



SCHOLASTIC

art

How to Read Art

Featuring:

- David Hockney
- Georgia O'Keeffe
- Diego Rivera
- Kehinde Wiley

SEPTEMBER 2016 • scholastic.com/art • Vol. 47 No. 1 ISSN 1060-892X



SCHOLASTIC
art

SEPTEMBER 2016
VOL. 47 • NO. 1
ISSN 1060-832X

2 Art News
+ Notes

4 Reading Art

10 5 Things to
Know About
Reading Art

12 Debate:
Anish
Kapoor

13 Student of
the Month

14 Hands-on
Project

16 Great Art
Jobs

MORE ONLINE:
scholastic
.com/art

Art History
Video:

Reading *The
Oath of
the Horatii*

Debate:
Can You
Own a Color?

How-to Video:
Draw With
Intention

Cover artwork by David Hockney
David Hockney (b. 1937), *A Bigger
Splash*, 1967. Acrylic on canvas,
96x96in. (242.6x243.8cm).
©David Hockney
Collection Tate, London



ART ON THE ROAD

Giant blank canvases rumble past us every day, but it takes a special eye to even notice they are there. Jaime Colsa, CEO of a Spanish trucking company, recently realized that his fleet of tractor-trailers and box trucks could become

traveling venues to display art. Colsa, an avid art collector, partnered with a gallery in Madrid for the project. The team invited several contemporary Spanish artists to paint massive trucks with original murals.

Okuda San Miguel, the artist who painted the truck above right, is a street

Homes to Roost In

When Thomas Dambo begins a new artwork, he has the birds of Copenhagen in mind. The street artist makes colorful birdhouses that decorate trees and homes in the bustling Danish city.

Originally trained as a carpenter, Dambo began using his woodworking skills to make plywood birdhouses after observing how much of the material is wasted at construction sites. With an emphasis on using recycled materials, he also works with paint donated to the project.

Dambo finds creative ways to install the houses. Since there was no tree available for the birdhouses shown here, the artist simply built a tree for them. His houses are so cozy that once a family of birds moves in, they rarely leave the nest.



How does Dambo's art contribute to his community?

Thomas Dambo, *Happy City Birds Mural*, 2012. Copenhagen.



artist who also makes small-scale works in his studio. He uses bright colors and geometric shapes, which make the murals look three-dimensional. Okuda explains that the three faces looking out of this mural observe the people they pass on the streets of Spain.

Okuda was especially interested in this project because his work will always be traveling. Ten painted trucks began their journeys in February, with more planned for the future. Colsa's goal is to eventually have 100 of these rolling works of art navigating Spanish highways.

How does the artist who painted this mural use color and shape?

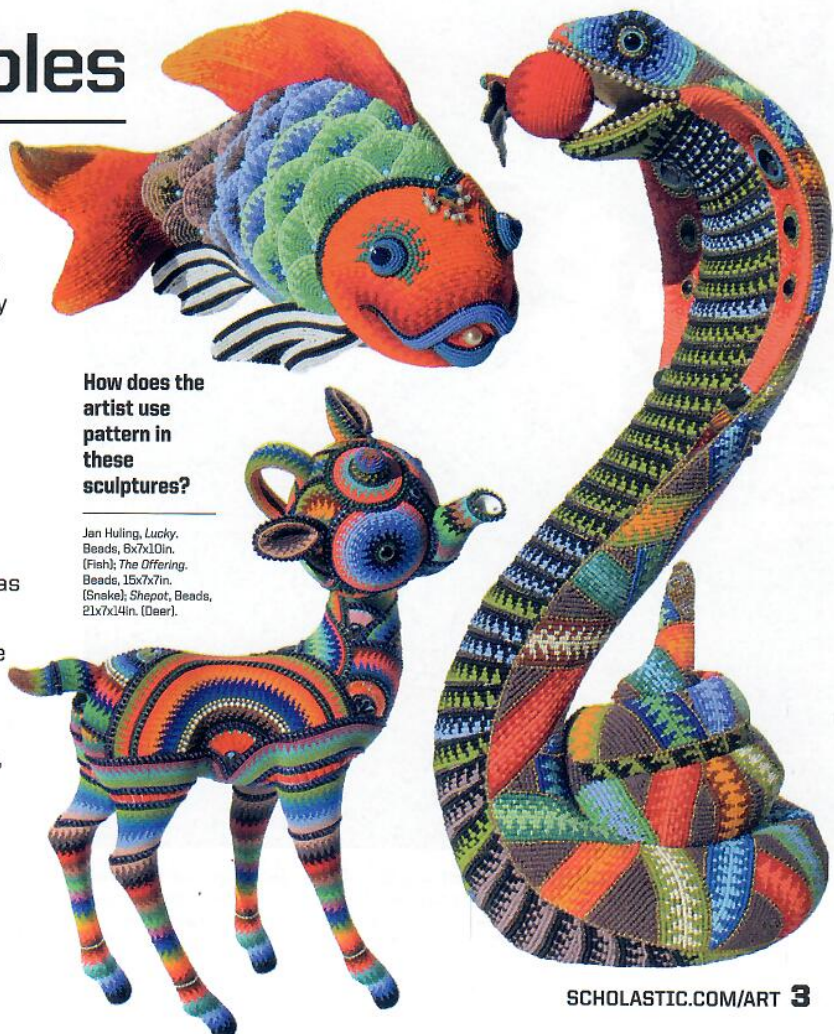
Artist: Okuda San Miguel (b. 1980). Image: @Pancal Calvo.

