

THE BRANT FOUNDATION
ART STUDY CENTER

THIRD DIMENSION: IMAGINATION THROUGH ART
TEACHER GUIDE
Grades: K-2nd

This guide is designed to be used in conjunction with a visit to The Brant Foundation Art Study Center or in the classroom alongside the images provided. The suggested projects can be catered to all age groups.



MISSION

The Brant Foundation Art Study Center, located in Greenwich and New York, has a mission to promote education and appreciation of contemporary art and design, by making works available to institutions and individuals for scholarly study and examination. The Brant Foundation Art Study Center presents long-term exhibitions and extensive public programming for individuals of all ages.

The Brant Foundation strives to uphold its objective of art education advocacy by developing programs tailored to specific grade levels. These programs allow students to learn and work in a contemporary art institution through lessons designed to excite and inspire. More explicitly, because our K-12 programs are particular to individual classrooms, each group's current in-school curriculum is integrated into the docent-led tour and subsequent art project – making for a highly personalized, unique educational experience. Through immersive learning, the Foundation's activities encourage the exploration and exchange of ideas in order to develop deeper understandings of contemporary art and to help navigate today's highly visual society.



ARTISTS TO EXPLORE

David Altmejd

Karen Kilrnik

Rob Pruitt

Julian Schnabel

Franz West

INTRODUCTION

[THIRD DIMENSION: Works from The Brant Foundation](#) features twenty-five artists and over fifty artworks, all of which incorporate three-dimensional elements, allowing students to witness different styles in medium, process, and technique. This guide will focus on artists in the exhibition who transform everyday objects into art.

OBJECTIVES

- Introduce students to the artists and works in the exhibition
- Explore different materials used to make an artwork
- Discuss the differences between figurative and abstract art
- Discuss the meaning of creativity and open interpretations of artwork
- Have students create their own artwork inspired by the works in the exhibition

KEY TERMS

Sculpture, painting, medium, figurative art, abstract art, scatter art, found objects, collage, composition

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

1. What does **medium** mean in relation to art?
2. What materials can a **sculpture** be made of?
3. What materials are used to make a **painting**?



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

DAVID ALTMEJD (b. 1974) creates sculptures that often blur the distinction between interior and exterior, surface and structure, representation and abstraction. For Altmejd, the process of making is paramount—he is interested in how the act of constructing an object and the unconventional use of materials gives rise to meaning. The human body in relation to processes of decay, renewal and transformation is a principal theme, with more recent sculptures appearing to either create or destroy themselves. His sculptures, which range from monumental to head scaled works, often incorporate a myriad of unexpected materials (such as plaster, polystyrene, chain, hair, quartz, mirrors, and casts of hands and fruit), the combinations of which can be captivating, disturbing or extremely poetic. Motivated by the invisible worlds that often exist beneath the surface of things, the artist reveals the hidden structures in his own works through negative spaces: gaps, holes, fissures and crystal-filled orifices are a recurring motif.¹

KAREN KILIMNIK (b. 1955) Drawing correspondences between romantic tradition and consumer culture, Karen Kilimnik's work brings a haunting and contrary sense of beauty to contemporary art. The world of the ballet and childhood, romantic painting and pop music, icons of film and fashion, signs of witchcraft, time-travel, and murder comprise an imagery that has been culled from the fairytale and recent past into an unsettling present. In a world where the forces of nature, youth, and terror have taken awesome hold, Kilimnik's art rematerializes a quest for the romantic sublime.²

ROB PRUITT (b. 1964) is a contemporary American artist. Translating personal experience into broader political statements, Pruitt's work is eclectic and ironic, often striving to achieve a spectacle while retaining a sense of social, cultural, or artistic critique. Spanning the disciplines of painting, sculpture, photography, and performance, Pruitt's practice often bridges the gap between art and life, and has been met with both critical and commercial success.³

JULIAN SCHNABEL (b.1951) is an artist, filmmaker, musician, and writer, best known in the art community for his hasty rise to fame after the exhibition of his famous Plate Paintings at Mary Boone Gallery in 1979. Encouraged to draw by his mother during his childhood in Brooklyn, Schnabel's artistic interest piqued as a teenager when he encountered the art of the Mexican muralists. After earning his BFA at Houston University in 1973, Schnabel enrolled in the very prestigious Independent Study Program at the Whitney Museum, and began his career as an artist.⁴

