

SPRING 2023 EXHIBITIONS STUDY GUIDE

Thursday, February 16 -
Saturday, April 22, 2023

ANNE SAMAT:

Follow Your Heart Wholeheartedly 2

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

Content connections in grades 2-8

YANIRA COLLADO:

*Zafa/ A Spellworking of
Temporal Geometry*

Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne

Quillen '71 Reception Gallery

Content connections in grades 9-12

CONOR MCGRADY:

Mountains Series

Exterior Turner Street wall

and Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor

Through summer 2023



**MOSS
ARTS
CENTER**



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The Moss Arts Center would like to thank each of the artists for providing these images for our educational resources. For more information about each artist, visit the links and additional resources in the guide.

Pictured above: Anne Samat; *Follow Your Heart Wholeheartedly*, 2020 (detail); rattan sticks, yarn, rakes, washers, plastic swords, toy soldiers, beads, metal, and plastic ornaments; 131 ½ x 141 ¾ x 11 ¾ inches; courtesy of the artist and Marc Straus, New York

ABOUT THE MOSS ARTS CENTER GALLERIES

The Moss Arts Center at Virginia Tech is dedicated to providing transformative arts experiences through gallery tours, artist engagements, and special school-day matinee performances from renowned touring artists for children, teachers, and families.

Explore exciting opportunities to connect with the arts through exhibitions and study guides created especially for young audiences. Contact us to register for a gallery tour and sign up for emails to learn more about the Moss Arts Center's K-12 programs.

PLAN YOUR VISIT

Gallery Hours

Wednesday-Friday, 10 AM-5 PM

Saturday, 10 AM-4 PM

Entrance to the galleries is always free and open to the public. The Ruth C. Horton Gallery is located downstairs in the Moss Arts Center near the Alumni Mall entrance. The Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery are located upstairs near the Turner Street entrance. Find parking information [here](#).

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Please reach out to Shara Appanaitis, engagement manager, at sappanaitis@vt.edu or 540-231-0806 to schedule a visit or for questions about teaching, learning, and engaging with our programs.

WE WANT EVERYONE TO ENJOY THE EXHIBITION

Please prepare your students for their visit to the Moss Arts Center by practicing museum manners before you visit. The following guidelines will ensure that everyone can enjoy the exhibition:

- Do not touch the works of art. Always stay a safe distance away from each work of art.
- Do not lean on the gallery walls or pedestals. You may sit on the benches or the floor.
- Food, gum, and beverages are not allowed inside the galleries.
- Please remove backpacks and place them in a safe place away from the art.
- Use only pencils when writing or drawing in the galleries.
- Photography is allowed, but please do not use a flash.

ANNE SAMAT

Follow Your Heart Wholeheartedly 2

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

Appropriate for all ages; content connections in grades 2-8

Anne Samat's *Follow Your Heart Wholeheartedly 2* features a mesmerizing collection of the artist's weaved sculptures. Taking inspiration from the traditional Malaysian weaving practice Pua Kumbu, Samat makes it her own through the addition of found objects repurposed as art. Colorful yarn and beading combine with everyday items such as rakes or sieves in Samat's carefully crafted pieces, often representative of the artist herself or her friends and family.

