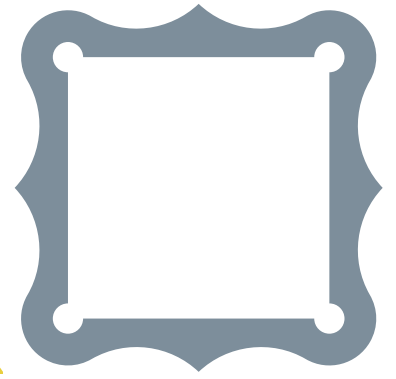


Chapter 1

What is Art?



Chapter Objective: In this chapter we will explore the definition of art.

Supported Standards

National Arts Standards

- Anchor Standard #7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Anchor Standard #8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Anchor Standard #10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Anchor Questions


- What is art?
- What does art look like?
- What media can we use to make art?
- Why is art necessary?
- How is art understood?
- How does art deepen our understanding of ourselves and the world?

Introduction

Fun Fact: The founding of Rome took place on 21 April 753 BCE

“The term ‘art’ is related to the Latin word ‘ars’ meaning art, skill, or craft. The first known use of the word comes from 13th-century manuscripts. However, the word **art** and its many variants (*artem, eart, etc.*) have probably existed since the founding of Rome.” ([Source](#))

How do we define art? This question has been debated by humans for centuries. Plato, a philosopher in Ancient Greece, believed that art or “[mimesis](#)” had to be representational, meaning art should look like the thing the artist was inspired by. During the 1700s it became important that art included the principles of art and design (balance, rhythm, harmony, unity, etc.). In the 1800s (the Romantic era) it was thought that art should evoke an emotional response from the viewer.

