

WHITNEY

**THE WHITNEY'S
COLLECTION:
SELECTIONS FROM
1900 TO 1965
TEACHER GUIDE**



June 28, 2019–

WELCOME TO THE WHITNEY!

Dear Teachers,

We are delighted to welcome you to *The Whitney's Collection: Selections from 1900 to 1965*. This exhibition of more than 120 works is inspired by the founding history of the Museum. The Whitney was established in 1930 by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, a sculptor and patron, to champion the work of living American artists. The collection she assembled foregrounded how artists uniquely reveal the complexity and beauty of American life.

This teacher guide provides a framework for preparing you and your students for a visit to the exhibition and offers suggestions for follow-up classroom reflection and lessons. The discussions and activities introduce some of the exhibition's key themes and concepts.

We look forward to welcoming you and your students at the Museum.

Enjoy your visit!

The School and Educator Programs team

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Cover image

Marisol (1930–2016), *Women and Dog*, 1963–64. Wood, plaster, acrylic, and taxidermied dog head, 73 9/16 × 76 5/8 × 26 3/4 in. (186.8 × 194.6 × 67.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 64.17a-i. © 2019 Estate of Marisol / Albright-Knox Art Gallery / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

THE WHITNEY'S COLLECTION: SELECTIONS FROM 1900 to 1965

The Whitney Museum of American Art was established in 1930 by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, a sculptor and patron, to champion the work of living American artists. In the early twentieth century, museums and collectors in the United States were skeptical of modern art and still privileged works by European artists. Mrs. Whitney's seismic contribution was to recognize both the importance of contemporary American art and the need for supporting the overlooked artists who made it. She created a gathering place for the artistic community in New York, and regularly exhibited and acquired work by emerging artists.

The collection Mrs. Whitney assembled with the Museum's first director, Juliana Force, was art historically rigorous and vibrantly idiosyncratic. It embraced disparate approaches and foregrounded how artists uniquely reveal the complexity and beauty of American life. In a statement that coincided with the opening of the Whitney Museum, curator Hermon More made the spirited claim: "We look to the artist to lead the way."

This exhibition begins with selections from the Whitney Museum's founding collection and then examines (largely chronologically) major art historical movements and genres, as well as key achievements by individual figures such as Georgia O'Keeffe and Jacob Lawrence. Icons of the collection are featured with galleries dedicated respectively to *Calder's Circus* and the work of Edward Hopper. More recent acquisitions are on view as well.

The Whitney's collection is a dynamic cultural resource that allows us to continually reframe the history of American life and artistic production. The artists whose works are on view confronted war and peace, economic collapse and recovery, new technologies, and social discord and progress with a range of responses. In keeping with its history and ideals, the Whitney Museum continues to look to artists—those of the past and those of today—to lead us forward.

This exhibition is organized by David Breslin, DeMartini Family Curator and Director of the Collection, with Margaret Kross, senior curatorial assistant, and Roxanne Smith, curatorial assistant.

More information about the exhibition:

<https://whitney.org/exhibitions/collection-1900-to-1965>

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Before visiting the Whitney, we recommend that you and your students explore and discuss some of the ideas and themes in the exhibition. We have included some selected images from the exhibition, along with relevant information that you may want to use before or after your Museum visit. You can print out the images or project them in your classroom.

Pre-visit Objectives:

- Introduce students to the artists and works in the exhibition.
- Examine themes and topics students may encounter on their museum visit.
- Explore how artists interpreted American life in the early to mid-twentieth century.

1. Artist as Observer: Editing the Environment

Edward Hopper and Elsie Driggs closely observed and sketched the world around them, but they often created their paintings from their drawings and memory. Georgia O'Keeffe painted the natural environment, but her compositions often distort its scale. For his snowy landscape painting, Horace Pippin may have called upon his memories of trapping in Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains as well as images from nineteenth-century engravings of the American West and other sources.

- This discussion can be structured according to your students' grade level. Ask your students to select, view, and discuss two or more of the works by Elsie Driggs, page 12, Edward Hopper, page 13, Georgia O'Keeffe, page 20, and Horace Pippin, page 21. How do these artists observe and represent the landscape or natural environment in their paintings? Ask students to share at least one adjective or descriptive phrase that they think is inspired by the works they've chosen. Which elements of the painting do students see as realistic or recognizable? Which elements seem unusual, unexpected, or out of place? Select and share the information below the images with your students. Based on this additional information, how do students' ideas about these works change?

2. Artist as Storyteller: Figures and Faces

How do artists represent people in their work? In *New York Interior* and *Victory* respectively, Edward Hopper and Jacob Lawrence focus on a single figure.

- With your students, view and discuss the works by Edward Hopper on page 13 and Jacob Lawrence on page 16. Compare and contrast the figures in *New York Interior* and *Victory*. Even though your students can't see their faces, what can students deduce about these figures from their poses and body language? From what the subjects are wearing? From the setting or other elements of the paintings?
- Paintings in this guide by Charles Henry Alston, page 7, George Bellows, page 8, Archibald Motley, page 19, and George Tooker, page 23, depict multiple figures to create a narrative. Have students describe the relationship between the subjects in each of these works.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Consider the figures' facial expressions as well as their body language, groupings, settings, and mood. How does each artist show connections between the figures? For example, eye contact, physical contact, and proximity to each other. If students were to choose one person in any of these works and added a speech or thought bubble to that figure, what might that figure be thinking? If that figure could communicate to another person in the painting, who would it be? Why? What would they say to each other?

