



Curriculum Guide & Activity

Sterling
Ruby

ICA
MIAMI



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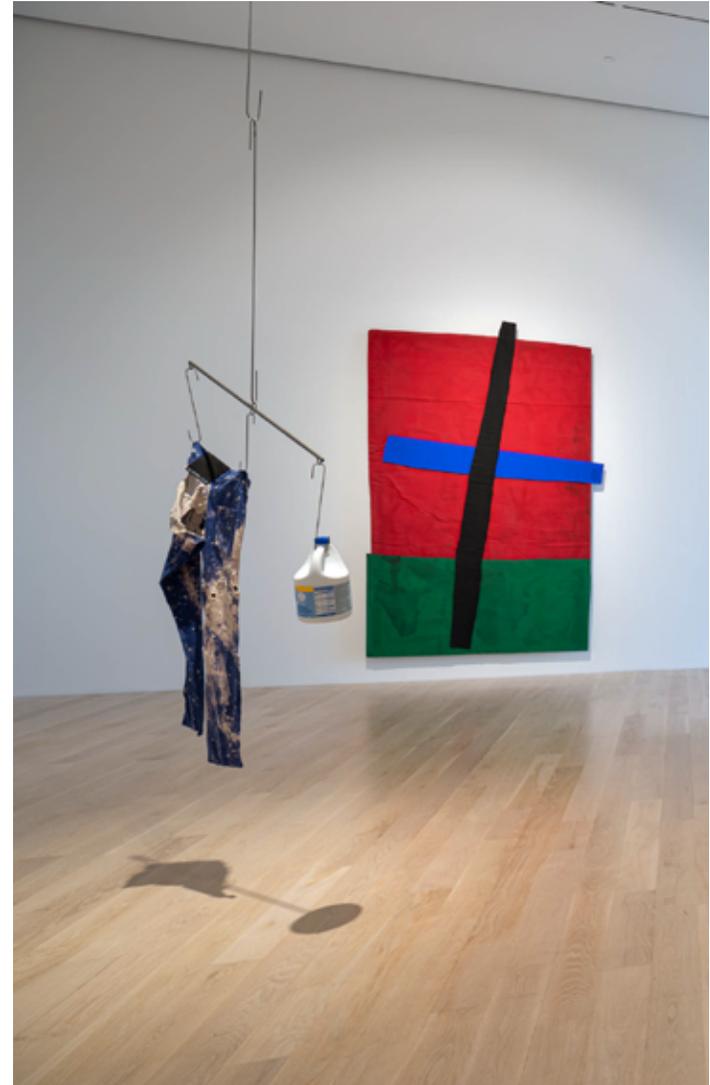
INTRODUCTION

In this course, educators will discuss how artist Sterling Ruby uses the collage process to organize his thoughts surrounding social issues such as prisons, institutions and the suppressive architecture therein.

By viewing Ruby's work, students will learn to convey their ideas on social issues using effective and creative methods of collaging techniques.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will explore the connection between visual art and activism by discussing how a combination of text and imagery has the potential to convey a political idea and whether or not the act of displaying politically charged work in a museum or gallery setting could impact a community.



All images courtesy the artist.

FOR TEACHERS

FLORIDA STATE STANDARDS

Visual Arts

VA.5.C.1.2

Use prior knowledge and observation skills to reflect on, analyze, and interpret exemplary works of art.

KEY DISCUSSION

Begin by asking students to analyze and interpret Sterling Ruby's work. Have students choose to describe what they see in terms of message, meaning, composition, color etc.



All images courtesy the artist.

VOCABULARY TERMS

ABSTRACT

Something that exists in thought or as an idea but does not have a physical existence.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

The view that everyone deserves equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities.

POLLUTION

The presence in or introduction into the environment of a substance or thing that has harmful or poisonous effects.

SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION

When the laws of a place create unequal treatment of a specific social identity group or groups.

MIXED MEDIA

The use of a variety of mediums in a work of art.

COLLAGE

A piece of art made by sticking various different materials such as photographs and pieces of paper or fabric on to a backing.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Sterling Ruby, born in 1972, is an American/Dutch artist who works in a large variety of media including ceramics, painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, video, and textiles. Sterling Ruby was born on an American military base in Bitburg, Germany to a Dutch mother and an American father. His family relocated to the United States shortly after his birth, first to Baltimore, Maryland, and then to the rural town of New Freedom, Pennsylvania. After graduating from high school, Ruby worked in construction in Washington D.C.

Ruby attended The Pennsylvania School of Art and Design, (now the Pennsylvania College of Art and Design, PCA&D). In 2001, he received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Ruby has cited a diverse range of sources and influences including aberrant psychologies (particularly schizophrenia and paranoia), urban gangs and graffiti, hip-hop culture, craft, punk, masculinity, violence, public art, prisons, globalization, American domination and decline, waste and consumption. In opposition to the minimalist artistic tradition and influenced by the ubiquity of urban graffiti, his works often appear scratched, defaced, camouflaged, dirty, or splattered.



All images courtesy the artist.

ABOUT THE WORK

Through his work, Ruby addresses the repressed underpinnings of American culture and the coding of power and violence as well as examines various social issues such as over consumption and pollution. In this earlier work, Ruby has investigated the role of the artist as an outsider. Critiquing the structures of modernism and traditional institutions, Ruby addresses the repressed underpinnings of American culture and the coding of power and violence. Craft is central to his inquiry, as he explores traditions from Amish quilt-making to California's radical ceramics tradition, shaped by his upbringing in Pennsylvania Dutch country.



All images courtesy the artist.

RECOMMENDED READING

Yes You Can! by Jane Drake and Ann Love

Your guide to becoming an activist

RECOMMENDED VIEWING

ICA Miami presents the first comprehensive museum survey of American/Dutch artist Sterling Ruby.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3JvJbGzCHfl>



ACTIVITY

Stand Up!

Appropriate for Middle School

Students will learn about mixed media collage in the style of Sterling Ruby by challenging themselves to create an abstract poster on a social justice issue of their choosing.

ACTIVITY MATERIALS

Cardboard



Paper (color is preferred)



Markers



Scissors



Scrap Fabric



Glue

ACTIVITY

Stand Up!

Activity Instructions

1. Think about how different social issues such as racial injustice or climate change affect you and your family.
2. Using only materials that you can find around your house, create a mixed media poster that represents a social justice issue that you would like to see changed.
3. Your design should include words, images, fabric, and original artwork.