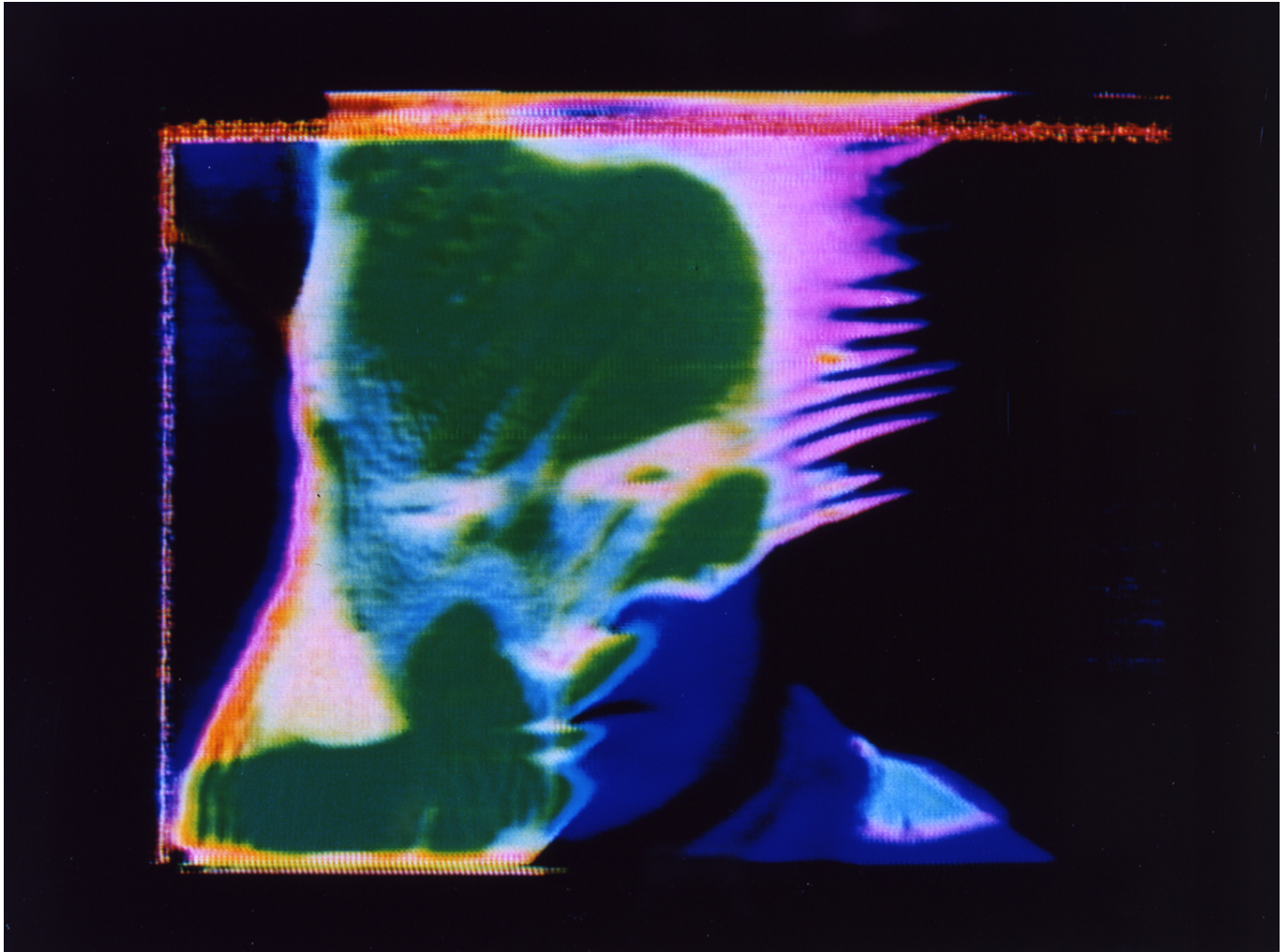


Utilize a lesson from the *New York Times*:
[“What Is Art? Considering and Creating Artistic Works.”](#)



Watch this video for a great [“What is art?”](#) overview.












Nam June Paik (South Korean, 1932–2006), *Untitled (Humphrey Bogart)*, 1997. Cibachrome, 14 x 11 in. (35.6 x 27.9 cm). Museum purchase, Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, 98.1.1.

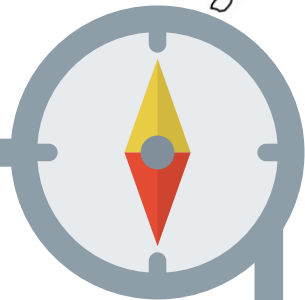
Art in Context

Use this map to explore the major events that shaped Nam June Paik's life and career.



Most of this artist's important events took place in East Asia, Europe, and North America. Let's take a closer look!

-  **Gyeongseong, Korea** - Paik was born July 20, 1932, in what is now Seoul, the capital of South Korea.
-  **Tokyo, Japan** - Paik graduated from the University of Tokyo where he studied art, music history, and philosophy.
-  **Wuppertal, Germany** - First solo show, *The Exposition of Music - Electronic Television*, at Galerie Parnass in 1963 was a preview to the groundbreaking work he would produce later (such as [Electronic Superhighway](#), 1995).
-  **New York, New York** - Paik's move to New York City in 1964 allowed for collaborations with many famous visual artists and musicians, including David Bowie!
-  **Paris, France** - Paik's installation *Good Morning, Mr. Orwell* was a live international satellite broadcast that occurred on New Year's Day in 1984.
-  **Miami, Florida** - Paik died January 29, 2006, at the age of 73, due to complications related to a stroke.
-  **Seoul, South Korea** - The [Nam June Paik Art Center](#) was opened in Paik's honor two years after his death. While he was still living, he conceptualized the center as being "the house where the spirit of Nam June Paik lives on."





LaToya Ruby Frazier (American, b. 1982), *Me and Mom's Boyfriend Mr. Art*, 2005. Gelatin silver print, 16 x 20 in. (40.6 x 50.8 cm). Museum purchase with funds from Mrs. Martha W. Smith by exchange, Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, 2009.12.1.

Art in Context

Explore photography through LaToya Ruby Frazier's work.

