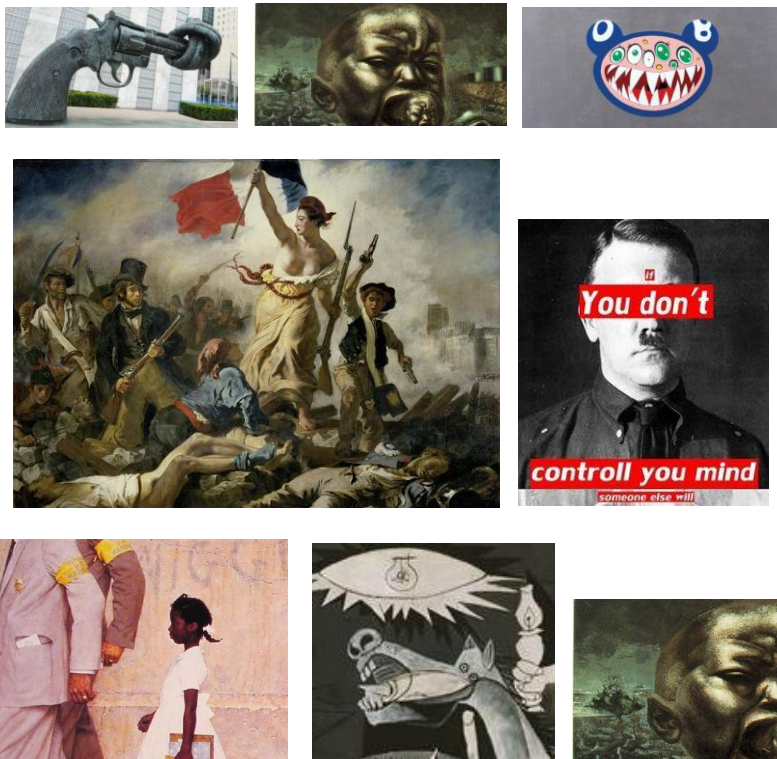


# LEARNING RESOURCE

## VISUAL ARTS



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## CONSTRUCTING THE MESS-AGE

*(Expressing Opinion Through Art)*

## LEARNING RESOURCE for VISUAL ARTS

### CONSTRUCTING THE MESS-AGE (*Expressing Opinion Through Art*)

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## FOREWORD

Welcome to this Learning Resource for VISUAL ARTS.

This Learning Resource was developed by experts from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts as a reference to aid you in developing rich, meaningful, and empowering learning in the creative fields. Every effort has been exerted to produce a Self-Learning Learning Resource that incorporates the most fundamental elements and principles of each discipline, while providing a spiraled, scaffolded, and multi-sensory approach to allow you to explore your innate creativity while building discipline and rigor in your chosen discipline.

Each lecture, activity, or reflection here is designed to be meaningful. Each one designed to build from the previous one, and each one with the objective of building up for the next skill or competence. We hope that you will find these activities challenging but empowering, and that your potential as a Filipino artist and Creative is further enhanced and inspired.

These Learning Resources take into consideration the various limitations and challenges brought about by the current situation, and provides you with the flexibility to manage content and pace to your individual needs while maintaining standards for creativity, embodying 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, and aspiring towards artistic excellence. Beyond compilations of dry information, these Learning Resources seek to develop *Higher Order Thinking Skills* of Analysis, Evaluation, and Creation.

If you are planning to use this Resource as a facilitator or teacher, you are expected to guide and orient your learners in the proper and efficient use of this Learning Resource. Most, if not all activities, will entail exploration, investigation, and experimentation, as such it is imperative that you, as the facilitator, establish the guidelines which will allow your students to be creative but within responsible, safe, and academically-sound limits. Your guidance and mentorship is expected and encouraged throughout the learning process.

We look forward to your journey as an artist, MABUHAY!

## Hello Learner!



Do you remember having fun moments like this with your classmates? Well, we would have wanted to meet with you in a regular classroom to work together in this exciting endeavor of honing your talents and building your knowledge in the visual arts.

However, because of the current crisis, you will be studying through these modules instead.

This does not mean that you will be learning less about the fascinating world of the visual arts. Self-learning has its own merits and will develop skills that you may not learn so much about in regular classrooms. This may also improve your reading skills and develop self-discipline!

This material is designed to help you make artworks, read, reflect and do your own research at the same time. Read the instructions slowly and carefully. And don't hesitate to ask your parents or siblings or any person within your home for help if there are things here that you find hard to understand. You can contact me, your teacher, for any advice or guidance through mobile number \_\_\_\_\_.

Also, remember to keep all your artworks and notes. You might be asked to send them to your school so that we can see them and give you feedback. When we can safely meet again in person, we will mount a fascinating exhibition for everyone to see and enjoy!

