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The Robert McLaughlin Gallery



# Art and Music

Lesson Plan for Grade 4-6, 7-8



Lillian Freiman, *Toscanini*, n.d., wax crayon, ink, chalk on paper.  
Gift of Florence Rabinovitch, 1991.

# Art and Music Commonalities

Discuss as a class, things art and music have in common. Use these terms to discuss some of the links.

**creativity**

**inspiration**

**express  
emotion**

**composition**

**cultural**

**universal  
language**



# How does a Musician convey emotion?

- Types and number of instruments used
- Melodies and Harmonies
- Loudness/Quiet
- Rhythm and Tempo
- Lyrics
- Composition



Lillian Freiman, *Orchestra II*, n.d., chalk, oil pastel, gouache, coloured pencil, graphite on paper. Gift of Florence Rabinovitch, 1991.

# How does an Artist convey emotion?

- Colour
- Line
- Shape
- Light/Darkness
- Pattern
- Rhythm
- Composition



William Ronald, *Back Through Sound*, c.1954, casein, duco on masonite. Purchase, 1970.

# Art and Music Vocabulary

## Rhythm

Rhythm is the patterns of sound and emphasis in a song or the movement of the eye through an art piece.

## Composition

How the parts of a song are ordered or where the things in an artwork are placed.

## Harmony

How the parts of a song or images in an art piece work together to create the overall feeling.

## Tone

The quality of the sound in music. Different instruments have different tones or sounds. Tone in art is the lightness and darkness.



# Synesthesia

Kandinsky was a Russian painter who had what is called synesthesia. The word synesthesia comes from the greek meaning "joined perception."

Kandinsky literally saw colours when he heard music, and heard music when he painted. Those two senses were linked together.

Many famous creative celebrities have synesthesia such as Billie Eilish, Lady Gaga , Beyonce, Van Gogh and Kandinsky.



Watch a video of what music looks like to one musician with synesthesia.

Hearing Color, Seeing Sound. This Is Synesthesia. (360 Video)  
by Seeker VR

# Abstract Expressionism

There were many abstract artworks by the Painters Eleven – a group of artists who would support each other and exhibit their abstractions together here in Ontario from 1953 to about 1960.

At first, there were many people who did not understand or appreciate what they were seeing. They were trying to SEE recognizable objects in the painting. Instead, viewers were asked to consider how the artwork made them FEEL emotionally.

**Lets try to look at abstract expressionist art as if it were a song.**



# Alexandra Luke

One influential abstract expressionist artist was Alexandra Luke. She was part of the influential abstract expressionist group called the Painters 11, she worked out of Oshawa.

She would sometimes use music as inspiration when painting and made connections between the elements of art and the elements of music.



