

Henk Pander: Memory and Modern Life
January 29 – March 27, 2011
Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University

Teachers Guide

This guide is to help teachers prepare students for a field trip to the exhibition, *Henk Pander: Memory and Modern Life* and offer ideas for leading self-guided groups through the galleries. Teachers, however, will need to consider the level and needs of their students in adapting these materials and lessons.

Goals

- To introduce students to the work of Henk Pander
- To explore Pander's artistic process
- To explore some of the major themes in the artist's work

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify characteristics of the artist's style
- Identify the variety of media Pander uses and how each contributes to a specific body of work
- Identify themes in the artist's work
- Discuss the role of memory, both personal and collective, in Pander's work

Preparing for the tour:

- If possible, visit the exhibition on your own beforehand.
- Using the images (print out transparencies or sets for students, create a bulletin board, etc.) and information in the teacher packet, create a pre-tour lesson plan for the classroom to support and complement the gallery experience. If you are unable to use images in the classroom, the suggested discussions can be used for the Museum tour.
- Create a tour
 - Build on the goals and objectives from this packet, as well as concepts students have discussed in the classroom
 - Have a specific focus, i.e. subject matter; medium; etc.
 - Be selective – don't try to look at or talk about everything in the exhibition
 - Include a simple task to keep students focused
 - Plan transitions and closure for the tour
- Make sure students are aware of gallery etiquette.

At the Museum:

- Review with students what is expected – their task and museum behavior.
- Focus on the works of art. Emphasize looking and discovery through visual scanning (a guide is included in this packet). If you are unsure where to begin, a good way to start is by asking, “What is happening in this picture?” Follow with questions that will help students back up their observations: “What do you see that makes you say that?” or “Show us what you have found.”
- Balance telling about a work and letting students react to a work.
- Use open-ended question to guide student looking and to focus their thinking on certain topics and concepts.
- Slow down and give students a chance to process.
- Respect all responses and deal with them.
- Be aware of students’ interest spans (usually about 45 to 50 minutes) and comfort.

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INTRODUCTION

Roger Hull, Curator and Professor Emeritus

Henk Pander has lived in Oregon for 45 years but to this day describes himself as a “reluctant immigrant” from his native Holland. Arriving in Portland in 1965, already an academically trained painter at the age of 27, he observed and documented the cross currents of the American cultural scene of the 1960s with the fascination and detachment of a European émigré.

In the decades since, Pander has maintained his cultural double vision: he records and interprets American technology, materialism, topography, and disaster in paintings and drawings that radically revise aspects of traditional Dutch painting in order to make hard-hitting American art. At the same time, drawing upon childhood memories of Holland and periodic visits to his home country, he frequently paints specifically European scenes and subjects.

His painted narratives range from memories of Nazi-occupied Holland, to a conflation of the American West with Deep Space, to the burning of the *New Carissa* off the Oregon coast. Combining personal and art historical memory with the subject matter of modern life, Pander creates works that are profound in their seriousness, dramatic intensity, and expressive power.

Henk Pander was born November 21, 1937, in Haarlem, The Netherlands. Henk’s father, an illustrator and painter provided the model for Henk’s becoming an artist. From the time he was eight or nine years old, he joined his father on drawing expeditions, often to the dunes near Haarlem, establishing a lifelong practice of painting watercolors *en plein air*. His father also introduced him to the indoor world of studio painting, and he continues to set up and visualize his studios as zones of Dutch-ness, spaces that keep him linked to a way of painting that extends back to Frans Hals and Rembrandt van Rijn.

Already skilled in the basics of drawing and watercolor, Henk focused on subjects other than art in his early education in Haarlem schools. He was particularly interested in natural sciences and astronomy, subjects that he still references in his creative work. In 1955, he graduated from the lyceum, or high school, and at his father’s urging enrolled at the Kunstnijverheid-School in Amsterdam. Pander described this as a “high modernist design school that ridiculed my ability” in drawing, *plein air* painting, and other traditional practices. This experience began Pander’s lifelong antagonism with modernism, even though he acknowledges that elements of modernist practice are essential to his work.

A year or so later, in 1956, he began taking night classes at Amsterdam’s Rijksacademie van Beeldende Kunsten, the prestigious government-supported academy of fine arts. He was accepted for a probationary first year and soon qualified as a regular full-time student. In contrast to the design school, he found the academy a perfect fit for his skills and ambitions. The curriculum included art history, iconography, and anatomy as well as studio practice.

After completing the course of study at the academy, Pander set about establishing himself as a professional artist in Amsterdam. His work included public commissions, portraits for private clients, and oil paintings, watercolors and drawings that he showed in group exhibitions in galleries and museums. In 1963 he met his first wife, an artist from Portland, Oregon. After the birth of their first child in 1964, they moved to Portland, where for nearly half a century Pander has been a major figure in Pacific Northwest art.

IMAGES (text by Roger Hull)

1.



