

Repoussé Design

Visual Art Lesson

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Project Objective and Standard

- **Objective:** SWBAT analyze the history of Repoussé in order to create an individual art piece inspired by the style of Repousse and using line design, shapes, and pattern with a chosen theme.
- **Long-Range Goal:** To develop ideas and understanding of society, culture, and history through an interaction with and analysis of art and design related to Repoussé Design.
- **Visual Art Standard: HS1.VA.Cn1.A** Document the process of developing ideas reflecting awareness of personal experiences, interests, and art-making approaches. **HS2.VA.Cn1.A** Research and connect an unfamiliar subject to personal experiences to develop meaning through art-making.
- **Essential Questions:** How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures? How does art preserve aspects of life?
- **Necessary Materials:** the students will need a thin metal sheet, Craft (EVA) foam sheets, wooden stylus, tracing paper (for students to draw their designs), items that can be used for texture plates (hot glue on chipboard, paperclips glued to cardboard, coins, embossing plates, etc.), sharpie/ink/antiquing medium to put in the recesses and buff off the high points, rags or steel wool for buffing.



Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

By the end of
this lesson,
you will..

- Be able to Identify historical uses and modern (current) uses of Repoussé.
 - Know the history of Repoussé and the origin of the technique.
 - Be able to successfully plan out a design concept for a Repoussé Design
 - Know key academic vocabulary terms relating to Repoussé.
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Key Concepts

- Some of the key concepts that will be utilized during this lesson will include prior knowledge such as the Elements of Art (Line, Shape, Form, Texture) and the Principles of Design (Repetition, Pattern, Emphasis, Unity). Using the basic concepts of art, we will gain a better understanding of the Repoussé Technique and how it applies today.



Academic Vocabulary

- **Repoussé**- A metalworking technique in which a malleable metal is shaped by hammering from the reverse side to create a design in low relief.
- **Chasing**- Also referred to as chased work, or embossing, refers to a similar technique, in which the piece is hammered on the front side, sinking the metal.
- **Embossing**- Embossing and debossing are the processes of creating either raised or recessed relief images and designs in paper and other materials. An embossed pattern is raised against the background, while a debossed pattern is sunken into the surface of the material but might protrude somewhat on the reverse side.

Introduction into Repoussé Technique

[https://youtu.be/JMr
d539y4aU](https://youtu.be/JMr
d539y4aU)



Image courtesy of Deviantart.com (Samize)



Stem Cup 7th-9th century (Image courtesy of metmuseum.org)

- *Repoussé* is a French term meaning “pushed back” refers to a metalworking technique in which a malleable metal is shaped by hammering from the reverse side to create a design in low relief. Chasing, chased work, or embossing refers to a similar technique, in which the piece is hammered on the front side, sinking the metal. The two techniques are often used in conjunction.
- Many metals can be used for chasing and repoussé work, including gold, silver, copper, and alloys such as steel, bronze, and pewter.
- These techniques are very ancient and have been extensively used all over the world, as they require only the simplest tools and materials, and yet allow great diversity of expression. They are also relatively economical, since there is no loss or waste of metal, which mostly retains its original size and thickness. Tool marks are often intentionally left visible in the result.
- A few among many famous examples of repoussé and chasing are the prehistoric Gundestrup cauldron, the mask on the mummy of Tutankhamun, the body-fitting armor of the Bronze Age, the copper ornaments made by the Native Americans in the Southeastern US, and the Statue of Liberty in New York.