3. Artist as Experimenter: Reimagining the World

Artists interpret, abstract, and distill the world around them in different ways. For example, in *Three Flags*, *Early Sunday Morning* and *The Brooklyn Bridge* respectively, Jasper Johns, Edward Hopper and Joseph Stella use repetition, scale, and point of view. In *The Rose* and *American Totem* respectively, Jay DeFeo and Norman Lewis use simplified imagery and omit detail.

- a. Ask students to view and discuss two of the following works by DeFeo, page 11, Hopper, page 13, Johns, page 15, Lewis, page 17, and Stella, page 22. Notice the forms and shapes these artists use. Where can students find repeated shapes or imagery?
- b. Before sharing the actual titles of these works with your students, ask them to choose one work as a class and come up with a title for it. Students can write their title on a Post-it. Ask students to reflect and share why they chose that title. Next, tell students the actual titles of the works that are relevant to your conversation. Does knowing the actual titles change the way they see, interpret, and understand these works? Why or why not?
- c. As a class activity or assignment, have students find a close-up image online or take a picture of something close up with their mobile phone camera. For example, grains of sand, citrus fruit, textured fabric, or a close up of something that has repeated shapes or patterns. Ask students to bring their images to class and create a wall of close-ups. As an activity or game, have students discuss the images and guess what they might be.

4. Artist as Critic: Surreal Spaces

How have artists communicated their opinions through the mood or atmosphere of a space and the people who populate it? In *The Subway*, George Tooker portrayed the alienation and the isolation of contemporary urban life in post-World War II America. The caricatures in Archibald Motley's *Gettin' Religion* complicate stereotypes about race. He may have been poking fun at the ecstatic worship he associated with recent arrivals from the rural Deep South in the late 1940s—for example, through the minstrel figure who appears to be preaching. This satirical approach would have been readily understood by African Americans at the time to be both cynical and affectionate.

Ask students to view and discuss the paintings by Tooker, page 23 and Motley, page 19. Have students describe what is happening in these paintings. What do they notice about the settings, the people, and what they are doing?

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

- b. Ask students to imagine themselves in one of these scenes. Have students write spontaneously about the scene as they look at it closely. Have students describe where they are and what time of day or night it might be. What might students be doing, thinking, saying and feeling? For younger students, offer a five senses prompt: what might they see / hear / smell / touch and taste?

CHARLES HENRY ALSTON

THE FAMILY, 1955



Charles Henry Alston (1907–1977), *The Family*, 1955. Oil on canvas, 48 3/16 × 35 13/16 in. (122.4 × 91 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Artists and Students Assistance Fund 55.47

An influential painter, printmaker, sculptor, teacher, and activist, Charles Henry Alston was a central figure of the Harlem Renaissance. *The Family* is a portrait of four figures, rendered through bold blocks of color and defined by thin lines created with a palette knife. The family was a recurring theme for Alston; he described this painting in particular as “an attempt to express the security, stability and human fulfillment which the ideal family represents.” His artistic challenge, he explained, was to find the painterly equivalents for these qualities, as well as tell the story. He found the solution in a compact, well-organized design with subtle harmonies and discords and a certain solid, monumental quality.

GEORGE BELLOWS

DEMPSEY AND FIRPO, 1924



George Bellows (1882–1925), *Dempsey and Firpo*, 1924. Oil on canvas, 51 1/8 × 63 1/4 in. (129.9 × 160.7 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.95

Dempsey and Firpo captures a dramatic moment in the September 14, 1923, prizefight between American heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey and his Argentine rival Luis Angel Firpo. Looking up from this composition's low vantage point, we find ourselves among the spectators—including the artist, George Bellows, who inserted his own likeness as the balding man at the far left. Although Dempsey was the eventual victor, the artist chose to represent Firpo knocking his opponent out of the ring with a tremendous blow to the jaw.