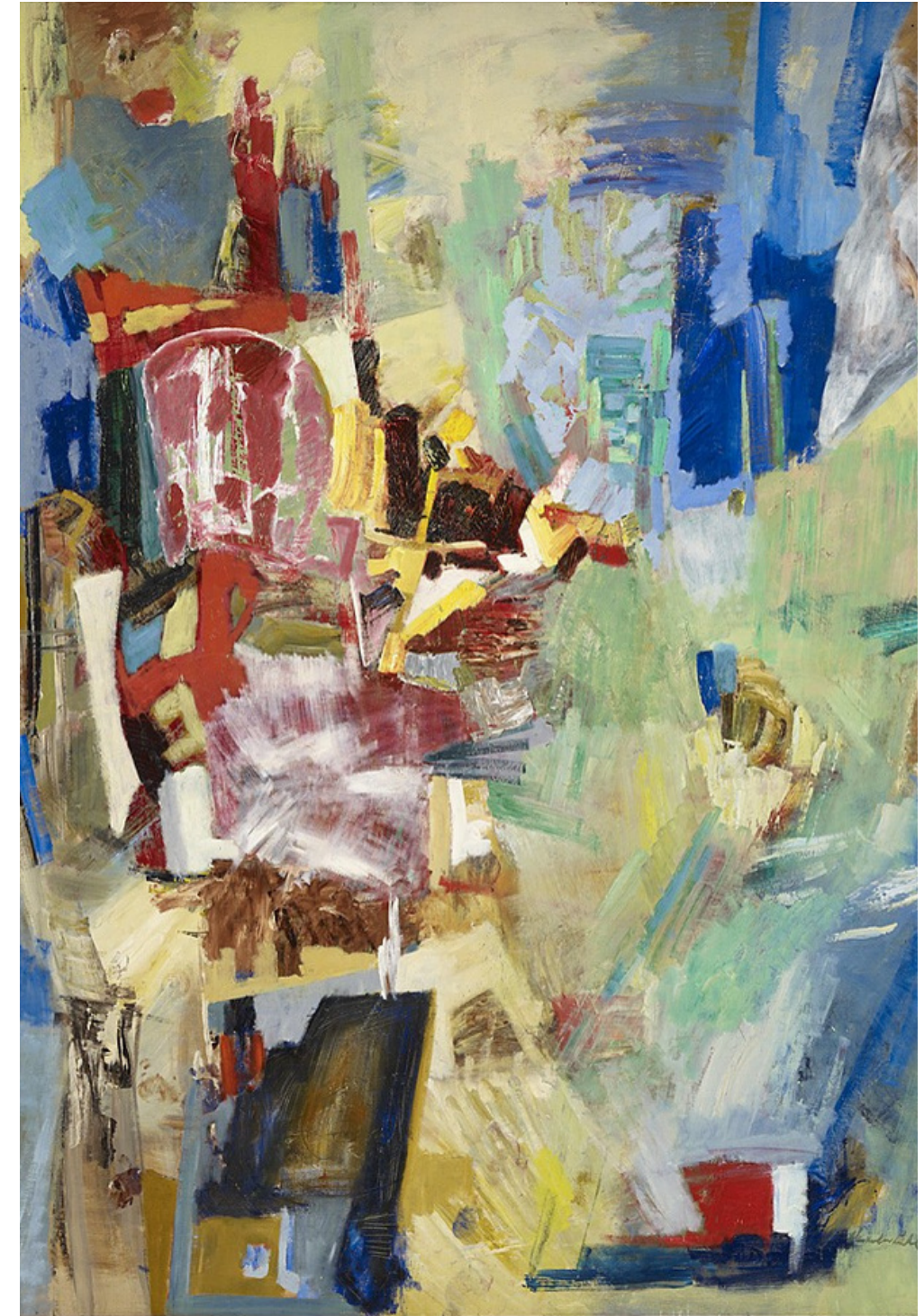
Alexandra Luke, *Symphony*, 1957, oil on canvas.  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. E. R. S. McLaughlin, 1972.



# Alexandra Luke

Questions:

- What feelings would you use to describe this song?
- If this was a song what would it sound like?
- What instruments would you use and why would you choose that? How many instruments are there?



Alexandra Luke, *Symphony*, 1957, oil on canvas.  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. E. R. S. McLaughlin, 1972.



# Jock Macdonald

Did you know Jock Macdonald often doodled unconsciously while doing other things?

He liked to use an automatic art style as a way of expressing his dreams and thoughts in a non-figurative way.

Do ever find yourself doodling without realizing you are doing so?



Jock Macdonald, Music Hour, 1946, ink and watercolour on paper. Purchase 1979.



# Jock Macdonald

Questions:

- What feelings would you use to describe this song?
- If this was a song, what would it sound like? (loud, quiet, fast, slow, lively, peaceful)
- What instruments would you use and why would you choose them?



Jock Macdonald, Music Hour, 1946, ink and watercolour on paper. Purchase 1979.



# Lets draw some music!

Take out your "Art and Music" printable and some coloured pencils or markers. Remember to choose your lines, shapes and colours thoughtfully.

1. First, play the sound clip, listen only and think about what it might look like.
2. Play the sound again and make lines, shapes and colours that represent the feelings you get from each instrument/sound.

Oboe

Drums

Jaw Harp

Erhu

Theramin

Bass

Harp

French  
Horn

Tibetan  
Bowl



## Art and Music


Print off this template and give one to each student

# Drawing Music Art Activity

## Materials Needed

Paper (the bigger the better)

