

# Black Artists of Florida

SCHOOL TOUR PACKET – GRADES 4 AND 5

**CUMMER**  
**MUSEUM**  
ART | GARDENS | EDUCATION



Mildred Thompson, *Magnetic Fields*, American 1936 – 2003, Oil on canvas, Purchased with funds from the Rushton William Hays Revocable Trust and the Morton R. Hirschberg Bequest, AP.2019.1.1

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens is excited for your group to participate in the Art of Portraiture Tour! This tour and resource packet is aligned with NGSSS: Visual Arts Standards to introduce students to the art of portraiture where they will identify and discuss facial features, expressions, emotions, and clues about the people portrayed in the artwork. This tour is also aligned with selected math, language arts, and science standards.

A selection of artwork is included in each of our school tour packets, but not every work of art will be included on your tour. Works that are included in the packet and not highlighted on the tour are similar examples of what students will experience and give them the opportunity to explore multiple artworks in our Permanent Collection.

Please email [schooltours@cummuseum.org](mailto:schooltours@cummuseum.org) with any questions.

## **TOUR SUMMARY**

### **Objective**

Students will explore artwork by notable Black artists, activists and teachers from Florida to expand their understanding of our community's history and impact on the world.

### **Theme**

Black Artists of Florida

### **Big Ideas**

- + Citizens work together to influence government and help solve community and state problems.
- + Artists make contributions to their communities and society at large through their work.
- + Many artists are also teachers, activists, inventors, etc.

## STANDARDS

### VISUAL ART

#### Grade 4

- + VA.4.C.3.3 - Use the art-making process, analysis, and discussion to identify the connections between art and other disciplines.
- + VA.4.H.2.1 - Explore works of art, created over time, to identify the use of the structural elements of art in an historical event or art style.
- + VA.4.F.2.1 - Discuss how artists and designers have made an impact on the community.
- + VA.4.H.1.3 - Describe artworks that honor and are reflective of particular individuals, groups, events, and/or cultures.
- + VA.4.H.1.1 - Identify historical and cultural influences that have inspired artists to produce works of art.

#### Grade 5

- + VA.5.C.1.1 - Develop a range of interests in the art-making process to influence personal decision-making.
- + VA.5.H.1.3 - Identify and describe the importance a selected group or culture places on specific works of art.
- + VA.5.F.2.3 - Discuss contributions that artists make to society.

### ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

#### Grade 4

- + LAFS.4.L.3.6 - Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases as found in grade level appropriate texts, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
- + LAFS.4.RI.3.7 - Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- + LAFS.4.RL.3.9 - Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

#### Grade 5

- + LAFS.5.L.3.6 - Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases as found in grade level appropriate texts, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition).

- + LAFS.5.RI.1.3 - Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

## **SCIENCE**

### **Grade 4**

- + SC.4.N.1.2 - Compare the observations made by different groups using multiple tools and seek reasons to explain the differences across groups.

### **Grade 5**

- + SC.5.N.1.6 - Recognize and explain the difference between personal opinion/interpretation and verified observation.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

### **Grade 4**

- + SS.4.A.1.1 - Analyze primary and secondary resources to identify significant individuals and events throughout Florida history.
- + SS.4.A.6.3 - Describe the contributions of significant individuals to Florida.
- + SS.4.C.1.1 - Describe how Florida's constitution protects the rights of citizens and provides for the structure, function, and purposes of state government.
- + SS.4.C.2.2 - Identify ways citizens work together to influence

government and help solve community and state problems.

### **Grade 5**

- + SS.5.A.1.1 - Use primary and secondary sources to understand history.
- + SS.5.A.4.3 - Identify significant individuals responsible for the development of the New England, Middle, and Southern colonies.
- + SS.5.A.5.3 - Explain the significance of historical documents including key political concepts, origins of these concepts, and their role in American independence.

## **ARTFUL THINKING AND CLOSE LOOKING**

The purpose of Artful Thinking and Close Looking is to engage students in meaningful, thoughtful conversation while closely observing artwork. By observing and looking closely at a work of art, students can activate their critical thinking skills through making observations, explaining their reasoning, listening to others, and discussing – all while making personal connections and interpretations.

The process of looking closely can be broken down into different stages (observation, analysis, and interpretation) and is appropriate for and successful with ages PreK through adult. It's helpful to note that this process works not only for observing artwork but can also be applied when making observations in nature or while reading (e.g. observe and notice images/illustrations in a book). Use these looking strategies while viewing the artwork in the packet with your class.

Before launching into Artful Thinking, preview the focus of each of the three phases, to get a sense of the skills that are isolated within each phase and how they build off of each other.

### **Observation**

To begin the Artful Thinking method, encourage students to look closely at the work of art and describe what they notice and see. Questions using the elements of art (line, shape, color, form, value, texture, and space) are particularly helpful in driving the conversation to what students actually see, rather than what they think is happening (interpretation). Ask

students to observe a work of art for 30 to 60 seconds before beginning conversation about the work. After the designated time has ended, ask the following questions:

- + What do you notice/see?  
(Encourage students be specific)
  - What colors do you see?
  - What types of lines do you see?
  - What types of shapes and forms do you see?
- + What else do you notice/see?  
(Encourage answers from other viewpoints)
- + Can you describe them in more detail?
  - How would you describe the colors?
  - How would you describe the lines?
  - How would you describe the shapes and forms?