So, happy learning and hope to see your work soon!

## How to Use this Module

You will be using this module in the next eight weeks – or the equivalent of one quarter of the present school year. This module contains several lessons for Grade 8 that will help you understand and develop skills related to related storytelling through puppetry.

We wrote our suggestions on the amount of time you should spend with each lesson. But you can spend as much time on each lesson as you want – just make sure you complete all the lessons before the end of the quarter.

To make your learning experience easier, we think you should know about how each lesson goes. You will be guided through the lessons with a combination of activities, readings, projects and reflections.

### 1. ACTIVITIES

An activity will serve as an INTRODUCTION to a subject matter or a skill that you will be learning, or sometimes it is a REVIEW of things that you have learned in the previous school years.

You will be writing your answers to most of these activities in this module or in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL. But for other activities, you may have to find your own materials.

### 2. REFLECTIONS

To help you REFLECT on lessons and projects, you will be asked to share your thoughts and feelings in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL.



Your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL can be a regular notebook, a sketchbook, or loose sheets of paper. Just be sure to keep these and put the dates of your writings. Just like a regular journal.

You can choose your own style of writing in your journal. It can be formal or informal. You can even make drawings about your thoughts and feelings. Or even paste images you cut out from old newspapers and magazines.

Don't worry about what you write in your journal – there are no correct or wrong entries here. Just write as honestly as you can. The purpose of the journal is for you to explore your thoughts and feelings as you go through the lessons.

After writing in your journal, you are encouraged to discuss your lessons with your parent, a sibling, a friend, or someone you feel sharing your thoughts with.

### 3. READINGS



You may also be asked to READ an essay or two that will tell you about things that are related to your activity. Read them slowly and try to understand them very well. You might also be provided guide questions to help you reflect on the lessons. These will help you remember and understand better what you just read. Write your answers and reactions to these questions in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL.

### 4. PROJECTS

You will be asked to make a PROJECT that will give you a chance to apply the lessons and skills that you have earlier learned.



Make sure to keep all your projects and document them by taking photos. At the end of the quarter, you will be asked to send these to school so that we can see them and give feedback to help you learn better.

That's it! You're ready to go!



## WEEK 1 and WEEK 2

**Day 1 to Day 2 – READING:** Introduction; **ACTIVITY:** Finding Your Message

**Day 3 to Day 10 – READING:** Storytelling in the Classical Style; **PROJECT:** Make a Scene

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### INTRODUCTION

This module aims to make you familiar with art that expresses an opinion, or art that advocates something or takes a stand on an issue. Usually, these matters have to do with politics and social issues such as the environment, economy, religion, gender, identity, and culture.

We usually see artists expressing opinion through art in newspapers and magazines, in the form of editorial cartoons. We also see them in advertising in various media, including print, television, billboards and posters, and the Internet. In advertising, though, art doesn't tackle issues but tries to sell products or services – advocating the point of view of companies that make the products or provide the services.

In this module, you will study how different artists express their opinions through art, with the use of varying styles and methods. You will try to figure out the messages or views expressed in their artworks and study how the artists used images and the elements of art to communicate these messages and views in forceful and engaging ways.

### Overview

The artwork on the cover of this module is by American artist Barbara Kruger:



What is she trying to say? Can you figure it out?



In Kruger's work, the message is direct and clearly stated by the words that she uses. But the combination of the text and the image makes Kruger's works forceful and more interesting.

In this artwork, you might recognize the man as Adolf Hitler, the leader of the Nazis, who tried to exterminate the Jews in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Hitler was able to convince the Germans that the world must be rid of the Jews and that this is the German people's patriotic duty. Why did Kruger use Hitler's image to deliver her message? Why did she cover the eyes? Does this have something to do with the text and the message of the artwork? Why is "controll" spelled with two Ls?

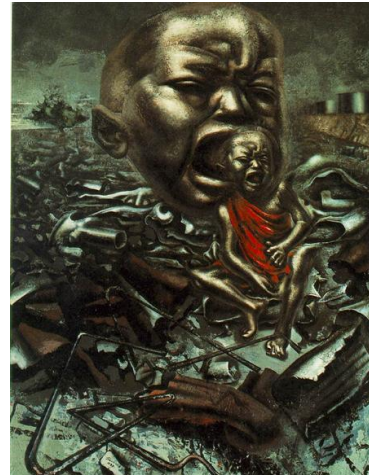
Here is another artwork by Barbara Kruger:



What is she saying in this one?

Barbara Kruger uses images that she finds in newspapers and magazines and adds text that use fonts identified with 1950s-style poster art and advertising. (Just like making a meme – but she came up with this way before memes became popular.) Why did she choose this image to convey this particular message? Why did she use a hand that looks like it's holding a small, familiar card? Is it a credit or debit card, or a calling card? Does this mean anything?