ARTIST STATEMENT

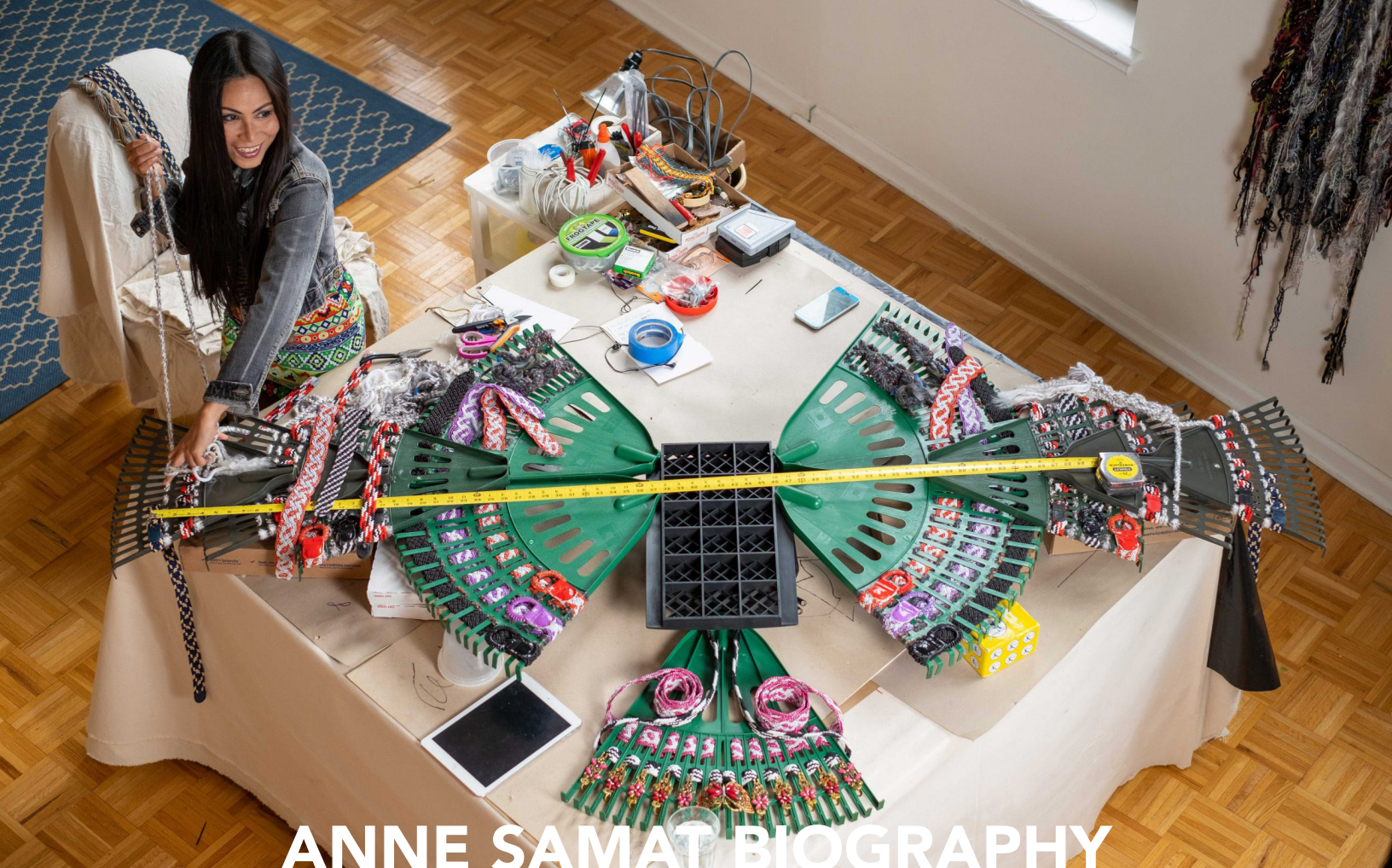


Courtesy of the artist

SULTANATE IN THE EYE, MONARCHY AT HEART: Freedom stands for something greater than just the right to act however I choose — it stands for securing for everyone an equal opportunity for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. To most reasonable people, freedom means more than just “the free will to do whatever I want.” Taken literally, that approach would produce anarchy — every man, woman, and child for himself or herself. Fortunately, none of us has to live that way. As for myself, I’ve always believed that “freedom” is what I feel from my “within,” followed by the ability to express it in the most sincere manner. The desire for freedom is what takes me from a comfortable life to an uncertain [one], but far more fulfilling... Our true self is who we really are when we let go of all the stories, labels, and judgements that we have placed upon ourselves. It is who we naturally are without the masks of pretension. It is through art that I express my freedom; it gives me the most fulfilling yet challenging experience. As the famous proverb by Einstein [states], “Imagination is more important than knowledge.” My creative journey begins in hardware stores and junk yards where I meticulously source and collect debris from daily life that is usually associated with the home or items often found in a garage. To me, these elements are unexpected and very intriguing. I amass vast collections of forks, nuts, bolts, garden rakes, sieves, and my latest choice of PVC chains and plastic soldiers. They later transform into quirky figurative sculptures (small

installations) and wall-mounted sculptures. The association of these objects is the key to my exploration — by combining domestic paraphernalia with a traditional weaving technique. I believe that I’ve managed to inject a new life into these seemingly banal materials as they morph into something incredible, and most importantly, into the portal to my “freedom.”