In Frazier's photograph *Me and Mom's Boyfriend Mr. Art*, she shows us an insider's look into family life in her hometown of Braddock, Pennsylvania, and challenges her family members face. Photography of this kind leads the viewer to create human connections and wonder about the daily lives and struggles of the people who appear in the image. [See more of Frazier's work here.](#)

How does photography spark creativity?

Some saw the introduction of photography in the 19th century as a threat to classical art. One artist of this time, Paul Delaroche, even went so far as to declare, **"From today, painting is dead!"** after seeing examples of a [daguerreotype](#) photograph around 1839. But not everyone had such an extreme view. Others began to explore more abstract and expressive art as a creative response to the realism of photography.

As technology progressed, photographers found a new way to creatively capture the world around them. [Learn more](#) about how advancements in technology have changed the art medium of photography.



"Be in a relationship with your photographs; follow where they lead you."

-[LaToya Ruby Frazier](#)

Ask a Curator: Katherine Ryckman Siegwarth, Biennial Director at FotoFocus.

Email Christine.Fleming@marquette.edu to ask a photography-related question.

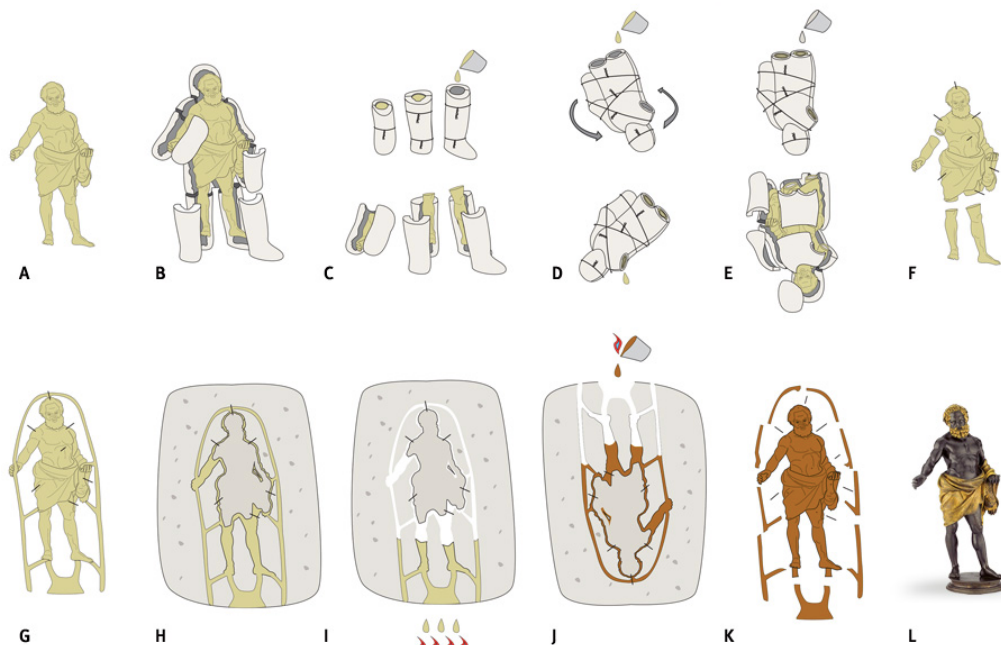




Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (French, 1827–1875), *Figaro*, ca. 1873. Bronze, 22 in. (55.9 cm). Gift of Catherine and David A. Straz, Jr. in Honor of Dr. Curtis L. Carter, Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, 96.3.

Art in Context

Explore sculpture through Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux's work.



Lost-Wax Casting

This sculpture technique is an elaborate, multi-step process that dates back to around 3000 BCE and includes using clay molds filled with hot bronze. [Watch this animated short](#) to see the full process of bronze casting. Throughout history sculptors utilized this technique to make detailed copies of marble statues. Artists still use this lost-wax technique today!