Other artists have also tried to express their views about societal issues. They did so in different ways. Among the artists who are known for tackling societal issues in their works are Jose Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros:



How are the artworks of Orozco and Siqueiros different from that of Kruger's? Can you identify the differences in how they communicate their messages?

Here is another famous painting that conveys a specific political message:



The title of this painting is *Liberty Leading the People*, painted by Eugene Delacroix in 1830. What do you think is the message of the painting? What is happening here? Who is the woman in the center? What flag is she holding? Why is she holding a rifle? Is this painting about a specific historical event? Is this event important in the history of the world?

After thinking about the things portrayed in the painting, take note of how Delacroix painted the picture – the colors he used, the rendering of light and shadow, the realistic features of the figures. Compare the way Delacroix painted with how Orozco did the painting below. Can you see the differences in the style or manner of representation?



Here are more examples of the various styles and methods artists use to express opinion in their art:



Can you “read” the messages and see the differences in the artists’ styles and methods?

In the next eight weeks, you will experiment with different styles of expression while trying to deliver a specific message on a social issue.

Hopefully, after trying out several ways of communicating visually, you can find your own voice.

Perhaps you, too, can develop or discover new ways of expressing your opinions through your art.

### **Some reminders**

#### Make a schedule

Do a quick review of the required activities and plan when and how long you will make each project. You have eight weeks to work on this module.

#### Use your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL

Write down your thoughts and make thumbnail sketches of the images that you are asked to look at. This will help you be more attentive to details and the various elements used by the artist in a particular artwork. Also, make thumbnails or sketches of ideas that come to you as you encounter the words and images in this module.

#### Take your time when looking at the artworks.

**This is very important. Clear your mind before looking at the artworks. Enjoy every work. Feel its immediate effect on you, then study the details. Don’t rush. Take note of the objects portrayed and then how they were portrayed in terms of art elements. Don’t hurry when answering the guide questions. The objective is to see and learn.**

## ACTIVITY 1:

# Finding Your Message

### Materials:

pencil, pen or collage  
VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL

### Instructions:

The first part of making an artwork that conveys a certain message is coming up with something that you want to say. For some people, this is easy. They have a lot of things they feel strongly about, and they are not shy about telling people what they feel. But for some, this is the hardest part. Some find out that they have nothing to say. But does anyone really have nothing to say about things that are happening in the world?

1. Set aside some pages of your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL for your notes on possible messages that you would want to express in visual form.
2. Call this section of your journal ***Things that I feel strongly about***, or something like that. Or come up with a title in your own language. Use an acronym. Or even an icon.
3. In this section, list down things that you care about. Start with a list of 10 things. It can be something general, like *Peace, The Planet, The Philippines, Education*; or something simple like *Candy, Ice Cream, Bread, Guitars, Dogs, or Karate*. You don't have to complete the list in one sitting. You can come back to the list later and as often as you want.
4. After coming up with your list, write a more detailed opinion about the items on that list. Something like *There should be Peace in the world*; or *Everybody should have an education, Teachers are heroes, You need to save money, Learning Karate is good for you*, etc. The point is to make your opinion about an issue or a thing clear to yourself.

Remember, an opinion is not always in favor of something. You can be against something like war, violence, tuition fee hikes, colonialism, consumerism, Valentine's Day, noontime shows, or whatnot.

5. Add more statements to your list as you go along. Be more detailed about your opinion. Make an essay about the topics of your choice. The more you write, the more material you can use when you start visualizing your message.
6. Do this for one or two days, then you're set to move on to the next activity.

Remember, you can add to this list and add more details as you go along.

READING:

## Storytelling in the Classical Style

Look at the following artworks. All of them are tackling a specific historical issue or event. Can you recognize the issues or events that the artists were dealing with in these artworks?

