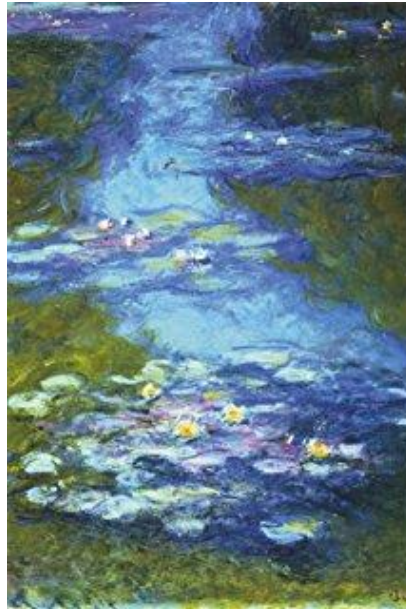


**Cunningham Creek Elementary
Meet the Artist**

Monet, Claude- Water Lilies



ARTIST: MONET, CLAUDE

PRINT:

Impressionism

Date: 1840-1926

Size:

Medium: Oil on canvas

ARTIST - Claude Monet, the leader of the Impressionist movement, was born in Paris. His father was a grocer. The family moved to Le Havre on the coast of Normandy where Monet spent his youth. Here, his interest in light, water and atmosphere became intense. Monet loved to work outdoors and to paint directly from the environment. Between 1865 and 1871, he developed the luminous style associated with Impressionism. For years Monet knew horrible poverty. To read his letters is to understand a life of hardship and hunger. It never occurred to him to put down his brushes and earn money for his family by some other means.

When his son was born in 1867, he wrote, "Camille has given birth to a fine big boy...I am tortured knowing that his mother has nothing to eat." About 1900, he received the fame that was so rightfully his. When he died in 1928 the Premier of France gave the eulogy. The Premier ordered that the coffin be draped in brilliant colors instead of the traditional black, because of Monet's love of color and light.

PRINT- The water-lily pond at Monet's home in Giverny, north-west of Paris, became the principal motif of Monet's later paintings. Filling the canvas, the surface of the pond becomes a world in itself, inspiring a sense of immersion in nature. Monet's observations of the changing patterns of light on the surface of the water become almost abstract. The paintings were not fully appreciated in Monet's lifetime, and when they were reassessed in 1950s, some critics viewed them as precursors of Abstract Expressionism.

In his effort to capture just the right amount of light and dark, Monet always worked on several canvases at once and furiously followed the changing daylight. He painted intently, disregarding all the topical trends, and declared to his astonished contemporaries.

In the last decades of Monet's life, his prized water garden at Giverny became a subject the artist explored obsessively, painting it 250 times between 1900 and his death. Eventually, it was his only subject. He began construction of the water garden as soon as he moved to Giverny, petitioning local authorities to divert water from a nearby river. The resulting landscape was Monet's invention entirely, and he used it as his creative focus and inspiration.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the subject of this painting?
2. How does it make you feel?
3. How has the artist used color?
4. Does the painting look realistic or not? Why?
5. Do the paintings look/feel different if you stand close or stand far away?
6. How has the artist shown texture?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

1. Use paint/pastels to create a water lily scene or a scene over water.
2. Write a poem about the painting or a descriptive writing piece.
3. Work in a group to create a large water scene.