Beaded Baubles

Broken jewelry, lost buttons, and discarded junk—objects most people consider trash—inspire Jan Huling. She uses millions of tiny beads to embellish ordinary objects, like the toy animals shown here, with colorful patterns. She calls these sculptures three-dimensional collages.

"It's a very slow process," Huling says. For each sculpture, the artist strings together hundreds of glass seed beads. Then she glues the beads to a found object. She carefully removes the thread as she progresses. Developing the beaded patterns is like "working out a puzzle," she explains. "It's very satisfying to see them grow in size and beauty."

Because she works with found objects, Huling is always on the lookout at garage sales, in thrift shops, and on eBay. She hopes her work will "transform the mundane and allow [her viewers] to imagine the magic within the familiar."



How does the artist use pattern in these sculptures?

Jan Huling, *Lucky*. Beads, 8x7x10in. (Fish); *The Offering*. Beads, 15x7x7in. (Snake); *Shepot*, Beads, 21x7x14in. (Deer).

How to Read Art

Analyze these artists' techniques to interpret their paintings



What techniques does Ruysch use to make her paintings look realistic?

Rachel Ruysch (1664-1750), *Flower Piece*. Oil on canvas, 29.53x23.03in. (75x58.5cm), Hallwyl Museum, Stockholm. Inv. XXXII. B.120. Image: HIP/Art Resource, NY.

What makes an artwork a masterpiece? Does it have to be beautiful? Should it tell a story? Must it have meaning? Interpreting art can be

challenging. But whether you're an expert or just getting started, reading art always begins with one simple step: **observation**.

You can learn a lot about an artwork by looking closely at how the artist made it. The three works shown here all depict flowers, a traditional **symbol** of beauty. But the paintings look very different from one another. What techniques does each artist use to present his or her interpretation of the subject?

Picture-Perfect

Rachel Ruysch (roysh), a 17th- and 18th-century Dutch painter, spent her youth studying plants and flowers. Her father, a scientist, collected rare plants, and young Rachel helped catalogue the samples. Inspired by the collection, she soon began painting **still lifes** of flowers.

Through close observation, Ruysch paints extremely **realistic**, or lifelike, paintings. To create works like the example at left, she applies many thin layers of paint. She adds **highlights** to the colorful petals in the **foreground** so they pop against the dark **background**. This helps Ruysch add **space** and **depth** to the scene.

Expressive Brushwork

While Ruysch carefully hides her brushwork, 19th-century Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh **emphasizes** his. In his 1890 *Iris*, above right, Van Gogh uses expressive brushwork and a technique called **impasto**, layering thick paint on the canvas. The visible brushstrokes are a record of how the artist worked.