FRANZ WEST (1947-2012) Emerging in the early 1970s, Franz West developed a unique aesthetic that engaged equally high and low reference points and often privileged social interaction as an intrinsic component of his work. While he was known primarily as a sculptor, his body of work incorporated drawing, collage, video, and installation, using papier-mâché, furniture, cardboard, plaster, found imagery, and other diverse materials. By playfully manipulating everyday materials and imagery in novel ways, he created objects that serve to redefine art as a social experience, calling attention to the way in which art is presented to the public, and how viewers interact with works of art and with each other.⁵

¹ <https://www.xavierhufkens.com/artists/david-altmejd>

² <https://www.303gallery.com/artists/karen-kilimnik/biography>

³ <http://www.artnet.com/artists/rob-pruitt/>

⁴ <http://www.artnet.com/artists/julian-schnabel/biography>

⁵ <https://www.davidzwirner.com/artists/franz-west/biography>





ROB PRUITT, *Esprit de Corps J Brand Jeans* (2015), Concrete, J Brand X Rob Pruitt Jeans, 61 x 24 x 22 in.

LET'S LOOK: Ask students to take a close look at this artwork

ASK: What is **figurative art**?

Since the early 1990's Rob Pruitt has made extremely fun and colorful artworks in various forms and **mediums**. In *Esprit de Corps J Brand Jeans*, we see two pairs of legs fashioned as a bench. Even though the sculpture is intended to be an idle object, it still exudes a lot of movement, like dancers or acrobats. Pruitt fills the jeans with an industrial material, concrete, which symbolizes the transition of jeans in fashion history. Once an industrial workman's garment, jeans are now also regarded as a fashionable item.

"It's just as fun to ruin something as it is to make something."

-Rob Pruitt

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- How is this artwork **figurative**?
- What do we know about this artwork based on the description provided?
- What found objects can you see within this artwork?
- What do you notice about the color of the jeans?
- How do the colors make you feel?
- How do you think this artwork was made?
- If you could display these legs as a different object, what **composition** would you use? Why?
- Do you like this artwork? Why or why not?
- What does this artwork mean to you personally?





FRANZ WEST, *Untitled* (2003), Paper mache, muslin bandage, plaster, paint
Sculpture: 68 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 41 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 25 $\frac{5}{8}$ in., Pedestal: 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 36 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.

ASK What is **abstract art**?

Using various **mediums**, Franz West's work combines **abstract** and interactive **sculpture**, furniture, and **collage** that engage the viewer. West's artworks often fused these **mediums** together to project a playful approach both in how they look visually, and their meaning. Franz West believed that through the act of standing in front of, walking around, or being in close proximity to a sculpture, the viewer's engagement becomes part of the artwork.⁶ This directs us to another important theme of Franz West's work, the body, which is not only about how the human body interacts with art but how the **composition** of his art takes on a bodily or organic form.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Is this artwork **abstract** or **figurative**? Can you explain why you feel this way?
- How would you describe the **composition** of this artwork?
- Does it remind you of a human body? Why or why not?
- What is the artwork's **medium**?
- What colors do you see?
- How do you feel about being a part of an artwork by just walking around or viewing it closely?
- This artwork is *Untitled*, if you could give it a title based on what you see, what would you name it? Why?

⁶ Editors, Artspace. "The Perception of Art Takes Place Through the Pressure Points That Develop When You Lie on It: A Q&A with Franz West." *Artspace*, 13 Dec. 2017, www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews_features/book_report/franz-west-55144.





KAREN KILIMNIK, *Switzerland, the Pink Panther & Peter Sellars & Boris & Natasha & Gelsey Kirkland in Siberia* (1991)

LET'S LOOK: Take a few minutes to view this work and the materials used

Karen Kilimnik's installation work employs a mixture of imagery, objects, and nostalgia and belongs to the movement of **scatter art**. In her installations, the artist presents items from pop culture with a whimsical, fairy tale twist that fuels the imagination of the viewer, allowing them to create their own narrative based on the connections they make with the objects she uses. This piece is made from several **found objects**. The contents are organized thematically, but are meant to display the interplay between art, popular culture, and the romanticism of century old art.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What **found objects** do you see in this artwork?
- What other artist also discussed used **found objects**?
- How do you feel about an artist using **found objects** as a **medium** in an artwork?
- Bringing the focus back to this specific work, how would you explain the artwork's **composition**?
- Why do you think the artist placed all these objects and materials together?
- Where and when might this scene take place? What clues give you this idea?
- What effect does the snow and ballet slippers have on the other objects included in this piece?
- How does this artwork make you feel? Why?
- If you were to create a story behind this work, what would it be?