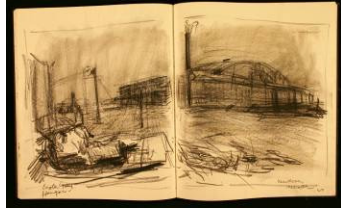
Enola Gay Hangar, Wendover, Utah
2007
Oil on Linen
72" x 96"
Collection of the artist

Henk Pander frequently travels the American West in search of scenery, structures and artifacts to use as subject matter in his paintings. Memory and modern life are on a continuum for Pander. The now, the recent and the more distant past form the matrix for his most creative work, and the airplane junkyards and abandoned airports are sites that haunt and energize the immigrant Pander with his long memory and essentially tragic vision.

One destination of his drive-about was the decommissioned Wendover Air Force Base west of Salt Lake City, Utah. This large oil painting is based on drawings (Image 2) and watercolors (Image 3) that he made of the hangar that housed the *Enola Gay* B-29 prior to its mission to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945. For Pander, with his childhood memories of World War II in Holland, the abandoned hangar is a haunting remnant of a war that, he believes, collective memory has simplified and idealized.

Pander works in a variety of media as he develops his visual ideas about a particular subject or theme. To fully explore a theme such as the *Enola Gay*, Pander utilizes photography, drawing and watercolor as well as oil painting. While the oil painting is often the center of a constellation of supporting works, watercolors and drawings, they make up the final work's lineage and pedigree. The preparatory works stand on their own, often with great authority, as works that can go to market and sell, but they originate in the process of envisioning a different, larger and more major work.

2.



Sketchbook drawing for *Enola Gay*
2007
Collection of the artist

For Pander, drawing is the basis of all his artwork, and he fills many sketchbooks with studies that often become the basis of watercolors, oil paintings and large format ink drawings. This and other sketches, drawn on-site at the *Enola Gay* hangar, represent the first stage of the process that results in his more finished drawings and paintings of the subject.

3.



Enola Gay Hangar, Wendover, Utah
2007
Watercolor
40" x 60"
Collection of the artist

Pander works in a variety of media as he develops his visual ideas about a particular subject or theme. It allows him the freedom to paint much further afield than the limits and complexities of oil will allow... [and provides] him with a medium for exploration and experimentation. It is watercolor (and drawing) that goes along on the road trips to remote locales of exotic views and artifacts. Oil painting stays home. Watercolor is the "right there" medium for [documentation]. It is Pander's *plein air* medium, the one he takes with him out into the world. Driving his van and pulling a small house trailer, he arrives at a location, sets up his painting table, gets out his board with the pre-stretched paper attached, and paints the scene then and there.

In this watercolor painted on-site at the old Wendover Air Force Base, Pander lays out the composition that he uses in the oil painting created later in his Portland studio. All the elements are in place: the still life of junk in the left foreground, the empty space of the midground, and the massive hangar accented by the chimney (one of several strong verticals in the composition). Together with oil paintings and drawings, watercolor is one of Pander's three primary media.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES

Pre-visit:

- Using visual scanning concepts, discuss the *Enola Gay* images. Compare and contrast the three stages: how does Pander use each medium (its qualities and strengths) to develop the final image?
- Discuss Roger Hull's statement: "For Pander, with his childhood memories of World War II in Holland, the abandoned hangar is a haunting remnant of a war that, he believes, collective memory has simplified and idealized." Do you agree with Pander? Why or why not? How might Americans' experience of World War II, and subsequently how they remember it, differ from Europeans'?
- Research the history of the *Enola Gay*. Why is Pander interested in the old hangar? Compare viewing Pander's "memorialization" to a visit to the National Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian to see the actual plane; restored, gleaming and on permanent display. (www.nasm.si.edu/exhibitions/uhc/es_ww_ii_aviation.cfm) What story (or stories) does each tell? Which has more resonance for you? Which do you think best reflects the historical event and its legacy? Which do you think best reflects America as a society and a nation? Explain.

At the Museum:

- Using visual scanning as a guide, have students choose a work to discuss with a partner or small group.
- Compare and contrast the *Enola Gay* works to other subjects that document or revisit events that affected Pander as a child living in Holland during World War II, as an American and as an Oregonian: the remains of a German concentration camp (which he visited decades after World War II), Ground Zero (which he visited soon after the September 11, 2001 attack), and the *New Carissa* (where he witnessed key events as they unfolded). How are they similar? How are they different? How does the immediacy of the event for the artist influence his portrayal of the subject? How does it affect your experience of the work?
- Pander's body of work includes narrative paintings of World War II based on memories of his childhood in occupied Haarlem. Discuss his approach to these works and how and why they are similar or different from other World War II-themed works like *Enola Gay* or the concentration camp? How and why are they similar or different from a more immediate work like *Shadows*, his painting of Ground Zero?

Post Visit:

- Create a body of work around a single theme using a variety of media. Choose a theme that can be represented by an object or place you can observe. Begin with a sketch or sketches drawn onsite or from life. Note what you are most concerned with at this stage. Follow with watercolor painted onsite or from life. Again, note what developments, decisions, etc. are made. Create a final painting with oil or acrylic based on your sketches and watercolor, once more with notes about your process.