ALEXANDER CALDER

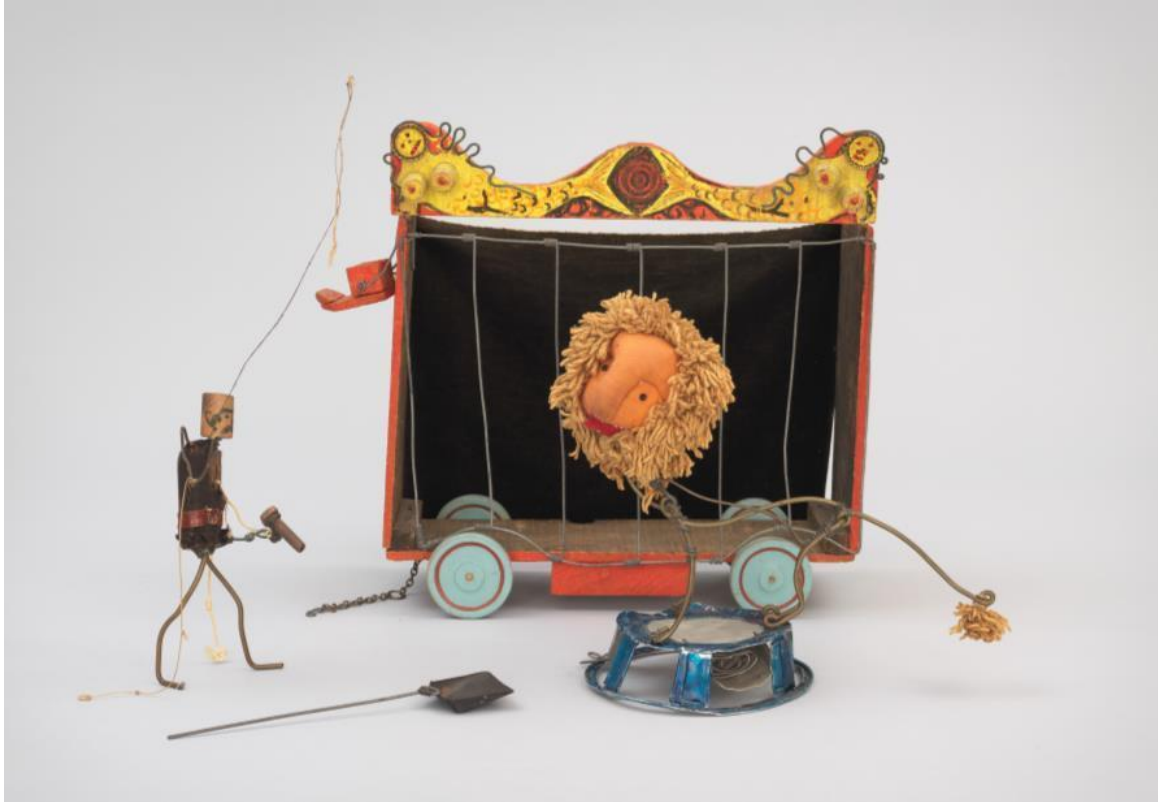
CALDER'S CIRCUS, 1926–1931



Alexander Calder (1898–1976), installation view of *The Whitney's Collection: Selections from 1900 to 1965* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, June 28, 2019-). Alexander Calder, *Calder's Circus*, 1926-31. Photograph by Ron Amstutz © 2019 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Alexander Calder originally trained as a mechanical engineer, but he was working as a newspaper illustrator in New York in 1925 when he was sent to make sketches of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. His visit to the circus sparked a lifelong interest. When he moved to Paris in 1926, he began *Calder's Circus*, crafting dozens of small movable figures and props from wire and found objects. Adding acts over several years and transporting the miniature circus in several suitcases, he gave performances in his studios and at the homes of friends. Calder acted as both stagehand and impresario: he constructed makeshift bleachers from wood crates and planks, handed out cymbals and other noisemakers, and cued up records on his gramophone. Narrating the acts in English and French, he manipulated acrobats, a bearded lady, a lion tamer and his lion, and other figures.

ALEXANDER CALDER CALDER'S CIRCUS, 1926-1931 (CONTINUED)



Alexander Calder (1898–1976), *Lion and Cage* from *Calder's Circus*, 1926–31. 83.36.34 © 2019 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Alexander Calder (1898–1976), *Kangaroo* from *Calder's Circus*, 1926–31. 83.36.6 © 2019 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Alexander Calder (1898–1976), *Fanni, the Belly Dancer* from *Calder's Circus*, 1926–31. 83.36.22 © 2019 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

JAY DEFEO

THE ROSE, 1958–1966



Jay DeFeo (1929–1989), *The Rose*, 1958–66. Oil with wood and mica on canvas, 128 7/8 × 92 1/4 × 11 in. (327.3 × 234.3 × 27.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of the Estate of Jay DeFeo and purchase with funds from the Contemporary Painting and Sculpture Committee and the Judith Rothschild Foundation 95.170 . © 2019 The Jay DeFeo Estate / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Jay DeFeo, who emerged as part of a vibrant community of artists, poets, and musicians active in San Francisco in the 1950s, worked on this monumental painting for nearly eight years. She later described *The Rose* as “a marriage between painting and sculpture.” Built almost entirely from thick layers of paint—supported in some cases by wooden dowels—the work weighs more than 1,500 pounds. DeFeo made it using a laborious process of building up, carving back, and repainting. Her original idea was simply to produce a painting that had a center. Over the ensuing years, she extended its length and width, and worked and reworked the painting stylistically. In the end, *The Rose* had to be removed from her second-story studio through a partially dismantled window using a forklift.

ELSIE DRIGGS

PITTSBURGH, 1927



Elsie Driggs (1895–1992), *Pittsburgh*, 1927. Oil on canvas, 34 1/4 × 40 1/4 in. (87 × 102.2 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.177. © Estate of Elsie Driggs

Elsie Driggs was inspired to make this painting by a childhood memory of Pittsburgh's steel mills. Returning to the site as an adult, she initially tried to capture the scene from inside the mill. The owners thought the factory floor was no place for a woman, though, and management worried that she might be a labor agitator or industrial spy. Today the painting may seem to warn of the dangers of industrial pollution, but that was not Driggs's agenda. She ended up basing the work on drawings she made from a hill above her boardinghouse, later writing that she stared at the mills and told herself: "This shouldn't be beautiful. But it is.' And it was all I had, so I drew it."

