TITLE: *Sepolcro di Cecilia Metella*, from *Vedute di Roma* (*The Tomb of Cecilia Metella*, from *The Views of Rome*)
ARTIST: Giovanni Battista Piranesi
DATE: 1762
SIZE: sheet: 22 7/8" x 32"; image: 18" x 25 2/4"
MEDIUM: Etching
ACCESSION # : 70.183
Additional works in the collection by the artist?
Yes __X__   No_____

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Piranesi: "I need to produce great ideas, and I believe that if I were commissioned to design a new universe, I would be mad enough to undertake it." – Metmuseum.com

ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

Giovanni Battista Piranesi, an Italian architect and engraver, was born October 4, 1720 at Mojano di Mestre near Venice, Italy. Piranesi was the son of a stonemason and was trained under his uncle as an architectural engineer. In 1740, Piranesi left for Rome as a draftsman on the staff of the Venetian ambassador, Marco Foscarini, and learned to engrave and etch under Giuseppe Vasi. Unable to attract architectural commissions, Piranesi published *Prima Parte di Architettura e Prospettive*, a book of prints of imaginary buildings that were inspired by the architecture of imperial Rome. The book unfortunately ended as a financial failure. In 1745, Piranesi enjoyed his first success with his *Carceri d'Invenzione*, or *Imaginary Prisons*. In 1776, Piranesi published his *Roman Antiquities*, four large volumes containing over 200 folio plates, which won him immediate and widespread fame. He died at the age of 58 on November 9, 1778 while making drawings of the newly discovered temples at Paestum. He had suffered from a long illness.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

The *Vedute di Roma (The Views of Rome)* are a series of 135 prints made by Piranesi to depict Rome's architectural masterpieces. He etched each location or building on large-scaled copper plates. This particular piece, *Sepolcro di Cecilia Metella (The Tomb of Cecilia Metella)*, is the tomb built for the daughter-in-law of Crassus, the richest man in Rome during the 1st century BCE. Built along the ancient Appian Way, the tomb was converted into a massive fortress in the 14th century and used to guard the road as well as exact tolls. After Piranesi's death, his son Francesco took these engraved copper plates to Paris to finish printing the images etched by Piranesi. These prints are highly prized and rare.

MEDIA DESCRIPTION

Etching is an intaglio printing technique used for everything from master prints of the past to manufacturing printed circuit boards today. A wax ground is applied to a plate made of metal such as copper, zinc, or steel. Then, using an etching needle, a design is drawn into the plate. The plate is then submerged in a series of acid baths which bite into the metal surface where the plate is unprotected by the waxy ground. Once the ground has been removed, ink is then forced into the etched depressions. The unetched surfaces are wiped clean, and an impression is printed.

REFERENCES

•Newlin, Alice. "Prints by Piranesi." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 36.11 (1941): 224-229. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Nov. 2011. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3256212>.
•Delahunt, Michael. "Etching." *Art Lex: Art Dictionary*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Nov. 2011. <http://www.artlex.com/Artlex/e/etching.html>.
•"Giovanni Battista Piranesi Biography." *YourDictionary.com*. Encyclopedia of World Biography, n.d. Web. 20 Nov. 2010. <http://biography.yourdictionary.com/giovanni-battista-piranesi>.
•Thompson, Wendy. "Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778)." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Nov. 2010. <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/ pira/hd_pira.htm>.

RELATED TERMINOLOGY

Intaglio: a group of printmaking techniques involving an incised image
Etching: a process of using acid to create a design on metal for printmaking
Engraving: a technique of cutting grooves in a design on a hard surface
Ground: an acid-resistant substance — such as wax, gum, or resin — that is placed on an etching plate and through which the design is drawn

Completed Spring 2011, Jasmine VanWeelden

I Want to Logo Around the World

Session Activity: Students will create stamps that have logos, symbols, or icons of tourist attractions from around the world. Using each other's stamps, students will create collage–like prints of the places to which they wish to travel.

Objectives: Students will incorporate the concept of traveling to attractions as seen in Giovanni Battista Piranesi's prints from the series, *Views of Rome.* Students will work as a team while creating the project. Students will recognize and distinguish international icons.