- Henk Pander has served as a documentarian of historic events (World War II, September 11th, the burning of the *New Carissa*) as well as specific communities (public safety agencies). Some projects, like the body of work he created for the public safety agencies, were funded by monies from arts and cultural organizations. Write a grant proposal to create a body of work documenting a significant event in Oregon or National history, or a specific community.
 - Describe the project (what, when, where, how).
 - Why is it important to your development as an artist?
 - What is its historical, cultural and/or societal significance?
 - What community, if any, will the project benefit? How?

RESOURCE:

Hull, Roger, *Henk Pander: Memory and Modern Life*. Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon. Distributed by University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, 2011

VISUAL SCANNING

Scanning is meant to guide the viewer in looking at a work of art. To avoid tedium, one may choose not to use all six points during each scanning.

1. SUBJECT

Subject is usually a good starting place, but should one of the other points “speak” to the viewer first, by all means, begin there.

What is the subject of the work?

What objects can be identified or recognized?

If there is no imagery, the formal qualities may be the subject (line, shape, color, etc.)

2. COMPOSITION

Identify the formal qualities (line, color, shape, form, etc.)

How are these formal qualities organized?

repetition

contrast

balance

movement

scale

unity

visual rhythm

3. TECHNIQUE & MEDIUM

How was the work made? (painting, sculpture, prints, weaving, etc.)

Does the particular technique contribute to the total? How?

4. EXPRESSION

What is the role of cultural conventions? (Native American, for example)

What is the mood or emotional content?

What is the message or meaning?

What has the artist done to “send” the message?

5. CONTEXT

How is the work a product of a particular culture?

Where and how does the work fit into history?

6. CRITIQUE

Has the artist succeeded in expressing thoughts, emotions, and ideas? How?

Viewer’s response: like or dislike. Why?

How can a work that one dislikes still be a valid statement of the artist?

OREGON CONTENT STANDARDS

Create, Present and Perform Works of Art

Create, present and perform works of art.

AR.HS.CP.01 Select and combine essential elements and organizational principles to achieve a desired effect when creating, presenting and/or performing works of art for a variety of purposes.

Apply the use of ideas, techniques and problem solving to the creative process and analyze the influence that choices have on the result.

AR.HS.CP.02 Explain the choices made in the creative process when combining ideas, techniques, and problem solving to produce one's work, and identify the impact that different choices might have made.

Express ideas, moods and feelings through the arts and evaluate how well a work of art expresses one's intent.

AR.HS.CP.03 Create, present or perform a work of art by controlling essential elements and organizational principles and describe how well the work expresses an intended idea, mood or feeling.

Evaluate one's own work, orally and in writing.

AR.HS.CP.04 Critique the artistic merit of one's own work using aesthetic criteria, orally and in writing.

Aesthetics and Criticism

Apply critical analysis to works of art.

AR.HS.AC.01 Use knowledge of essential elements, organizational principles and aesthetic criteria to explain the artistic merit and aesthetic effect of a work of art.

Respond to works of art and give reasons for preferences.

AR.HS.AC.02 Explain personal preferences for works of art based on analysis of how the essential elements and organizational principles contribute to the work's artistic merit.

Historical and Cultural Perspectives

Understand how events and conditions influence the arts.

AR.HW.HC.01 Explain the influence of events and conditions on an artist's work.

Understand how the arts can reflect the environment and personal experiences within a society or culture, and apply to one's own work.

AR.HS.HC.04 Explain how works of art reflect the artist's personal experience, environment, society and culture and apply this knowledge to one's own work.

Understand the place of the arts within, and their influences on, society.

AR.HS.HC.04 Explain the connections among the arts, career opportunities, and quality of life in the context of personal, practical, community and cultural needs.

AR.HS.HC.05 Explain the influence of the arts on human behavior, community life and cultural traditions.

Social Sciences: History

Historical Skills: Identify and analyze diverse perspectives on and historical interpretation of historical issues and events.

SS.HS.HS.04 Understand how contemporary perspectives affect historical interpretation.

World History: Understand and interpret events, issues, and developments within and across eras of world history.

SS.HS.HS.05.01 Understand the causes, characteristics, lasting influence and impact of political, economic, and social developments in world history.

SS.HS.HS.05.15 Understand the character of the war in Europe and the Pacific, and the role of inventions and new technology on the course of the war.

Social Science: Analysis

Define and clarify an issue so that its dimensions are well understood.

SS.HS.SA.01 Define, research and explain an event, issue, problem or phenomenon and its significance to society.

Explain various perspectives on an event or issue and the reasoning behind them.

SS.HS.SA.04 Analyze an event, issue, problem or phenomenon from varied or opposed perspectives or points of view.

Identify and analyze an issue.

SS.HS.SA.05 Analyze an event, issue, problem or phenomenon, identifying characteristics, influences, causes and both short-and long-term effects.





