

Elizabeth Catlett, Charles White and the *Taller de Grafica Popular* of Mexico

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Abstract:

In October 2006, I attended a teacher workshop entitled “Mexico and Modern Printmaking” that explored several printmaking processes and toured the exhibit of the same name at the Philadelphia of Art. The printmaking exhibit included the traditional processes of woodcuts, lithography and linoleum. Some of the prints had themes relating to the culture of Mexico; some called for activism by the various leaders of the indigenous people of the countryside who were under-represented by the government; and others depicted the everyday life of the impoverished Indians. The artists who made this work were from the *Taller de Grafica Popular* (The People’s Graphic Workshop). The unit that is planned will cover with the theme of social awareness in Mexico and also focus on the backgrounds of Elizabeth Catlett and John White, two of the African American artists who traveled to work at the *Taller*. The students will create prints in the studio and learn about the background history of the artists, their personal struggles and artistic accomplishments. They will understand the conditions in both the U.S. and Mexico that led to the creation of this work. Under the teacher’s direction, the students will transfer and incorporate some of the themes they have encountered in the unit into their own work using the process of printmaking.