



ART IN MOTION

TEACHER RESOURCE

WELCOME TO THE NEWARK MUSEUM OF ART!

Dear Teachers,

We are happy to present *Art in Motion* Teacher Resource. The goal of our school and teacher programs is to provide students an opportunity to connect museum objects with their own lives and understand how these objects connect to subject matter they are learning in their classrooms.

This teacher guide is based on our collection and provides a framework for you and your students. The discussions and activities introduce some key themes and concepts for classroom reflection and lessons.

We look forward to the conversations sparked among your students.

Thank you for choosing The Newark Museum of Art!

NMOA School Programs Team



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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

ART IN MOTION

*Every day's a little year,
Keep it new and full of cheer,
Keep it glad in any weather,
So, by adding days together—
All the whole big year is true—
Full of cheer and shining new!*

—Annette Wynne, *Every Day's a Little Year*

This program focuses on movement, mindfulness, and bodily awareness in response to the artworks. It encourages the idea that students may experience artworks in whatever way they see fit, whether it be an emotional reaction or a physical response.

Artists are motivated by numerous things around them and many use the physical action of creating their artwork as inspiration. Action, movement, and motion is prevalent in many works, and this program analyzes painting, sculpture, and mixed media to identify how these themes appear in each. Students will be given the opportunity to physically respond to artwork, with awareness given to a variety of sensory needs.

Students will be encouraged to perform slow observation, engage in conversation, form connections to their personal lives, listen to diverse perspectives and cultures, participate in activities, and think critically.

PRE-VISIT

SPARK A CONVERSATION

Before getting into the meat of the lesson, we recommend that you and your students explore and discuss the themes of the resource. We have included some selected images from the collection, along with relevant information. You can print out the images or project them in your classroom.

Pre-visit Objectives:

- Introduce students to the artists and works in the collection
- Examine how and why movement is important in our daily lives
- Explore how artists represent movement in their artwork

1. Movement's Portrayal

These works feature a consistent theme of movement, one of the principles of design. Movement, in design, helps to guide the viewer's eye around the whole artwork. These works are also influenced by movement that we see and act upon in our daily lives. How is that movement portrayed in the artwork?

Play movement charades: ask the students to recreate movements they make in their daily lives and see if they can guess the action. Are there any similar movements or routines the students experience in their home life?

2. The Importance of Movement

Why is movement important? How do these artworks inspire us to move? How do we usually respond to artwork? Do we respond in our minds or with our bodies? When observing and discussing these artworks, let's think about how we can respond with our bodies to our artwork. We can respond with just a fiddling of our fingers, or a full dance routine! Let's get moving!

NORMAN LEWIS

UNTITLED



Norman Lewis, *Untitled*, 1953
Oil and gold metallic paint on linen,
71 x 49½ in. (180.3 x 125.7 cm)
Purchase 2016 Helen McMahon Brady
Cutting Fund 2016.3

New York-born Lewis began his career during the 1930s as a social realist. He shifted from an overtly figural style, depicting bread lines, evictions, and police brutality, to nonobjective abstraction in the 1950s, but remained active and consciously aware of social inequities, particularly those faced by African Americans.

Around 1946 he began exploring an overall gestural approach to abstraction, establishing himself as the only African American among the first generation of Abstract Expressionist artists. Inspired by sources as diverse as music, nature, modern painters from Wassily Kandinsky to Mark Tobey, and art from China, Japan, and Africa, Lewis freely experimented with varying approaches to abstraction.

Though his paintings changed, Lewis remained committed to social concerns throughout his career, forming the Spiral Group with Romare Bearden, Charles Alston, and Hale Woodruff. The group's primary mission was assisting the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960s.