EDWARD HOPPER

NEW YORK INTERIOR, c. 1921

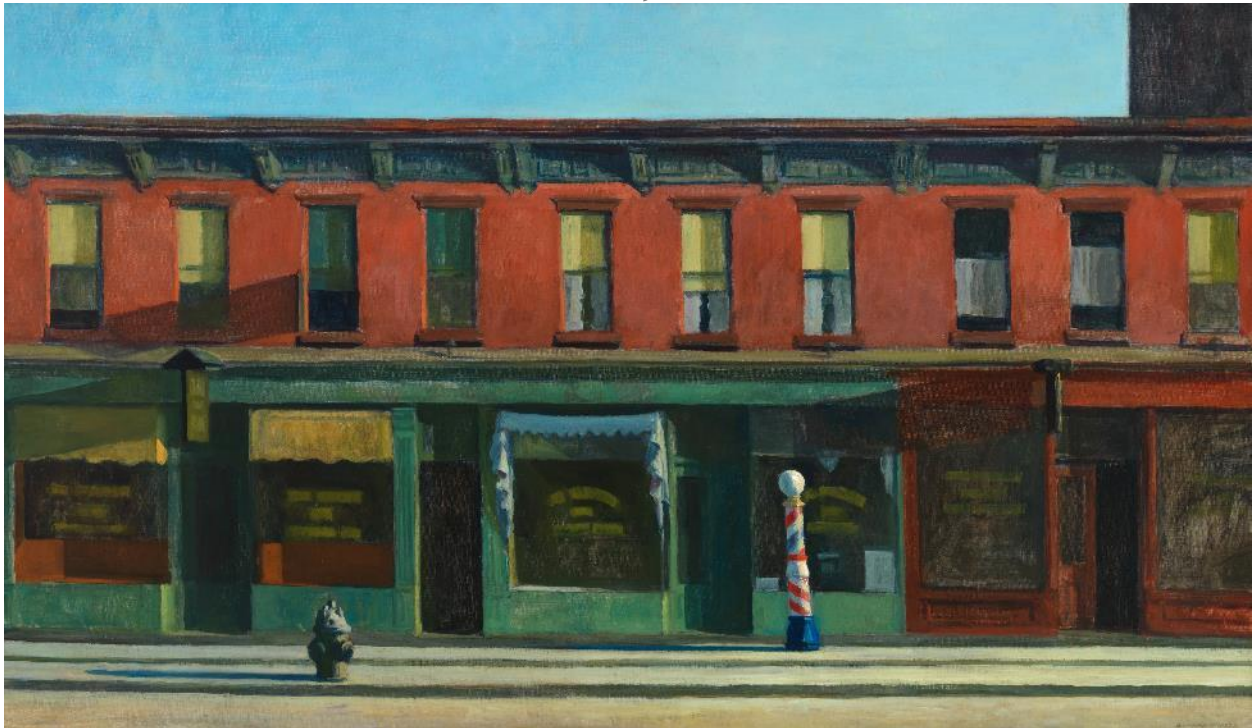


Edward Hopper (1882–1967), *New York Interior*, c. 1921. Oil on canvas, 24 1/4 × 29 1/4 in. (61.6 × 74.3cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Josephine N. Hopper Bequest 70.1200. © 2019 Heirs of Josephine N. Hopper/Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

An early example of Hopper's focus on private, indoor scenes, *New York Interior* offers an unconventional view of a woman sewing. The scene depicts the impersonal, yet strangely intimate quality of modern urban life. We glimpse this private moment as voyeurs through a window, with the figure's turned face and exposed back heightening her anonymity and our awareness of her vulnerability.

EDWARD HOPPER

EARLY SUNDAY MORNING, 1930



Edward Hopper (1882–1967), *Early Sunday Morning*, 1930. Oil on canvas, 35 3/16 × 60 1/4 in. (89.4 × 153 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.426. © 2019 Heirs of Josephine N. Hopper/Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Although Hopper described *Early Sunday Morning* as “almost a literal translation of Seventh Avenue,” the painting actually removes many of the street’s particulars, leaving it difficult to identify as the New York thoroughfare. The lettering in the signs is illegible, architectural ornament is loosely sketched, and human presence is merely suggested by the variously arranged curtains differentiating apartments. The long shadows in the painting could never appear on Seventh Avenue, which runs north-south. Yet these very contrasts of light and shadow, coupled with the composition’s series of verticals and horizontals, create the charged, almost theatrical atmosphere of an empty street at the beginning of the day. The uncanny sense of disquietude Hopper distilled here and in other paintings has come to be identified as part of the collective American psyche.

JASPER JOHNS

THREE FLAGS, 1958



Jasper Johns (b. 1930), *Three Flags*, 1958. Encaustic on canvas, 30 5/8 x 45 1/2 x 4 5/8 in. (77.8 x 115.6 x 11.7 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Gilman Foundation, Inc., The Lauder Foundation, A. Alfred Taubman, Laura-Lee Whittier Woods, Howard Lipman, and Ed Downe in honor of the Museum's 50th Anniversary 80.32. © 2019 Jasper Johns / Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

In 1954, Jasper Johns began painting what would become one of his signature emblems: the American flag. As an iconic image—comparable to the targets, maps, and letters that he also has depicted—Johns realized that the flag was “seen and not looked at, not examined.” *Three Flags* draws attention to the process of its making through Johns’s use of encaustic, a mixture of pigment suspended in warm wax that congeals as each stroke is applied; the resulting accumulation of discrete marks creates a sensuous, almost sculptural surface.

