

Stephanie Brody-Lederman

Mixed Media Art & Nature

Duration: 45 minutes

Grade Level: Grades 5 – 8

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about mixed media artist Stephanie Brody -Lederman incorporates nature into her artwork.
- Discover her progression with expressing her emotions by using her imagination.
- Learn how to incorporate animals or other iconic motifs into a landscape background.

Outcomes:

- Students will learn about the life of Stephanie Brody –Lederman and what shaped her as an artist, starting as a young child
- Students will learn about the expressing emotions and creating a painting of them
- Students will learn critical thinking and visual skills by creating an idea and words to go with it

Associated Activities:

- Drawing an imaginary environment, 30-60 minutes
- Origami, 20-30 minutes

Who is Stephanie Brody-Lederman?

Brody-Lederman is a New York-based artist that creates paintings and mixed media collages that often combine imagery and text. Her work is poetic, whimsical, and emotional – a reflection of her own feelings. Born in 1939, her family moved around a lot throughout her childhood. Very young she turned to poetry, drawing, and painting as an outlet for her feelings. Brody-Lederman's father was a real-estate broker that briefly owned an art gallery, he greatly supported his daughter's artistic endeavors. She studied art in college and went on to pursue her master's degree in art as a working mother at the C.W. Post College on Long Island.

Brody-Lederman's artistic style has been significantly impacted by her immediate surroundings and the emotions she relates to these places. As a child her family's frequent moving created high levels of stress that she was able to channel into her art. As a young woman attending art school, the sights, smells, and experiences of New York City along with the numerous galleries and museums served as a constant inspiration. As a mother attending night classes five days a week for her master's degree, she followed the feminist movement in both her personal art and by volunteering for feminist publications. She mentioned in an interview for Arts & Antiques that "like me, many women were making art in their kitchens and basements. I realized that these humble places for making art had a lot of validity." Her work often incorporates oil and acrylic paints, and canvas, but also more basic aspects of everyday life.



Figure 1 Stephanie Brody-Lederman in her Manhattan Studio, 2013. Image Source: Hyperallergic

Incorporating Nature

Inspired by her immediate environment, Brody-Lederman often incorporates scenes from nature and domestic life. Reflective of her upbringing in a city, her works often represent nature in more subtle ways rather than panoramic views and scenic landscapes. As in figure 2, an example of mixed media art, we see a bird propped on a bird cage, which is sitting atop an opened book and three staggered briefcases.



Figure 2 Stephanie Brody-Lederman, Waiting Years, 2013, Mixed Media

Her works can be understood as visual poetry—the interaction of natural and domestic motifs along with words is intended to “reveal underlying psychological content.” As she explains, “Words are edited ruthlessly and are distilled into a poetic compositional form.” As a result, her versatile style is highly emotional and directly influenced by the environment in unique ways that highlight the prominence of nature in our everyday lives.



Figure 3 Stephanie Brody-Lederman, Warm Uncertainty, Oil and Acrylic on Canvas

Stephanie Brody-Lederman and Her Art Expressing Emotion

As we have learned, Stephanie Brody-Lederman used art beginning at a very early age to express her emotions. She employs various artistic styles and mediums, incorporating many different colors, objects, and words to convey her emotions. She consistently incorporates nature, using landscapes and natural motifs to further express the mood of her work. Notice how she uses drips on her painting to add activity, the drips guide your eyes around the painting. The altered viscosity of the paint allows it to flow freely down the paper or canvas creating new colors as it runs, adding to the emotion. As we see here, she included a dog named skippy and flowers in a vase. Considering her choice of colors, the drips on the painting, the words, the objects, and animal she painted—what do you think she was feeling as she created this work? Continue to the next page to analyze more of Brody-Lederman’s work!

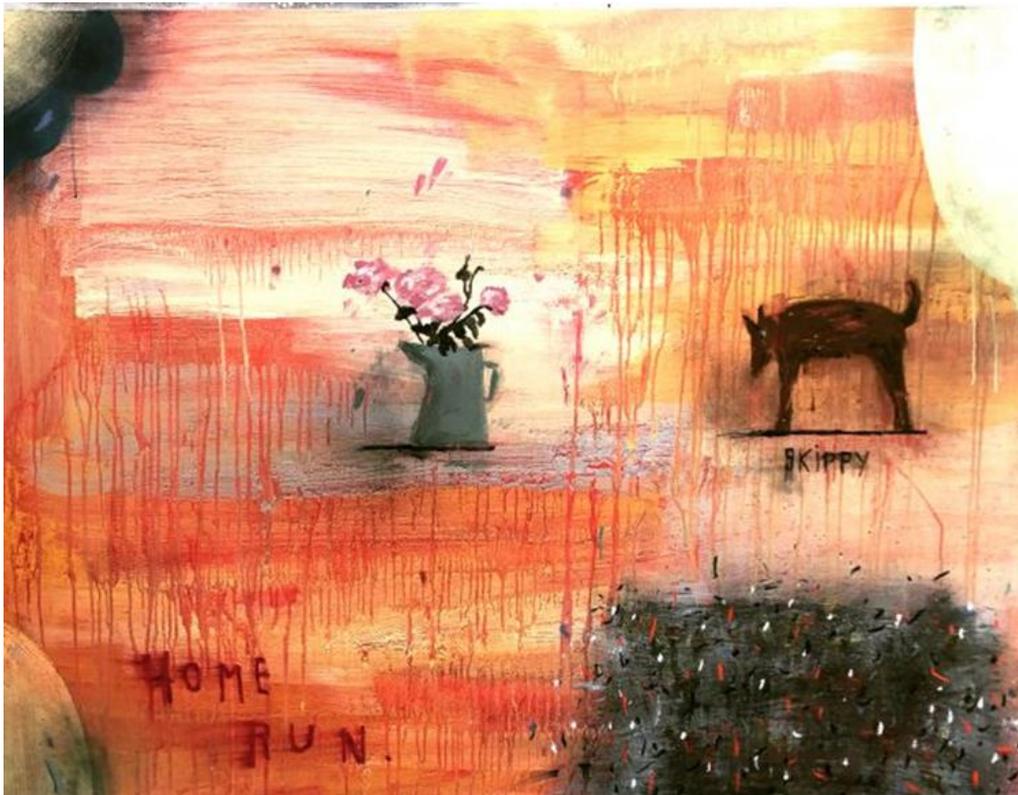


Figure 4 Stephanie Brody-Lederman, Skippy on Linoleum Floor, Oil & Acrylic on Canvas

Art Analysis

What do you think the following artworks represent? What objects from nature do you see? Are they in their natural environment or an artificial environment? What is the mood of the piece? How does her choice of colors support the mood? How do the drips on the painting convey the emotion? How can you use Brody-Lederman's style to create your own environment painting that expresses your emotions?



Figure 5 Stephanie Brody-Lederman, Your Exciting Difference, Oil & Acrylic on Canvas



Figure 6 Stephanie Brody-Lederman, Day + Night, Oil & Acrylic on Canvas

Activity: Create your own imaginary environment

Hint: complete the Origami activity and combine it with your imaginary environment to create a mixed media work of art!