— Anne Samat, July 2017



ANNE SAMAT BIOGRAPHY

Courtesy of the artist

Malaysian artist Anne Samat was born in 1973 in Malacca. Formally trained in the Malaysian craft of Pua Kumbu, Samat incorporates traditional weaving techniques into intricate three-dimensional wall sculptures. Breaking from custom, her pieces include found objects and consider concepts of both freedom and identity. Steeped in personal connections and stories, Samat's weavings are full of symbolism and often anthropomorphically represent herself and family members. Recognizing the significance of these relationships in her life, Samat states that her works are about love. Her humanized sculptures are tributes to family members and their support of her artistic pursuit as a woman in Malaysian society, and also bring to light the underrepresentation of female Asians artists in the mainstream global art world.

Samat's pieces continuously break from the tradition of Pua Kumbu through the inclusion of various modern, repurposed objects. Dollar store items such as rakes, brooms, and combs combine with found items like sieves and wheels to create cohesive and totemic artworks that disrupt custom. Yarn and incorporated objects in Samat's pieces symbolize the human form and become avatar- or altar-like sites for reverence, representative of Samat and her values.

She takes pride in sourcing objects for her pieces from all over the world. In considering an object, she imagines a life beyond the functions of a normal object. These are materials around us every day, yet she brings new life and story to things often overlooked in our daily lives.

Many of Samat's pieces explore themes of love and identity through figurative studies in relationships. Recognizing the importance of support from friends and family, many works celebrate the connections that have helped her thrive as an artist. Another series explores the freedom she finds in being an independent artist, able to work for herself and set her own schedule. Samat sees weaving as very therapeutic, meditating on largely positive influences within her life.

Samat attended the Mara Institute of Technology in Malaysia and received a bachelor's degree in art and design in 1995. She is based in Kuala Lumpur and is represented by the Richard Koh Fine Art Gallery in Malaysia, as well as the Marc Straus Gallery in New York.

ANNE SAMAT, continued

ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

▶ SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING: "FREE TO BE ME" COLLAGE

Having students reflect on themselves and their own amazing character traits will allow them to have a better understanding of what makes them unique. Draw an outline of the profile of their face, or a generic outline of a figure, on a piece of paper. Using collage, fill in the figure with images and statements about what makes them unique, important, and amazing. They can also include images of the things important to their identity and their hopes for the future.

Virginia Social Emotional Learning Standards: SeA1: 1-2a, SeA2: 1-2a, DeM2: 1-2a, SeA2:3-4a, SeA2: 3-4d, SeA2: 5-6a, SeA2: 5-6d, SeA2:7-8d, DeM2: 7-8a

▶ VISUAL ART: WEAVING ON A CARDBOARD LOOM

Pre-notched cardboard looms can be purchased from arts and craft suppliers, or you can make your own. Choose a stiff cardboard for the best results. To make a cardboard loom, start by cutting small slits every half-inch along the short ends of a rectangular piece of cardboard. Tape the end of a ball or long piece of yarn to the back of the cardboard, then thread the yarn through the first slit at the top (to the front) and then down through the first slit at the bottom (to the back). Bring the yarn up around the back of the cardboard again and continue wrapping the yarn through the top and bottom slits all the way across. Your loom and the warp are now complete and you can begin weaving.

Warp: The thread that is strung over the loom vertically and holds tension while weaving

Weft: The thread that is woven between the warp threads to create pattern and structure

The weft materials will be woven over and under the warp in the opposite direction. Beginners can start by practicing with the classic over-under technique, but should also experiment with other weaving techniques, alternating colors, layering colors, and adding pom poms or tassels. Weft materials can include yarn, thread, strips of fabric, paper, or found objects. Students can experiment with including found objects in their weaving, inspired by Samat's work.

Virginia Visual Arts Standards of Learning: 2.1, 2.2, 2.12, 2.15, 3.1, 3.2, 3.12, 3.16, 4.1, 4.2, 4.12, 4.16, 5.1, 5.2, 5.12, 5.16, 6.1, 6.6, 6.12, 6.15, 7.1, 7.12, 7.15, 8.1, 8.12, 8.15

▶ LINKS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: [Exhibition Page](#) and [Interview with the Artist](#)

▶ BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anne Samat. MARC STRAUS. MARC STRAUS, December 17, 2021. marcstraus.com/exhibitions/anne-samat/.

Anne Samat. Asia Society. Asia Society Museum, 2020. asiasociety.org/triennial/artist/anne-samat.

