



Mystic Vessel Ascending

Artist: Tim Curtis, American
Title: Mystic Vessel Ascending, 1997
Media: Steel
Dimensions: 25' h., 30'w., 15' d.
Owner: Laclede's Landing Foundation

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LOOKING AT ART:

- As you walk around this sculpture, what do you notice? Make a list of the differences you see when viewing it from the inside versus the outside?
- Why do you think the artist created this piece? How might it relate to the area? How might its appearance change with the weather—in the fog, on a sunny day, at sunrise, etc?
- What materials are used in its construction? Why do you think they were chosen? Where do you think construction took place?

SOCIAL STUDIES:

- Research the history of the area including the existence of mounds. Then, write a newspaper article discussing how you think Curtis made use of historical information when he created this sculpture. Include elements of the site such as the mound and the trees.
- What is the history of boats in this area? What is their role the economy both now and in the past?

LANGUAGE ARTS:

- Imagine you came across this piece just as the sun was setting. Write a letter to a friend describing your experience. Make your description so vivid that a visually impaired person could see it in his/her mind. Include all the senses.
- Myths from a wide variety of cultures refer to boats and vessels symbolically expressing transformation and life changes. Research and read several, then write your own myth about this vessel.

SCIENCE, MATH, AND TECHNOLOGY:

- What problems are associated with art placed outdoors? How might climate, weather changes, and pollution affect this particular sculpture? Make a list of what needs to be assessed. What preventative measures could be taken? Present your findings.
- How would you know how much steel to order? Based on the size and design of the piece, estimate the amount of steel necessary. What might the cost be for the steel?

PERFORMING ARTS:

- Think about shape, structure, inside/outside, the setting, and images associated with the title **Mystic Vessel Ascending**. Then, choreograph a dance based on these ideas.
- If this boat could sing, what would it sound like? List the qualities which might be incorporated, and then create a sound score. Use found-sounds including the human voice. Extension: Use the sound collage as an accompaniment to the choreography.

VISUAL ARTS:

- Reinterpret **Mystic Vessel Ascending** as an abstract painting. Use acrylics and 18" x 24" paper or illustration board. Set up a display, and discuss the process afterwards.
- Imagine that you are the artist and will now present your idea for this site-specific sculpture to a selection panel. Prepare key points, a description, a budget, and sketches.