

Matsumoto Hafū (b. 1952) Outsize flower basket, 2008. Bamboo, approximately 20 x 31 in. Collection of Saitō Masamitsu.

Inquiry

Describe what you see. What details attract your attention?
Please comment on color, texture, line, shape, scale.

From what material do you think the sculpture is made?

What techniques do you think the artist used to make this piece?

How has the artist altered/transformed the material?

Does the sculpture remind you of anything?

Give the sculpture a title and explain your choice.

Artist Information for Educators

Matsumoto Hafū studied under Iizuka Shokansai a Living National Treasure bamboo artist. This sculpture can serve as a flower basket when a water container with a floral arrangement is placed inside. Bamboo for many years was considered by many within Japan primarily as a material appropriate to basket making. In the Post-War period, Iizuka Shokansai's father, Iizuka Rokansai pioneered the notion of bamboo as a material suitable for sculpture and created hybrid bamboo works, basket/sculpture objects.

The material used in *Outsize flower basket*, is madake (timber bamboo) Hafū took 6 feet ten-foot lengths of madake, split them lengthwise and pounded them flat. He separated the outer skin from the pithy interior which he discarded. He then bent and wove the strips into a basket form.

Artists such as Hafū transform the bamboo's original green color to suit their creative and practical purposes in a variety of ways. This pale color was achieved by leeching the oil from the plant by using heat.

Honma Kazuaki (b. 1930) Breath, 1968. Hōbichiku, madake, and rattan. H. 34 3/4 in. Collection of Diane and Arthur Abbey.

Inquiry

Describe what you see. What details attract your attention?
Please comment on color, texture, line, shape, scale, etc.

In which ways did the artist manipulate his material to make this sculpture?

How are the individual parts of this sculpture held together? Can you point to a number of different instances where the artist does this?

How is this piece different from Haf ū's *Outsize Flower Basket*? What similarities do you notice?

The artist entitled this sculpture *Breath*. Why do you think he chose this title?

Using your body, create a sequence of two or three linked movements or gestures to capture the essence of this piece.

Write an imaginative short story, 2-3 pages which incorporates *Breath*. Create a richly detailed context for *Breath* that gives the reader a new understanding and or perspective on the sculpture.

Artist Information for Educators

Honma Kazuaki was born into a basket-making family on Sado Island. Both an accomplished and recognized artist and commercial artisan for many years Honma headed a commercial handicraft business that employed 50 assistants and turned out as many as 1000 brooches every day. *Breath* echoes some of the brooch manufacturing style in the curved multiple strips of thin madake combined with whole unsplit stems of hōbichiku.

Honma Hideaki (b. 1959) *Double Swirling Winds*, 2003. Hōbichiku, madake, and rattan, 29 3/4 x 12 x 14 1/2 in. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Diker.

Inquiry

Describe what you see. What details attract your attention?
Please comment on color, texture, line, shape, scale, etc.

How does this artist achieve a feeling of movement in the piece?

Bamboo sculpture has been described as “frozen music”, what kind of music or sound does this sculpture suggest to you?

Using your body re-create the shape of the sculpture, next, create an original shape to follow. What emotion would you like to communicate?
Work together in pairs and collaborate on other movement phrases.

Artist Information for Educators

Honma Hideaki lives and is a founding member of a craft school on Sado Island, off Japan's northwestern coast. Sado's abundant natural resources have inspired him to employ a wide range of different bamboos and unusually complex weaves in his art.

Double Swirling Winds, is an example of sensuji (literally thousand line technique) in which the strands are not plaited but held in parallel rows with twisted rattan.