**Figaro,
Figaro,
Figaro!**

Fun Fact: Milwaukee has its own large bronze public sculpture, [the Bronze Fonz!](#) Fonzie is a character from a Milwaukee-based television show, *Happy Days*.

How did Carpeaux experiment with sculpture?

Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux was [commissioned](#) by many wealthy and important people of his time to create artwork. In fact, his work creating portrait sculptures made him a favorite of Napoleon III and his court! Carpeaux was known for bold, expressive figures that rivaled the more subdued styles of his time. Figaro was inspired by a popular opera, [The Barber of Seville](#). Explore more of his work at [Artcyclopedia](#).



Gillis Mostaert (Netherlandish, 1528 or 1529–1598), [*Entry of Christ into Jerusalem and Scenes of the Passion*](#), ca. 1570. Oil on canvas, 43 1/2 x 50 1/2 in. (110.5 x 128.3 cm).
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Marc B. Rojzman, Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, 58.9.

Art in Context

Explore what it was like in 16th-century Europe through Gillis Mostaert's work.

Art in 16th-Century Europe

Gillis Mostaert was a painter who lived in Northern Europe. He painted religious subjects as well as landscapes and portraits of his town, Antwerp. Mostaert helped [genre art](#) (scenes of everyday life) become popular through his paintings of small figures.

During this time, not many people knew how to read. Painted images were one of the most important ways of spreading ideas. People would use these painted images, or religious [icons](#), in order to tell stories and indicate special meaning.



Mostaert painted this scene, *Village Life*, in 1590. Try comparing it to your own neighborhood. Does anything look similar? What looks different?



How did art change during this time?

Northern European countries perfected [recipes for oil paint](#). This allowed for more detail in paintings.

Gillis Mostaert created genre paintings in the late 1500s. Oil paint helped him render small figures in the scenes of his town in **Belgium**.

