

Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning // Ramsess: The Gathering

Greetings from Art + Practice!

Thank you for scheduling your upcoming field trip to Art + Practice's exhibition space. A+P is excited to welcome your class for a self-guided tour of the exhibition titled *Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning* and *Ramsess: The Gathering*.

In preparation for your visit, A+P suggests that you review the following gallery rules, general information about A+P's exhibition space and provided educational resources prior to your visit. This will ensure that you will be prepared to guide your students through the suggested activities. If you have any questions, please email A+P at education@artandpractice.org or call (323) 337-6887.

We look forward to welcoming your class to A+P soon.

Sincerely,

ART + PRACTICE

Teacher Resource Guide

ART + PRACTICE

Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning // Ramsess: The Gathering

GALLERY RULES

1. No food or drink is allowed. If students bring their lunches, they can leave their food/drinks with A+P near the front gallery desk.
2. No running or skipping in the gallery.
3. Backpacks and large bags are not permitted in the gallery. Students can leave their belongings with A+P near the front gallery desk.
4. No pens are allowed. A+P will provide students with pencils for the tour.
5. No flash photography permitted.
6. Visitors should use inside voices while in the gallery.
7. Limited use of cell phones is requested.



Ramsess, *H. Rap Brown*. Fabric. 55 x 67 1/2 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Duration

Self-guided tours typically range between 45 minutes-1 hour.

Group Size and Chaperon Count

Groups of 30 or less are highly encouraged. Adult to student ratio should be 1:10.

Teacher Resource Guide

This packet contains tools and activities for you to facilitate with your students during your visit to A+P. This packet is meant to integrate into your curriculum and incorporate the California State Content Standards.

Please follow the directions listed in this packet, and ask an A+P staff member if you have any questions before or during your visit. We'll be happy to help.

Student Handouts

This packet corresponds to a student handout, which A+P will have printed and ready for your students upon arrival to the exhibition space, along with clipboards and sharpened pencils.

Bathroom Code

A+P has women's and men's restrooms onsite. The code for entry is [52022](#).

INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET

1. Tour Agenda
2. Key Vocabulary Words
3. List of the elements of art discussed in the artworks on view
4. List of California State Content Standards applied to the tour's activities
5. List of recommended reading materials for the tour and information about how to read the artworks on view
6. Descriptions for the exhibitions and artists' biographies
5. Tour and post visit activities (1-4)
6. Supplemental descriptions for the artworks on view

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: K - 2nd Grades

TOUR AGENDA

- 1. Review the gallery rules with students (page 02).
- 2. Introduce the key vocabulary words to the students and encourage them to utilize them during their activities (page 03).
- 3. Provide students with background information about the exhibitions and artists on view (pages 06-07).
- 4. Administer the activities included in the student handouts (pages 08-09). Reference the short descriptions included in the back of this resource guide to provide further context.

KEY VOCABULARY WORDS

Pattern - A repeated decorative design.

Quilt - A textile, which traditionally has three layers of fiber or cloth.

Pictorial Quilt - A quilt that tells a story through pictures.

ELEMENTS OF ART DISCUSSED IN ARTWORKS ON VIEW

1. Line 

2. Shape 

3. Color 

4. Form 

5. Repetition 

6. Rhythm 

CALIFORNIA STATE CONTENT STANDARDS

While carrying out the following activities in this packet, please keep in mind the following California State Content Standards (VAPA/ELA):

Visual and Performing Arts:
Responding-Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

1.VA:Re8
Interpret art by categorizing subject matter and identifying the mood and characteristics of form.

Enduring Understanding: People gain insights into meanings of artworks by engaging in the process of art criticism.

Essential Questions: What is the value of engaging in the process of art criticism? How can the viewer “read” a work of art as text? How does knowing and using visual arts vocabularies help us understand and interpret works of art?

Process Component: Interpret

PK.VA:Re8
Interpret art by identifying and describing subject matter.

K.VA:Re8
Interpret art by identifying subject matter and describing relevant details.

CALIFORNIA STATE CONTENT STANDARDS (Continued)

English Language Arts Content Standards

TK/K:CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.3

Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

1:CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.1

Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

2:CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.1

Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.