YANIRA COLLADO

Zafa/ A Spellworking of Temporal Geometry

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery

Appropriate for all ages; content connections in grades 9-12

Yanira Collado's *Zafa/ A Spellworking of Temporal Geometry* brings together a collection of her sculptures which consider connections to place. How do we remember where we grew up, where we went to school, and other important spaces? How does time change the places that mean so much to us? Collado's exhibition also features a piece created on-site with assistance of Virginia Tech students using objects found and donated from around the Blacksburg area.

ARTIST STATEMENT



Courtesy of the artist

I am a multimedia cultural practitioner working with site specific installations that encompass painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, and audio. My practice considers concepts that allude to the restoration of histories once muted due to natural and human interventions such as the paradoxes in time and the disruption of Indigenous cultures.

These perceptions are summoned through construction materials, reclaimed literary texts, wood, concrete, textiles, iron, and drywall — materials with inherent geographic histories, processes, and economies that imply varying degrees of ritual, cultural values, traditions, and personalized and public memory. My work assembles a visual language that reconciles the process in which the history of

this information is recorded, stored, and retrieved. This interest in the embedded narrative of materials has led me to an expansive focus on textiles and their complex but often neglected presence in the conversation of how we define history and culture.

— Yanira Collado



YANIRA COLLADO BIOGRAPHY

Yanira Collado was born in 1975 in Brooklyn, New York. Collado attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and currently lives and works in Miami, Florida. Using found objects, she constructs three-dimensional collages that confront ideas of identity and history. Using materials with inherent geographic histories and processes, Collado implies consideration of both personalized and public memory. Scraps of textiles, paper, cardboard, and building materials are often found in her works and are used to create a visual language of how such objects came to be. These fragments, in turn, create a whole; a reconstruction with ritualistic undertones that recognizes the memory of both object and place.

Considering her Dominican heritage, Collado's work attempts to retain and uplift cultural values and traditions by encoding their meanings within her works. Through a symbolic process that produces abstract form, she uses fragments to reconstruct narratives of the past, lost to time. This offers a healing process for Collado and viewers alike.

Collado's work ranges in size from the smallest snail shell to full-room installations. Maintaining an unfinished, rough aesthetic, her work often features raw edges, jagged fragmentations, and uneven textile scraps. The hand of the artist is evident in every aspect of the construction of Collado's work, bringing further attention to the labor with which these objects were produced. Brightly colored fabrics contrast with neutral-toned building materials to lead the viewer's eye through these pieces. Painted shapes and patterns provide sites of ritual critical to her reconstruction of memory and tradition.

While many of Collado's works are wall sculptures, she also creates free-standing works and textiles. Some of her works are reminiscent of quilts and take inspiration from the American quilting movement through the use of repeated symbols. Preferring to leave discussion to the viewer, Collado's process is open-ended and she takes a spiritual approach to her artistic practice.

Collado is represented by Emerson Dorsch Gallery in Miami, Florida.

YANIRA COLLADO, continued

ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

▶ VISUAL ART: SCULPTURAL SPACES

Students can explore place, construction, and site-specificity in their own work through scale model design of a monument or architectural space. Begin by asking students to choose a site for their design and find a photograph or illustration of that place. Challenge them to think about sites in the past or present, real or imaginary (or AI-generated), accessible or inaccessible to humans. Once a site is chosen, they will design a monument or building for that location. The size, materials, colors, textures, cultural or historic references, and message that the design communicates should have meaning in the site.

When the design is complete, students will build a scale model or create a digital 3D rendering of the design and place it in the image or illustration of the site chosen. Allow each student to present their final work, explaining the meaning behind the choices they made, followed by a class critique.

Virginia Visual Arts Standards of Learning: AI.1, AI.2, AI.3, AI.12, AI.13, AI.15, AI.16, AI.17, AII.1, AII.3, AII.12, AII.13, AII.15, AII.16, AII.17, AIII.1, AIII.3, AII.13, AIII.14, AIII.15, AIII.17, AIV.1, AIV.4, AIV.13, AIV.14, AIV.15, AIV.16

▶ ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: TRANSFORMATION OF A CHARACTER

In her sculptural work, Collado often uses and repurposes doors. In literature, film, and theatre, doors can be useful symbols that illustrate a character's transformation, growing up, embarking on a journey, overcoming a barrier, reaching safety, and much more.

