

## Rufino Tamayo & Watermelonmania

It's summer in Pennsylvania, and what better time of year to learn how to draw a still life. There is such a bounty of vegetables from the garden to use as objects for beautiful drawings and watermelons in particular lend themselves to wonderful drawings incorporating shape and color choices! We will also talk about Mexican painter and printmaker Rufino Tamayo (1899-1991) His work, nurtured by both European modernism and pre-Columbian indigenous art, demonstrates a clear break with the preceding generation of Mexican muralists. His mainly easel-sized paintings, with their vibrant colors and cryptic, semi-abstract figures, display strong cubist, expressionist, and surrealist elements. Tamayo painted many important murals 1933-77 as well as smaller-scale works. His choice of subject matter - Mexican folklore, people, fauna, and flora - reveals his passion for his native country and for *watermelons!* (see painting in bottom right hand corner)

### Materials needed:

Several *real* watermelons (halved and sliced on plates)

Pencils

Paper

Soft chalk and/or oil pastels

Forks and napkins

Reproductions of Rufino Tamayo paintings (teacher will supply)

### What to do:

1. Place whole and cut pieces of watermelon in the center of the table.
2. Have artists examine and smell the cut pieces of. (ask artists to taste watermelon too!)
3. Inform artists that they are only asked to *interpret what they see*. (there are no expectations that what they draw will look exactly like what they see or we would use a camera to take a photograph!)
4. Remind each artist that all objects may be drawn using one of four elements of shapes: circle, oval, straight line and curved line.
5. Ask artists to begin by drawing an oval shaped outline on their paper. (it is important during this process to tell artists to repeatedly look at the watermelon and then at their paper as they draw)
6. Be sure to have artists draw a horizon line on their paper.
7. Pencil drawings may then be colored using oil pastels. (to add depth to the drawings, be sure to suggest that oil pastels be *rubbed into* the surface of the paper using fingers)