Van Gogh uses **thin lines** to add details to each flower petal and **bold lines** to define the **shapes** of each leaf and stem. These lines, combined with Van Gogh's brushwork, make the painting more



expressive than realistic. The artist wants his viewers to experience the feeling of looking at flowers, rather than simply seeing a perfect illustration of them.

Creative Close-Up

Georgia O'Keeffe, a 20th-century American artist, gave viewers yet another way to see flowers with her groundbreaking compositions. In works like her 1925 *Purple Petunias*, right, O'Keeffe **magnifies** the flowers, filling the canvas. She **crops** the image so the petals extend beyond the edges of the **picture plane**. O'Keeffe uses soft colors to set the **mood** and emphasize the **contours** of each petal. Although easily recognizable as flowers, the image becomes almost **abstract**, not representational.

How do Ruysch, Van Gogh, and O'Keeffe each represent beauty in their paintings? Do you think there is more to these



paintings than their **aesthetic** (attractive) value? Observing the techniques artists use is just the first step in reading art. Turn the page to learn more!

How does Van Gogh use his brushstrokes in *Iris*s?

Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890), *Iris*s, 1890. Oil on canvas, 23x36 1/4 in. (73.7x92.1 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gift of Adele R. Levy, 1958. Image: Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY.

What makes this painting by O'Keeffe more abstract than those by Ruysch and Van Gogh?

Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986), *Purple Petunias*, 1925. Oil on canvas, 15 7/8x13 in. Collection of The Newark Museum, Bequest of Miss Cora Louise Hartshorn, 1958. Inv. 58.167. Image: Newark Museum/Art Resource, NY. ©2016 Georgia O'Keeffe Museum/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

SPOTLIGHT ANALYZING ART

What do the objects in Holbein's painting symbolize?

Hans Holbein the Younger (1487/8-1543), *The Ambassadors*, 1533. Oil on oak, 207x208.5cm. The National Gallery, London. Inventory Number: NG1314. Image: The National Gallery.



Seeing the Story

How do artists use symbolism, characters, and dramatic action to share a narrative?

The best writers develop characters that capture your imagination and plots that draw you in. Like a writer, an artist can tell a story—but he or she does so visually. Key details—such as symbols—can help you “read” a painting just as you read a book.

Subtle Symbols

Some artists, like Hans Holbein (hahns HOHL-bine) the Younger, create narratives through the imagery in their work. In the 1533 painting above, *The Ambassadors*, Holbein shares a narrative through the work's title and the objects he includes.

An ambassador is a person who represents his or her country and must be well-versed in many subjects. The objects in Holbein's painting are **symbolic**, showing that these men are well-educated. For example, the upper shelf holds a sundial and a celestial globe showing the stars. These objects represent the men's knowledge of space and time. What do you think the lute, the hymnal, and the globe on the lower shelf symbolize?

SPOTLIGHT ANALYZING ART

What do the objects in Holbein's painting symbolize?

Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/8-1543), *The Ambassadors*, 1533. Oil on oak, 207x209.5cm. The National Gallery, London. Inventory Number: NG1314. Image: The National Gallery.



Seeing the Story

How do artists use symbolism, characters, and dramatic action to share a narrative?

The best writers develop characters that capture your imagination and plots that draw you in. Like a writer, an artist can tell a story—but he or she does so visually. Key details—such as symbols—can help you “read” a painting just as you read a book.

Subtle Symbols

Some artists, like Hans Holbein (hahns HOHL-bine) the Younger, create narratives through the imagery in their work. In the 1533 painting above, *The Ambassadors*, Holbein shares a narrative through the work's title and the objects he includes.

An ambassador is a person who represents his or her country and must be well-versed in many subjects. The objects in Holbein's painting are **symbolic**, showing that these men are well-educated. For example, the upper shelf holds a sundial and a celestial globe showing the stars. These objects represent the men's knowledge of space and time. What do you think the lute, the hymnal, and the globe on the lower shelf symbolize?

A Snapshot of History

Discover what historical context reveals about these two paintings

Sometimes you must look beyond the surface of an artwork to fully understand it. Who created the work? When and where did the artist live? Who is the subject of the work? Answering these and other questions puts the piece in **context**, providing insight into why the artist created it and how people interpret it.

