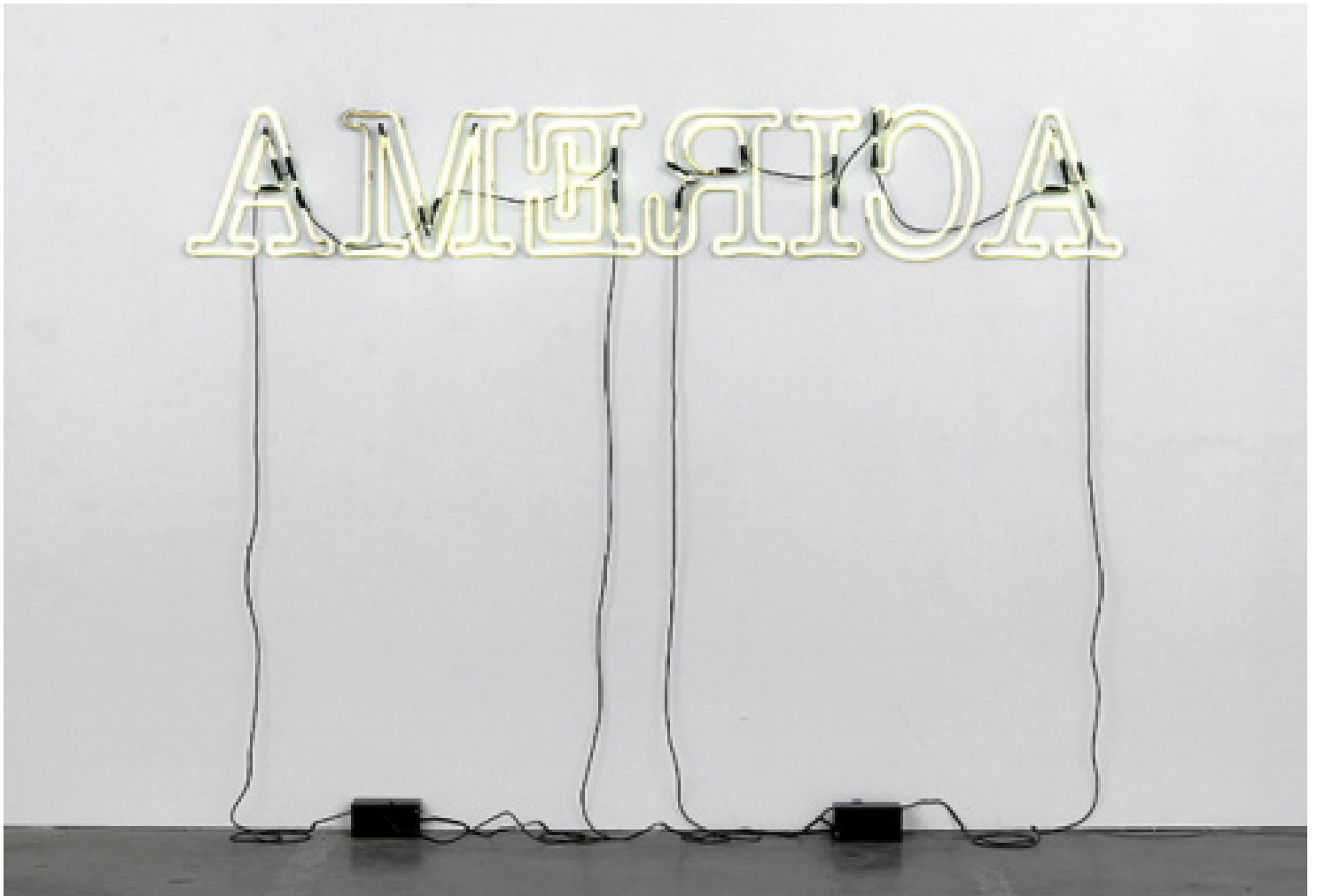


WHITNEY



**AMERICA IS
HARD TO SEE
TEACHER GUIDE,
GRADES K-5**

May 1–September 27, 2015

WELCOME TO THE WHITNEY'S NEW BUILDING!

Dear Teachers,

We are delighted to welcome you to the Whitney Museum's new building! With the opening on May 1, 2015, the Education Department launches an exciting program that features a broad spectrum of activities designed to engage diverse audiences. Organized around the idea of "Art as Experience," a title borrowed from the American philosopher and educator John Dewey (1859-1952), these programs demonstrate our approach to museum education as an experimental process in which art helps us to better understand the world around us and inspires creative thinking far beyond the Museum's walls.