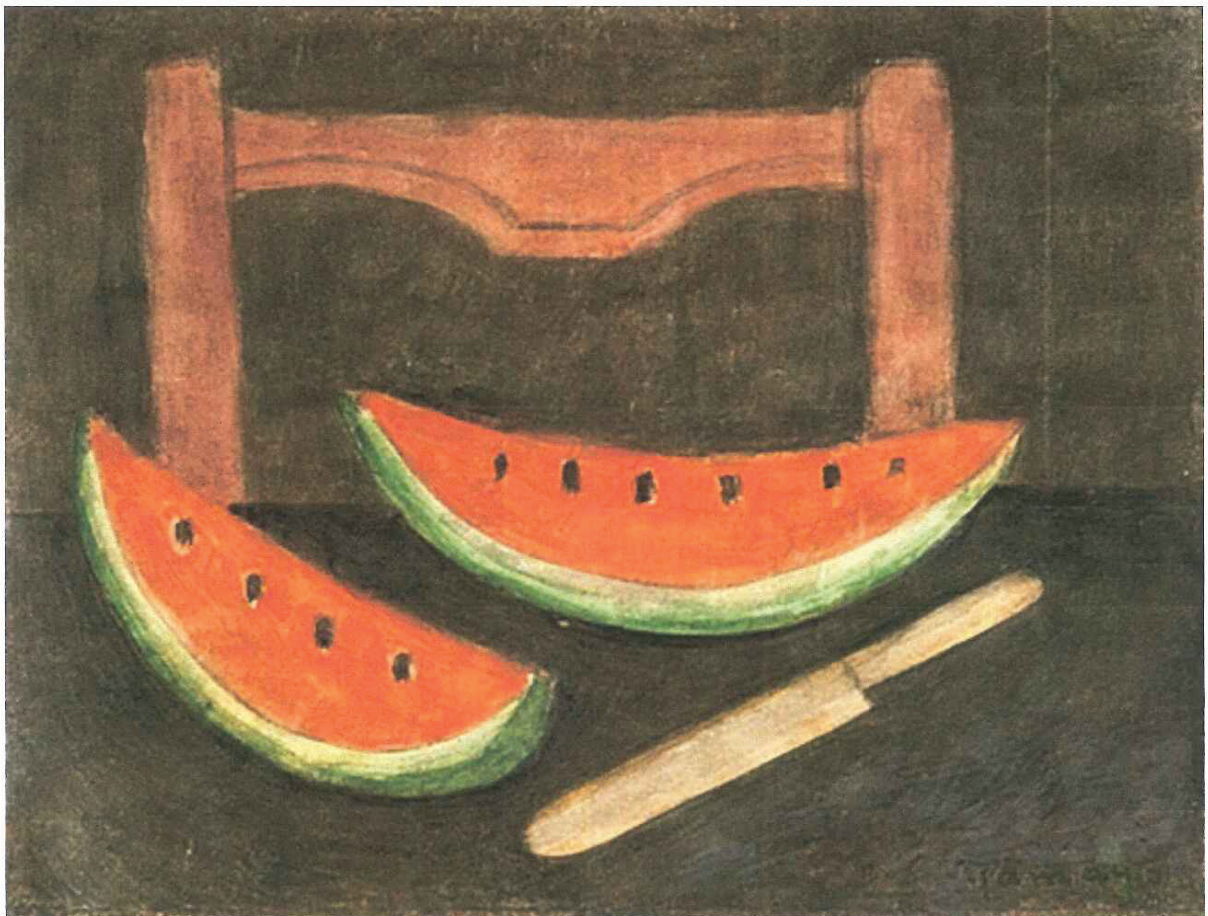
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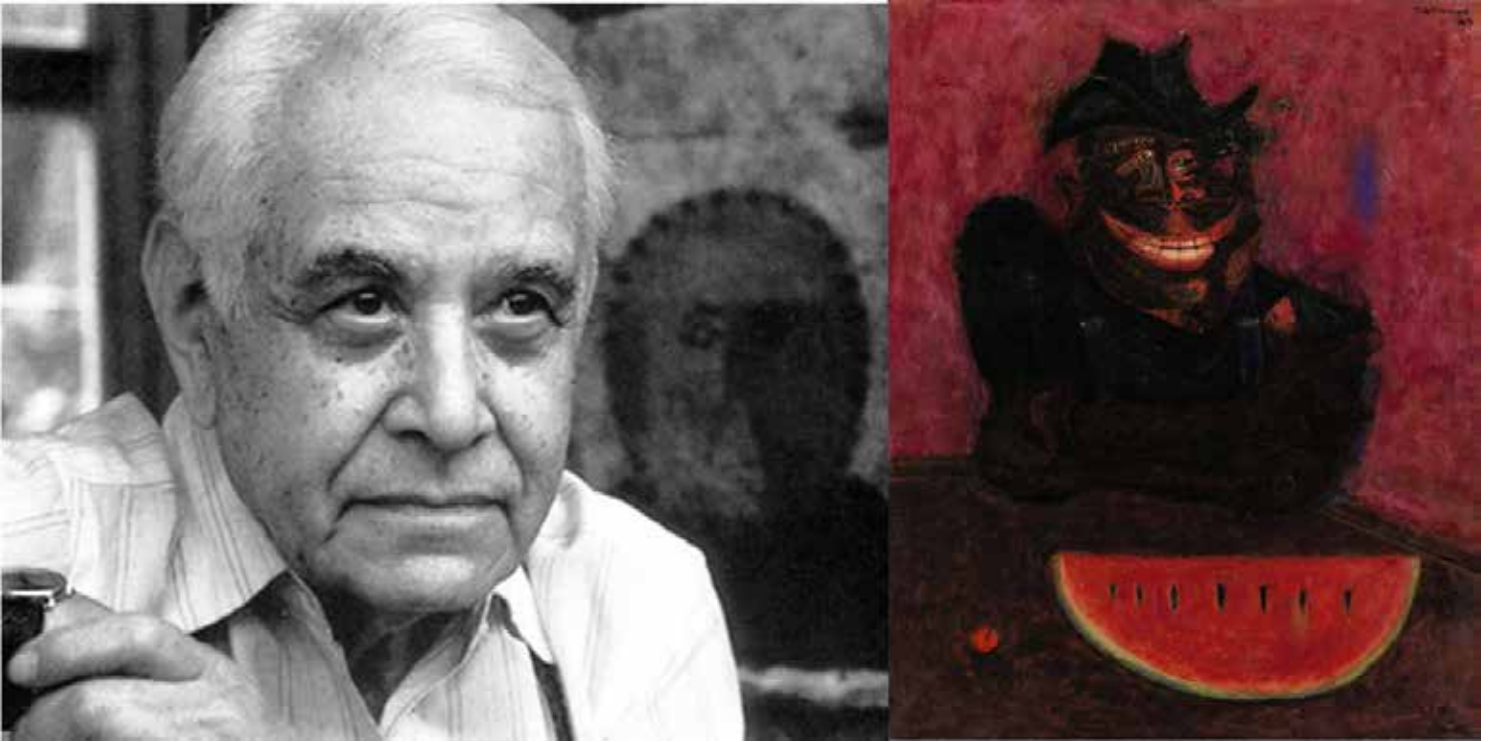
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Lesson Plan by instructor Deb Hodies. Consider the following summer camps:

- Gourmet Art: Art Inspired by Food (grades 6-8), July 6 - July 10  
9AM to 12:15PM
- Observational Drawing (grades 5-7), July 6 - July 10, 9AM to 12:15PM





## Rufino Tamayo

Rufino del Carmen Arellanes Tamayo was born on August 25th, 1899 in Oaxaca de Juárez, Mexico. Tamayo was influenced by surrealism and was a painter of figurative abstraction. His legacy in the history of art lies in his oeuvre (body of works) of original graphic prints in which he cultivated every technique. Tamayo's work, produced between 1925 and 1991, includes woodcuts, lithographs, etchings and "Mixografía" prints. Tamayo passed away on June 24th, 1991 at the age of 91.