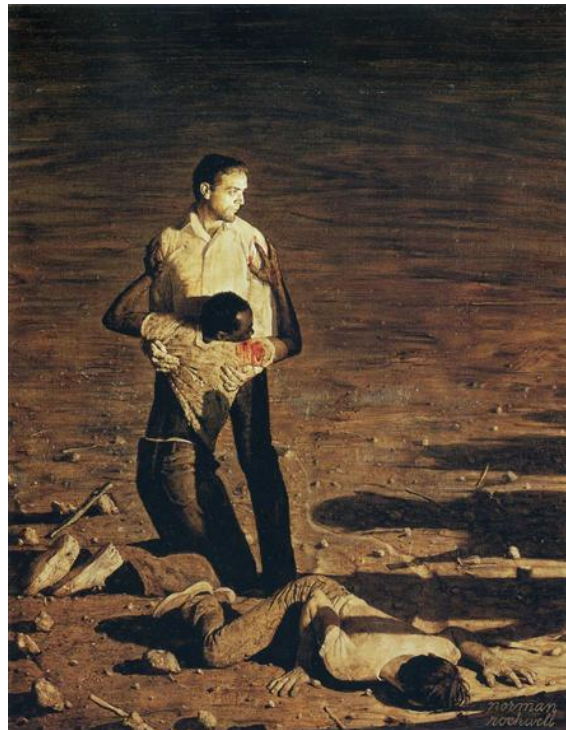
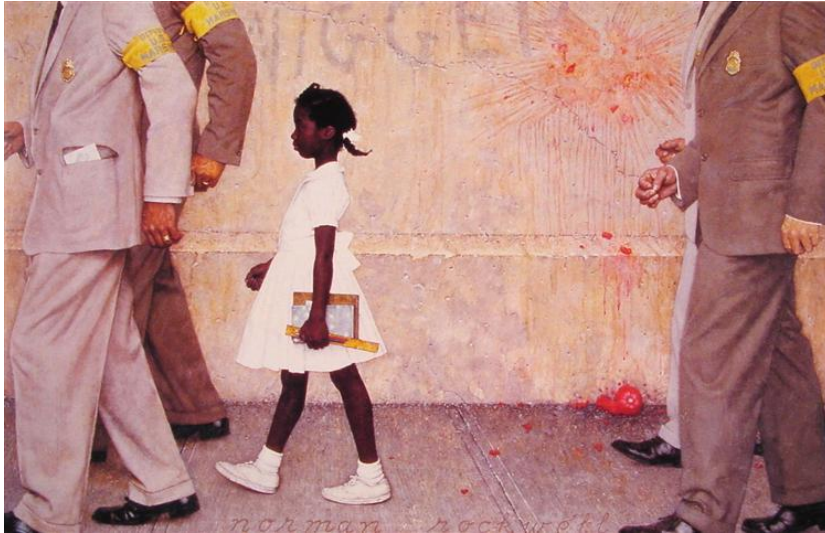
Look at the artworks carefully. Take your time. Notice the details and how these contributed in telling an engaging story visually.



The painting above, called *Liberty Leading the People*, is about the French Revolution. What was the artist trying to say with this painting? Do you think this is a depiction of a scene that actually happened? Did a half-naked woman carrying the French flag and a rifle actually lead revolutionaries to battle? Or, is the artist representing an idea? What

idea is that? Is the woman a symbol? What is the artist saying about the French Revolution? Are the revolutionaries winning? Write your thoughts in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL.

Now, look at the works of another artist who tackled a different social issue:



These are paintings by the American artist Norman Rockwell. In these three artworks, Rockwell was tackling the same issue. Can you identify what it is?

The title of the painting on top is *The Problem We All Live With*. What problem is the artist referring to?



The painting above and on the left is called *Lincoln For The Defense*, and the one on the right is *Southern Justice (Murder In The Mississippi)*. Who is Lincoln defending? Why did Rockwell choose to portray the American President Abraham Lincoln as a defense lawyer? What do you think happened in *Southern Justice*? Why is there a man sprawled on the ground? Why does the black man have blood on his shoulders?

Try to figure out the stories depicted in these artworks. What is the artist's stand on the issue he is dealing with?

Afterwards, take note of how Rockwell visualized scenes to comment on one particular issue. Pay attention to the details in the paintings. Notice that in all these paintings, there are characters that are involved in the scene but are outside of the frame or cannot be seen. To whom do the long shadows seen in *Southern Justice* belong? Can you tell who they might be?

Study this artwork:



Here is another painting that expresses a strong opinion about a specific historical event. This is Francisco Goya's *Third of May*. This painting depicts a real historical event and elicits a very strong emotion. What did you feel when you first saw the painting?

This painting depicts the execution of those who resisted Napoleon's occupation of Spain in 1808. What message was Goya trying to convey? What did he feel about the event he portrayed?

Take note of how Goya designed the scene to tell the story. Study the details of the painting: the image of the dead, the blood flowing on the ground, the raised arms of the man about to be executed, the rifles and their bayonets, the dark sky. Notice that the faces of those about to be executed are clearly visible, but only the backs of the French soldiers who are about to shoot them can be seen. Why do you think the artist decided to paint the picture this way?

## PROJECT:

# Make a Scene

Now, it's your turn to tell a story.

### Materials:

You can use any of the following: oil, watercolor, acrylic, ink, colored pencils, pens, markers, pastels, crayons pencils, pens, or ink on canvas, paper, cardboard, or wood (sized 3 feet x 4 feet).