Our in-gallery teaching builds visual literacy skills and introduces new ways of looking at art that encourage contemplation and sustained attention. For K-12 students we offer themed, guided visits that explore the multifaceted roles artists play in our culture—as experimenters, observers, critics, and storytellers—and forge thoughtful connections between K-12 classroom learning and the art on view. New York City public schools visit the Whitney free of charge thanks to an endowment from The Allen and Kelli Questrom Foundation.

For the first time in its history, the Whitney has a dedicated space for education. 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.

For detailed information about all of our programs, please visit whitney.org/Education. We look forward to seeing you and your students at the *America Is Hard to See* inaugural exhibition. Enjoy your visit!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn Potts". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathryn Potts, Associate Director, Helena Rubinstein Chair of Education

ABOUT THIS TEACHER GUIDE

How can these materials be used?

These materials provide a framework for preparing you and your students for a visit to the exhibition and offer suggestions for follow up classroom reflection and lessons. The discussions and activities introduce some of the exhibition's key themes and concepts.

p. 5	About <i>America Is Hard to See</i>
pp. 6-7	About the building
pp. 8-14	Pre- & Post-visit Activities
pp. 15-22	Images & Information
p. 23	Bibliography & Links

Which grade levels are these materials intended for?

These lessons and activities have been written for Elementary, Middle, or High School students. We encourage you to adapt and build upon them in order to meet your teaching objectives and students' needs.

Learning standards

The projects and activities in these curriculum materials 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>

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.

Cover image:

Glenn Ligon (1960-), *Rückenfigur*, 2009. Neon and paint, Overall: 24 x 145 1/2 x 5 in. (61 x 369.6 x 12.7 cm). AP 1/2, Edition of 3. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase, with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee 2011.3a-1 Courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects, Los Angeles

AT THE MUSEUM

Guided Visits

We invite you and your students to visit the Whitney's new building at 99 Gansevoort Street and the inaugural exhibition *America Is Hard To See*, on view at the Whitney through September 2015. To schedule a visit, please go to <http://whitney.org/Visit/GroupTours>. 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.

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. Groups can spend extra time in the galleries after their guided tours only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays when the Museum is open to the public.

All educators and students who have a Guided Visit will receive a pass which offers free admission to the Whitney during the school year.

High school non-guided visits

High School students are welcome to visit the museum during public hours in a self-guided capacity. Non-guided visits must be scheduled in advance. A maximum of 50 students may arrive at the museum together and must then divide into small groups (no more than 4 students per group) to visit the galleries. One chaperone must accompany 15 students.

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.

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.

We look forward to welcoming you and your students to the Whitney!

ABOUT THE INAUGURAL EXHIBITION AMERICA IS HARD TO SEE

Drawn entirely from the Whitney Museum of American Art's collection, *America Is Hard to See* takes the inauguration of the Museum's new building as an opportunity to reexamine the history of art in the United States from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present. Comprising more than six hundred works, the exhibition elaborates the themes, ideas, beliefs, and passions that have galvanized American artists in their struggle to work within and against established conventions, often directly engaging their political and social contexts. Numerous pieces that have rarely, if ever, been shown appear alongside beloved icons in a conscious effort to unsettle assumptions about the American art canon.

The title, *America Is Hard to See*, comes from a poem by Robert Frost and a political documentary by Emile de Antonio. Metaphorically, the title seeks to celebrate the ever-changing perspectives of artists and their capacity to develop visual forms that respond to the culture of the United States. It also underscores the difficulty of neatly defining the country's ethos and inhabitants, a challenge that lies at the heart of the Museum's commitment to and continually evolving understanding of American art.

Organized chronologically, the exhibition's narrative is divided into thematic "chapters" installed throughout the building. These sections revisit and revise established tropes while forging new categories and even expanding the definition of who counts as an American artist. Indeed, each chapter takes its name not from a movement or style but from the title of a work that evokes the section's animating impulse. Works of art across all mediums are displayed together, acknowledging the ways in which artists have engaged various modes of production and broken the boundaries between them.

America is Hard to See reflects the Whitney's distinct record of acquisitions and exhibitions, which constitutes a kind of collective memory—one that represents a range of individual, sometimes conflicting, attitudes toward what American art might be or mean or do at any given moment. By simultaneously mining and questioning our past, we do not arrive at a comprehensive survey or tidy summation, but rather at a critical new beginning: the first of many stories to tell.

