

Warm Up: Beginning, Middle, or End

A routine for observing and imagining

Choose one of these questions:

1. If this artwork is the *beginning* of a story, what might happen next?
 2. If it this artwork is the *middle* of a story, what might have happened before? What might be about to happen?
 3. If this artwork is the *end* of a story, what might the story be?
- Use your imagination --



When Dreams Come True

Elizabeth Carroll Smith (USA)



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About the artwork:

In 1995, the first formal art exhibition in space was launched. Called the **Ars Ad Astra project**, 20 works of art were selected by an international committee for exhibition on the **Mir Space Station**. The name of the exhibit was **"Space and Humanity."** Though the crowds were limited, the collection was greatly appreciated by the Mir crewmembers. One of them, Thomas Reiter, said that the art is "a part of what is necessary to keep us alive, to keep our memory of the Earth, of our families, of our friends, of nature."

The Mir is no more, but you can still see the art that once graced it in the Galactic Gallery.



*This is the artwork we
just viewed and
discussed. :)*



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Ars Ad Astra Project

Ars ad Astra was a project conceived by the OURS Foundation, a cultural and astronomical organization based in Switzerland. The idea was to put space art in orbit aboard the late, great Russian Mir space station. Conceived as a "cultural experiment" the first task the OURS organizers had was to convince the European Space Agency to OK to the idea.

Eventually, the ESA agreed so long as the materials used were non-toxic and the total weight of the exhibit didn't exceed one kilogram, or 2.24 pounds. Word went out and 82 artists answered the call. A panel of artists, space agency administrators and OURS officials selected 20 works featuring artists from nine countries.

On Sept. 3, 1995, the artworks blasted into space in a Soyuz capsule (left) along with ESA cosmonaut Thomas Reiter and his Russian comrades Sergei Avdeev and Yuri Gudzenko. Once aboard Mir, the trio struggled to pick a winning entry, as Reiter described during a live link-up to the space station on Nov. 30, 1995.

"It was quite difficult for us to select a favorite picture because we like them all," he said. "We took the task very seriously -- in fact, it took us more than a week." The winner was American artist Elizabeth Carroll Smith for her painting "When Dreams Come True." (the painting you viewed in the warm up)



Ars Ad Astra Project



Promise

2nd place -- Mark Maxwell (USA)



Unforgettable Home

3rd place -- Alessandro Bartolozzi (Italy)



The Glory

Michael Carroll (USA)

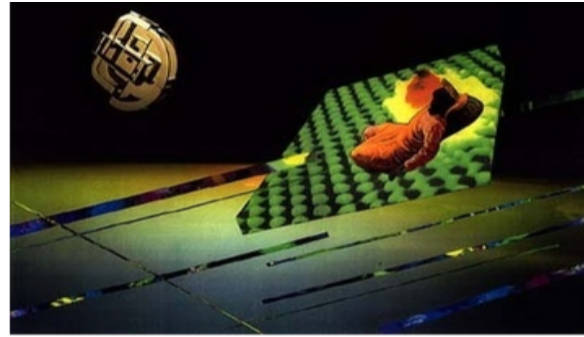


Life Probes

Werner Beyeler (Switzerland)



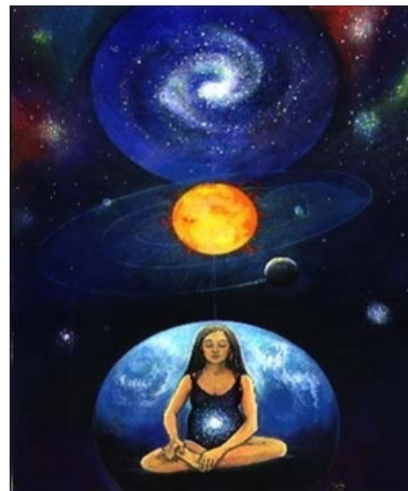
Encounter
Michael Bohme (Germany)



Let There Be Life
Edward Mendelsohn (UK)



Painting in Space
Karl Draeger (Germany)



Unity
Claudine Varesi (Switzerland)

Mir Space Station 1986-2001

Mir means peace
and world in Russian



The Mir space station contributed to world peace by hosting international scientists and American astronauts. It also supported a community of humans in orbit and symbolized the commonwealth of the Russian people.

Mir was constructed in orbit by connecting different modules, each launched separately from 1986 to 1996. During the Shuttle-Mir Program, Russia's Mir combined its capabilities with America's space shuttles. The orbiting Mir provided a large and livable scientific laboratory in space. The visiting space shuttles provided transportation and supplies, as well as temporary enlargements of living and working areas, creating history's largest spacecraft, with a combined mass of 250 tons.

Magnificent to behold through the windows of a space shuttle, the 100-ton Mir was as big as six schoolbuses. Inside, it looked more like a cramped labyrinth, crowded with hoses, cables and scientific instruments—as well as articles of everyday life, such as photos, children's drawings, books and a guitar. It commonly housed three crewmembers, but it sometimes supported as many as six, for up to a month. Except for two short periods, Mir was continuously occupied until August 1999.

The journey of the 15-year-old Russian space station ended March 23, 2001, as Mir re-entered the Earth's atmosphere near Nadi, Fiji, and fell into the South Pacific.

Despite its inconveniences, many cosmonauts and astronauts grew to love Mir, comparing it to a living being with qualities, needs, and eccentricities.



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More on the space station, Mir:

<http://kids.yahoo.com/science/space/article/spacestation>

For more on the Ars Ad Astra, click here:

<http://www.arsadastra.com/euromir.html>

And here:

<http://www.outer-space-art-gallery.com/ars-ad-astra.html>

Both the above sites were referenced in creating this lesson. Text and descriptions were taken from these websites.