READING A WORK OF ART

There are various approaches to discussing works of art with your students. A+P has briefly outlined methodologies that can be used to discuss artworks and guide students to engage in discussing, writing about and examining works of art. These strategies can be used during your visit at A+P and in the classroom as you introduce new ideas, a new lesson or unit.

VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

Visual Thinking Strategies are a great way to engage students in a group discussion. They are a series of thoughtfully facilitated questions that prompt discussion of an artwork to create a more engaging and equitable conversations with your students. Consider asking these questions when in discussion with your students at A+P:

1. After students have examined the image, ask: What's going on in this picture?
2. Whenever a student makes an inference (i.e. a comment drawing conclusions based on observations), respond first by paraphrasing, and then ask: What do you see that makes you say...?
3. In order to keep students searching for more observations, frequently ask: What more can you find?

For more information visit vtshome.org.

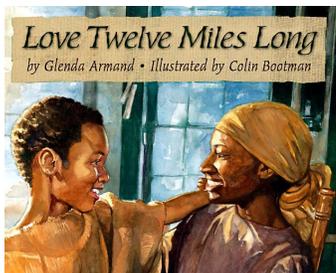
SEE, THINK, WONDER

This activity helps students make careful observations and develop their own ideas and interpretations based on what they see. By separating the two questions, *What do you see?* and *What do you think about what you see?* The activity helps students distinguish between observations and interpretations. By encouraging students to wonder and ask questions, the activity stimulates curiosity and helps students reach for new connections.

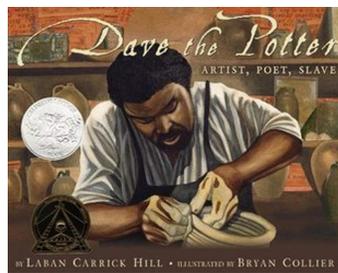
For more information visit harvard.edu/resources/see-think-wonder-at.

PRE-VISIT RESOURCES

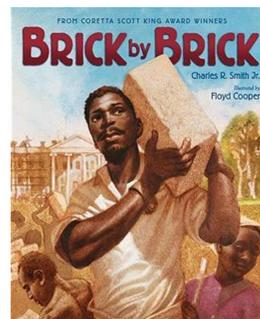
If interested in furthering your students' familiarity with American history in 1800, A+P recommends that you check out the following books. The recommended books address slavery for an elementary audience:



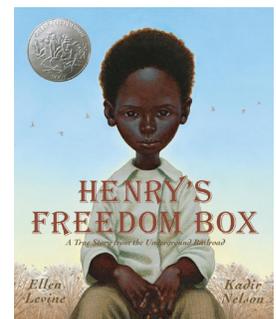
Love Twelve Miles Long
by Glenda Armand,
illustrated by Colin Bootman



Dave the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave
by Laban Carrick Hill,
illustrated by Bryan Collier



Brick by Brick by Charles R.
Smith Jr., illustrated by Floyd
Cooper



*Henry's Freedom Box: A True
Story From The Underground
Railroad* by Ellen Levine,
illustrated by Kadir Nelson

ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS

Please read the following summaries for the exhibitions on view to your students:



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, (2014). Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

About Stephen Towns: *Ruminations and a Reckoning*

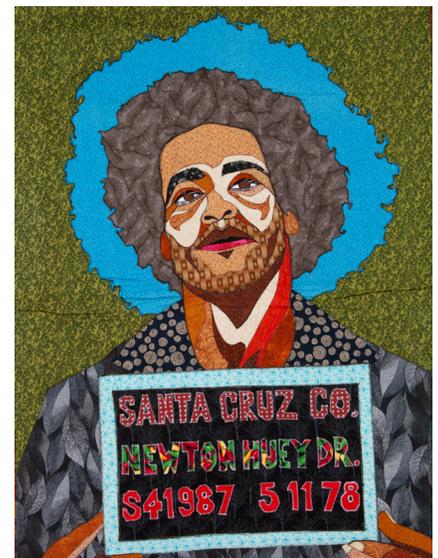
At the center of this exhibition, the monumental installation *Birth of a Nation* (2014) represents a Black woman nursing a white infant against the backdrop of the first official flag of the United States. Suspended above a mound of earth, the quilt will be surrounded by *Towns' Story Quilts* (2016–2019), a cycle of works in luminous fabrics and glass beads that chronicle the life of Nat Turner and the 1831 rebellion he led against slavery. A pair of quilted oval portraits of *Nat and Cherry Turner* (2018) adds a significant dimension to this narrative, considering the role of a marriage in historic events.