### **Analysis**

During this stage, students are analyzing the arrangement of objects and the general composition of the work of art and how the objects work together. The conversation can move to the following line of questioning:

- + How is it all arranged?
  - Where do you see those colors?
  - Where do you see those lines?
  - Where do you see those shapes and forms?
  - How are they grouped?
- + How do these elements of art work together?

## Interpretation

Students now use the visual evidence they (and their classmates) have been gathering to support their answers during the interpretation phase. Their responses will depend on what they have identified during the observation and analysis phase. Offer relevant contextual information within the conversation as it flows.

- + What do you think is happening?
- + What makes you say that?
- + What do you think the artist's message is? What is this artwork about?
- + Why do you think that?

## Notes about the process of Artful Thinking and Close Looking

- + The stages in this process can happen simultaneously rather than in discrete phases as outlined above. For example, your line of questioning could go from observation to analysis and back to observation. Here is a sample conversation with Kindergarten or First Grade students.
  - You: What do you notice and see?
  - Student 1: A house. (Note: most often, students will initially and naturally jump immediately to interpretation – it's what we're used to doing – to make meaning immediately. Slow them down by asking follow-up questions. Ask for evidence.)
  - You: What makes you say that it's a house? What do you notice? What lines do you see?
  - Student 1: It looks like my grandma's house. I see tall lines

and the color brown. I notice people inside the windows.

- Student 2: The lines make a triangle. It looks like a roof.
  - Student 1: I see a street, and a house lives on a street.
  - You: What do you notice that makes you say that? What lines do you see? Student 1: The lines are flat and long, right next to each other. And the lines that make a square (the house) are next to the lines that make the street.
  - Your role becomes to question and prompt so that the students give the detail and evidence that supports their observations. The direction of questioning depends on how the class responds, so be adaptive, responsive, and flexible to the flow of the conversation.
- + Artful thinking requires a level of active listening:
    - Be open to asking questions unique to the responses to help facilitate the conversation.
    - Be open to a multitude of interpretations, because students are forming their own connections and meanings.
  - + Artful thinking encourages not only close observation but also helps students practice slowing down their looking and seeing.

## **VOCABULARY**

### **ABSTRACT**

Abstract art is art that does not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of a visual reality but instead use shapes, colors, forms and gestural marks to achieve its effect.

### **ACTIVIST**

A person who campaigns to bring about political or social change.

### **BRONZE**

A bronze sculpture, often simply called 'a bronze', is a three-dimensional piece of art made by pouring molten bronze into a mold, before leaving it to solidify.

### **CITIZEN**

A person belonging to a country, state, or community.

### **COLLABORATION**

The action of working with someone to produce or create something.

### **COMMUNITY**

A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals.

### **CONTEMPORARY ART**

Contemporary art is the art of today, produced in the second half of the 20th century or in the 21st century. Contemporary artists work in a globally influenced, culturally diverse, and technologically advancing world.

### **CONTRIBUTION**

The part played by a person or thing in bringing about a result or helping something to advance.

### **DIVERSITY**

The practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc.; the state of being diverse; variety.

### **HALEM RENAISSANCE**

The Harlem Renaissance was an intellectual and cultural revival of African American music, dance, art, fashion, literature, theater and politics centered in Harlem, Manhattan, New York City, spanning the 1920s and 1930s.

### **INFLUENCE**

The capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something, or the effect itself.

### **MURAL**

A painting or other work of art executed directly on a wall.

**PAINTING**

The process or art of using paint, in a picture, as a protective coating, or as decoration; a painted picture.

**PERSPECTIVE**

A particular attitude toward or way of regarding something; a point of view.

**PORTRAIT**

A painting, drawing, photograph, or engraving of a person, especially one depicting only the face or head and shoulders.

**SCULPTURE**

The art of making two- or three-dimensional representative or abstract forms, especially by carving stone or wood or by casting metal or plaster.

## WORKS OF ART & ACTIVITIES

### *Magnetic Fields*



Mildred Thompson, *Magnetic Fields*, American 1936 – 2003, Oil on canvas, Purchased with funds from the Rushton William Hays Revocable Trust and the Morton R. Hirschberg Bequest, AP.2019.1.1

### About the Artist



Mildred Thompson, born in Jacksonville, Florida, graduated from Howard University in 1957. She spent the majority of the 1960s in Germany, in response to racial and gender discrimination in the United States. Thompson served as the artist-in-residence for the City of Tampa in 1974, then returned permanently to the United States in 1985, settling in Atlanta.

### About the Painting

Thompson was influenced by the abstract paintings of the early

modernists such as Wassily Kandinsky. In the early 1970s, she consciously turned away from the creation of representational imagery to fully focus her craft on the abstract, choosing to artistically interpret scientific and musical theories that are not visible to the naked eye. "My work in the visual arts is, and always has been, a continuous search for understanding," Thompson said. "It is an expression of purpose and reflects a personal interpretation of the universe. Each new creation presents a visual manifestation of the sum total of this life long investigation and serves as a reaffirmation of my commitment to the arts."