Find out more about the exhibition here:

<http://whitney.org/Exhibitions/AmericalsHardToSee>

ABOUT THE BUILDING



Whitney Museum of American Art. Photograph by Ed Lederman

The Whitney's new building was designed by architect Renzo Piano. Piano's design was inspired by the industrial character of the neighboring buildings in the Meatpacking District. The connection to the neighborhood is integral to the building. The building is constructed mostly of concrete, steel, stone, reclaimed pine, and low-iron glass. Where it meets the street, the building is "raised" on narrow pillars creating the "largo", a public space right at the base of the High Line. There's art all over the new Whitney, in the indoor galleries, stairwell, first-floor lobby, and on the outdoor terraces. Piano designed a special outdoor staircase that goes from the sixth to the eighth floors that echo the forms of the fire escapes on buildings all over New York City. When you visit the Museum, take a walk outside with your students and check out the awesome 360 degree views!



Artschwager Elevator Model (Art / Passenger Elevator)

Step into an artwork! Artist Richard Artschwager designed the four elevators for the new building titled *Four in Six*. 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. The largest elevator is being inside a giant woven basket that lifts you (and artworks) up and down. In the second elevator you can peer into the looking glass. The third elevator opens, revealing a window and a door that might transport you to another world. In the fourth elevator, it is as though you are literally inside one of Artschwager's sculptures, under a table.

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. You may want to introduce students to at least one or two works of art in the exhibition. See the **Images and Related Information** section of this guide on **pages 15-22** for examples of artists and works that may have particular relevance to your classroom.

Objectives:

- Introduce students to the works of American artists and the ways in which they represented the world around them.
- Introduce students to the themes they may encounter on their museum visit.
- Explore how artists have interpreted the idea of “America” in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

1. Artist as observer: Joseph Stella, *The Brooklyn Bridge*



Joseph Stella (1877-1946), *The Brooklyn Bridge: Variation on an Old Theme*, 1939. Oil on canvas, Overall: 70 1/4 × 42 3/16 in. (178.4 × 107.2 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase 42.15 © artist or artist's estate

When Joseph Stella arrived in New York from a small Italian village in 1896, he saw the glamour and power of industry and the promise of social and economic opportunities. Stella especially liked the Brooklyn Bridge and its sweeping cables, glittering lights, bustling traffic, and spectacular views. He returned to the subject of the bridge throughout his artistic career. *Brooklyn Bridge: Variation on an Old Theme* (1939) shows the bridge's stone towers and multiple views of the city.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

View and discuss Stella's painting on **page 22** with your students. Imagine they have just stepped into the picture. Ask them to describe where they are and what they see.

What sounds might they hear?

Have students seen arches like those of the bridge before? Where?

How do they think the Brooklyn Bridge changed people's lives when it was first built?

Ask students to go to the windows in your classroom or school and look for shapes and lines that stand out. Have each student make quick pencil sketches from different points of view. Ask them to first draw what they see close up, then add some details that they see in the distance. Once they have finished drawing one view, they could move to another window or change the angle of their view. What did they choose to include? How did their drawings change when they moved to different angles or views?

2. Artist as storyteller: Edward Hopper, *Early Sunday Morning*



Edward Hopper (1882-1967), *Early Sunday Morning*, 1930. Oil on canvas, Overall: 35 3/16 x 60 1/4 in. (89.4 x 153 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase, with funds from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.426 © Heirs of Josephine N. Hopper, licensed by the Whitney Museum of American Art

Before making his paintings, Hopper began with sketches. For this painting he sketched the buildings on a New York City street. Back in his studio he combined them, often adding details from his imagination. For Hopper, it was more important to capture a feeling or mood than to represent the world exactly as it looked. Although there are no people in this painting, there is evidence of human presence. In the second story windows, each curtain and shade is arranged differently, suggesting that a different person occupies each room.

View and discuss Hopper's painting on **page 20** with your students. Ask them to describe what they see.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

What do students notice about this street?