### Instructions:

1. Choose a topic from the list that you have written in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL. (Or, maybe you want to tackle an issue that you haven't thought of before. That's alright.)
2. Imagine **scenes** that will convey your opinion or ideas about a particular issue or historical event. Visualize these scenes in the Classical style. This means you will draw the figures in a "naturalistic" or "realistic" manner – like setting up actors in a scene then taking a photograph.
3. Do not exaggerate the features of the characters and objects in your painting or drawing. Do not exaggerate colors, lines, or shapes. Instead, choose the right costumes, props, settings, poses, and composition to deliver your message in a forceful way.
4. Make several studies and preliminary sketches before doing your final artwork. You can even try out several topics and ideas. Play around with ways on how to tell your story visually. Look at the works of the three artists that you've studied earlier and take some cues from them on how to tell a story. Look at other artworks that tell stories and learn from them.
5. After completing your final artwork, come up with a title that will reflect the message you want to convey.

## WEEK 3 – Day 1 to Day 5

**READING:** Exaggeration and Distortion; **PROJECT:** Let It All Out

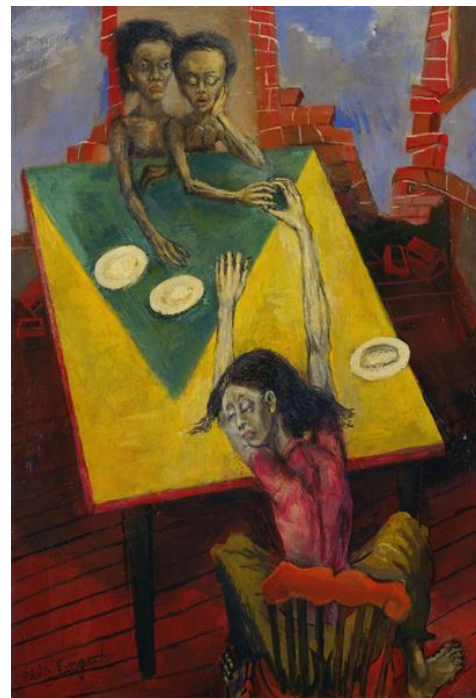
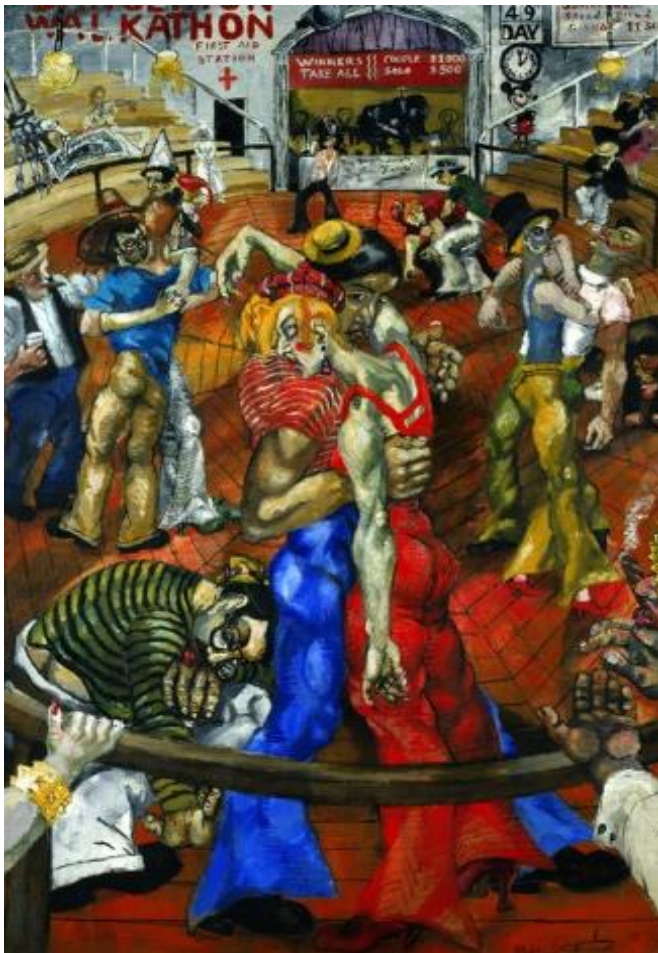
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### READING:

# Exaggeration and Distortion

Study these two artworks by Philip Evergood. The painting on the left is called *Dance Marathon*. A dance marathon is a contest where a cash prize is given to the last couple still dancing after all the others have given up because of exhaustion. The painting on the right is called *Don't Cry Mother*.

What issue is the artist tackling in these paintings? Notice that Evergood did not paint his characters in a “realistic” or “naturalistic” manner, but he exaggerated and distorted their features. Why did he do this? Do you think this made his message more forceful and effective?



Also, notice the way the artist applied his paint, as well as the kinds of colors that he used. Did applying the paint in a rough manner contribute to the message he was trying to convey? How so? What is the effect of using bright and contrasting colors?