This exhibition is presented by Art + Practice in collaboration with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and is curated by Cecilia Wichmann, Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at The BMA.

About Ramsess: *The Gathering*

Ramsess' mural-scale quilt *The Gathering* (2012) re imagines Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495–98) as a memorial to Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed on February 26, 2012. This sacred meal is attended by twelve historical figures, one still living: Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani activist who becomes a symbol for peace, justice, and possibility. With *The Gathering* at its center, this focused exhibition brings together a selection of Ramsess' quilted portraits—monuments to individuals of crucial significance to American history whose stories have been suppressed or overlooked through politics of race, age, and gender: Sojourner Truth, Ruby Bridges, Cathay Williams, Malcolm X, H. Rap Brown, Huey P. Newton, and George Stinney.

This exhibition is presented by Art + Practice in collaboration with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and is curated by Cecilia Wichmann, Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at The BMA.



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Meet Stephen Towns

Stephen Towns was born in 1980 in Lincolville, South Carolina and lives and works in Baltimore. He trained as a painter with a BFA in studio art from the University of South Carolina, and has also developed a rigorous, self-taught quilting practice. His work draws visual inspiration from medieval altarpieces, nineteenth-century photography, and Dutch wax print fabrics, as well as from African American story quilts. Towns has exhibited at Arlington Arts Center, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Galerie Myrtis, Gallery CA, Goucher College, and York College of Pennsylvania, among other venues. He won the inaugural travel prize of the Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City in 2016, traveling to Ghana and Senegal to visit historical sites that mark the Transatlantic Slave Trade. He is also the recipient of a 2015 Ruby Artist Project Grant from the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance.



Stephen Towns. Photo by Jermaine T. Bell and Kirk Shannon-Butts.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Meet Ramsess



Ramsess in his quilting studio. 5 February 2018.
Photo by Natalie Hon.

Ramsess is a self-taught artist and educator who works in multiple mediums, including textiles, painting, mosaic, illustration, and stained glass. He contributed political cartoons and illustrations to the Los Angeles Times from 1976 to 1994. A longtime resident and leading creative voice in Leimert Park, Ramsess began renting his Degnan Boulevard studio from Dale and Alonzo Davis of Brockman Gallery in 1981, where he lived and worked until 2002. A Los Angeles native, Ramsess continues to live and work in Leimert Park. A life-long fan and lover of blues and jazz music, much of his art reflects that interest, honoring musicians and the music they create. He frequently travels the country to sell his jazz-focused works at music festivals. Ramsess is a member of the Afro-American Quilters of Los Angeles, a partner of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts.

ENGAGING WITH THE WORKS ON VIEW

Stephen Towns: Ruminaton and a Reckoning and *Ramsess: The Gathering* highlight two distinct and unique approaches to quilt making. Both Towns and Ramsess incorporate African American social activists in their work, drawing from historical references. For example, Towns draws visual inspiration from Medieval altarpieces, nineteenth-century photography and Dutch wax print fabrics in addition to African American story quilts; while Ramsess draws his interpretation from media based images and news archives, including mug shots, news articles and magazine clippings.

As you experience the exhibitions, consider the history of quilt making and its role in American society as quilting as been an American tradition for centuries. Originally introduced by the settlers who immigrated to the Americas in the 1600s, quilting later became a common practice that woman carried out to clothe their families in the 17th and 18th centuries. Then during the Civil War era, quilts were designed to raise funds to support the abolitionist movement as well as were used as signals to help slaves in their flight to freedom.



Medieval altarpieces incorporating iconography, such as gold plated halos and religious figures.

