



**THE  
MISSING  
PEACE**  
Artists Consider the Dalai Lama

**Naturally We**

by artist Squeak Carnwath as part of *The Missing Peace: Artists Consider the Dalai Lama*

An educational activity is presented on the back of this poster. Recommended age range: middle school and above. Digital copies are available for free download at [www.dalailamafoundation.org/tmpp](http://www.dalailamafoundation.org/tmpp)

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# Middle School Educational Activity

related to artwork from

*The Missing Peace: Artists Consider the Dalai Lama Exhibit*



## Naturally We

Squeak Carnwath, 2005

### Artist Interview

#### Meet Squeak Carnwath ([www.tmpp.org/artists/carnwath](http://www.tmpp.org/artists/carnwath))

*What kind of art did you do as a child?*

I painted pictures of my dog using oil paints. I also did paintings of buildings around my hometown of Marblehead, Massachusetts.

*Who or what inspired you to become an artist?*

Various teachers inspired me. Painting seemed to be something I had a talent for and I liked to do. I liked the solitude of painting. My teachers recognized that. I kept it up, and I would do it at home on my own. Then my parents let me go to a night art school when I was in 5th grade to learn oil painting.

*What education do you have?*

I have been studying and practicing art since I was a little kid. When I got older, I went to the Aegean Center for the Fine Arts in Greece. Then I went to Goddard College in Vermont. Finally, I went to the California College of Arts and Crafts for graduate school.



Squeak's tapestry titled *Sorry World*

## Motivation for This Work

*What influenced this painting?*

I was influenced by the fragility of the planet we live on, ecologically, spiritually, and politically—everything. I thought about things that I hear on the news and all of the stuff that is going on in the world.

*What was your motivation for this painting?*

There's an ongoing motivation for me to make paintings. They're not separated out individually. They are all equal to me. Painting is the most important thing that I do. It is more important to me than teaching, grocery shopping, or things like that. My motivation is that I want to stay alive and survive. Painting allows me to do that. My paintings are a way of trying to make sense of the complex world we live in.

*Please explain some of the symbolism contained in your piece.*

The records at the top of the painting have only "Side One," which represents mortality, or death. The planet Earth, to me, represents that it belongs to us all. The vase symbolizes history. The wood means many things: ecology, building materials, life force, or "touch wood for good luck." The question mark symbolizes that no one really knows what's going on and that life is a big mystery.

*What message would you like your audience to take away from viewing the piece?*

I have two answers to that question. First, life is fragile, and we may only go around once. Second, try anything and don't take "no" for an answer.

*Do you have a piece of advice you would like to give to young people?*

Pay attention to your own thoughts and ideas. Don't dismiss them.

## Techniques Used in This Work

*What techniques did you use to create this artwork?*

This painting is hundreds of layers of paint. I don't just paint it, and it's done. It's a series of layers, and there are some other paintings under there. You know the billboards that have been covered over and over again? It's sort of like that. It's like a daily life; it changes everyday. Some of the paintings are earlier versions of the final one, and other paintings are unrelated. Sometimes I take pictures as I go along, other times I don't.

*What materials and tools did you use for this painting?*

This painting is made of oil paint and alkyd medium on canvas. I used brushes and a palette knife. There was also a tapestry made that was based on this painting when it was in progress. It's called *Sorry World*. It's woven in cotton.

*How long did it take to complete the painting?*

It took me three or four months to finish it, but I work on about ten paintings at once. When I get stuck on one, I move to another.

*Is this piece part of a series of artwork?*

Yes. I'm still working on the series. I don't name it while I'm working on it. The other pieces will have some of the same symbolism, like with the wood and the records.

*What advice would you give to young art students?*

Find your own voice, and trust it.



Squeak's painting titled *Stolen Borrowed*.  
(Notice some of the symbols in it are the same as in *Naturally We*.)

This activity may be used in conjunction with a visit to *The Missing Peace: Artists Consider the Dalai Lama* exhibit, a visit to the website at [www.tmpp.org](http://www.tmpp.org), or as a stand-alone activity. Please see the Educator's Guide for additional background information and activities. The Educator's Guide and other resources, including this poster, can be downloaded at [www.dalailamafoundation.org/tmpp](http://www.dalailamafoundation.org/tmpp).