Study these two artworks. What emotions do you feel when you look at them? Without knowing the specifics of the images portrayed, do you get an idea of what the artist is trying to express? How did the artists do this? What techniques did they use? Write your thoughts in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL.



What kinds of lines did the artist use? What kinds of shapes?

How did he arrange the objects and characters in his painting?

Can you figure out what's going on in the paintings? How many things are happening in the scene portrayed?

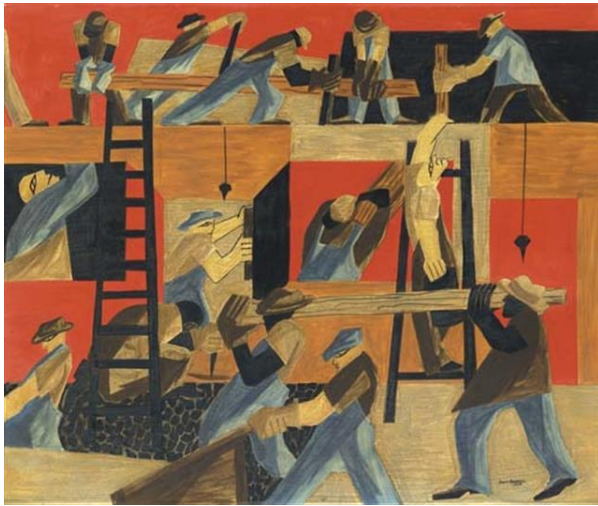


Compare the two sets of artworks below. The first two are by Mexican artist Jose Clemente Orozco, and the last three are by a group of Russian caricaturists called The Kukryniksy (Mikhail Kupriyanov, Porfiri Krylov, and Nikolai Sokolov).

Both sets of artworks deal with a similar issue -- war -- and use diagonal lines and angled shapes to denote action and force. But can you sense a difference in the attitude and ideas expressed in each set? Can you feel and see the difference? What is it?



Study the following artworks by Jacob Lawrence:



Who is he portraying? What are they doing? Why did he exaggerate the sizes of their arms and hands? Why are their heads bowed? What is he saying about the characters that he portrayed?

Take note of how he used lines, shapes, colors, volume, and perspective. Did exaggeration and distortion of shapes and color make his compositions more striking? How did this contribute to the delivery of his message?

Also, notice how he also used rhythm in his compositions by repeating lines and shapes. Does that add to the sense of movement in the paintings? Does that add to the message?

## **PROJECT:**

# **Let It All Out**

### **Materials:**

You can use any of the following: oil, watercolor, acrylic, ink, colored pencils, pens, markers, pastels, crayons pencils, pens, or ink on canvas, paper, cardboard, or wood (sized 3 feet x 4 feet).

### **Instructions:**

1. Choose another topic from the list you've made earlier. (Or, if you want to tackle an issue that you haven't thought of before, that's fine.)
2. Visualize a scene that will express your opinion about this topic.
3. Experiment with several images and make a number of studies before you come up with a final concept.
4. Use exaggeration and distortion to express your emotions.
5. Experiment with the ways of composing the elements in your artwork. Use materials that are available to you.
6. After completing your final artwork, come up with a title that will reflect the message you want to convey.
7. Don't forget to document your work by taking photos of it.



## WEEK 4 and WEEK 5

**READING:** Advocacy and Surrealism; **PROJECT:** Dream On

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### READING:

## Advocacy and Surrealism

Study the following artworks. In these works, the artists used the visual language of Surrealism to deliver their messages. They did not limit themselves to “real” situations or “naturalistic” scenes and did not only use exaggeration of visual elements such as line, color, shape, and perspective. They used “fantastic” elements or invented dream-like scenes to get their messages across.

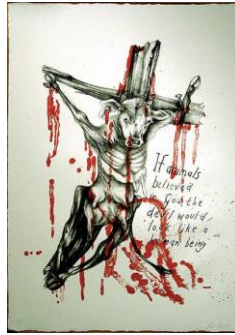
Look at this painting by British artist, Sue Coe:



Does this painting feel like a dream or a scene in a fantasy movie?

The painting's title is *Go Vegetarian!*, which is precisely the artist's message to her viewers. Again, look at the details of the painting. Notice the style of the text “modern man haunted by the ghosts of his meat.” Do you see the burger and fried chicken leg on the bedside table? What expression do the animals' eyes have? Why is the human looking away at the animals and looking at his food? Why do you think Coe did the painting this way?

Here are some other artworks by Coe:



The artwork on the left is called *Monkey*. The one in the middle is titled *Cow* and has text that says, *If Animals Believed in God, the Devil Would Look Like a Human Being*. The artwork on the right is called *Fur Coat*, with the text *The Ghosts of the Skinned Want Their Coats Back*.