CHECK OUT ARTISTS WITH SIMILAR THEMES/MEDIUMS

Faith Ringgold



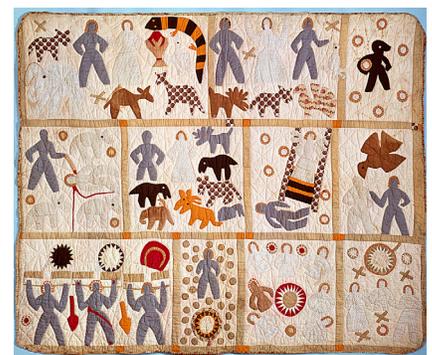
Faith Ringgold. *Coming to Jones Road Part II No 2 We Here Aunt Emmy Got Us Now*, 2010

Joyce J. Scott



Elizabeth Talford Scott. *Plantation*. 1980.

Harriet Powers



Harriet Powers. *Bible Quilt*, 1885-1886

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: K - 2nd Grades

ACTIVITY 01 | See, Think, Wonder

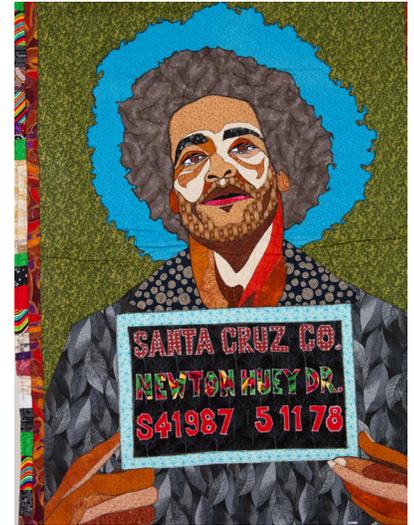
ACTIVITY 01: See, Think, Wonder

Duration: 20 minutes

Objective: Students engage in *See, Think, Wonder* activity and engage in a conversation around the artwork *Dr. Huey P. Newton, 2008*.

See, Think, Wonder activity is designed to help students make careful observations and develop their own ideas and interpretations based on what they see. Students are encouraged to spend at least 30 seconds looking at an artwork, before writing or drawing their thoughts on paper.

1. Ask students to gather around the quilt by Ramsess titled *Dr. Huey P. Newton, 2008*.
2. Ask students to identify a pattern in the quilt. Direct students to either draw or write their observations in their handout.
3. Ask students to contemplate what they see, think and wonder about the artwork for at least 30 seconds.
4. Direct students to draw their observations in their student handout as well as draw one that they see in *Dr. Huey P. Newton, 2008*.
5. Ask students to gather in pairs and discuss their observations with their partner for 5 minutes.
6. Ask students to gather as a group. Read the short description for *Dr. Huey P. Newton* from the back of your teacher resource guide. Ask students to respond with any questions or remarks about what they've learned from your reading of the short description.



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton, 2008*. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ACTIVITY 02 | It's all in the details!

ACTIVITY 02: It's all in the details!

Duration: 20 minutes

Objective: Students engage in *It's all in the details!* activity and engage in a conversation around the artwork *Birth of a Nation, 2014*.

1. Ask students to gather around the quilt by Stephen Towns titled *Birth of a Nation, 2014*.
2. Ask students to identify a pattern in the quilt. Direct students to either draw or write their observations in their handout.
3. Ask students to contemplate what they see, think and wonder about the artwork for at least 30 seconds.
4. Direct students to draw or write their observations in their student handouts.
5. Ask students to gather in pairs and discuss their observations with their partner for 5 minutes.
6. Ask students to gather as a group. Read the short description for *Birth of a Nation* from the back of your teacher resource guide. Ask students to respond with any questions or remarks about what they've learned from your reading of the short description.



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation, 2014*. Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

ACTIVITY 03 | *Pattern Detective*

ACTIVITY 03: Pattern Detective

Duration: 15 minutes

Objective: Students examine the symbology in patterns and the subtle storytelling elements that Stephen Towns incorporates in his quilts.

- 1. Introduce to students that fabric patterns are more important than one may think. Describe that for hundreds of years, fabric patterns have told us a lot about where they came from, who they belonged to and what they were used for and what messages they carry. Ask students to check out the three patterns included in their handouts. Explain the following meanings of the quilts:



Double Wedding Ring Pattern

This pattern did not exist until after the American Civil War. The Double Irish Chain pattern did, however, and is believed to have symbolized the chains of slavery. When a Black slave saw this quilt displayed, it meant that their rings or shackles of slavery could be removed.



