Imagination

Design Intent

Step into *Imagination*, where reality blurs and the heart takes flight. Here, every corner invites children to dream bigger, feel deeper, and explore the magical worlds that live inside them. On the stage, shy smiles turn into bold performances, with costumes and characters waiting to be brought to life. The art gallery hums with quiet pride; it is a space where famous masterpieces spark curiosity and children's own creations hang with honor. In the cozy library nook, soft cushions and timeless stories wrap little readers in comfort and wonder, transporting them to distant lands where anything is possible. In this room, I*magination* isn't just encouraged... it's everything.

Technology Components

Magic Window - Collection of video clips

Mural Features

- Theater - The theater is a place where people perform stories, music, and dances for an audience. It usually includes a stage for performers, seats for viewers, lights, curtains, costumes, and props that help bring stories to life. Theater experiences help people build imagination, language, listening, and social-emotional skills as they watch characters express feelings and solve problems.
- Windmill - A windmill harnesses the power of wind through its blades, converting wind energy into mechanical energy. Windmills have been used since 2000 B.C. The first modern wind turbine was built in Vermont in the 1940s. Wind is Ameria's largest source of renewable energy, providing 10.1% of the country's energy and growing. Windmills are an iconic symbol of Dutch culture and heritage.
- Mountain - A mountain is classified as a landform that rises at least 1000 feet or more above its surrounding area. Mountains are found in elongated ranges or chains and are formed through tectonic forces, erosion, or volcanism. The highest mountain is Mount Everest in the Himalayas.
- Well - A well is a deep hole that is dug or drilled into the ground to access water. People use wells to bring up fresh water (using buckets, pumps, or pipes) from underground for drinking, cooking, cleaning, and watering plants or animals. Wells have been in use for more than 8,000 years, with ancient abandoned wells discovered in Isreal, China, and India.

Mural Features

- Dragon - A dragon is a mythical monster that resembles a giant reptile, sometimes shown as having wings. In European culture, a dragon symbolizes chaos or evil. In Asia culture, a dragon symbolizes water and the heavens.
- Castle - Medieval castles were primarily built for defense, with most of their structures designed to provide multiple layers of protection for nobles. Though they appeared strong, many were made for display than actual security. Castles were constructed from materials like wood, stone, or brick.
- Rainbow - A rainbow is an optical illusion made by light striking water droplets. The colors of a rainbow are always in order of their wavelength, from longest to shortest: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. Rainbows are the result of the refraction and reflection of light.
- Spinning Wheel - A spinning wheel is a traditional, hand- or foot-powered machine, often made of wood, used to turn fibers like wool, flax, or cotton into yarn or thread. Important to textile production before the Industrial Revolution, it features a single spindle and a large wheel that twists fibers into a continuous, usable strand.
- Grandfather Clock - A grandfather clock is a tall, freestanding clock with a swinging pendulum and chimes that mark the passing of time. These clocks became popular in the 1600s because they could keep time accurately. Grandfather clocks are important in stories and folklore because they create a sense of mystery, tradition, and the passage of time, especially when they chime at midnight or hide secret compartments.
- Grass - Grass is a plant that grows on all continents. Many species occur in forests, woodlands, and jungles. Grass taxonomists estimate over 13,000 species of grass.
- Tree - A tree is considered a perennial plant. Most plants classified as trees have a single self-supporting trunk with the trunk producing branches. There are more than 73,000 discovered species of trees.
- Flowers - Flowers are the blossoming part of a plant and play a key role in reproduction. They produce seeds that can grow into new plants. Most plants, including many trees, grow flowers at some point in their life cycle. Flowers attract pollinators like butterflies, bees, and birds, which help spread pollen from one flower to another (pollination).
- Turtle - Turtles are classified as cold-blooded reptiles with bodies encased in a bony shell; this group also includes tortoises. There are approximately 360 species of turtles found across the globe, on every continent except Antarctica, inhabiting environments ranging from oceans and rivers to forests and deserts. All turtles must breathe air through lungs and cannot survive entirely underwater. They also lay their eggs on land, typically digging nests in sand or soil for incubation.
- Duck - A duck is a water bird with a wide, flat bill, webbed feet, and waterproof feathers. Because of their webbed feet, ducks are excellent swimmers. They can fly short distances and are known for their distinctive quacking sounds. Most ducks eat a mix of plants, insects, and small aquatic creatures.
- Frog - Frogs are amphibians that live in many parts of the world, with more than 7,000 different species identified. They usually live near ponds, lakes, rivers, forests, or wetlands because they need water and moist environments to survive. Most frogs eat insects, worms, spiders, and other small animals, using their long, sticky tongues to catch food. Frogs begin life as tadpoles in water and go through metamorphosis, changing into adult frogs with legs and lungs.

Mural Features

- Rabbit - Rabbit-A male rabbit is called a buck, and a female is known as a doe. Rabbits were first domesticated by the Romans for food and fur, and today they are also popular pets and important animals in ecosystems. Rabbits are highly social animals that live in groups. Throughout history, rabbits have appeared in many myths, fables, and folktales as symbols of cleverness, quick thinking, luck, and fertility.
- Goose - A goose is a large water bird with a long neck, strong wings, and webbed feet that help it swim and travel long distances. Geese live near lakes, ponds, rivers, and wetlands in many parts of the world, and many species migrate seasonally in large V-shaped flocks. They mostly eat grasses, grains, and aquatic plants, although they may also eat small insects. Geese are also connected to folklore and fairy tales, especially the story of the “Golden Goose,” a magical goose whose golden feathers brought adventure to the characters in the tale.
- Mythical Mushroom House - In European folklore, mushrooms are believed to be gateways to the realm of dreams. According to these tales, humans were cautioned against stepping on them, or they would be transported to the fairy world.
- Mythical Butterfly - A mythical butterfly is often described as a magical creature with glowing wings, shimmering colors, and the ability to bring transformation, hope, or good luck. In many folktales and legends, butterflies symbolize change, rebirth, and the connection between nature and the spirit world because they transform from caterpillars into winged insects.
- Fairy - Fairies are mythical beings of folklore, often depicted as having a small human form and magical powers. They are typically associated with nature and are believed to intervene in human challenges and problems.

Themes to Explore

- Fantasy and Reality
- Classic Fairy Tales
- Storybook Characters
- Storytelling and Bookmaking
- Dreams
- Magical Landscapes
- Cultures and People
- Art and Artists
- Art as a Process

Mounted Artifacts

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- Throne - A throne is a large, decorated chair used by kings, queens, and other rulers as a symbol of power and leadership. Thrones have been used since ancient times in civilizations such as Egypt, China, and, Mesopotamia, where rulers sat on them during ceremonies, meetings, and important events. In stories, fairy tales, and myths, thrones often represent authority, responsibility, and adventure.

To Find Out More

- International Children's Digital Library
- American Folklore
- The American Folklife Center
- Project Zero: Art|Play at Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Art Institute Chicago