## Student Activity

### Overview

Students will interpret a piece of art, read an interview of the featured artist, explore symbolism, engage in discussion questions related to the concepts presented in the artwork, and then create their own artistic masterpiece using their personal symbolism and ideas to promote awareness of a chosen topic.

### Engage

1. Introduce The Missing Peace Project: Artists Consider the Dalai Lama. Background information and resources may be found in the Educator's Guide or at The Missing Peace website, [www.tmpp.org](http://www.tmpp.org).
2. Explain that in *The Missing Peace*, art is used to represent more than what you see on the canvas. Draw a simple object on the board and ask students to identify it (a butterfly, a cat, a ladder). This is one type of symbol; it is supposed to represent an actual object.
3. Draw a more abstract symbol on the board such as a peace sign or a heart and ask what it represents. These symbolize ideas instead of actual things. Both of these symbols can be used to communicate visually. Optional: have students list additional signs and symbols they can think of.
4. Explain that artists often use symbolism to suggest ideas, emotions, and concepts. Display the poster and reveal its title.
5. Ask students to consider the artwork. Point out various aspects of the artwork and ask students to imagine what the artist is trying to suggest. Accept all answers. There is no right or wrong interpretation.

### Explore

1. Photocopy the appropriate panels of the poster so that students can read the Artist Interview. This includes three sections: Meet, Motivation, and Techniques.
2. Use the following discussion questions to lead a discussion of the artist's message. All of the artists are trying to raise awareness about something.
  - a. Why do you think people do harmful things to the environment—like littering—even when there are laws and fines that protect the environment?
  - b. Squeak says that the planet Earth belongs to everyone. If this is true, why shouldn't we do whatever we want with it as long as it serves our needs?

## Explain

1. Students will now have an opportunity to create a piece of art with their own message to the world. Their artwork is a vehicle to discuss and promote an issue with others. Possible topics to explore include: love, peace, empathy, forgiveness, compassion, respect, and embracing diversity. Brainstorm other possible topics relevant to teens. The objective is to make the audience think about the issue/topic chosen.
2. Once students have completed their art, they should compose a one-page Artist Interview that follows the same format as this poster: a brief biography with a description of the motivation and techniques used to create their artwork. Optional: As an extension, students can create two discussion questions they would like others to consider about their message.

## Extend

1. Just as important as the creation of the artwork, is the opportunity to share it with others. It will give students a chance to formalize their ideas and practice communicating their message with others.
2. Arrange for one of the following:
  - a. Class Presentations: Each student makes a 2-minute presentation of their art to promote their message. These presentations could be grouped by theme for a more powerful impact. Thematic groups could work collaboratively.
  - b. Art Show: Choose a theme and show title. Invite students, parents, and members of the community to attend. Require each student to stand by their artwork and engage visitors in a dialogue about their message.
  - c. Share With Other Classes: Create a meaningful cross-curricular activity in which members of your class present their work to members of another class/subject area.
3. We invite you to visit us online at [youth.dalailamafoundation.org/tmpp](http://youth.dalailamafoundation.org/tmpp) where members of your class can share their experiences related to *The Missing Peace* with other students around the world.

## Evaluate

1. After students have shared their art, ask students to reflect on the experience of creating and sharing their own artwork as a vehicle to discuss and promote an issue with others. Did they feel like their message got across? Were there challenges? Frustrations?
2. *The Missing Peace* curriculum is an ongoing project. Your participation is welcome! We invite you to share your experiences, outcomes, insights, and suggestions with other educators at [www.dalailamafoundation.org/tmpp](http://www.dalailamafoundation.org/tmpp).

### The Missing Peace: Artists Consider the Dalai Lama

Eighty-eight contemporary artists.

Eighty-eight disarming works of art.

Eighty-eight ways to think about,  
talk about, experience, and create peace.

This project involves a diverse collaboration of some of the world's most respected and innovative artists from twenty-five countries creating entirely new works of art designed to start a renewed global dialogue about peace. A travelling exhibit of the artwork is being shown in museums around the world.

The Missing Peace  
([www.tmpp.org](http://www.tmpp.org))

is a project of

The Dalai Lama Foundation  
([www.dalailamafoundation.org](http://www.dalailamafoundation.org))

and

The Committee of 100 for Tibet  
([www.c100tibet.org](http://www.c100tibet.org))