



Foil Giacometti Figures

Lesson Description: Students will learn about the famous 20th century sculptor Alberto Giacometti. They will observe and analyze his unique way of portraying figures and then use foil to create their own human-like figures.

Lesson Objective: Students should learn about Giacometti and his unique sculpture style. They should then create their own Giacometti-inspired figures.

Art History/Theory Relation: Swiss sculptor Alberto Giacometti was an era defining artist of the 20th century. His work was heavily influenced by surrealism and cubism. He is best known for his human figures. They're elongated and heavily worked but still stick thin. He often used his close family and friends to model: his wife, Annette and his brother Diego, were often the subjects of his works. These human figures were made in a post WWII context and following an essay titled *The Search for the Absolute* written by Giacometti's friend, philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, for an exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York in 1948, Giacometti's expressive figures became associated with existentialist ideas and a sense of post-war trauma. As one critic commented,

reduced, as they are, to their very core, these figures evoke lone trees in winter that have lost their foliage

The image of a walking man preoccupied Giacometti for the rest of his career.



Example Piece:



Materials Needed:

NOTE: All for Art lesson plans are always flexible with materials and students can use whatever they have on hand! We always strive to make art available to everyone, no matter how limited the resources available to them are. Thus, the following list is simply an ideation of possible materials for the above project.

1. Foil
2. Optional: tape or cardboard to keep the figures upright for display.

Step-by-Step Procedure:

1. Introduce students to Giacometti and his work.
 - a. This video is a great overview:
[▶ Alberto Giacometti – 'A New Way of Thinking About Humanity'...](#)
 - b. Be sure to also show them pictures of his work! Below are some of my favorites:



all for art



2. Hand out materials and introduce the project: students should create multiple human figures out of foil. Some should be elongated and thin like Giacometti's work, but encourage them to experiment! They can try different styles, poses, etc. Give them an opportunity to be creative!
3. If desired, students can take turns modeling for the class! This can be a fun way to liven up the activity.



What Students Should Aim to Accomplish with their Final Piece:

They should have created foil figures inspired by Giacometti's work. Ideally, they should create a couple in his style to try it out (elongated figures) and then experiment on their own to find other unique ways they can "sculpt" figures. This project is all about creativity and thinking outside the box! Don't force students to make their figures look exactly like Giacometti's work- in fact, encourage them to try out different styles/forms.