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### **On the traces of Vaggelis Baras**

The primary school of Xino Nero Florina, participates to the Comenius Regio project, titled *“Visual arts, creativity and intercultural education based on local artistic repository”* which takes place for the last 2 years, with cooperation between Florina city of Greece and Dobeles city of Latvia.

The painter that we worked on is Vaggelis Baras, his biography, the subjects of his paintings and his combined technique.

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### **Vaggelis Baras**

1933 - 2007

Vaggelis Baras was born in 1933 in Florina and he spent his childhood near the river Saculevas. He started painting, when he was 12 years old. He is a self-taught painter, who developed a special technique, in which he combined the oil painting with the three-dimensional relief.

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His subjects are mainly taken from his homeland, Florina, and Greece. In his thousands of paintings he presented traditional images of Greece that may no longer exist. He organized more than 110 personal exhibitions and participated in more than 30 group exhibitions both in his country and abroad.

### **COMENIUS REGIO 2013 – 2014. V. BARAS**

During the 1<sup>st</sup> year, 2013 – 2014, the project took place with the students of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade of the primary school of Xino Nero village. They achieved the following goals. (4)

- 1) They got to know about the local artistic production.
- 2) They observed paintings by local artists. (5)
- 3) The students of a rather distant village from the town of Florina, learned that the whole area around Florina, was and still remains a place of artistic production, with plenty of painters and sculptors, unusual for its population. (6)
- 4) They contacted the procedure of painting on a more specific basis. (7)
- 5) They approached V. Baras's painting in an individual way, and they drew images of their village the same way Baras used to paint images of his hometown.

### **COMENIUS REGIO 2014 – 2015 V. BARAS (8)**

The project takes place this year with the students of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. We did a theme approach on Vaggelis Baras's paintings starting with organizing his little corner, at a special spot in our classroom. The main targets of the project remained the same and the first steps of

introducing the painter, as well as information about his life and his combined technique, were repeated, because there were new students involved. However, the continuation was different. We worked on the three main subjects of his paintings, using several ways and materials.

1<sup>st</sup> subject: “The River in Florina” (9)

1. To begin with, I introduced the painter to the students, giving information about his personal and family life. As the students realized the family relationship between the painter and their teacher, they showed a great interest and they started asking a lot of questions about his life and his personality. So we also had the chance to talk about the local history, along with Vaggelis Baras’s family history .
2. We created V. Baras’s little corner at a special spot in our classroom, where we presented some photos of the painter himself, his biography and photos of his paintings.
3. We talked a lot about the subjects he mostly loved to paint, and the students observed that he mostly painted images from his home town Florina, from Lake Prespa nearby, and images from rural life. So they reached the conclusion that those were the subjects that they would work on.
4. I brought some real paintings in the classroom and the children had the opportunity to watch them closely, to touch them and to observe his combined technique, which is oil painting with the three dimensional relief. In this way, the students realized that painting is an art that may really be expressed in different ways, materials and techniques. This fact expanded their horizons about the materials they could use and the techniques they could follow. (10)
5. The students had already seen and realized by them selves that V. Baras loved to paint images of Florina and especially the river Sacoulevas . So after they saw several paintings on this particular subject, they decided which one of them they would try to recreate and also which technique and materials they would use.
6. They worked in groups. Some draw the main lines in pencil on aquarelle paper, some painted the colors and some collected natural materials such as pebbles, sticks, and little branches. They also prepared pieces of colored paper and carton and they glued all that stuff, in order to recreate the three dimensional relief. They completed their work by gluing their painting on a hard carton, surrounded by velvet paper used as the background.

2<sup>nd</sup> subject: “Lake Prespa”. (11)

1. This has been another favorite subject of V. Baras’ s paintings, as the students had already realized. So after they watched several photos of paintings from Lake Prespa, they decided which one of them they would try to recreate and also which technique and materials they would use. (12)
2. Some of them drew the main lines in pencil on a hard carton

3. Then they used pieces of colored plasticine in order to recreate the colors and the three dimensional relief. They enjoyed the procedure a great deal, because plasticine is a material which is very easy to use and it is very effective, recreating the three dimensional relief easily and successfully. They completed their work by gluing their painting on a hard carton, surrounded by velvet paper used as the background.

3<sup>rd</sup> subject: "Images from rural life" (13)

1. The students watched several paintings on this particular subject, finding similarities and differences between them and then chose the one that they were really interested in recreating. They also observed that the painting named "Winter" approaches another great theme by V. Baras, which is snowy landscapes. They discussed about the materials they could use and they decided to use aquarelle colors and polystyrene. (14)
2. They worked in groups. Some drew the background with aquarelle colors.
3. Some drew in pencil the horse, the dog and the tree on the polystyrene.
4. They cut the polystyrene with a hot knife. I helped them in that point, in order to keep the procedure safe.
5. Some painted the polystyrene details with aquarelle colors,
6. In addition they glued the polystyrene details on the painted aquarelle paper. They completed their work by gluing their painting on a hard carton, surrounded by velvet paper used as the background. They also glued polystyrene flakes all over the drawing in order to show the snow.

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