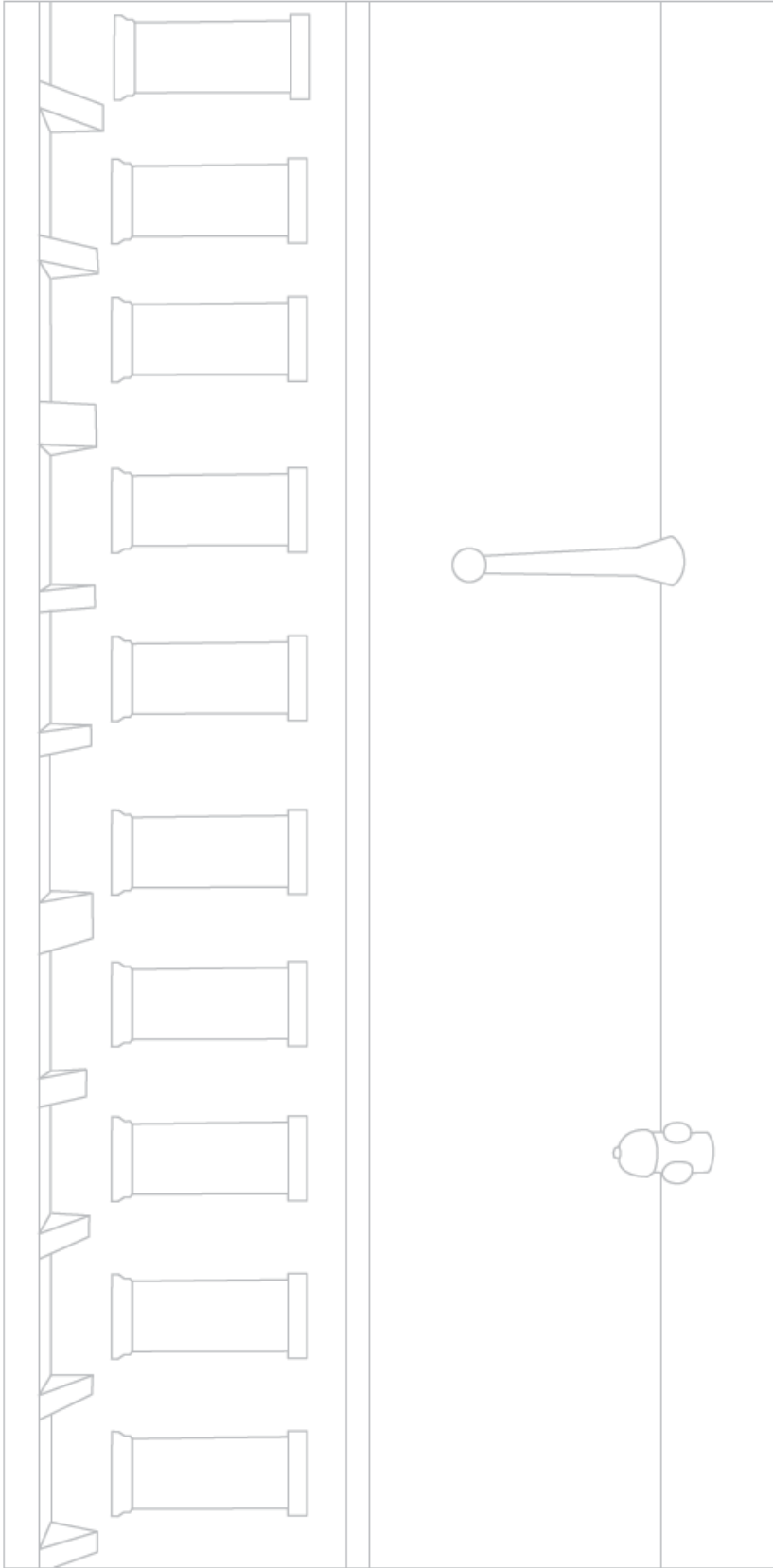
Ask students to look at the windows and notice the similarities and differences.

What might be missing from this street scene?

If your students could add two things to this painting, what would they be? Why?

Ask students to think about their own neighborhood. How is this scene similar to or different from where they live or go to school?

- a. Ask your students to imagine what the street in Edward Hopper's painting, *Early Sunday Morning* might look like when everyone wakes up. Print out the template on the next page and ask students to add details to the scene. For example, they can include people, dogs, cars, or whatever else they like.
- b. Ask students to work in small groups for this activity. Have them imagine Edward Hopper's painting, *Early Sunday Morning* as a scene in a film. Your students are the film directors. Ask them to write a script and draw a storyboard for one scene in the film. Give students different times of day to stage their scene. For example, 7 am, 12 noon, 4 pm, 7 pm, 11 pm. Have students perform their street scene, or they could form a tableau of one moment in the scene. Discuss how the scene changed at the different times of day. Did the mood of the scene change in any way? How?



POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

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 and art-making activities.

1. Museum Visit Reflection

After your museum visit, ask students to take a few minutes to write about their experience. What new ideas did the exhibition give them? What other questions do they have? Ask students to share their thoughts with the class.

2. Artist as experimenter: Multiple Materials



Lee Bontecou (b. 1931). *Untitled, 1961, (1961)*. Welded steel, canvas, wire and rope, 72 1/2 × 66 × 24 3/4in. (184.2 × 167.6 × 62.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase 61.41



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 Jay DeFeo Trust and purchase, with funds from the Contemporary Painting and Sculpture Committee and the Judith Rothschild Foundation 95.170 © artist or artist's estate

In *Untitled 1961 (1961)* (**page 15**) and *The Rose (1958-66)*, (**page 17**) Lee Bontecou and Jay DeFeo built up the surface of their work in relief. Bontecou included saw blades, metal spools, wire, rope, and soot in her work; DeFeo embedded small objects such as a barrette, bottle cap, keys, and wire in the oil paint of *The Rose*.

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Ask students to begin with a two-dimensional surface such as a wood panel or metal frame, and create a relief piece using art materials such as model magic, paint, paper, and wire, as well as small found objects.

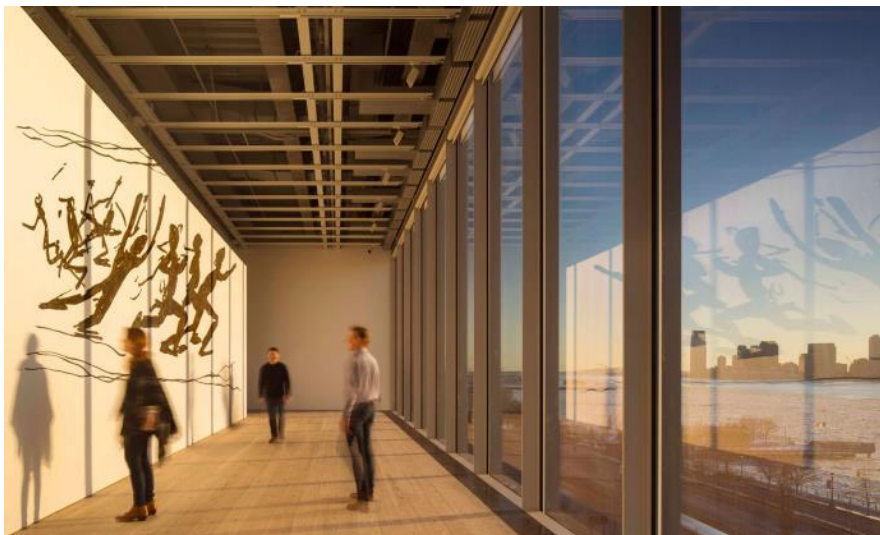
3. Artist as experimenter: Representing the figure



Marisol (b. 1930). *Women and Dog*, (1963-1964). Wood, plaster, synthetic polymer, taxidermied dog head and miscellaneous items, 73 9/16 × 76 5/8 × 26 3/4in. (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 Art © Marisol, Licensed by VAGA, New York, N.Y.



David Hammons (b. 1943). *Untitled*, (1992). Human hair, wire, metallic mylar, sledge hammer, plastic beads, string, metal food tin, panty hose, leather, tea bags, and feathers, Dimensions variable. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase, with funds from the Mrs. Percy Uris Bequest and the Painting and Sculpture Committee 92.128a-z



Jonathan Borofsky (b. 1942), *Running People at 2,616,216*, 1978-79. Latex paint on wall and/or ceiling, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase, with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee 84.43 © artist or artist's estate
Photography by Nic Lehoux

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Marisol, David Hammons, and Jonathan Borofsky represent the human figure in diverse and unexpected ways. Marisol included plaster casts of her own face, drawing, painting, and real objects—a photograph of herself, pocket book, and taxidermied dog’s head—in *Women and Dog* (1963-64) (**page 21**). David Hammons used hair, rocks, teabags, beads, feathers, and pantyhose in his sculpture (**page 19**), and Borofsky’s running people (**page 16**) can be installed differently each time on walls and ceilings.

Ask your students to create a flashlight figure mural. Tape butcher paper to your classroom walls, including the corners and uneven surfaces. Have students take turns being models, lighting crew, and artists. Ask students to use flashlights to project shadows onto the paper. Have them use markers to draw the outlines of the shadows on the paper. Students can play with scale, distortion, parts and whole, and layering. Encourage students to draw on the paper in the corners of the classroom or on uneven surfaces.

