

Lorado Taft



Fountain of the Great Lakes 1913

Bronze

Art Institute of Chicago

Artistic Emphasis

Lorado Taft (1860-1936) was one of the first Chicago sculptors to achieve widespread recognition, yet he has since fallen into relative obscurity. Taft and a group of fellow artists and writers formed an artist's community and spent their summers together on 15 acres of land near Oregon, Illinois, where they built homes, studios and a camp house. Their camp is now the Lorado Taft Field Campus of Northern Illinois University -- the site of McKenzie's 4th grade Outdoor Ed. In this lesson, students are asked to think about why "communities of learning" are important and how we learn from and are inspired by the people and ideas around us.

Project Description

Students do a warm-up exercise on paper, then move on to work in clay, creating a sculpture that symbolizes "Spring." They pass their sculpture within small groups, using the modifications made by others as inspiration for expanding or changing their original concept.

Advance Preparation

- Schedule a date with your teacher. **Everyone seems to leave this project until just before Outdoor Ed, so please schedule in advance!** Remember to check the on-line calendar for conflicts first. E-mail Sara sara@kurensky.org and Julie jageyer@sbcglobal.net with the new date so they can post it on-line.
- One week prior to your date, check the Fine Arts supply room to make sure all the supplies are in the cabinet.
- The volunteer making the presentation should read through the handbook, located in the Fine Arts supply room, and become familiar with the project narrative and visuals.
- Allow time before the class to divide the clay into pieces. This can take up to an hour for a couple of you to complete. Instructions are in the cabinet with the clay.
- Recommended number of volunteers: 4