JACOB LAWRENCE

WAR SERIES: VICTORY, 1947



Jacob Lawrence (1917–2000), *War Series: Victory*, 1947. Tempera on composition board, 20 1/4 x 16 3/16 in. (51 x 40.5 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Mr. and Mrs. Roy R. Neuberger 51.19. © 2019 The Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

In 1946, a year after the end of World War II, Jacob Lawrence began work on the fourteen paintings that comprise the *War Series*. The images are based on the artist's own experiences of serving with the Coast Guard, and present a narrative, like chapters in a book. Lawrence said that he wanted these works "to capture the essence of war" by "portraying the feeling and emotions that are felt by the individual, both fighter and civilian." Historically, paintings of war have most often emphasized the triumph of victory. In these images, however, heroism cannot be separated from drudgery and suffering, nor is victory free from sorrow and loss.

NORMAN LEWIS

AMERICAN TOTEM, 1960



Norman Lewis (1909–1979), *American Totem*, 1960. Oil on canvas, 73 1/2 × 44 7/8 in. (186.7 × 114 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund in memory of Preston Robert and Joan Tisch, the Painting and Sculpture Committee, Director's Discretionary Fund, Adolph Gottlieb, by exchange, and Sami and Hala Mnaymneh 2018.141. © Norman Lewis. Courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC, New York, NY

American Totem is one of a series of black-and-white paintings that Norman Lewis made exploring the emotional and psychic impact of the civil rights movement. Lewis, one of the few Black artists associated with Abstract Expressionism, created a form that evokes the infamous hooded Klansman. But here, the monolith is composed of a multitude of smaller forms resembling apparitions, skulls, and masks. Lewis's work suggests that terror is both representable and abstract, conscious and unconscious, visible and hidden.

MARISOL

WOMEN AND DOG, 1963–1964



Marisol (1930–2016), *Women and Dog*, 1963–64, Wood, plaster, acrylic, taxidermied dog head and miscellaneous items. 73 9/16 × 76 5/8 × 26 3/4 in. (186.8 × 194.6 × 67.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 64.17a-i © 2019 Estate of Marisol / Albright-Knox Art Gallery / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Marisol developed a distinctive approach to sculpture that combined elements of Surrealism, Pop art, assemblage, and even folk art. Each of the four life-size blocky female figures in *Women and Dog* is a self-portrait of the artist, carved from wood and painted. One of the figures incorporates a black-and-white photograph of Marisol; the multiple faces on two of the others were cast in plaster directly from the artist herself; and the small figure is a representation of Marisol as a child. Each sports a fashionable outfit of the period, accessorized with found objects that include a real purse and hair bow. Although the work explores variations on the midcentury American woman of a certain class, Marisol, commenting on the work in 1964, claimed to have been “inspired by the dog.”

ARCHIBALD MOTLEY

GETTIN' RELIGION, 1948



Archibald Motley (1891–1981), *Gettin' Religion*, 1948. Oil on linen, 32 × 39 7/16 in. (81.3 × 100.2 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase Josephine N. Hopper Bequest, by exchange 2016.15. © Valerie Gerrard Browne

Archibald Motley was a leading painter of Chicago's Black community. By 1930, African American migrants from the South had dramatically transformed the neighborhoods on that city's South Side into a culturally thriving area. Its inhabitants became Motley's primary artistic inspiration, and in this night scene—almost hallucinatory in color—he captured the full spectrum of urban experience, including residents in the background voyeuristically regarding the bustling parade of life in front of them. Motley often made strategic use of visual stereotypes, such as those common to minstrel shows. He rendered the man standing on a platform emblazoned with "Jesus Saves," for example, with exaggerated red lips. With such caricatures, Motley may have been poking fun at the ecstatic forms of worship he associated with recent arrivals from the rural Deep South. This approach would have been readily understood by African Americans at the time and was meant to be both sardonic and affectionate.

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

SUMMER DAYS, 1936



Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986), *Summer Days*, 1936. Oil on canvas, 36 1/8 × 30 1/8 in. 91.8 × 76.5 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Calvin Klein 94.171. © 2019 Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

In *Summer Days*, Georgia O'Keeffe suspended an animal skull and several Southwestern flowers above a barren desert landscape. The large scale of the bones and blossoms and their placement in the sky give the painting a surreal quality. For O'Keeffe, the animal skull and vibrant flowers were symbols of the cycles of life and death that shape the natural world. This composition belongs to a group of paintings in which the artist depicted the sun-bleached bones she brought back east from her summer sojourns in New Mexico. The deer, horse, mule, and steer skulls she collected became potent souvenirs of a landscape that had deeply inspired her.