Bow Tie (or Hourglass) Pattern

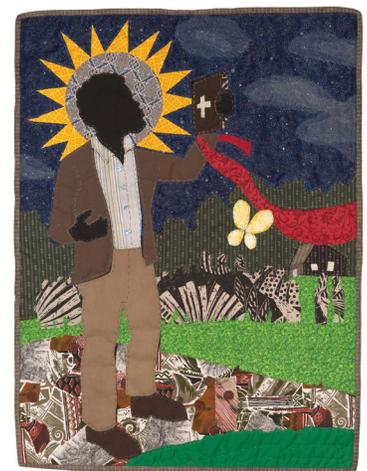
The Bow Tie (or Hourglass) pattern was used as a symbol during times of slavery in the United States to notify Black slaves when it was necessary to travel in disguise or to change from the clothing of a slave to those of a person of "higher status".



Sailboat Pattern

The Sailboat pattern was used in quilts as a signal to notify people what a body of water was nearby or that boats were available.

- 2. Following your description of the quilts' meanings, ask students to draw their own quilt pattern in the space provided in their handouts.
- 3. Ask students to gather as a group in front of Stephen Towns' quilt titled *The Prophet #3*, from the series *Story Quilts*, 2016.
- 4. Direct students to complete activity 03 in their handouts. Remind students to spend at least 30 seconds looking at Stephen Towns' *The Prophet*, 2016 before drawing the patterns that they identify. Encourage students to spend time illustrating the details in the patterns they choose. Guide students to examine the shapes in the quilt.
- 5. Read the short description for *Prophet #3* from the back of your teacher resource handout. Ask students to respond with any questions or remarks about what they've learned from your reading of the short descriptions.



Stephen Towns, *The Prophet*, 2016, #2 from the series *Story Quilts*. Natural and synthetic fabric, nylon tulle, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, Thermoweb, cotton/polyester blend batting, crystal glass beads, resin and metal buttons. 37 x 28 1/2 inches. Private collection.

ACTIVITY 04 | Post Visit Activity - Quilting Their Story!

ACTIVITY 04: Post Visit Activity - *Quilting Their Story!*

Duration: 1 hour

Objective: Students draw upon concepts from their visit to A+P to create content for their own visual artwork inspired by Stephen Towns and Ramsess' quilts.

Recommended Materials: Paper with various colors and patterns, colored pencils, markers, magazines and glue sticks.

1. Direct students to select an advocate of social justice that they admire.
2. Ask students: What about the person you selected inspires you? / What social justice cause has this person advocated for? / What can others do to bring attention to the issue that your person advocates/ed for?
3. Direct students to sketch the portrait of their person of choosing on a piece of paper, using a pencil.
4. Using various types of paper and magazine clippings, ask students to recreate the sketched portrait with a quilted pattern.



In process images of Ramsess' quilt making. Photo by Natalie Hon.



In process images of Ramsess' quilt making. Photo by Natalie Hon.

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR THE ARTWORKS ON VIEW

ABOUT THE NAT TURNER REVOLT

I had a vision—and I saw white spirits and black spirits engaged in battle, and the sun was darkened—the thunder rolled in the Heavens, and blood flowed in streams—and I heard a voice saying, 'Such is your luck, such you are called to see, and let it come rough or smooth, you must surely bare it.

— Nat Turner, *The Confessions of Nat Turner*

The total eclipse of the sun in February of 1831 signaled to Nat Turner that he should carry out his insurrection. Turner planned to begin the revolt on July 4th, but was delayed by illness and fear. A second celestial event in August, convinced Turner that now was the time.

On the night of Sunday, August 21st, 1831, Turner and six of his trusted comrades commenced to carrying out Turner's planned revolt. Mimicking the prophets of the Bible and American enslavers, Turner's plan took an unflinching approach of divide and conquer. The bands would quietly sneak into each farm and kill every white man, woman, and child. They would then recruit other enslaved blacks to join the crusade. Turner's then owner, Joseph Travis, was the first to succumb to fate of the band. Throughout the skirmish Turner's army was able to recruit 50- 60 insurgents. Their planned seizure of Jerusalem, Virginia failed when Virginia militia overtook Turner's army.

Turner was able to escape capture by the Virginia militia. He hid in a makeshift cave while exploring the town at night. On October 30th he was discovered by farmer Benjamin Phipps and jailed. Turner was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death in November 1831.