1400s

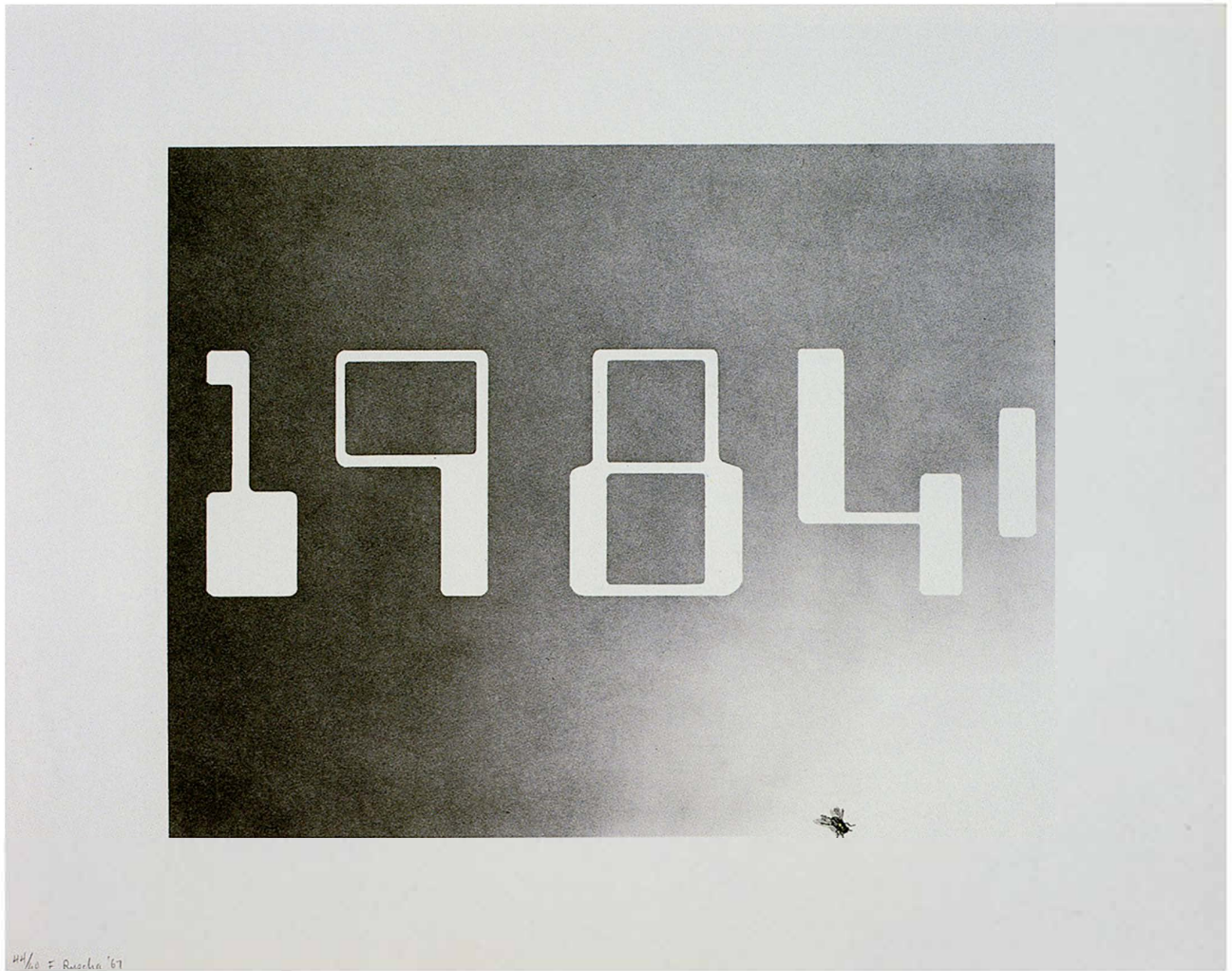
1517

1590

Religious artworks were popular in this period, but became even more so during the lead up to the [Protestant Reformation](#) in the mid-1500s.



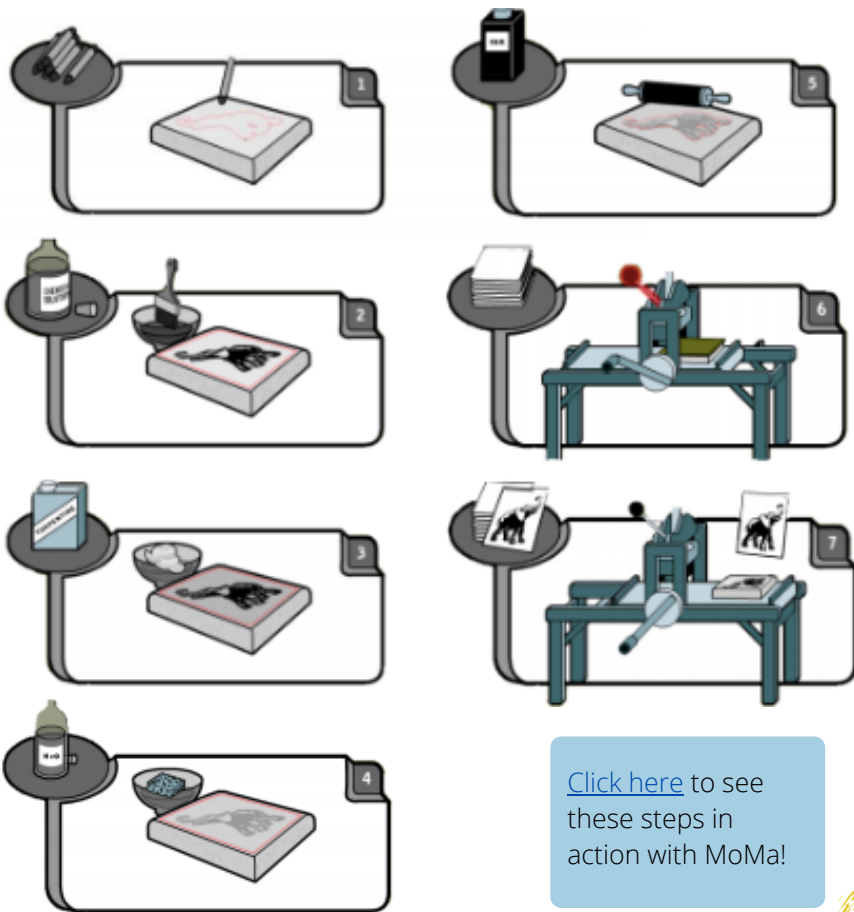
Check out [popular games](#) from history!