Study the painting below. What is the painting trying to say? What do you feel when you look at this artwork? Look at the details. What things do you see? Write them down in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL. Describe what the animals and humans are doing.

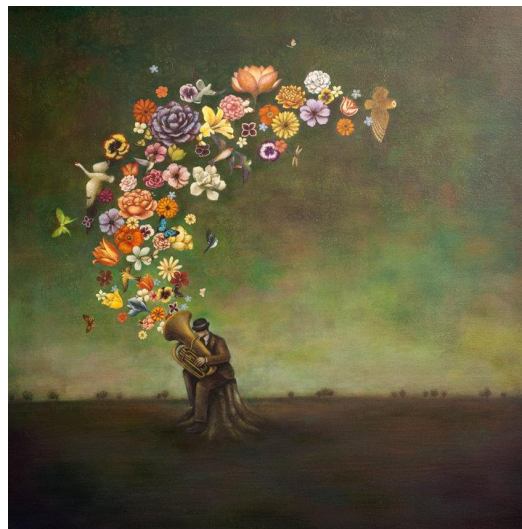


The artwork above is titled *Jumbo*. After seeing a number of works by Coe, what do you think is the issue she's passionate about?

Look at the following artworks and take note of how the artists used surrealistic or dream-like images to make their commentaries:

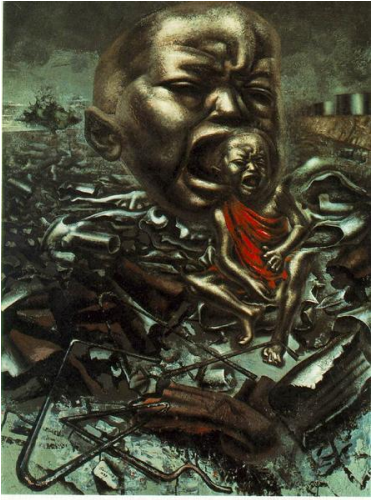


The image above shows part of Orozco's mural called *The Epic of American Civilization*. Based on this image, do you think Orozco had a positive view of American civilization? Who are the persons wearing togas and why are they portrayed as skeletons? Who is the skeleton on the operating table? Doesn't it look like a woman giving birth? What is the artist trying to say?



The title of the painting above is *Unknown* by Duy Huynh. Can you figure out what the artist is trying to say? Examine the things that you see in the painting. What does the brown, barren landscape mean? Why is the musician sitting on the stump of a tree that has been cut? What do the colorful flowers, birds, and butterflies coming out of the musical instrument mean? Write your thoughts in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL.

Look at the following paintings and see if you can figure out the artists' messages by examining the artworks' details.



**PROJECT:**

# Dream On

Tap into the power of your subconscious and invent fantastic scenes and unusual objects.

**Materials:**

You can use any of the following: oil, watercolor, acrylic, ink, colored pencils, pens, markers, pastels, crayons pencils, pens, or ink on canvas, paper, cardboard, or wood (3 feet x 4 feet).

**Instructions:**

1. Choose another topic from the list you've made earlier.
2. Visualize a surrealistic scene that will express your opinion about this topic.
3. Experiment with several images and make a number of studies before you come up with a final concept. Use materials that are available to you.
4. Make the unusual objects and dream-like quality of your artwork the main elements that would deliver your message across.
5. After completing your final artwork, come up with a title that will reflect the message you want to convey.

## WEEK 6 and WEEK 7

READING: Pop-up Messages; PROJECT: Pop Talk

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### READING:

## Pop-up Messages

Some artists express their opinions and views about societal issues by using images and the language of popular culture. These include images and language that we see every day and everywhere: from advertising and movies, industrial design, media, fashion, toys, the Internet, and others.

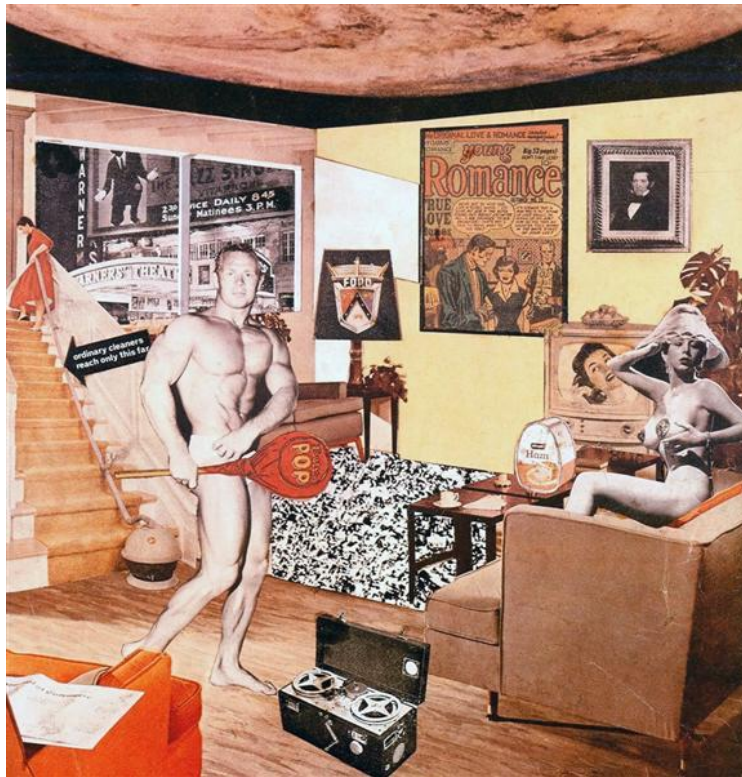
One popular artist who used images from Pop culture is Keith Haring. Can you identify the influence of Pop culture in the artwork below? Why do you think he made the black figure extremely large compared with that of the white figure? What is he trying to say?