Switch on the classroom lights and have students add color and pattern to their figure mural. What did they find challenging, fun, or unexpected about this process?

IMAGES AND RELATED INFORMATION

On the following pages, 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.

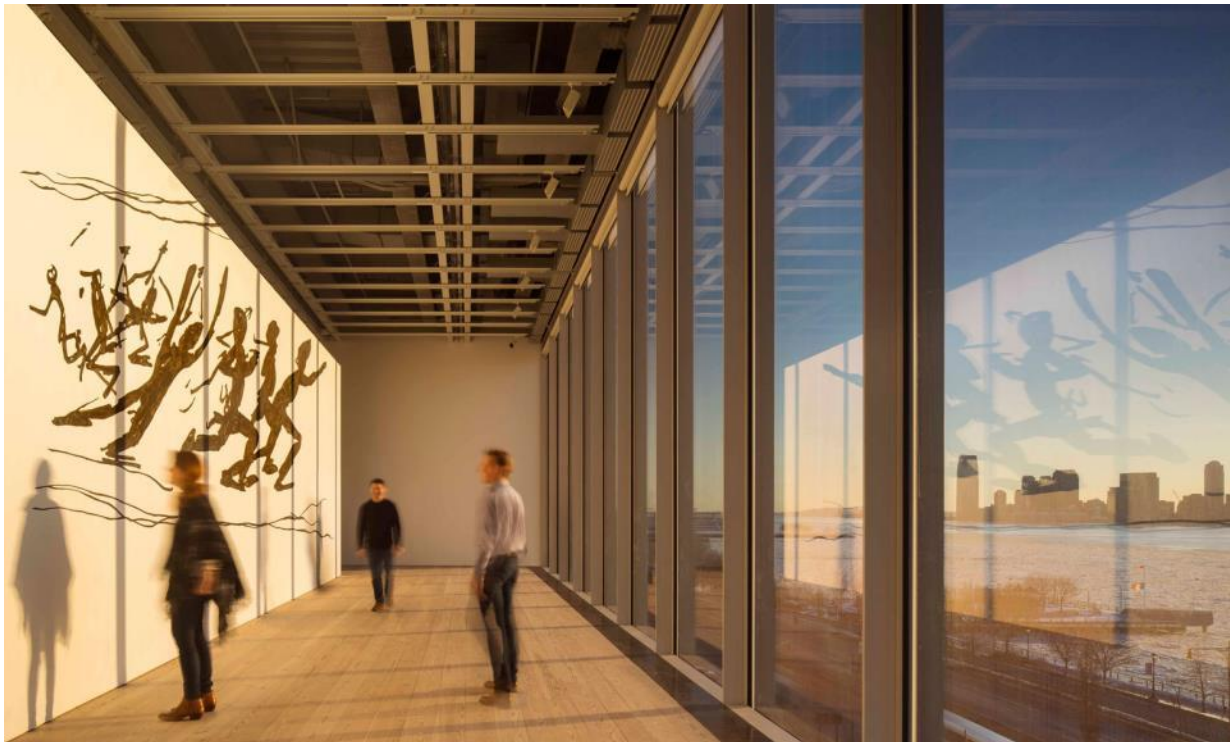
LEE BONTECOU UNTITLED 1961, 1961



Lee Bontecou (b. 1931). *Untitled, 1961, (1961)*. Welded steel, canvas, wire and rope, 72 1/2 × 66 × 24 3/4in. (184.2 × 167.6 × 62.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase 61.41

Between 1959 and the mid-1960s, Lee Bontecou made large-scale, metal-and-canvas wall reliefs. These hybrids of painting and sculpture were created by welding a metal armature and then using suture-like stitches to attach fragments of canvas with copper wire. Bontecou scavenged most of the canvas from bags and conveyor belts discarded by the laundry below her New York studio. She also included other found objects, such as grommets, saw blades, and rope. These objects are configured into a complex assemblage that hangs on the wall like a painting but projects more than two feet into the room. The visual allusions generated by this configuration range from destructive man-made devices to organic and geological structures: riveted airplane engines, celestial black holes, gun barrels, volcanoes, human orifices, and the segmented shells of insects. Bontecou has said that her art responds to the historical moment in which it was created: “I wish my work to represent or to be a part of my time. . .I want them to be things and facts inside us—from war to the wonders of the space age.”