Materials: Construction paper, Styrofoam blocks, magic markers, paper clips, paper towels

Activity: Students will first observe Giovanni Battista Piranesi's prints from the series, *Views of Rome*. Discuss the way Piranesi used the process of engraving to make the prints. Also discuss the way Piranesi's prints were made to attract tourists to Italy's ancient ruins. Ask the students to list places they would want to go as tourists. Allow students to search for famous icons or symbols of tourists attractions via the Internet (i.e. Walt Disney World, palm trees, Kennedy Space Center). Students will then engrave Styrofoam blocks with logos using paper clips or other tools. Students will compile their finished stamps. With magic markers, students will color the blocks' engraved designs liberally one at a time as they are used. Students will stamp the blocks onto their own pieces of construction paper. Students will clean used stamps with damp paper towels between usage. Students will proceed to use other stamps from the pile as many times as they would like, creating collage-like prints.

Piranesi, *A View of Santa Maria di Loreto and Il Nome di Maria.* 1762
Etching. 15 1/2 x 23 4/5 in; 39.5 x 60.5 cm
Vam.ac.uk.com

Vocabulary:
- Icons: recognizable symbols
- Symbol: object/image representing something; sign with specific meaning

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS: K—5	SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS: 6—12
Strand B: Creation & Communication Standard: The student creates and communicates a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas using knowledge of structures and functions of visual arts.	Strand B: Creation & Communication Standard: The student creates and communicates a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas using knowledge of structures and functions of visual arts.

Create a Postcard!

Session Activity: Students will create postcards that highlight their city's culture and its distinction from other cities. Each student will include an image of a landmark on the front of the postcard as well as a short description of the landmark on the back.

Materials: (For students in grades K-5) construction paper, crayons/colored pencils, scissors, markers
(For students in grades 6-12 in a computer graphics class) computer, Adobe Photoshop program, digital camera, tape

Objectives:
- Students will incorporate on a local level the concepts of Giovanni Battista Piranesi's series, *Views of Rome,* into their postcards.
- Students will draw connections between their community/culture and art.
- Students will recognize cultural icons and landmarks.

Vocabulary:
- Landmark: a prominent structure or geographical feature that identifies a location and is preserved because of its significance
- Culture: the traditions, beliefs, or attitudes shared among a group of people
- Icon: a picture or symbol that is universally recognized to be representative of something

Activity Procedures: Students will first observe prints by Giovanni Battista Piranesi (http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/pira/hd_pira.htm) and note their purpose. Students will discuss the fact that Piranesi made his prints as a way to attract tourists to the ancient ruins of Italy. Ask the students to name other such tourist attractions throughout the world. Show students a picture of the Eiffel Tower, noting and discussing it as an icon of French culture. Discuss the features of the icon that make it so, that tell us about the culture in which it exists. This may require a small amount of historical research about the Eiffel Tower. Students will do the same with other icons and cultures. Students will then discuss their community icons — buildings, city parks, or specific pieces of art in the community that best represent their city's culture, people, or way of life. Students will use the Internet to find photographs of the community icons/landmarks named. Students in grades K-5 will choose and draw their symbolic landmarks on pieces of paper cut to the size of a standard postcard. On the back of the postcards near the top, students will write brief descriptions of their selected landmarks inclusive of reasons for their significance to the city. In a computer class, students in grades 6-12 will create postcards on Adobe Photoshop in 31/2" x 5" rectangles. Students will use their own digital pictures of landmarks. Ask them to concentrate on architecture and public art for their postcards. Students will replicate the back design of a standard postcard on another Photoshop document that will include a statement about the landmark, a divided writing space, and a stamp. Students will print both pages of their completed postcards, cut away excess paper and tape together the backs of the two pages.
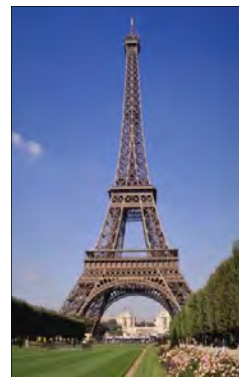
Eiffel Tower, Paris, France. Britannica.com