JULIAN SCHNABEL *The Sea* (1981), Oil, Mexican pots, plates, burnt wood, plaster, styrofoam, antlers, bondo on wood, 108 x 156 in.

LET'S LOOK: Ask students to look closely at this work.

Through exploration of brushstroke, line, shape, and color, Julian Schnabel conveys strong feelings of emotion in his work. Schnabel paints on a very large scale, creating both an overwhelming and peaceful experience. This work of art was made outside in Long Island, overlooking the Pacific Ocean, but by observing the artifacts included in this work, this scene feels more inspired by the Mediterranean Sea and ancient ruins from past civilizations. The ocean is something that can be symbolized as relaxing and clarifying but can also be seen as fearful and violent at times. In this work, Schnabel creates a pictorial image that exudes the ocean's balance of chaos and tranquility.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What **medium** is the artist using?
- Do you think the artist is using **found objects**? Why or why not?
- Do you think this is a **painting** or a **sculpture**?
- Can an artwork be both a **painting** and **sculpture**?
- How does the artist make this work look or feel like the ocean?
- Why do you think the artist uses the wood? How does this connect to the sea?
- What does the piece of wood look like to you?
- What story do you think the artist has created by **painting** the ocean this way?
- What would you add to this artwork to make it feel more like the ocean?





DAVID ALTMEJD, *The Island* (2011), Polystyrene, expandable foam, epoxy clay, epoxy gel, wood, synthetic hair, resin, quartz, Plexiglas, coconuts, acrylic paint, metal wire, glitter, latex paint, 144 x 40 x 40 in.

The Island is a larger-than-life figure that has multiple layers created with different materials. This **sculpture's composition** suggests a beast, a human, or a giant made of small organic systems. Altmejd studied biology and his work engages with the knowledge he obtained from this area of study, while also using anatomical language from other sources, including the mythical figure of the werewolf. Using the various materials seen in this **sculpture**, he examines the ways in which objects can embody and communicate creativity through both material and form. For Altmejd, it's the process of creating and using materials that generates the meaning of the overall artwork.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What do you think this **sculpture** represents?
- What different materials do you see the artist using?
- What materials look like **found objects**? Where would we find these objects?
- The name of this **sculpture** is *The Island*. Why do you think the artist gave this **sculpture** this name?
- How does the title connect to the materials he is using?
- Do you think the size of this **sculpture** is important to the overall work?
- How would it feel different if it was much smaller?
- What story would you make up about this **sculpture**?
 - Who is it?
 - Where does it come from?
 - What is its story?
- If you had a chance to rename this artwork, what would your title be? Why?



PROJECT

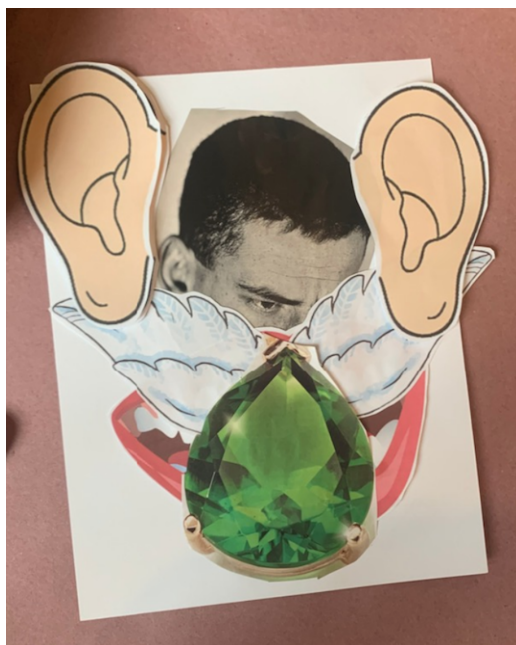
Students will create their own collage inspired by the artworks discussed.