UNRECORDED YORUBA ARTIST

MAN WITH A BICYCLE

Unrecorded Yoruba Artist, *Man with A Bicycle*, mid-20th century
Wood, pigment, metal, H 36 x 17 in, W 12 x 28 in, D 10 x 6 in.
Purchase 1977 Wallace M. Scudder Bequest Fund and the Members' Fund
77.285A,B

Made sometime in the mid-20th century by a Yoruba artist working in southwestern Nigeria, this sculpture may represent a merchant en route to market. The man bears scarification marks on his face and wears a shirt and tie, along with trousers held up by suspenders. The bicycle, introduced in the region in the 1920s, expanded trade possibilities for men. It was both useful and a symbol of upward mobility. Visually compelling and functionally enigmatic, *Man with a Bicycle* was acquired by the Museum in 1977. Ten years later, it caught the attention of writer James Baldwin, who wrote:

This is something. This has got to be contemporary! He's really going to town! It's very jaunty, very authoritative. His errand might prove impossible, whatever it is. He's one place on his way to another place. He is challenging something—or something has challenged him. He's grounded in immediate reality by the bicycle.

For Baldwin, the sculpture reflects the cultural exchanges between Africa and the West and the changing everyday practices of African culture in the 20th century. It offers an African perspective on modernity in which a bicycle is not necessarily a symbol of the West but a reflection of African culture, illustrating the cultural complexity of the African continent.



UNRECORDED TIBETAN ARTIST VAJRVARAHI

Unrecorded Tibetan Artist, **Vajravarahi**, 15th century
Silver, cold gold, colors, H 12¾ in.
Purchase 1970 Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke
Foundation 70.3

Vajravarahi derives from the boar-headed Hindu goddess Varahi, the female aspect of Vishnu's boar avatar, Varaha. She reflects the incorporation of Hindu imagery into Vajrayana Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhists see the boar head as a sign that she has overcome ignorance, as the pig symbolizes ignorance in the Wheel of Existence, which is one of the three mental poisons that perpetuates the cycle of death and rebirth.

Hindu deities are often incorporated into Buddhist iconography, sometimes in positive roles and other times as representative of obstacles to be overcome, an expression of both common cultural roots and the tension between the two competing traditions.

In this work, Vajravarahi's body stands in an graciously exaggerated posture, the body beautifully counterbalanced. Her dancing pose and kinetic energy demonstrate her power to suppress ignorance and greed, while her nudity and wrathful expression combine the seductiveness of feminine beauty with the fearsome attributes of a ferocious deity. The use of fine gold and jewels seen here represents the glory of supreme realization and is a traditional Buddhist way of paying homage to the deity embodied by the image.

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Post-visit Objectives:

- Enable students to reflect upon and discuss some of the themes from the artwork
- Encourage students to explore representations of movement and demonstrate them

1. Can Two-dimensional Objects Dance?

Observe Norman Lewis's abstract painting. Try the following activities:

- Trace the movements of the different lines with your finger. Use your whole body to dance like the line.
- Crumple up a piece of regular computer paper. Try to get as many crumples in it as you can. Unfold the whole paper. Look at all of the lines! Can you take a pen and go over all of the lines? Can you fill in some shapes?
- Listen to the song [Pretend \(1953\)](#), by Nat King Cole. With your pencil in your hand, move your hand to the sounds of the music that you hear. How can your lines reflect what you hear?

2. Stand Like a Sculpture

Observe *Man with A Bicycle*. Try the following activities:

- Pretend you are the figure in this work. Position and move your body how you think it would feel if you were in this figure's position. There are heavy things on your head and you have to push a bicycle—what would that feel like? Show us!
- Can you stack some items like this figure? Grab some flat, light items around you—could be notebooks, folders, papers, books, magazines, cereal boxes—and try to stack them as high as you can on your table. Be careful!

3. Strike a Pose!

Observe *Vajravarahi*. Try the following activities:

- Can you pose like this figure? How does it feel when you stand like this? Can you write down what it feels like? Where do you feel your power/ balance/ strength coming from?