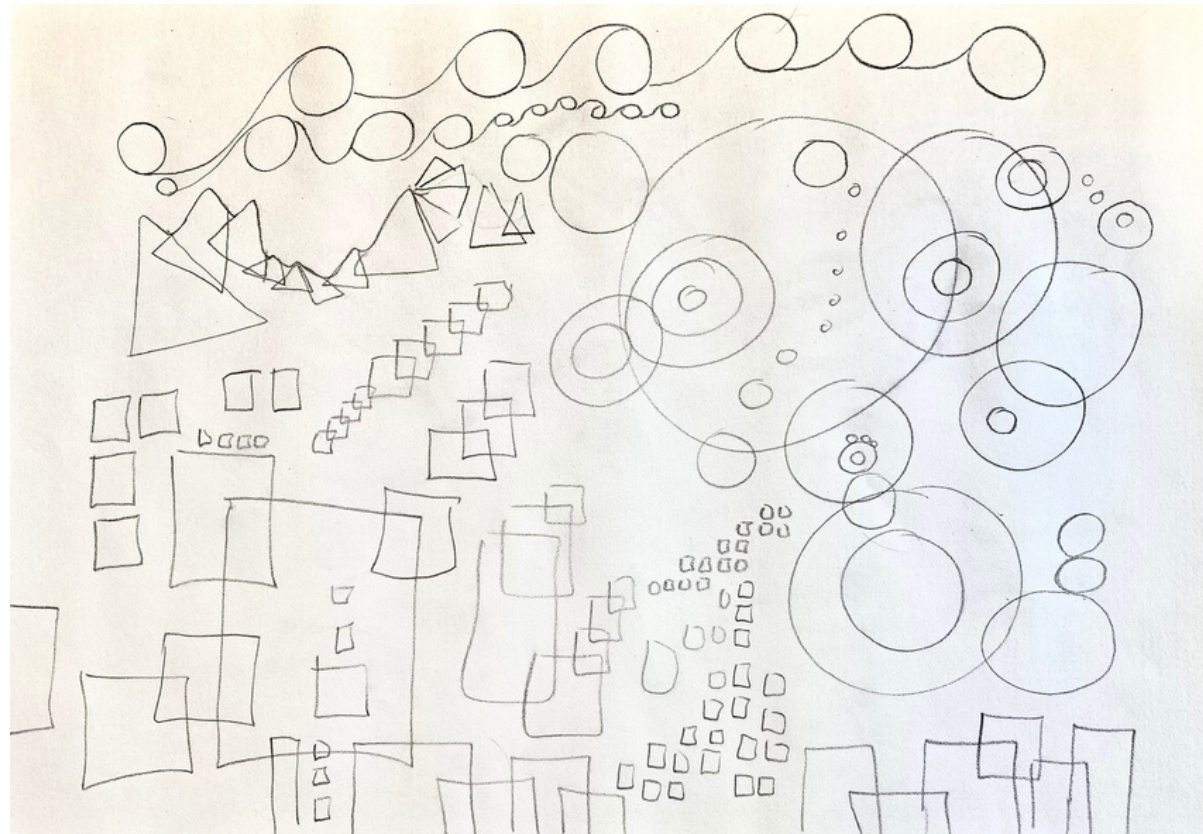
Any or all of the following....

- Coloured pencils
- Markers
- Pastels
- Speakers to play the following song [Rhapsody in Blue](#) by George Gershwin or other preferred piece of music. You can use any song. Pick one that suits your class. You do not have to play the entire song, just a few minutes of it for each step.

## DRAWING MUSIC CHALLENGE

### Challenge Rules:

- No drawing recognizable objects.
- Be thoughtful about your choices.
- Shapes and lines can go off the page edges, overlap or move in any way.
- Have fun! There is no wrong way.



1.

We are going to listen to a song. During the first part we are going to use markers to add in SHAPES. Choose different shapes and sizes that you feel represents the song. They can be geometric or organic.

Ask yourself.....

What shapes is this sound?

What colour is it?

How big is it?

How many are there?

Does the sound connect or overlap?

Does the sound wander off the edge?





2.