JONATHAN BOROFSKY RUNNING PEOPLE AT 2,616,216, 1978-79



Jonathan Borofsky (1942-), *Running People at 2,616,216*, 1978-79. Latex paint on wall and/or ceiling, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase, with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee 84.43 © artist or artist's estate

Borofsky installed this work on the West Ambulatory, 5th floor, the inaugural exhibition, *America Is Hard to See* (May 1–September 27, 2015). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Photograph © Nic Lehoux

In 1974, Jonathan Borofsky made the first of many works directly on the wall, treating the blank surface as if it were a sheet of paper. He often used an opaque projector to assist him in realizing large-scale works, projecting doodles or sketches made on acetate gels onto walls or ceilings and then tracing over them with paint. This process allowed Borofsky to activate an entire room relatively quickly. Yet the artist's presence was not always necessary in creating the work, and in purchasing *Running People at 2,616,216*—the first wall drawing that Borofsky sold—the Whitney acquired the transparent gel and the drawings and instructions for reproducing it. Like much conceptual art of the 1960s and 1970s, a distinction is made between the idea behind the work and its execution.

Borofsky based *Running People at 2,616,216* on a 1976 drawing that was inspired by a dream, as were many of his works. The image can be projected in varying scales onto walls and ceilings, and unlike most works of art it can accommodate architectural and structural breaks. The number in the title refers to Borofsky's ongoing project of obsessively writing down numbers in sequential order. He started at 1 in 1969 and wrote numbers in succession for several hours per day, picking up where he had left off the previous day. This exercise became his personal record of time, and he regularly incorporated the number he had reached into the titles of his works.

**JAY DEFEO
THE ROSE, 1958-66**



Jay DeFeo (1929-1989), *The Rose*, 1958-66. Oil with wood and mica on canvas, 128 7/8 x 92 1/4 x 11 in. (327.3 x 234.3 x 27.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Gift of The Jay DeFeo Trust and purchase, with funds from the Contemporary Painting and Sculpture Committee and the Judith Rothschild Foundation 95.170 © artist or artist's estate

JAY DEFEO, THE ROSE, 1958-66 (CONTINUED)

Jay DeFeo began this monumental work simply as an “idea that had a center to it.” Initially, the painting measured approximately 9 x 7 feet and was called *Deathrose*, but in 1959, the artist transferred the work onto a larger canvas with the help of friends. She continued to work on *The Rose* for the next seven years, applying thick paint, then chiseling it away, inserting wooden dowels to help support the heavier areas of impasto. Now nearly eleven feet tall and weighing almost a ton, the work’s dense, multi-layered surface became, in DeFeo’s words, “a marriage between painting and sculpture.”

First exhibited in 1969, *The Rose* was taken to the San Francisco Art Institute, where it was covered with plaster for support and protection, and finally stored behind the wall of a conference room. Legend grew about the painting, but it remained sealed until 1995, when Whitney curator Lisa Phillips had it excavated and restored by a team of conservators, who created a backing strong enough to support the heavy paint. DeFeo resisted offering an explanation or interpretation of the work, although she did acknowledge that despite the work’s enormous size and rough surfaces, there was a connection to “the way actual rose petals are formed and how they relate to each other in the flower.”

DAVID HAMMONS UNTITLED, 1992



David Hammons (b. 1943). *Untitled*, (1992). Human hair, wire, metallic mylar, sledge hammer, plastic beads, string, metal food tin, panty hose, leather, tea bags, and feathers, Dimensions variable. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase, with funds from the Mrs. Percy Urus Bequest and the Painting and Sculpture Committee 92.128a-z

Finding inspiration in the streets and everyday life of the Harlem community where he lived in the early 1990s, David Hammons gathers castoff, ordinary, and ephemeral materials—ranging from fried chicken wings and liquor bottles to dirt and snow—for use in sculptures and performance works. In this untitled sculpture, an array of spiky tendrils seems to sprout from a small bed of smooth stones. A combination of the organic and the manmade, the plant- or spider-like form here is composed of bits of kinked black hair—gathered from the sweepings of barbershops—that are attached to long metal wires. Pieces of hair inevitably fall beneath and around the work, evoking natural processes of change and decay. Like much of Hammons’s art, *Untitled* summons an uncanny sensation of the strangeness that often lies just below the surface of the familiar. The work also alludes to vernacular African American traditions of making art out of whatever is at hand, and the hair suggests the presence of an extended community of countless anonymous individuals who indirectly contributed to its creation.