Edward Ruscha (American, b. 1937), [1984](#), 1967. Gemini G.E.L., publisher. Lithograph and watercolor, 13 7/8 x 17 5/8 in. (35.24 x 44.77 cm). Museum purchase, Heller Art Acquisition Fund, Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, 2012.1.

Art in Context

Explore lithography through Edward Ruscha's work.



[Click here](#) to see these steps in action with MoMa!

Lithography

Lithography is a way to [print an image](#) from stone or metal plate. The image is drawn with a greasy crayon. When processed, the grease sticks to the ink, and water prevents the ink from sticking to the non-image areas when the image is printed. It can be printed multiple times and distributed to the public!

Good art should elicit a response of "Huh? Wow!" as opposed to "Wow! Huh?"

[Edward Ruscha](#)

How did Ruscha use lithography?

Ruscha has always been fascinated with language. In his work, he explores what happens to language when you change its design. This style is called [Pop Art](#) and has been a sensational form of artwork used by many artists since the 1950s. Ruscha and many other Pop artists enjoyed using printing techniques in order to mass-produce their art and have it seen by many people!





Joan Miró (Spanish, 1893–1983), *Untitled*, 1961. Lithograph, 29 3/4 x 21 in. (75.6 x 53.3 cm). Gift of Mr. Russ Jankowski, Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, 2005.3.

Art in Context

Use this timeline to explore the major events that shaped Joan Miró's life.

Fun Fact: Miró used any medium and technique possible to visually capture his ideas, attempting everything from scorching to [finger painting](#).



[Watch a video](#) of Miró's famous art!

Beginnings

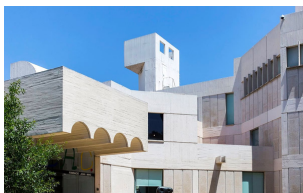
Joan Miró was born in Barcelona, Spain.

Uprooted by conflict

Miró and his family fled the [Spanish Civil War](#), only to be uprooted again a few years later when World War II erupted in Europe.

Miró Museum

The Miró Museum and the [Fundació Joan Miró](#) were opened in Barcelona. Miró worked with his friend, the architect Josep Lluís Sert, to bring his vision for the center to reality.



Miró Museum

1893

1920

1936

1958

1975

1983

A life-changing trip

Miró took a trip to Paris after his first solo show ended in disappointment. Describing the inspiration that Paris gave him, he exclaimed, "I immediately burst into painting the way children burst into tears."

International acclaim

Miró won the Guggenheim International Award for his [ceramic mural](#) on the UNESCO building in Paris and continued to gain international acclaim.

Death

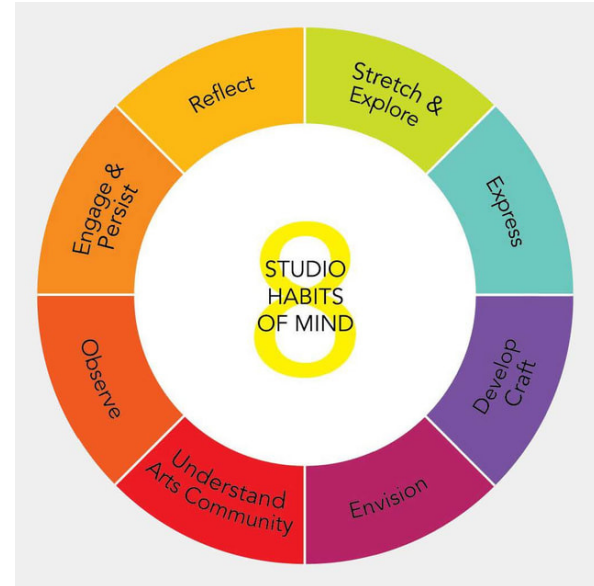
Joan Miró died at the age of 90 in Palma de Mallorca, Spain.