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Magazine clippings
- Glue/tape

ACTIVITY

1. Have students cut out, or pre-cut in advance, images from various magazines they would like to use to create their own figure. For example, someone's head, an arm, a flower, or a shape that represents a human or animalistic form.
2. Students will be instructed to glue the pieces onto a piece of paper in the shape of an organic being, either abstract or figurative.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What did you make?
2. Where is your figure from?
3. What is the title of your work?

EXHIBITION REFLECTION

1. What did you learn from the artworks you saw today?
2. What artworks interested you the most? Why?
3. Which was your least favorite artwork? Why do you say that?



KEY TERMS

Sculpture: A three-dimensional art form.

Painting: A solid flat surface that contains paint, pigment, color or other mediums. The mediums are commonly applied with a brush, but also include the use of knives, sponges, and airbrushes.

Medium: Refers to the materials used to create an artwork.

Figurative Art: Strongly resembles things from the real world, particularly the human figure.

Found Object: An object found by an artist that is turned into an artwork through changing its context and original function.

Composition: The arrangement of parts or forms within an artwork

Abstract Art: A style of art that uses shapes, colors, forms, and textures to express ideas and/or emotions. Abstract art does not imitate people, objects, or places realistically.

Scatter Art: This style of art surfaced in the 1980's and is a variation of installation art, consisting of randomly collected materials that have aesthetic meaning only by virtue of their chance arrangement.

Collage: An artwork that contains different materials such as photographs, magazine clippings, pieces of paper, and/or fabric arranged onto a supporting surface.

LEARNING STANDARDS

The project and lesson within this teacher guide adhere to the national and state learning standards for the arts.

New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards in the Arts

<http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/arts>

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

<https://www.weteachnyc.org/resources/resource/visual-arts-blueprint-for-teaching-and-learning-1/>

NATIONAL CORE STANDARDS (VISUAL ARTS)

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Cr1.1.Ka Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Cr1.2.Ka Engage collaboratively in creative art-making in response to an artistic problem

1ST VA:Cr1.1.1a Engage collaboratively in exploration and imaginative play with materials.

1ST VA:Cr1.2.1a Use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art.

2ND VA:Cr1.1.2a Brainstorm collaboratively multiple approaches to an art or design problem.

2ND VA:Cr1.2.2a Make art or design with various materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Cr2.1.Ka Through experimentation, build skills in various media and approaches to artmaking.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Cr2.3.Ka Create art that represents natural and constructed environments.

1ST VA:Cr2.1.1a Explore uses of materials and tools to create works of art or design.

1ST VA:Cr2.2.1a Demonstrate safe and proper procedures for using materials, tools, and equipment while making art.



- 1ST VA:Cr2.3.1a** Identify and classify uses of everyday objects through drawings, diagrams, sculptures, or other visual means.
- 2ND VA:Cr2.1.2a** Experiment with various materials and tools to explore personal interests in a work of art or design.
- 2ND VA:Cr2.2.2a** Demonstrate safe procedures for using and cleaning art tools, equipment, and studio spaces.
- 2ND VA:Cr2.3.2a** Repurpose objects to make something new.

Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Cr3.1.Ka-2ND VA:Cr3.1.2a-2ND VA:Cr3.1.2a

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

2ND VA:Pr4.1.2a Categorize artwork based on a theme or concept for an exhibit.

Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Pr5.1.Ka-2ND VA:Pr5.1.2a

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work

KINDERGARTEN VA:Re.7.1.Ka Identify uses of art within one's personal environment.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Re.7.2.Ka Describe what an image represents.

1ST VA:Re.7.1.1a Select and describe works of art that illustrate daily life experiences of one's self and others.

1ST VA:Re.7.2.1a Compare images that represent the same subject.

2ND VA:Re.7.1.2a Perceive and describe aesthetic characteristics of one's natural world and constructed environments.

2ND VA:Re.7.2.2a Categorize images based on expressive properties.

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Re8.1.Ka-2ND VA:Re8.1.2a

Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Re9.1.Ka-2ND VA:Re9.1.2a

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

KINDERGARTEN VA:Cn10.1.Ka-2ND VA:Cn10.1.2a

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding

KINDERGARTEN VA:Cn11.1.Ka-2ND VA:Cn11.1.2a

COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.1.A-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.A
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.1.B-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.B
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.3-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.3
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.4-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.4
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.5-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.5
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.6-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.6