EDWARD HOPPER EARLY SUNDAY MORNING, 1930



Edward Hopper (1882-1967), *Early Sunday Morning*, 1930. Oil on canvas, Overall: 35 3/16 x 60 1/4 in. (89.4 x 153 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase, with funds from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.426 © Heirs of Josephine N. Hopper, licensed by the Whitney Museum of American Art

Early Sunday Morning is one of Edward Hopper's most iconic paintings. Although he described this work as "almost a literal translation of Seventh Avenue," Hopper reduced the New York City street to bare essentials. The lettering in the window signs is illegible, architectural ornament is loosely sketched, and human presence is merely suggested by the various curtains differentiating discrete apartments. The long, early morning shadows in the painting would never appear on a north-south street such as Seventh Avenue. Yet these very contrasts of light and shadow, and the succession of verticals and horizontals, create the charged, almost theatrical, atmosphere of empty buildings on an unpopulated street at the beginning of the day. Although Hopper is known as a quintessential twentieth-century American realist, and his paintings are fundamentally representational, this work demonstrates his emphasis on simplified forms, painterly surfaces, and studiously constructed compositions.

MARISOL WOMEN AND DOG, 1964



Marisol (b. 1930). *Women and Dog*, (1963-1964). Wood, plaster, synthetic polymer, 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-l Art © Marisol, Licensed by VAGA, New York, N.Y.

Equal parts painting, collage, carving, and assemblage, *Women and Dog* was inspired by sources as diverse as its constituent materials. Each of the four life-size, blocky female figures in the sculpture 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; while the small figure is a representation of Marisol as a child. Each is wearing a fashionable outfit of the period, accessorized with found objects that include a real purse and hair bow. The dog's head—which the artist purchased from a taxidermist—is a central element of the piece; the animal, tethered by his real leash, becomes another kind of accessory to these well-heeled ladies.

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, Overall: 70 1/4 × 42 3/16 in. (178.4 × 107.2 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase 42.15 © artist or artist's estate

To Italian-born Joseph Stella, who immigrated to New York at the age of nineteen, New York City was a nexus of energy. In the engineering marvel of the Brooklyn Bridge, which he first depicted in 1918 and returned to throughout his career, he found a contemporary technological monument that embodied the modern human spirit. Here, Stella portrays the bridge with a linear dynamism borrowed from Italian Futurism. He captures the dizzying height and awesome scale of the bridge from a series of fractured perspectives, combining dramatic views of radiating cables, stone masonry, cityscapes, and night sky. The large scale of the work—it is nearly six feet tall—conjures a Renaissance altar, while the Gothic style of the massive pointed arches evokes medieval churches. By combining contemporary architecture and historical allusions, Stella transformed the Brooklyn Bridge into a twentieth-century symbol, the quintessence of modern life and the Machine Age.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND LINKS

Miller, Dana, Ed. *Whitney Museum of American Art: Handbook of the Collection*. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2015.

<http://whitney.org/Exhibitions/AmericalsHardToSee>

America Is Hard to See exhibition information.

<http://collection.whitney.org/artists/by-letter/A>

The Whitney's collection.

<http://whitney.org/Education>

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

<http://whitney.org/ForTeachers>

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

CREDITS

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Education programs in the Laurie M. Tisch Education Center are supported by the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation, Inc; The Pierre & Tana Matisse Foundation; Jack and Susan Rudin in honor of Beth Rudin DeWoody; Joanne Leonhardt Cassullo and The Dorothea L. Leonhardt Foundation, Inc.; the Barker Welfare Foundation; Con Edison; public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; and by members of the Whitney's Education Committee.

Generous endowment support for Education Programs is provided by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, the Annenberg Foundation, Laurie M. Tisch, Steve Tisch, Krystyna O. Doerfler, Lise and Michael Evans, and Burton P. and Judith B. Resnick.

Free Guided Visits for New York City Public Schools are endowed by the Allen and Kelli Questrom Foundation.

The Whitney's Education Department is the recipient of a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.



America Is Hard to See is sponsored by the Henry Luce Foundation and Bank of America.

Major support is provided by the John R. Eckel, Jr. Foundation.

Generous support is also provided by the Juliet Lea Hillman Simonds Foundation, the Keith Haring Foundation Exhibition Fund, the Korea Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Philip A. and Lynn Straus Foundation.