Ask students to write a short story in which a door, gate, or other portal is used to symbolize a character's transformation.

Virginia English Language Arts Standards of Learning: 9.1, 9.6, 9.7, 10.1, 10.6, 10.7, 11.1, 11.6, 11.7, 12.1, 12.6, 12.7

▶ LINKS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: [Exhibition Page](#) and [Interview with the Artist](#)

▶ BIBLIOGRAPHY

Soto, Edra. "The Sacred Geometries of Yanira Collado." The Latinx Project at NYU. The Latinx Project at NYU, July 5, 2022. latinxproject.nyu.edu/interventions/the-sacred-geometries-of-yanira-collado.

"Yanira Collado." Emerson Dorsch. Emerson Dorsch, October 15, 2022. emersondorsch.com/artist/yanira-collado/.

"Yanira Collado." Joan Mitchell Foundation. Joan Mitchell Foundation, 2022. joanmitchellfoundation.org/yanira-collado.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Exterior Turner Street wall and Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor

Appropriate for all ages; content connections in grades K-3

Artist Conor McGrady's work primarily consists of monochromatic, large-scale drawings and paintings. McGrady paints figures, architecture, and landscapes: all subjects that address power and authority. Speaking about his work, McGrady states, "The impetus for my practice as a whole is based on situations of violence and military control, largely drawing on, but not confined to, my experience growing up in Northern Ireland." McGrady's landscapes, such as those on display at the Moss Arts Center, as well as his portraiture, suggest a power imbalance between the artwork and the viewer, creating subdued and peaceful scenes with eerie undertones found in their underlying meanings.

The black-and-white color scheme of McGrady's artworks are simple yet intense, sending a bold message to the viewer that mimics tactics used in propaganda. McGrady's works consider the control of spaces, both in personal and national boundaries. Scenes of geographic wilderness featured both in landscape works as well as in the backgrounds of figurative works play a role in creating the sense of disquiet integral to McGrady's considerations of power. The vastness of open space, as seen in McGrady's *Mountains Series*, is contrasted with ideas of control, boundaries, and a lack of freedom.

ARTIST STATEMENT



Courtesy of the artist

These images are from a recent series of works exploring landscape as a multi-layered signifier, representing national territory, boundaries, control, and a sense of unease or threat. The works have been produced in the context of the ongoing tension between the desire for openness and fluidity on the one hand, and the ringfencing of nation states and territories as ideological enclosures, with an increase in barriers to mobility and migration on the other.

As images they draw upon the picturesque construction of landscape as an indicator of national identity, informed by the ideas of the romantic and the sublime, yet are underpinned by a sense of disquiet or alienation. As such they represent an investigation into the role that images of landscape play in relation to ideology.



CONOR MCGRADY BIOGRAPHY

Conor McGrady (b. 1970, Downpatrick, Northern Ireland) works primarily in painting and drawing. McGrady's work examines the role of authority in contemporary society, mainly through how power is manifested and represented in architecture, urban space, and individual and collective actions. His work arises from situations of civil unrest and social instability, often drawing on the artist's experience growing up in Northern Ireland.

McGrady has exhibited internationally, with one-person exhibitions in New York, Miami, Atlanta, Chicago, and Zagreb. Group exhibitions include the 2002 Whitney Biennial in New York, *The Jerusalem Show VII: Fractures* (Qalandiya International Biennial), D-0 Ark Underground Biennale of Contemporary Art, Sarajevo-Konjic, and IK-00 Spaces of Confinement in Venice. Editor of Radical History Review's *Curated Spaces*, his writing has appeared in the *Brooklyn Rail*, *Ruminations on Violence* (Waveland Press, 2007), *State of Emergence* (Plottner Verlag, 2011), and *State in Time* (Drustvo NSK Informativni Center, Ljubljana, 2012). McGrady lives and works in the Burren, Ireland, where he is the dean of academic affairs at the Burren College of Art.

CONOR MCGRADY, continued

ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

▶ VISUAL ART: CREATE YOUR OWN MURAL

Working as a class, determine an appropriate topic for a large mural and have small groups research and design individual elements that should be included in the mural. Combine each group's elements into one cohesive composition. Project or transfer the design onto a large board or canvas, and work collaboratively to complete the mural using the materials most appropriate for your class. When it is complete, install the mural in a prominent place in your classroom or school.