HORACE PIPPIN

THE BUFFALO HUNT, 1933



Horace Pippin, (1888–1946), *The Buffalo Hunt*, 1933. Oil on canvas, 21 5/16 × 31 5/16 in. (54.1 × 79.5 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase 41.27

In Horace Pippin's *The Buffalo Hunt*, a buffalo moves across a snowy landscape, encircled by dogs, while a hunter waits, perched behind a hill. Pippin likely never witnessed a buffalo hunt. To make this work he may have called upon his memories of trapping in Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains as well as images from nineteenth-century engravings of the American West and other sources.

Pippin, an African American, served in World War I in the Third Battalion of the 369th Infantry, which was nicknamed the Harlem Hellfighters. The war, he later recounted, "brought out all the art in me"—but a severe shoulder wound he suffered then would limit the use of his right arm. Despite the injury, he continued to make art, and by the late 1920s began to work with oil paints. The artist started his career by showing his works in local stores in West Chester, Pennsylvania, but soon attracted the attention of collectors and museums.

JOSEPH STELLA

THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE: VARIATION ON AN OLD THEME, 1939



Joseph Stella (1877–1946), *The Brooklyn Bridge: Variation on an Old Theme*, 1939. Oil on canvas, 70 × 42 in. (177.8 × 106.7 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase 42.15

For Joseph Stella and many of his contemporaries, the central icon of American cultural achievement was the Brooklyn Bridge, which had been completed in 1883. He first depicted it in 1918 and returned to it throughout his career. He saw the bridge in religious terms, as a “shrine containing all the efforts of the new civilization of *America*—the eloquent meeting point of all forces arising in a superb assertion of their powers, in *apothéosis*.” Fittingly, he depicted the bridge as a modern-day altar, its soaring cables and pointed Gothic arches emphasized by his palette of blues, reds, and blacks that allude to light filtering through a stained-glass window.

GEORGE TOOKER THE SUBWAY, 1950



George Tooker (1920–2011), *The Subway*, 1950. Egg tempera on composition board, 18 1/8 × 36 1/8 in. (46 × 91.8 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Juliana Force Purchase Award 50.23. © Estate of George Tooker

George Tooker used a claustrophobic, labyrinthine subway station to portray the alienation and the isolation of contemporary urban life. These urban dwellers—all of whom seem to have the same face—seem frozen, trapped by the architecture of the subway station. Tooker rendered this distinctly modern subject in egg tempera, a medium associated almost exclusively with the Renaissance. The technique creates a smooth, matte surface and is ideal for making sharp, clear lines, which together lend the anxious scene an eerie placidity. The artist said that he attempted to paint reality in a way that would impress it “on the mind so hard that it returns as a dream.”

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Post-visit Objectives

- Enable students to reflect upon and discuss some of the ideas and themes from the exhibition.
- Have students further explore some of the artists' ideas through discussion, art-making, and writing activities.

1. Museum Visit Reflection

After your museum visit, ask your students to take a few minutes to write about their experience. What new ideas did the exhibition give them? Discuss the impact of seeing these works in person. For example, did the size or scale change their opinions of the work? Did students see different artworks or techniques in the exhibition that intrigued them? What other questions do they have? Ask students to share their thoughts with the class.

2. Artist as Storyteller: Expand the Scene

Alexander Calder performed his circus for friends and family. Edward Hopper shaped his view of the city by painting people as they appeared to him in brightly lit windows seen from passing El (elevated) trains.

- a. Both Hopper's painting and *Calder's Circus* could be considered as only part of the story. What do students think happened before and after the scenes that they saw in the galleries? Use the image for a writing activity or ask students to use one of the templates on pages 26 and 27 to expand the story. Have students imagine the scene beyond the image in both directions. For example, before or after, or extending the scene to what they might see beyond the edges of the image. Ask students to view and discuss their work. How did they choose to expand the scene?

3. Artist as Experimenter: Self-Portrait Sculpture

Ask students to look at Marisol's *Women and Dog* on page 18 and notice how she created this three-dimensional sculpture using found objects and photographs of her face.

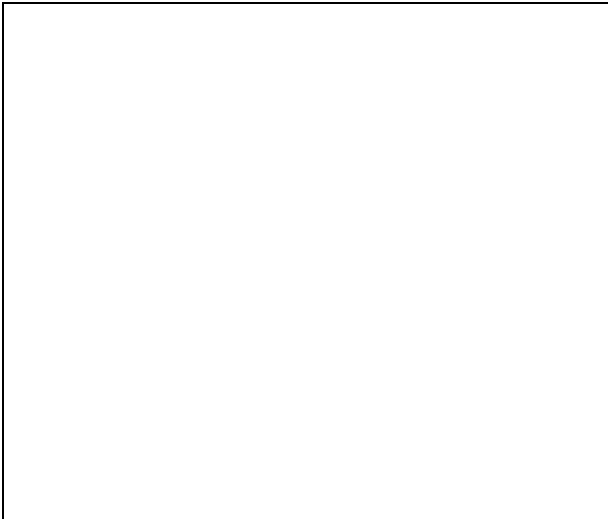
- a. Ask students to draw a figure in the center of a sheet of paper and include a drawn or photographic self-portrait. They could also add a pet or a favorite animal, and create a setting.
- b. Ask students to transform their drawings into three-dimensional objects. Have them curl the sheet of paper into a cylinder, then use magic tape or a glue stick to seal the edge and make it stand up. Students could create feet at the bottom of the paper cylinder by making slits at the base of the cylinder, or adding paper shapes that are folded and laid flat at a right angle—like tabs—to add to their cylinder.
- c. Ask students to view and discuss their sculptures. How did they depict themselves?