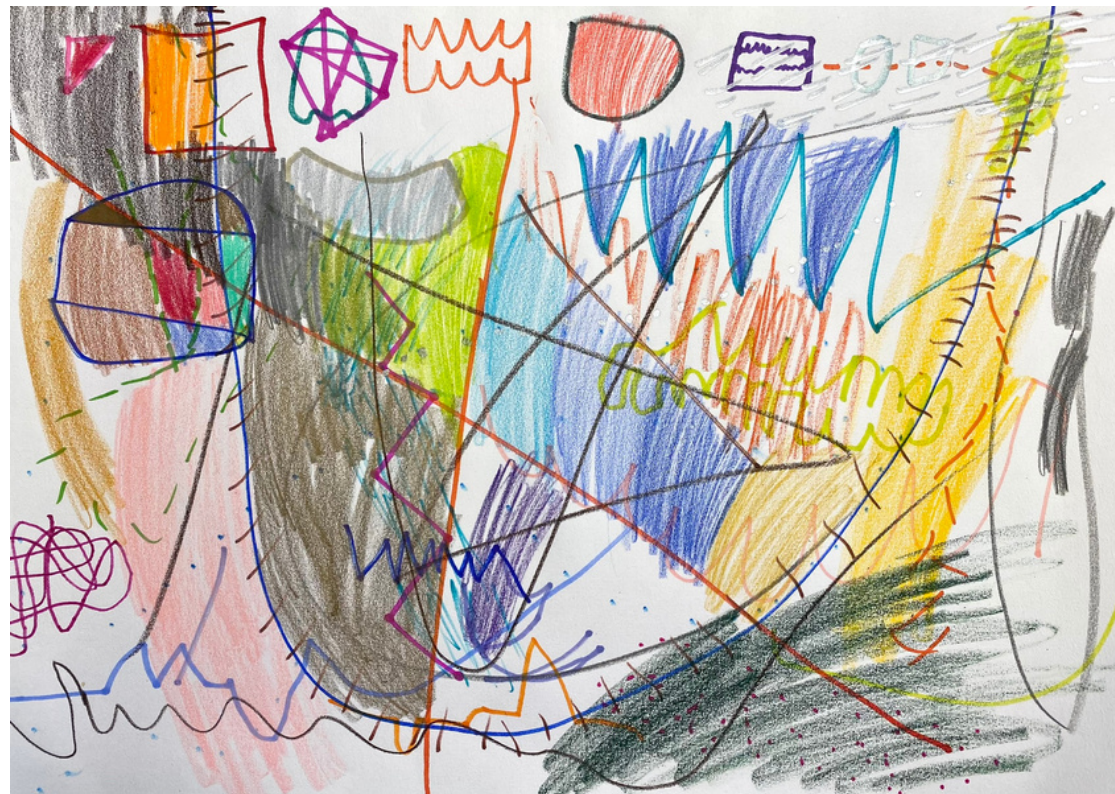
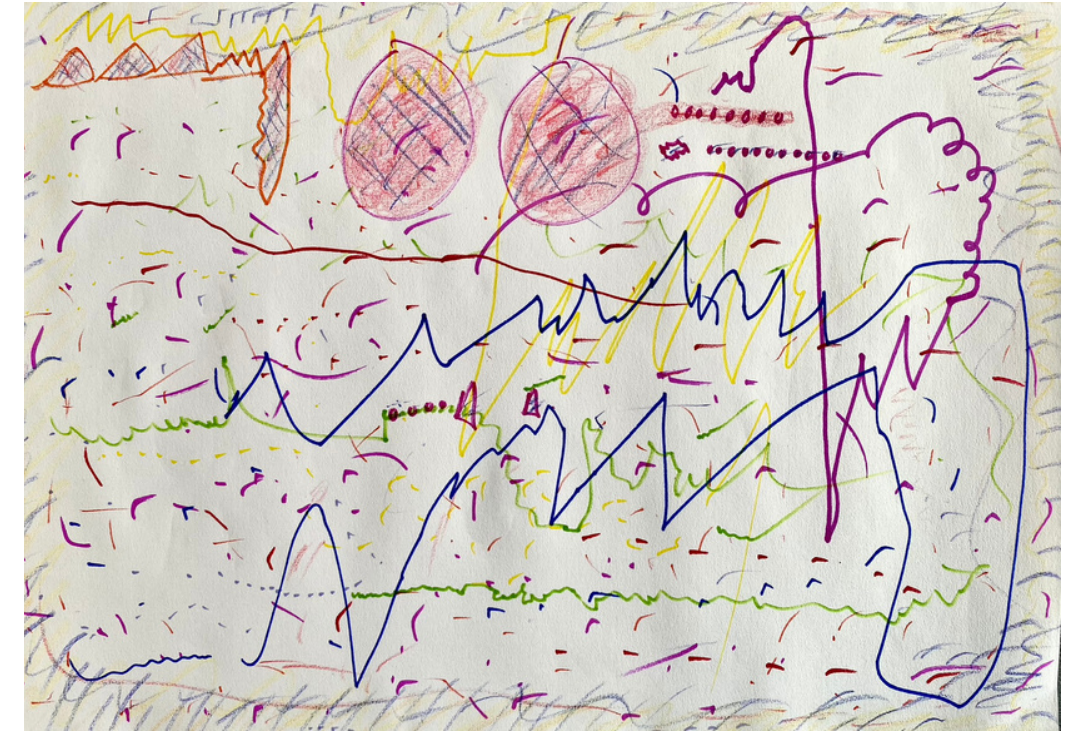
A few minutes into the song we are going to add in LINES using markers. These can be straight, wavy, thick, thin, dotted, patterned and move in any direction. What shapes is this line? Does it hop or stretch or walk along the page?

3

Lastly we are going to add COLOUR to our shapes and fill in areas. What areas feel full of colour and which areas do not? This will complete our artwork. Optional : After step 3 you can continue to colour in further.



# Drawing Music Challenge Examples



Five different artists created these using markers and coloured pencils while listening to Rhapsody In Blue by George Gershwin.