- Use some clay, Model Magic, or pipe cleaners to duplicate the shape of this figure. It doesn't have to look exact, but try to copy the general "S" shape of the figure. (See *figure 1*)
- What movement comes next? Can you draw, in simple shapes, what move you think comes next? Maybe the figure puts its foot down on the ground, or maybe their leg kicks straight up in the air—the possibilities are up to you! (See *figure 2*)



Figure 1



Figure 2

LINKS

Norman Lewis

<https://www.ideelart.com/magazine/norman-lewis-artist>

<https://americanart.si.edu/education/oh-freedom/norman-lewis>

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

Yoruba Art

https://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/TeachingKit_YorubaArtAndCulture.pdf

<https://africa.si.edu/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/visionary-viewpoints-on-africas-arts/studying-yoruba-art-virtuoso-artists/>

<https://africa.uima.uiowa.edu/peoples/show/Yoruba>

Tibetan Art

https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tibu/hd_tibu.htm

<https://library.brown.edu/cds/BuddhistTempleArt/TibetanArt.html>

<https://asiasociety.org/new-york/guide-decoding-buddhist-symbolism-tibetan-art>

<https://collections.dma.org/artwork/5069902>

Mindfulness

<https://www.mindful.org/mindfulness-in-education/>

<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/19/01/making-time-mindfulness>

AT THE MUSEUM

The Museum supports teachers, administrators, and parents through an array of programs carefully designed to connect different levels of curricula to the Museum collections.

For more, visit: <https://newarkmuseumart.org/learn/school-programs/>

Field Trips

Field trips are available to students, educators, and parents. Designed to include our permanent collection, Planetarium, and special exhibitions, our programs provide curriculum connection in all subject areas.

Professional Development

The Museum provides professional development opportunities for educators, administrators, and parents.

Residencies

For art and STEM residencies, the Museum partners with schools with teaching artists to create projects that connect to Museum objects.

Scout Programs

Each onsite experience is a fun and educational way to earn badges while connecting with the global offerings of the Museum.

Birthday Parties

With the magic of the Museum as a backdrop, our educators lead a one-of-a-kind activity for your child and your guests.

Camp NMOA

Summer begins here! Join us for six weeks of building community through project-based learning where campers can develop their skills in art and science.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM

We welcome everyone with inclusive experiences that spark curiosity and foster community.

The Newark Museum of Art, in Newark, Essex County, New Jersey, is the state's largest museum. It holds fine collections of American art, decorative arts, contemporary art, and arts of Asia, Africa, the Americas, and the ancient world. Its extensive collections of American art include works by Hiram Powers, Thomas Cole, John Singer Sargent, Albert Bierstadt, Frederick Church, Childe Hassam, Mary Cassatt, Edward Hopper, Georgia O'Keeffe, Joseph Stella, Tony Smith and Frank Stella.

Founding Director John Cotton Dana believed that museums were established to promote the appreciation, understanding, and enjoyment of the arts and sciences. Together with a group of public officials, prominent businessmen, and local collectors, he established the Museum in 1909 at the Newark Public Library. He provided the intellectual leadership that made it one of the most progressive cultural institutions in the country.

LEARNING STANDARDS

(Science) 1-LS1-1: Use materials to design a solution to a human problem by mimicking how plants and/or animals use their external parts to help them survive, grow, and meet their needs.

(Dance) 1.1.2.Cr1a: Demonstrate movement in response to a variety of sensory stimuli (e.g., music, imagery, objects) and suggest additional sources for movement ideas.

(Visual Arts) 1.2.5.Cr3b: Describe and apply principles such as movement, balance, contrast, and emphasis.

(Visual Arts) 1.5.8.Re7b: Compare and contrast cultural and social contexts of visual arts and how they influence ideas and emotions.

(Comprehensive Health & Physical Fitness) 2.2.2.LF.3: Explore the body's range of motion through participating in flexibility and breathing exercises (e.g., stretching, mindfulness, yoga).

(Social Studies) 6.2.8.GeoGI.4.a: Determine how Africa's physical geography and natural resources presented challenges and opportunities for trade, development, and the spread of religion.

(Career Readiness, Life Literacy & Key Skills) 9.4.5.GCA.1: Analyze how culture shapes individual and community perspectives and points of view.

IMAGE CITATIONS

Cover photography by [Mike Peters](#)

Norman Lewis

<https://www.wikiart.org/en/norman-lewis>