

Landmarks Guide for Adolescents



Beverly Pepper
American, born 1924

Harmonious Triad
1982–83
Cast ductile iron

Subject: Harmony and unity

Activity: Making a harmonious sculpture

Materials: Styrofoam and popsicle sticks or chopsticks

Vocabulary: Geometric Abstraction, symbolism, harmony

i Introduction

Beverly Pepper was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1924. Before becoming a sculptor she was a painter. She studied in France and Italy with master sculptors like Fernand Leger, Alexander Calder, and David Smith. At the time, Pepper was one of the few female sculptors who worked in metal, and she was also one of the few sculptors who fabricated their own work (most artists had their large metal works made in factories). Pepper is interested in expressing timeless human experiences and emotions through geometric forms. This is a style called Geometric Abstraction. In *Harmonious Triad*, she created three columns that are alike but unique. By placing them in a row, these three similar objects create a composition that is interesting and varied, but that still has unity and balance as a whole.

? Questions

What human experiences or emotions might Pepper be representing in this work? Why do you think so?

How does the title influence our understanding of the work?

Does this piece resemble columns or totems? Where do we usually find columns or totems? What function do these forms usually represent?

Beverly Pepper, continued



Activity

Using styrofoam as a base, insert popsicle sticks or chopsticks into the foam so that they stand vertically. Experiment with arranging them to create a composition that utilizes visual harmony and unity. Try using equal numbers of vertical lines and repetition to achieve the effect.



Vocabulary

Geometric Abstraction - A style of art that uses geometric shapes to create a composition that is not representational or realistic

Symbolism - Representing an idea or concept through images

Harmony - Having balanced or equal parts