

ContemporaryART

in the Elementary Classroom

Engaging with contemporary art allows elementary students to connect with the issues and topics in the world today. By exploring contemporary art, we can forge meaningful connections around universal themes while keeping engagement relevant and fun for elementary students. Use these tips and resources from the May 26th webinar to build strategies for introducing contemporary art to students in grades K–5.

TIPS FOR TEACHING WITH CONTEMPORARY ART

- If you are using an instructional video with your class mute the video during discussion.
 - Give one focus question or ‘thinking job’ for students to think about while watching a video
 - Use Google Slides when showing a video to insert playback options to start and end at specific points
 - Show groups of images and challenge students to determine the theme
 - Print thumbnail pictures of artworks for students to collect in a sketchbook
 - Show portraits of artists with their artwork
 - Periodically examine the artists you have shared to check for balance of male/female/culture/ethnicity
 - When using historical art examples, find contemporary examples that deal with similar themes to show as well
 - Use stories about artists experiences in school or as children and illustrate how the experiences influenced their career or point of view
- When using Art21 videos, view them ahead of time. Consider showing a short 1–3 minute segment of a video to demonstrate an idea or process you are teaching. For example:
- Process (firing a kiln like Arlene Schehet)
 - Scale (Show students a very large canvas like Julie Mehretu’s)
 - What a studio looks like (look at Cindy Sherman’s studio with many props)
 - How some artists use non-traditional materials (watch how Mark Bradford creates his work)
 - How to reflect on your work
 - How artists install work in a gallery
 - How artists talk about their art
 - How artists collaborate (Janine Antoni)
 - How artists address freedom (Ai WeiWei)
 - How artists address colonialism (El Anatsui)
 - How artists keep collections (Mark Dion) and compare with The Getty’s collection piece: The Cabinet of Curiosities
 - How artists address the ecology/environment (Aurora Robson, Mark Dion)

RESOURCES

Art21 (Art21.org)

Artists to Consider:

- **Alex Da Corte:** art21.org/?s=Alex+Da+Corte
- **Creative Growth Art Center:** art21.org/?s=Creative+Growth+Art+Center+
- **Leonardo Drew:** art21.org/?s=Leonardo+Drew+
- **Cindy Sherman:** art21.org/?s=Cindy+Sherman+
- **Do Ho Suh:** art21.org/?s=Do+Ho+Suh+
- **William Wegman:** art21.org/?s=William+Wegman+
- **Oliver Herring:** art21.org/?s=Oliver+Herring+
- **Nick Cave:** art21.org/?s=Nick+Cave+
- **Educators Guides:** art21.org/for-educators/tools-for-teaching/guides
- **Educator-In-Residence Resources:** art21.org/?s=educator+in+residence
- **Teaching with Contemporary Art Resources:** art21.org/?s=teaching%20with%20contemporary%20art
- **Art21 Educators Program:** art21.org/for-educators/initiatives/art21-educators-program/about-art21-educators

Davis (DavisArt.com)

- **Curator’s Corner Blog:** CuratorsCorner.com
- **SchoolArts Magazine:** schoolartsmagazine.com
- **Davis Webinars:** DavisArt.com/covid-19-assistance/weekly-webinars

Books & Magazines

- *Think and Make Like an Artist* by Claudia Boldt & Eleanor Meredith
- *Museum Gallery Activities* by Sharon Vatsky
- *Just Like Me: Stories and Self-Portraits by Fourteen Living Artists* by Harriet Rohmer
- *SchoolArts* magazine



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WEBSITES

For Students

- **Tate Kids:** tate.org.uk/kids
- **The Artist Project: The Metropolitan Museum of Art:** artistproject.metmuseum.org
- **The Kid Should See This:** thekidshouldseethis.com
- **KQED Art School:** kqed.org/artschool
- **Google Arts and Culture:** artsandculture.google.com

For Teachers

- **Hyperallergic:** hyperallergic.com
- **Google Arts and Culture:** artsandculture.google.com
- **Designboom:** designboom.com
- **Colossal:** thisiscolossal.com
- **My Modern Met:** mymodernmet.com

MODERATORS

Emma Nordin (emma@art21.org)

Emma Nordin is the Manager of Education Initiatives at Art21, based in New York City. Art21 is a celebrated global leader in presenting thought-provoking and sophisticated content about contemporary art, and the go-to place to learn first-hand from the artists of our time. In this role, she supports new and existing educational programs and projects including content development, professional development, and event programming.

Kristi Oliver (koliver@davisart.com)

Kristi Oliver is currently the Professional Development Manager for Davis Publications, a company committed to helping art educators since 1901. Drawing from over 15 years of teaching experience in both high school and university settings, Dr. Oliver aims to assist communities in providing high quality art education experiences for all learners, students and teachers alike.

Robb Sandagata (rsandagata@davisart.com)

Robb Sandagata is the Director of Digital Curriculum for Davis Publications. He supports art educators, artists, and students through developing the Davis Digital art education platform, writing about contemporary artists for *SchoolArts* magazine, and editing groundbreaking books like *The Open Art Room* by Melissa Purtee and Ian Sands, the first TAB-based book for Secondary Level Art Educators. Based in Lowell, MA, he also is a practicing artist and curator interested in building connections between diverse local arts communities.

SESSION PANELISTS

Marie Elcin (marieelcin@gmail.com)



Marie Elcin is an Art21 Educator, has an M.Ed. from Tyler School of Art, Temple University, and is a practicing fiber artist living in Philadelphia, PA. She teaches 5th-8th grade art and technology at Christopher Columbus Charter School and is an instructor of youth programs at Fleisher Art Memorial.

Maureen Hergott (mrhergott@gmail.com)



Maureen Hergott has been teaching visual arts at the elementary level for eighteen years. She is an Art21 Educator and has a master's degree in Interdisciplinary Arts from Columbia College. She has presented her approach to teaching with contemporary art at the National Art Education Association Conference, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and The Art Institute of Chicago. She lives in Chicago with her family.

Natovian McLeod (nmcleod@bcps.org)



Natovian McLeod graduated from Maryland Institute College of Art in 2015 with her BFA in General Fine Arts and her Master of Art in Teaching in 2016. Currently Natovian is the coordinator of MICAs Art and Design College Accelerator Program and an elementary art teacher in Baltimore County Public Schools

Julia Mack Munar (julia.t.mack@gmail.com)



Julia Mack Munar is an elementary art teacher at PS 8 in Brooklyn Heights. This is her thirteenth year teaching visual arts at the elementary level in public schools. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a degree in Art Education as well as a master's degree in Special Education from Ohio University. She is an alumnus of the Art21 Educators program and has presented on teaching with contemporary art at the National Art Education Association Conference, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, and The Guggenheim.

Emily Sandagata (emilysandagata@gmail.com)



Emily Sandagata has been teaching art for seventeen years, holds an MA in Art Education from MICA, and teaches pre-K-5 at the Pike School in Andover, MA. She regularly exhibits her large-scale paintings made from found and natural objects. She is interested in the interplay between structure and freedom in art education.



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