Experience and Create

Explore the artistic process with your students. Review each step before you start. These steps can occur in any order, and some might repeat throughout the making of an artwork.

Activity: Painting as Storytelling

Use Gillis Mostaert, [*Entry of Christ Into Jerusalem and Scenes of the Passion*](#), ca. 1570, as inspiration for your students to create a painting that tells a story.



- **Express:** how do artists tell a story with their art? What might happen if we were to transform a story into a painting?
- **Envision:** sketch out ideas. What [composition](#) did Mostaert use to paint his story? How might yours be similar or different?
- **Develop Craft:** practice creating with the painting materials available and techniques students have learned.
- **Engage and Persist:** encourage students to be flexible and persistent throughout the artmaking practice.
- **Observe:** make sure to balance teacher-led demonstrations and time for students to observe each other painting. Try out a partner pair and share or make time for students to walk around and look at in-progress artwork.
- **Reflect:** incorporate time for critiques for students to think and talk about their artwork and their classmate's artwork. Have they been successful in communicating the story? How have students told the same story in different ways?
- **Stretch and Explore:** give students opportunities to create collaboratively, incorporate art games, and elevate play and experimentation as an important part of the creative process.
- **Understand Arts Community:** build a school arts community by displaying sketches and final paintings around the school, during events, and online. Help your students view themselves as artists.

Experience and Create

How do you know a work of art is finished? *ARTnews* compiled responses from a few artists:



"Art is never finished,
only abandoned."
[Leonardo da Vinci](#)

"When I am forcibly
removed from it is the
correct answer."
Conceptual artist [Ellen
Harvey](#)



"For me, once the
piece has left the
studio, then I consider
it finished."
Contemporary artist
[Mark Sheinkman](#)



"The worst thing that
could happen is for me to
really finish a piece, and
by that I mean finish it in a
way that the metaphor I
mean to be there is
blocked." Sculptor [Ursula
von Rydingsvard](#)

[Click here to read](#) the full
article.

We recommend exploring this concept with your students using the ["Glow and Grow" critique activity](#). *This activity takes about 20 minutes.*

Make It Personal

What is art made of?

[Watch students try to answer that question at the Tate Modern.](#)



The term art media includes the material and tools used by an artist or designer to create a work of art. How many art media are featured across the chapters of this curriculum guide? Use these art media [bingo cards](#) with your class.

The artworks featured in this chapter include prints ([Untitled](#), Joan Miró, 1961), paintings ([Entry of Christ into Jerusalem and Scenes of the Passion](#), Gillis Mostaert, ca. 1570), photographs ([Me and Mom's Boyfriend Mr. Art](#), LaToya Ruby Frazier, 2005), and sculptures ([Figaro](#), Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, ca. 1873).



Why is art necessary?

Ask your students what they think.

What does art mean to you?

The Tate Modern asked students this very question; [watch their responses in this video](#). Learn more about artists Bob and Roberta Smith by visiting their [website](#).

“The arts matter because they help us see the world from different perspectives. They give us empathy and help us understand people, places, periods of history, and issues with which we may otherwise be unfamiliar. They comfort us in grief and energize us in celebration. They are important because they can act as a catalyst for change . . . they can start a revolution! The arts ignite something in our brains that I can’t explain, but I know it’s essential for life.”

— Jennie Terman, [National Endowment for the Arts](#)

Open Studio

Organizations and resources

Local



[Latino Arts](#) is dedicated to bringing cultural awareness, artistic educational experiences, and high-quality programming to the Greater Milwaukee and southeastern Wisconsin community, featuring Hispanic artists from throughout the world.