History of Repoussé

Famous Examples of Repoussé

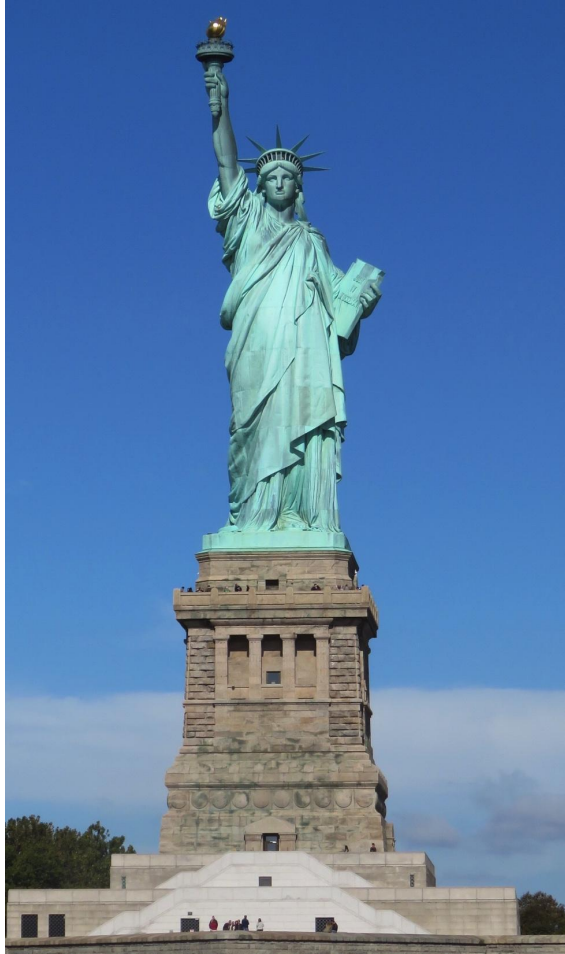


Image courtesy of Wikipedia



Image courtesy of the Boston Globe (KHALED ELFIQI/EPA)



Image courtesy of silverworks.ie



Image courtesy of Wikipedia

The Statue of Liberty

- The **Statue of Liberty** is a colossal neoclassical sculpture on Liberty Island in New York Harbor within New York City, in the United States. The copper statue, a gift from the people of France (in which the term Repoussé originated) to the people of the United States, was designed by French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi and its metal framework was built by Gustave Eiffel. The statue was dedicated on October 28, 1886.
- The outer shell of the sculpture is not structural, yet offers the look of added support through the use of Repoussé on the copper shell.

Death Mask of Tutankhamun

- The mask of Tutankhamun is a gold mask of the 18th-dynasty ancient Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamun (reigned 1334–1325 BC). It was discovered by Howard Carter in 1925 in a tomb in the Valley of the Kings, and is now housed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. The mask is one of the best-known works of art in the world and serves as a great example of Repoussé. Here we see various patterns, designs, and inscriptions. The level of detail indicates the importance and prestige of the person in the tomb.



Image courtesy of Tarekheikal/public domain

Gundestrup Cauldron

- **Gundestrup cauldron** is a richly decorated silver vessel, thought to date from between 200 BC and 300 AD, or more narrowly between 150 BC and 1 BC. This places it within the early Roman Iron Age. The cauldron is the largest known example of European Iron Age silver work at 27 inches wide and 17 inches tall
- The cauldron is not complete, and now consists of a rounded cup-shaped bottom making up the lower part of the cauldron, usually called the base plate, above which are five interior plates and seven exterior ones; a missing eighth exterior plate would be needed to encircle the cauldron, and only two sections of a rounded rim at the top of the cauldron survive. The base plate is mostly smooth and undecorated inside and out, apart from a decorated round medallion in the center of the interior. All the other plates are heavily decorated with repoussé work, hammered from beneath to push out the silver. Other techniques were used to add detail, and there is extensive gilding and some use of inlaid pieces of glass for the eyes of figures.



Image courtesy of silverworks.ie

Other Repoussé Examples



Image courtesy of mardonjewelers.com



Image courtesy of Wikipedia



Image courtesy of Wikipedia

Some Questions to Consider

Why does the material you use to create Repoussé have to be thin?

What designs and patterns appeal most in the Repoussé style? How do you know?

Why is it important for artists to have the proper tools when working with the Repoussé technique?

Getting Started

- You will now create a work of your own in the Repoussé Design style.
- Create four line designs and patterns on the planning sheet. (See “Dinner Menu” for instructions)
- Choose your best design as a basis for your final concept. Do some research of your own! Look up more works in Repoussé to get a feel for the technique.



Image courtesy of www.maronpot.com

Assignments

Planning Guide- Look at the “Dinner Menu” for details.

4 Line Designs/Patterns- Create 4 different thumb-nail sketches of design ideas.

Preliminary Drawing- Create a practice drawing of your best line design.

Work in Progress-Upload (If virtual) your work in progress to get teacher feedback.

Finished Work & Artist Statement-Submit your finished piece and your artist statement.

Artist Statement Guidelines

- Discuss the concept of your work. What are you portraying in your piece? Is it objective (representational) or non-objective (abstract)
- What elements and/or principles did you use the most? How did they aid in your design?
- How was the experience in working with Repoussé? Likes and dislikes.



Grading Criteria

Use of elements and design principles is evident.

Work is reflective of Repoussé style and shows depth.

Composition is dynamic and fills the picture plane. In addition, has high point and low points in the design.

Craft is neat and clean.