# Classroom Post-Activity Discussion

For those students who would like to share their artwork, have them hang up their piece for others to see. Look at all the different artworks created and the different visual interpretations of the same song.

- Can you find any similarities in shapes, lines or colours used?
- Can you choose a word(s) to describe each piece?
- Can you guess, just by looking, where the artist began and where they ended?

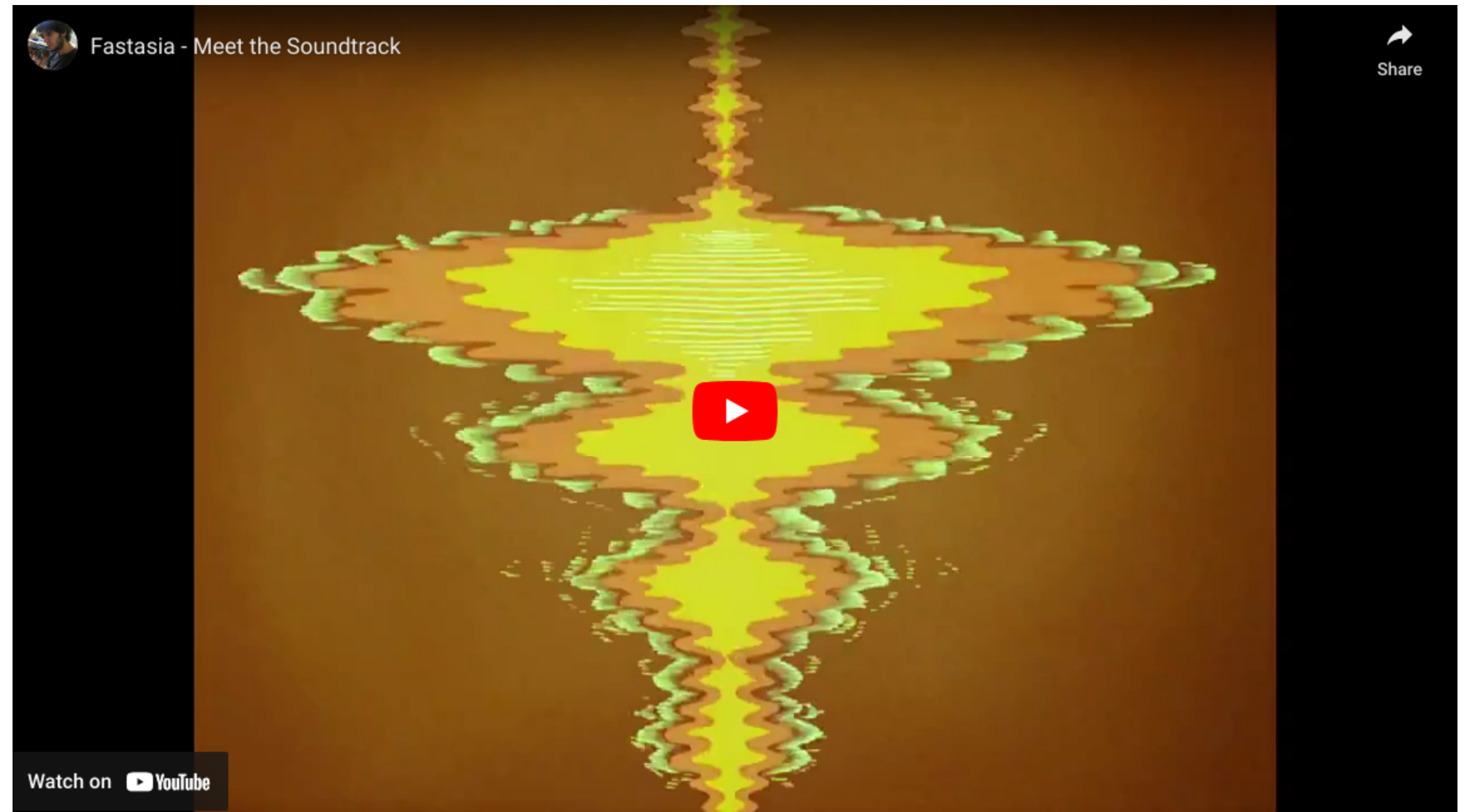
If some students would like to share why they chose the shapes, colours and lines that they used have them present to the class, explaining the flow in creating their artwork.



# Disney animators showing sound visually in Fantasia

In 1940, Disney produced an animated feature called Fantasia where animation was set to several pieces of classical music.

It was the first example of a music video using songs visualized by the Disney animators in a variety of artistic styles.



"Meet The Soundtrack" Disney's Fantasia  
1940

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