The works shown here, painted more than 300 years apart, have similar compositions, and both are about power. But the statements the artists make about power are wildly different. Background information and historical context will help you interpret the two paintings.

Investigating the Artists

The painting above is a 17th-century portrait by Anthony van Dyck (van DYKE). The Flemish artist made a career of painting aristocrats. He enjoyed the life of the nobility and had a reputation for behaving as if he were a member of the elite class.

Contemporary African-American artist Kehinde Wiley (keh-HIN-day WYE-lee) painted the portrait at far right. Wiley grew up in a poor neighborhood in Los Angeles during the 1980s. He became a superstar in the art world when he began re-creating paintings, like the one above by Van Dyck. But Wiley replaces the original aristocrats with black men and women.



A Classic Subject

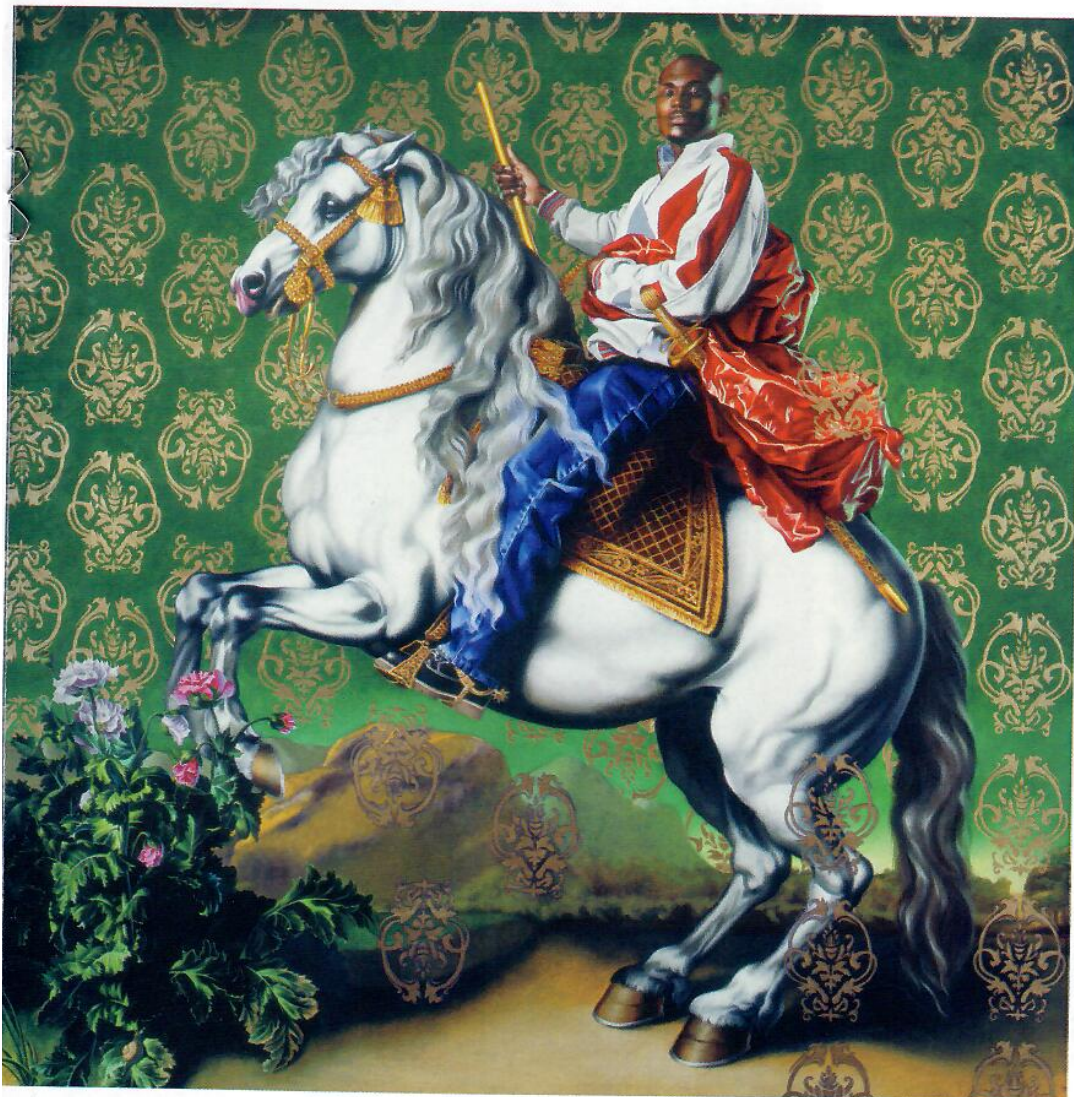
Who are the men in the paintings above? Knowing the subjects' identities will help you understand why Van Dyck and Wiley chose to paint these two portraits.