For over 30 years, [Walker's Point Center for the Arts](#) has been a cultural staple of the Walker's Point neighborhood and a powerful advocate for underrepresented artists in Milwaukee and beyond. It is one of the city's oldest and most beloved community art spaces (founded in 1987).



National



[Art School](#) is a KQED Arts series featuring contemporary artists working in fine art, performance, digital art, and more. Meet professional artists and learn about their personal histories and intentions, then follow along as they demonstrate how to make all kinds of art, from comics to beatboxing rhythms. Get creative with the new wave of Art School.



[The Art Assignment](#) is a weekly PBS Digital Studios production hosted by curator Sarah Urist Green. It explores art and art history through the lens of things happening today.

[Tate Kids](#) brings you films about art for kids!



Art in Action



Organize a classroom visit led by a HMA educator.

Lesson 1: In the first lesson, students will receive an overview of the different methods of art making. Students will explore two artworks to frame their conversation about media: [Figaro](#) by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux and [Untitled \(Humphrey Bogart\)](#) by Nam June Paik. They will be challenged to recreate digital work of arts inspired by work from the Haggerty Museum of Art's collection.

Lesson 2: Students will explore [Me and Mom's Boyfriend Mr. Art](#) by LaToya Ruby Frazier and will learn about the artist. This work will be used to investigate the story or meaning behind artworks and how artists leave viewers “visual clues” such as symbols, colors, and images for meaning making. In this lesson, students will draft stories about the artworks they created in Lesson 1 and will draw or collage new imagery that will include “visual clues” to support their stories.

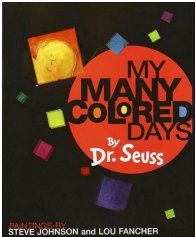
Lesson 3: Students will explore [1984](#) by Edward Ruscha and [Entry of Christ into Jerusalem and Scenes of the Passion](#) by Gillis Mostaert to conduct a deeper conversation about meaning making. How do we—as viewers—interpret art using the “clues” that artists include in their work to make connections and meaning? We can use art to represent ourselves and the world around us. In this lesson, students will use these ideas to create watercolor paintings depicting a time in which “art saved their life.”

Lessons can be scaffolded to meet the needs of any grade level.

Choose to do one lesson, or all three! Visit the Haggerty Museum of Art's [Educators webpage](#) to get started.

Book Recommendations

Books for kids.



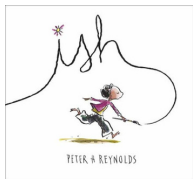
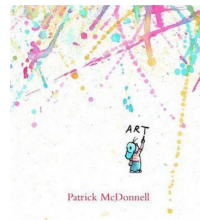
[My Many Colored Days](#)

Author: Dr. Seuss

Paintings by: Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher

[Art](#)

Author and Illustrator: Patrick McDonnell



[Ish](#)

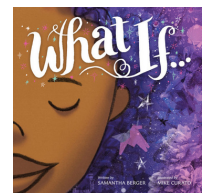
Author and Illustrator: Peter H. Reynolds

[For more book ideas, check out MAM's "Reading with Art."](#)

[What If...](#)

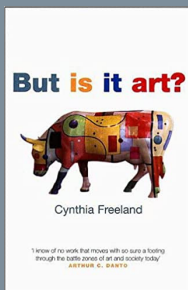
Author: Samantha Berger

Illustrator: Mike Curato



Click on each book title to follow along with a virtual reading.

Books for teens

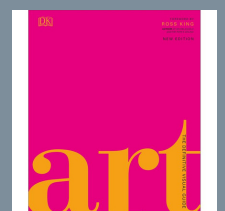


[But Is It Art?: An Introduction to Art Theory](#)

Author: Cynthia Freeland

[Art: The Definitive Visual Guide \(new edition\)](#)

Editor: Andrew Graham Dixon



[For more teen book ideas check out Five Books' recommendations.](#)