You've already seen Barbara Kruger's *I Shop Therefore I Am*. The image beside it is graffiti titled *Shop Until You Drop* by Banksy. What are the similarities and differences between the two artworks? Write them down in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL.



In this artwork titled *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?*, the artist Richard Hamilton used images he found in magazines. What do you think is he trying to say?



He did another version more than 30 years later. Can you “read” the statements he is making in his old and updated versions? Look at the details. Can you see the difference in the stories told in the two versions? Write your notes in your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL.



Below are artworks by the Japanese artist Takashi Murakami. Can you tell which cartoon character he based the character from? Why did he put sharp teeth on the character?

He called his character Mr. DOB – you can see the O and the B on his ears. According to the artist, DOB comes from the Japanese phrase “dobjite,” which translates to “why.” What is Murakami trying to say by creating this character?





The painting below was made by David Hockney and is titled *The Bigger Splash*. Study the details of the painting and the manner in which the painting was done. What kinds of lines and shapes and colors did the artist use? What do you feel when you look at the building, sky, water, and shadows? Why is the splash painted that way? Why didn't he show the diver? What is the artist trying to say?



**PROJECT:**

# Pop Talk

Use images and idioms of popular culture to express your opinion on something.

**Materials:**

You can use any of the following: oil, watercolor, acrylic, ink, colored pencils, pens, markers, pastels, crayons pencils, pens, or ink on canvas, paper, cardboard, or wood (3 feet x 4 feet).

**Instructions:**

1. Choose another topic from the list you've made earlier.
2. Visualize a scene or an object that will express your opinion about this topic. Use Pop images or everyday objects and render them in the style of advertising industry. You can use texts or words and numbers in your composition.
3. Experiment with several images and make a number of studies before you come up with a final concept. Use materials that are available to you.

After completing your final artwork, come up with a title that will reflect the message you want to convey.

## WEEK 8

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### REFLECTION:

Congratulations!

You've made it to the end of this module. Hopefully, you have learned a few things that would help you come up with interesting and engaging artworks that will communicate messages that you feel strongly about.

But before we end our quarter, get your VISUAL ARTS JOURNAL and write about the artworks that you made in the past weeks. Put each artwork in front of you as you try to tell your experience in making them. You can write about one artwork per day.

### GUIDE QUESTIONS:

1. Describe how you came up with the idea for your artwork.
2. What were you trying to say?
3. What were the difficulties that you encountered in making your artwork? How did you overcome them?
4. What could you have done differently in each artwork?
5. Do you think art is an effective tool to express an opinion? Why?
6. Among the styles that you've encountered, which one is your favorite?

That's it. Cheers!

## IMAGE LIST



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**FREE SOUTH AFRICA**

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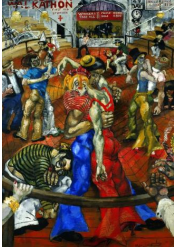
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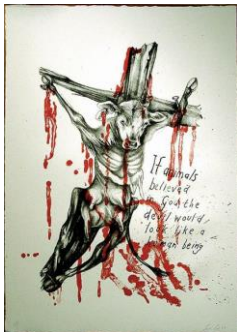
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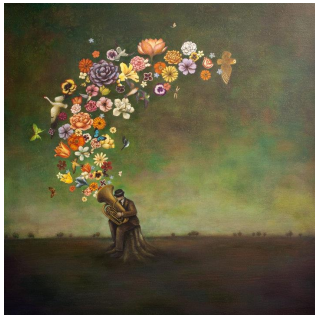
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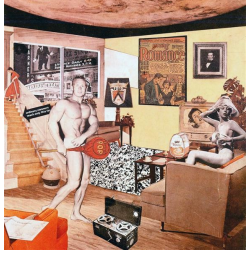
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