In the 17th century, aristocrats **commissioned**, or hired, artists to paint their likenesses. Van Dyck painted **idealized** portraits that emphasized his subjects' best qualities. The painting above portrays an Italian military leader and prince. Van Dyck shows the prince's military power by placing the subject on a rearing horse. The artist displays the prince's wealth by putting him in luxurious, expensive-looking clothing.

Only the wealthy could afford portraits like Van Dyck's, so most European art from this period shows white, upper-class

How does Van Dyck show his subject's social status?

Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641), *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Thommaso Francesco of Savoy-Carignano*, c. 1634-1635. Oil on canvas, 315x236cm. Galleria Sabauda, Turin, Italy.



What statement does Wiley make about power?

Kehinde Wiley (b. 1977), *Prince Tommaso Francesco of Savoy-Carignano*, 2006. Oil on canvas, 96x96in. ©Kehinde Wiley. Used by permission.

men. Wiley challenges this convention. He draws attention to race in art by featuring black men in scenes traditionally occupied by white men.

While the subject of Van Dyck's work commissioned his portrait, Wiley found his model through a process he calls "street casting." The artist spotted his model walking on the street and invited him to pose for the painting. The model even chose the reference image, Van Dyck's portrait.

Power in Context

Van Dyck emphasizes the prince's power as a military leader. The man in Wiley's

portrait isn't a military hero or a prince. But by placing his model in the context of Van Dyck's portrait, Wiley elevates his subject's power and status.

In its own time, Van Dyck's painting was simply a portrait of a member of the noble class. When **juxtaposed**, or placed side by side with Wiley's portrait, it takes on new meaning about who holds power. Similarly, Wiley's portrait depends on the history of art, and the painting by Van Dyck, to help viewers understand his statement about power and race. Wiley invites viewers to think about whose portraits appear in museums and why.

“Possibility is not necessarily impacted or determined wholly by the color of your skin.” –Kehinde Wiley

5 Things to Know About Reading Art

1 SEE THE SCENE

When you first encounter a work of art, the first thing to do is look carefully. What do you see? Completed by French artist Jacques-Louis David (zhahk-loo-EE dah-VEED) in 1784, the theatrical scene at right presents a **tableau**, a group of figures arranged as if on a stage. Three men on the left, each wearing a helmet, raise their arms toward the central figure. He faces the trio, holding three swords. On the right, three women and two children lean heavily on one another.

2 IDENTIFY THE TECHNIQUES

Next, you should consider the techniques the artist uses to create the work. David renders his figures realistically, with great attention to their muscles and their draped clothing. He paints crisp, refined details, leaving no brushstrokes visible on the surface of the canvas. Dramatic light in the foreground emphasizes the figures, while the background fades into shadow. David uses **linear perspective** to create depth. The lines where the tiles meet recede into the background, making the space seem to be **three-dimensional**.



3 NOTICE THE NARRATIVE

The title and the figures' actions can help you interpret the narrative in a work of art. This painting is called *The Oath of the Horatii*. An oath is a promise. The Horatii are an ancient Roman family. So how might you interpret this scene? The painting shows the three Horatii brothers, on the left, taking an oath before their father, in the center. The swords are symbols, showing that the promise is about an upcoming battle. David enhances the narrative through the composition. The father anchors the scene. The closely grouped sons, who stand strong, **balance** the swooning women.

How can you use the five steps outlined here to interpret this painting?

Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825), *The Oath of the Horatii*, c. 1784. Oil on canvas, 330x425cm. Louvre Museum, Paris, France. Inv.: 3692. Image: Gérard Blot/Christian Jean. ©RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY.



ASK THESE 5 QUESTIONS TO
“READ” ANY WORK OF ART:

1 What do you see?

2 How does the artist work?

3 What's the story?

4 When does it take place?

5 Who is the artist?

4 PUT IT IN CONTEXT

Sometimes you might need historical context to fully understand an artwork. David rose to fame in the years leading up to the French Revolution in the 18th century. But *The Oath of the Horatii* represents a myth about the Horatii family that was popular in 7th-century b.c. Rome. In the myth, the brothers swear to defend Rome in battle. Why did David choose a subject for his painting that was more than 2,000 years old? He saw patriotic symbolism in the tale—a call to arms to defend one's home. This was David's first commission by French royalty, and the artist wanted to make an impact.

5 CONNECT TO THE ARTIST'S LIFE

Details about the artist's biography can illuminate an artwork. David chose to break away from the **decorative** style popular during the 18th century. These ornate paintings frequently had bright, chaotic compositions. David pushed for a return to a more classical style with simple geometric compositions and moral messages. He traveled to Rome to study ancient masterpieces and find inspiration for *The Oath of the Horatii*. Little did he know that his painting would become a masterpiece in its own right, the first in a new style of art we now call **neoclassical**.

WRITE ABOUT ART

Select an iconic painting. Use the five questions above to help you write a paragraph about what you see.



DEBATE

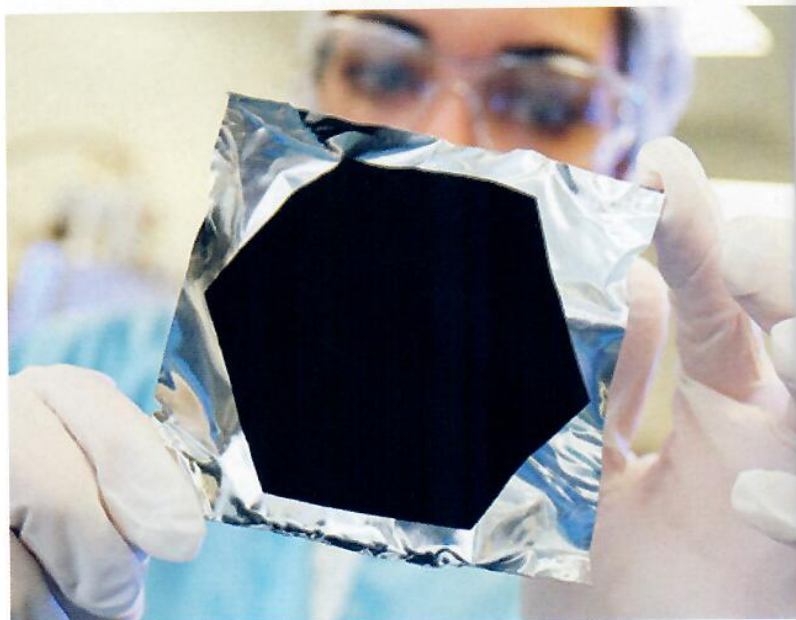
Can You Own a Color?

One artist has exclusive rights to the world's blackest substance

What's the blackest black on the planet? It's not the color of coal, a midnight sky, or even a panther's fur. The blackest shade on Earth actually comes from a human-made substance called Vantablack. It's believed to be the darkest material ever created. But that's not all that has people talking. Recently, sculptor Anish Kapoor (ah-NEESH kah-POR) bought the exclusive rights to use Vantablack in art. Now, many are asking whether an artist should have a monopoly on a material or color.

A British company called Surrey NanoSystems originally developed Vantablack as a coating for military and scientific instruments. It absorbs nearly all the light that strikes its surface, making objects coated with the substance almost impossible to see. Some people say it's like looking into a hole. When asked about the artistic applications of the material, Kapoor told the BBC, "Imagine a space that's so dark that as you walk in you lose all sense of where you are, what you are, and especially all sense of time."

