyeth was fascinated by the strong Tatar facial structure of Nureyev. Many of the paintings and studies in this exhibition feature portraits of Nureyev – some almost full length. The artwork is not as much about the dancer dancing as it is about the dancer himself.

While Jamie was working with the dancer, Nureyev was rehearsing for his performance in *Pierrot Lunaire* in which he played a moonstruck clown appearing in heavy white face paint. This is reminiscent of the famous Mime tradition of France led by Marcel Marseau. Nureyev loved mime and brought about a tradition of mime in ballet. It is interesting to see how white makeup changed the essence of his face, yet still maintaining it's strength.

### **Objectives:**

*The student will:*

- view slides in packet and study the proportions of Nureyev's face.
- compare the difference that theatrical makeup makes on their own faces.
- write a short treatise on what role makeup plays in dance and theatre.

### **Materials:**

- computer and internet connection
- paper and pencils
- white face make-up
- camera

### **Vocabulary:**

mime

theatrical make-up

facial proportions

### **Teachers Motivation:**

The students will have available for study the **web site (ARTSEDGE)**, and slides accompanying this packet. Reproductions of the Wyeth drawings and paintings of Nureyev as well as a video of ballet and dance can be found on several sites. They may have seen the Nureyev **exhibition** which includes over 100 paintings, drawings, photos and costume items to use as references for their own.

They will use each other as models. They will be encouraged to think about what role makeup plays in theatre and dance.

### **Procedure:**

*Ask Students to:*

- Study Nureyev's face and actually measure it's appropriate proportions in one of the paintings.
- In pairs, photograph each other in frontal portraiture style. Re-photograph after applying white make-up in the tradition of mime. Think about:
  - how the application of makeup has changed the way the face looks and
  - what role makeup plays in dance and theatre.

*Note: Following Wednesday matinees, Nureyev would often not remove his white face paint before leaving the theater, enjoying the attention he attracted on the street.*

### **Evaluation:**

*Did students:*

- study the portraits of Nureyev.
- compare the effect of their own faces in makeup to Nureyev's and their own face without makeup.
- define the role of makeup in dance and theatre.

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### **Interdisciplinary Connections:**

*Ask students to:*

#### **Language Arts:**

- Writing a short treatise analyzing the effect of theatrical makeup

#### **Visual Art:**

- Photographing, for comparison, two portraits.