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

4. Artist as Critic: Signs of the Times

- a. For older students: Jacob Lawrence and Norman Lewis use irony and symbolism to critique the times they lived in. Lawrence's *Victory* questions what kind of victory African-Americans faced when they returned to the United States from fighting in World War II such as segregation, race riots, and limited economic opportunities. Norman Lewis painted *American Totem* at the height of the civil rights movement and real racial terror, combining abstraction with an evocation of a Ku Klux Klan figure.
- b. Have students describe what they see in Lawrence's and Lewis's paintings on pages 16 and 19. How are these artists using irony and symbolism to communicate a message? What do they draw attention to? Explore the meaning of the titles of these works and their association with the imagery in the paintings. What might Lawrence and Lewis have intended by using the words *Victory* and *American Totem*?
- c. Both Lawrence and Lewis use symbolism to represent the America of their era. What symbols can students imagine as representing contemporary America? Compare the paintings. What similarities can students find? What do they think the differences are between these works? Consider color, composition, mood, and expression.
- d. Ask students to research post-World War II segregation and the civil rights movement. What information can students find about social and political issues during these times? How might they apply their findings to their interpretation of these paintings?

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)



POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)



LINKS

Charles Henry Alston

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery information and artist biography.

<https://www.michaelrosenfeldart.com/artists/charles-alston-1907-1977>

Archives of American Art oral history interview with Charles Henry Alston.

<https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-charles-henry-alston-11460#transcript>

George Bellows

Metropolitan Museum of Art biography and images of works by the artist.

<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2012/bellows>

Smithsonian American Art Museum information and images of works by George Bellows.

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/george-bellows-329>

Alexander Calder

Artnet biography and timeline.

<http://www.artnet.com/artists/alexander-calder/>

Calder Foundation biography and photos.

<http://www.calder.org/life/biography>

Jay DeFeo

Artist foundation and biographical information.

<http://www.jaydefeo.org/>

Archives of American Art oral history interview with the artist.

<https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-jay-defeo-13246#transcript>

Elsie Driggs

Archives of American Art oral history interview.

<https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-elsie-driggs-13102>

Gratz Gallery biography.

<http://gratzgallery.com/inventory/index.php?page=out&id=253>

LINKS (CONTINUED)

Edward Hopper

Metropolitan Museum artist biography.

https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/hopp/hd_hopp.htm

Smithsonian American Art Museum biography and works.

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/edward-hopper-2297>

Jasper Johns

Metropolitan Museum artist biography.

https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/john/hd_john.htm

Museum of Modern Art artist information.

<https://www.moma.org/artists/2923>

Jacob Lawrence

Phillips Collection biography.

<https://lawrencemigration.phillipscollection.org/artist/about-jacob-lawrence>

Smithsonian American Art Museum biography.

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/jacob-lawrence-2828>

Norman Lewis

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery artist information.

<https://www.michaelrosenfeldart.com/exhibitions/norman-lewis-looking-east>

The Art Story biography.

<https://www.theartstory.org/artist-lewis-norman.htm>

Marisol

Grounds for Sculpture artist information.

<https://www.groundsforsculpture.org/Artist/Marisol-Escobar>

Artnet artist biography.

<http://www.artnet.com/artists/marisol-escobar/>

Archibald Motley

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery artist information and images.

<https://www.michaelrosenfeldart.com/artists/archibald-j-motley-jr-1891-1981>

Whitney Museum of American Art teacher guide.

<https://whitney.org/Education/ForTeachers/TeacherGuides/ArchibaldMotley>

LINKS (CONTINUED)

Georgia O’Keeffe

O’Keeffe Museum biography.

<https://www.okeeffemuseum.org/about-georgia-okeeffe/>

Metropolitan Museum artist essay.

https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/geok/hd_geok.htm

Horace Pippin

Phillips Collection artist biography.

https://www.phillipscollection.org/research/american_art/bios/pippin-bio.htm

National Gallery of Art teacher guide.

<https://www.nga.gov/education/teachers/lessons-activities/counting-art/pippin.html>

Joseph Stella

Artnet artist information.

<http://www.artnet.com/artists/joseph-stella/>

Phillips Collection artist biography.

https://www.phillipscollection.org/research/american_art/bios/stella_j-bio.htm

George Tooker

DC Moore Gallery artist information.

<http://www.dcmooregallery.com/artists/george-tooker>

Smithsonian American Art Museum biography.

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/george-tooker-4840>

World War II

<https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart8.html>

Library of Congress information about African Americans in World War II.

<https://museumofworldwarii.org/collection/america-enters-the-war/>

International Museum of World War II information and images.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/ww2_summary_01.shtml

BBC World War II summary.

LINKS (CONTINUED)

Civil Rights Movement

<http://exhibitions.nypl.org/africanaage/essay-civil-rights.html>

New York Public Library information and images.

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/freedom/1917beyond/essays/crm.htm>

National Humanities Center information and images.