Kapoor makes sculptures that manipulate form and explore space. Some people believe that he's the perfect person to experiment with Vantablack. But many in



The deep black of Vantablack makes wrinkles in aluminum foil disappear.

the art community object. They argue that if Kapoor has sole access to Vantablack, he is preventing other artists from innovating with the new substance.

This isn't the first time an artist has claimed a color for himself. In 1960, French conceptual artist Yves Klein created and patented his own vivid shade of blue. Kapoor didn't invent Vantablack, though, and it's not a paint color but a unique substance. Representatives of Surrey NanoSystems say that as scientists, they're staying out of the discussion, stating: "This debate is for the artistic community, we don't want to get involved."

What do you think? Should only one person have the right to use a color or material in his or her artwork?



Anish Kapoor is now the only person legally allowed to experiment with Vantablack in his artwork.



CRAFT AN ARGUMENT

1. Explain the issue surrounding the artistic use of Vantablack.
2. Why do some people object to Kapoor having exclusive artistic rights to the material?
3. Should artists share access to new materials or technology? Why or why not?

Vantablack: Courtesy of Surrey NanoSystems; Anish Kapoor: @JustIn Tallia/AFP/Getty Images

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

How does Jada use narrative in this painting?



Enduring Traditions

This award-winning artist explores the meaning of family

Jada Cameron wants her paintings to bring people together. “We may come from different areas of the world and from different races,” says Jada, 17, a senior at Alexander

W. Dreyfoos High School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, Florida, “but through art we can share ideas.”

What inspired this painting? I wanted to make a painting about my two heritages. My father’s family is Ethiopian and my mother’s is Cherokee. I thought about the similarities these cultures share, and settled on hair braiding—which is important in both. I included my grandmother, mother, and sister to show how different generations can connect through tradition.

How did you create your painting? First, I sketched my family and took pictures of

them posing. I covered my white canvas with yellowish-brownish paint and lightly sketched the outlines of the scene. Finally, I added color and painted the details.

What was most challenging about this painting? The canvas is 30" x 40", which is the largest I have ever painted. I’m a perfectionist, so I labored to get everything just right.

What did you want viewers to walk away with? I wanted them to appreciate that this is a home like any other. It’s a setting that anyone can relate to, no matter what his or her heritage—and that realization can bring us together.

Do you have any advice for aspiring artists like yourself? Yes, don’t be afraid. Great artists take risks!



Jada won a Gold Medal for her painting in the 2016 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. To find out more about this program, visit artandwriting.org.



Jada
Cameron

HANDS-ON PROJECT DRAWING

Watch
a Video!
scholastic
.com/art



How did the student who made this drawing use texture to create emphasis?

What mood did the student who made this drawing create by using a red palette?



Draw With Intention

Use what you've learned about reading art to create a drawing with a symbolic narrative

You've seen how artists like Hans Holbein use objects to communicate a narrative. Now it's your turn to create a still life arrangement using objects with personal significance. Then you'll make a monochromatic drawing with a narrative.

MATERIALS

- still life objects
- paper
- pencils
- colored pencils
- erasers

STEP 1 Plan Your Composition

How do you create an artwork with meaning a viewer can interpret? The choices you make about your technique, your color scheme, and your subject must be intentional. Begin by brushing up on your art observation skills. Look carefully at *The Ambassadors* on page 6. Consider the symbols Holbein uses to create a narrative. Then think about how you might use symbols in your own work. You'll select three to five objects to create a still life arrangement. Choose items that have symbolic meaning that is personal for you but that any viewer can understand. For example, clocks usually symbolize the passage of time. But for you, a clock might represent your dislike for early mornings. Make a few loose, gestural sketches to work out your ideas. Be sure to think about how your chosen objects relate to one another. Discuss your ideas with your classmates to ensure that your chosen symbols come across as intended.

TIP: Keep your preliminary sketches quick and simple.



Find inspiration by looking at iconic works of art.

STEP 2 Develop Your Drawing

Once you've decided which objects you're going to include in your drawing, create a dynamic arrangement. Then begin sketching your composition with pencil on your final drawing paper. Don't be afraid to take risks! You might try cropping your drawing in an unexpected way as Georgia O'Keeffe does in her painting on page 5. Or try incorporating implied action as in David Hockney's work on page 7. As you plan your drawing, focus on capturing the major forms first. Add the details once the composition is set.