### Questions to Explore with your Students:

- What colors do you see?
- Are the colors bright or dull?
- Where do the colors overlap and mix?
- Which colors catch your eye?
- How are the elements arranged?
- Close your eyes. Open them and look at the painting. What do you notice first? Where does your eye go next?
- Are the shapes geometric (circle, square, triangle) or organic (free flowing)?
- Do the organic shapes resemble anything?
- What do you think of when you look at them?
- What do you think is happening?
- What is a story you can create to describe this painting?  
i.e. Fireworks, party, Halloween – possibilities are endless
- Do you like this abstract art? Why or why not?

## ACTIVITY

### 1. 3-D Abstract Sculptures

Ask students to gather various objects around your classroom that are also solid colors. Encourage them to find as many as they can. How many objects can they find of a similar color? How many have similar shapes? Using the common items found, have students work together to arrange them in a creative design on the floor (could also be done individually on their own desktops). Be sure to utilize a larger space in your classroom for a grand effect! What stories can students tell with imagination and creativity? How can they relate your creation to science, math, language arts, or other subjects?

## **Gamin**



Augusta Savage (American, 1892 – 1962), *Gamin*, c. 1930, 9 ¼ x 6 x 4 in., Purchased with funds from the Morton R. Hirschberg Bequest, AP.2013.1.1.

## **About the Artist**



Born in Green Cove Springs, Florida, Augusta Savage moved to Jacksonville at the age of 16 to earn a living sculpting portrait busts of prominent African Americans. In 1921, she moved to New York and received many fellowships and awards, allowing her to travel and study abroad. In 1932 Savage began a notable

teaching career with the founding of the Savage School of Arts and Crafts in New York and became one of twentieth-century America's most prolific and influential sculptors. However, because of her often-difficult financial situation, few of her works survive to this day.

## **About the Sculpture**

*Gamin* was created early in her career, around 1930, and won her a scholarship to study in Europe. The title *Gamin* refers to a French word meaning "street urchin" leading some scholars to believe the portrait bust represents a homeless boy, while others believe it may be a likeness of Savage's nephew, Ellis Ford. Few of her painted plaster originals, like *Gamin*, were cast in bronze due to her lack of funds, and most were ultimately destroyed. This particular example of *Gamin* was formerly in the collection of Theron Fowler, a photographer and friend of Savage.

*Gamin* bears the same psychologically-penetrating expressiveness as another of her works already in the permanent collection at The Cummer, *The Diving Boy*. This bronze sculpture was placed in the Italian Garden at the foot of one of the long reflecting pools by Museum founder, Ninah M. H. Cummer. This sculpture now resides in the *Helen Murchison and Edward W. Lane, Jr. Gallery*.

## Questions to Explore with your Students:

- + What do you notice first about the sculpture? Why do you think it drew your attention there?
- + What else do you notice about the person? How old do you think they are?
- + What is the child wearing?
- + How is the child looking out at the viewer? Is it direct? Is it indirect?
- + How would you describe the person's facial expression? What do you think they could be thinking?
- + What do you think the sculpture is made out of?
- + What textures do you notice about the material? What would the textures be if the sculpture was made out of wood, or paper, or plastic?
- + Why do you think the artist chose bronze metal?
- + Why would the artist want something to last long?
- + How would you describe the scale of this sculpture? Why do you think Augusta Savage chose to make it small?

difference between an individual portrait and a group portrait.

## ACTIVITY

### 1. Portraits

Have students look carefully at several types of portraits including their own school portrait. Locate basic shapes, name colors, and examine details that give specific information about the person depicted. Ask students to identify facial expressions and individual characteristics in the portraits. Ask questions that will encourage students to look carefully and answer with specific vocabulary. Identify facial expressions that communicate feelings. Discuss the

## RESOURCES

### Reading Resources

- + Parker Curry, Jessica Curry, *Parker Looks Up*
- + Vashti Harrison, *Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History*
- + Vashti Harrison, *Little Legends: Exceptional Men in Black History*

### Music Resources

- + Committed sings on YouTube: Lift Every Voice
- + Billie Holiday, I Cover the Waterfront

### Visual Resources from the Cummer Museum Permanent Collection

- + Eastman Johnson, *Kitchen at Mount Vernon*
- + Gilbert Stuart, *George Washington*
- + Henry Ossawa Tanner, *Midday Tangiers*
- + Hughie Lee Smith, *End of the Festival*
- + Marie Victoire-Lemoine, *Portrait of Youth in Vest*
- + Jacob Lawrence, *The 1920's... The Migrants Arrive and Cast Their Ballots from the Kent Bicentennial Portfolio, Spirit of Independence*
- + Thomas Moran, *Ponce de Leon in Florida*
- + Whitfield Lovell, *Pago Pago*

### Internet Resources

- + [Artful Thinking Palette](#)
- + [PBS Kids: Harlem Renaissance](#)

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