Virginia Visual Arts Standards of Learning: 2.1, 2.12, 2.17, 3.1, 3.2, 3.12, 4.1, 4.2, 4.12, 5.1, 5.2, 5.12, 5.15, 6.1, 6.2, 6.12, 7.1, 7.2, 7.12, 8.1, 8.12

▶ LINKS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: [Exhibition Page](#), [Artist Website](#), and [Interview with the Artist](#)

▶ BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brock, Lisa, Conor McGrady, and Teresa Meade. 2010. *Editors' Introduction*. *Radical History Review* 2010 (106): 1-3. doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2009-017

McGrady, Conor. *Raising the Volume: Laibach: Art, Ideology and War*. *Fortnight*, no. 398 (2001): 15-17. [jstor.org/stable/25560386](https://www.jstor.org/stable/25560386).

McGrady, Conor. *Statement on Recent Drawings*. *Radical History Review* 2005 (93): 227-30. doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2005-93-227.

Conor McGrady Online Portfolio. Conor McGrady online portfolio. Conor McGrady. Accessed November 9, 2022. conormcgrady.com/index.html.

Conor McGrady. Thomas Robertello Gallery: Conor McGrady. Thomas Robertello Gallery, 2006. thomasrobertello.com/exhibitions/1288.html.



ACTIVITIES IN THE GALLERY

Write Your Descriptive Words

A
B
C
D
E
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I
J
K
L
M
N
O
P
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W
X
Y
Z

▶ ALPHABET EXPLORATION

Take a closer look and practice using descriptive language with this activity. Look carefully at all of the artwork in the gallery, and record one word beginning with each letter of the alphabet that describes what you see. When you have finished, compare your list with a friend and help each other complete all 26 descriptive words!

▶ SEE, THINK, ME, WE

Choose one work of art and answer the following questions about it.

See: Look closely at the work. What do you notice?
Make lots of observations.

Think: What thoughts do you have about the work?

Me: What connections can you make between yourself and the work?

We: How might the work be connected to bigger stories — about the world and our place in it?

▶ SCAVENGER HUNT

Anne Samat's sculptures are made of a variety of materials and objects. Using a pencil, check off each item in the list when you spot it in one of the works of art. Try to find every item!

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> toy soldiers | <input type="checkbox"/> forks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> an orange garden rake | <input type="checkbox"/> golden flowers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> red, white, and blue ribbon | <input type="checkbox"/> baby doll heads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the head of a broom | <input type="checkbox"/> small black beads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> plastic sword handles | <input type="checkbox"/> yellow chain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> black garden rake | <input type="checkbox"/> black key tags |
| <input type="checkbox"/> silver flowers | <input type="checkbox"/> purple yarn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> mask | <input type="checkbox"/> metal leaves |
| <input type="checkbox"/> round red beads | <input type="checkbox"/> yellow beads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> metal washers | |

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

ACCESSIBILITY

The Moss Arts Center is committed to being accessible to all of our patrons. Patrons with disabilities and their companions are accommodated through wheelchair seating, parking, and other special requests throughout the center at all levels. Assisted listening devices are available. Service animals are permitted. Sign interpretations and large-print programs are available with advance notification. If you or your students have questions regarding accessibility or would like assistance, please contact Jamie Wiggert at wiggertj@vt.edu.

PARKING FOR CARS AND VANS

Those driving cars and vans may park in the North End Center Garage (300 Turner Street NW), which is one block from the Moss Arts Center's Turner Street entrance. A valid university parking permit, a validation from one of the retail tenants, or payment of the daily fee is required to park in the North End Center Garage.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

In accordance with guidance from Virginia Tech, masks are no longer required in indoor public spaces, but remain recommended. The Moss Arts Center adheres to the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Tech in its operations, including protocols for face coverings and cleaning and sanitation. Find more information about the university's policies [here](#).

We ask patrons to do their part in keeping our community healthy. If you feel unwell, please stay home.

FEEDBACK

Following your visit, you may receive an email requesting feedback on your group's experience. Please make time to respond, as doing so could significantly improve the Moss Arts Center's pre-K to grade 12 programs for you and future visitors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MOSS ARTS CENTER PROGRAMS

Please subscribe to the [Moss Arts Center's email list](#) and join the list for school-day performances and K-12 programs.



MOSS ARTS CENTER

PERFORMANCES | EXHIBITIONS | EXPERIENCES
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