<https://www.pbs.org/johngardner/chapters/4b.html>

PBS Civil right Movement overview.

<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/backgrounders/civil-rights-movement>

ADL information and images.

Whitney Museum

The Whitney's programs for teachers, teens, children, and families.

<https://whitney.org/education>

The Whitney's online resources for K-12 teachers.

<https://whitney.org/education/ForTeachers>

AT THE MUSEUM

Guided Visits

Guided visits are one hour and ten-minute thematic tours that build upon classroom learning. We introduce students to three to five works of art through careful looking, discussions, and activities that incorporate the artist's voice and process. Museum educators lead inquiry based conversations as well as sketching or writing activities in the galleries. To schedule a visit, please go to <http://whitney.org/Visit/GroupTours>.

Guided Visit Themes

School Programs uses a thematic-based approach to teaching in the galleries. We created these themes in order to foster thoughtful connections between K-12 classroom learning and the art on view. When you schedule a guided visit, you will be able to choose one of the following themes.

Artist as Observer (K-12)

How do artists represent the world around them? How do they choose to show people and places? This theme can address topics including New York City, community, landscape, and portraiture. This is a great thematic tour for first-time visitors as it incorporates visual literacy skills and introduces students to multiple ways of looking at and talking about art.

Artist as Storyteller (K-12)

How do artists tell a story? What is their point of view? This theme addresses ELA concepts such as narrative, tone, character, and setting and is recommended for literacy and writing classes.

Artist as Experimenter (K-12)

How do artists push boundaries and explore new concepts? This theme examines how artists experiment with materials, processes, and ideas. Younger students may look at how artists use formal elements such as line, shape, color, texture, and composition, or how they transform everyday objects. Older students may consider more conceptual questions, such as "What makes this art?" and "Why is this in a museum?"

Artist as Critic (6-12)

How do artists respond to the social, political, and cultural climate of their time? What does their work tell us about American life and culture? How can art serve as a catalyst for change? Students examine how artists respond to the topics that shape history, politics, and contemporary culture. This thematic tour can address subjects such as current events, war, gender, race, politics, and activism.

AT THE MUSEUM (CONTINUED)

Working with Museum Educators

If you are scheduled for a Guided Visit, your museum educator will contact you in advance. Let them know what preparatory work you have done, how this connects to the rest of your curricula, and what you would like your visit to focus on. The more you tell them, the better they can prepare for your visit. Please also let them know if your students have any specific needs. High school groups can spend extra time in the galleries after their guided tours only on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays when the Museum is open to the public.

All educators and students on Guided Visits receive a pass to return to the Museum for free.

Discuss Museum rules with students before your visit. We have found that works of art are more accessible if students are provided with some structure or direction, and we recommend giving students a task to complete while in the galleries. You may want to create a worksheet, free-writing or poetry activity, or a sketching assignment. To schedule a visit, please go to <http://whitney.org/Visit/GroupTours>.

whitney.org/ForTeachers

Check out our web resources especially for K-12 teachers! Here you can explore the Whitney's collection, try out an activity with your students, prepare for a Museum visit, and learn some tips for working with modern and contemporary art. For Teachers also includes discussion, research, art making and writing activities, downloadable teacher guides, and links to related websites.

ABOUT THE WHITNEY’S BUILDING

The Whitney’s building opened on May 1, 2015 and was designed by architect Renzo Piano. His design was inspired by the industrial character of the neighboring buildings in the Meatpacking District. There’s art all over the Whitney: in the galleries, stairwell, first-floor lobby, and on the outdoor terraces, which offer awesome 360-degree views of the city. Artist Richard Artschwager designed the building’s four elevators. Titled *Six in Four*, the elevators are based on six themes that occupied Artschwager’s imagination from the mid-1970s throughout his artistic career: door, window, table, basket, mirror, rug. Each elevator is an immersive installation comprised of one or two of these themes.

The Laurie M. Tisch Education Center

The Laurie M. Tisch Education Center is a hub of activity where visitors of all ages can engage with artists and enliven and enrich their museum experience. Centrally located on the Museum’s third floor and adjacent to the Susan and John Hess Family Gallery and Theater, the Laurie M. Tisch Education Center brings visibility to the educational mission of the Whitney and also provides opportunities for museum educators to work in new ways, offering audiences drop-in programming, hands-on learning, as well as in-depth and interdisciplinary programming.

Feedback

Please let us know what you think of these materials. Email us at schoolprograms@whitney.org. For more information about our programs and resources, please visit whitney.org/Education.

LEARNING STANDARDS

The projects and activities in this teacher guide address national and state learning standards for the arts, English language arts, social studies, and technology.

The Partnership for Twenty-first Century Learning Skills

<http://www.p21.org/>

Common Core State Standards

<http://www.corestandards.org/>

Links to National Learning Standards

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>

Comprehensive guide to National Learning Standards by content area

<http://www.education-world.com/standards/national/index.shtml>

New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards

<http://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-p-12-common-core-learning-standards>

New York City Department of Education’s Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts

<http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/teachlearn/arts/blueprint.html>

CREDITS

This Teacher Guide was prepared by Dina Helal, Manager of Education Resources; Heather Maxson, Director of School, Youth, and Family Programs, and Stina Puotinen, Whitney Educator.

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