TIP: Include diagonal lines to add depth to your drawing.

STEP 3 Add Color

Once you've completed your preliminary sketch, begin working with colored pencils. Choose a monochromatic color scheme (hues of a single color) to set the mood in your work. A blue color scheme might seem sad or calm, and a yellow one might seem cheerful. Start with the highlights—the lightest areas—and gradually add darker tones. Layer colors on top of one another to develop a wider range of hues. Try to keep your techniques consistent throughout the drawing. Then, if you want to create emphasis, you can alter your technique to draw the viewer's eye to a part of the composition. When you're finished, ask a friend to interpret the narrative in your work. Is his or her interpretation what you intended?

TIP: Don't forget to give your drawing a title!



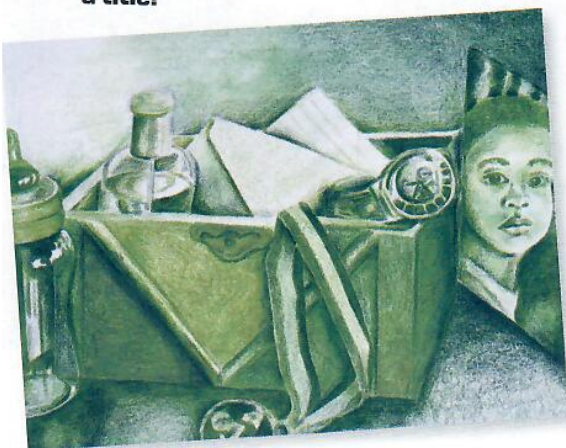
Create a preliminary sketch.



Add color to your drawing.



Ask a classmate to interpret the narrative in your drawing.



What is the narrative in this drawing?

Prepared by:
Peter Yuscavage,
Jersey City Arts,
Jersey City,
New Jersey

Art History Hunter

Alexis Culotta talks about researching the history of works of art



Alexis Culotta uses special lights to help her authenticate paintings.



CAREER PROFILE

ART AUTHENTICATOR

SALARY:

Art authenticators earn from \$40,000 to \$65,000 per year, depending on experience, employer, and location.

EDUCATION:

Most art authenticators have a bachelor's degree in art history or fine arts (B.F.A.). Many also have a master's (M.A.) or doctorate degree (Ph.D.).

GETTING STARTED:

- ▶ Take art history classes. Become familiar with the artwork and style of a wide variety of artists.
- ▶ Fine-tune your researching skills. Test yourself by choosing an artwork and digging up as much information about it as possible.
- ▶ Get an internship at a museum or gallery in research or archiving.

Images courtesy of Alexis Culotta.

Scholastic Art: What is your job?

Alexis Culotta: I am an art researcher and analyst for an organization that authenticates, or verifies, art. I find out whether an artwork is real—by the artist people think created it—or a forgery.

SA: What is a forgery?

AC: A forgery is an artwork that someone makes but claims that it is by a famous artist. They do so for fraudulent purposes—to deceive people to make money.

SA: How do you authenticate a work?

AC: Every assignment takes me down a different path. But the first step is usually the same—I examine the work and meet with the client to collect information about the piece. I look at sales receipts and other historical documentation. The next step could be anything! That's what's so exciting about my job. I might need to track down the meaning of a number written on the back of the painting, learn more about the owner's family history, or anything else.

SA: How can you tell if a work is a forgery? Do forgers make mistakes?

AC: Finding forgers' mistakes makes my job interesting. Sometimes the mistake is in the material. Maybe the forger paints on a type of canvas that didn't exist when the artist was alive. Or the mistake is in the subject matter. Maybe the style of dress doesn't fit with the era of the artist who supposedly painted the scene.

SA: What skills make you successful?

AC: In addition to knowing about art, strong research and writing skills are a must. Also, many sources in art history are written in French, Italian, or German. So developing at least a reading knowledge of these languages is important.

SA: What do you love about your job?

AC: I really enjoy answering people's questions. They want to know more about a work: Did a certain artist paint it? What collections has it passed through? Where was it exhibited? Providing the answers is very satisfying!