Religion served a dual purpose in early America. A master could employ scripture to bind a person in chains and the slave could use scripture to free themselves from their master. Though some sects of Christianity spoke out against slavery at the time, many slave holding parishioners found it improbable to give up that "peculiar institution." Not only was owning enslaved persons profitable and a status symbol, it was an effective means for establishing and maintaining white supremacy in American society.

Benjamin Turner, Turner's first enslaver, was Methodist and held prayer services on his farm for his enslaved people and allowed them to accompany him to Sunday chapel. Benjamin's son Samuel Turner, Turner's second owner, built a Methodist church he dubbed Turner's Meeting House where his enslaved people were witness to carefully crafted sermons that emphasized obedience.

Turner learned to read at an early age and was encouraged to study the Bible. Turner was later permitted to preach to other enslaved blacks in Southampton. Impressed with his religiosity, intelligence and charisma, he was referred to as *The Prophet*.

SOURCES

Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed.

Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

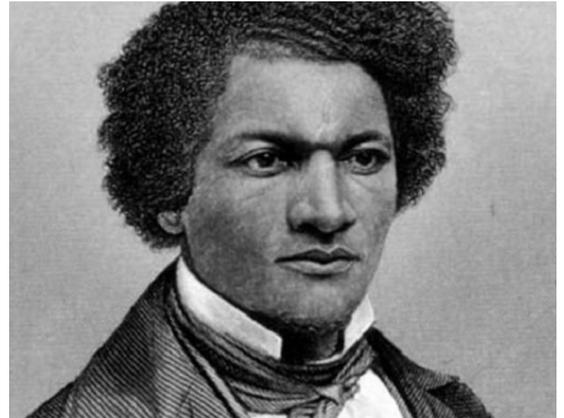


IMAGE CREDITS (TOP TO BOTTOM):

Portrait of Nat Turner. / Scene from the Nat Turner Revolt. / Nat Turner being captured by Benjamin Phipps.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: K - 2nd Grades

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR STEPHEN TOWNS ARTWORKS ON VIEW

Jacobs, Harriet A. Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself. N.p. 1861. Amazon. Web. 1 Jan 2014.

Cromwell, John W. "The Aftermath of Nat Turner's Insurrection." *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1920, pp. 208-234. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2713592>. Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

Jacobs, Harriet A. Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself. N.p. 1861. Amazon. Web. 1 Jan 2014.

Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

ABOUT *BIRTH OF A NATION*, 2014

Stephen Towns' *Birth of a Nation*, 2014 captures an African American slave wet nurse feeding a white baby. *Birth of a Nation* brings to mind decorated altarpieces and processional banners of the medieval era with its ionic presence and soaring height. Evoking a Madonna and Child, its central pose affirms with tender solemnity the foundational roles of women of color have played in American history.

In viewing *Birth of a Nation*, consider some of the symbols included in the work. Towns captures an early version of the American flag, which is made up of fabric from clothing worn by the artist's mother, Patricia Towns. Additionally, Towns incorporated fabric in the pictured woman's hair wrap from clothing worn by the artist's late sister Mabel Ancrum.

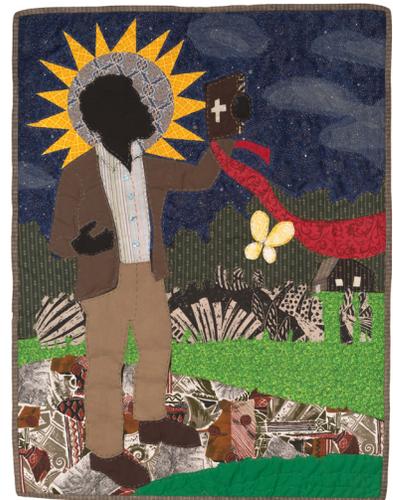


Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, (2014). Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

ABOUT *SPECIAL CHILD AND THE PROPHET*, 2016 FROM THE SERIES *STORY QUILTS*

Special Child and The Prophet are quilts from Stephen Towns' series titled *Story Quilts* - a series which chronicles Nat Turner's life and the rebellion that he led against slavery in 1831. The cycle recalls Lives of the Saints devotional imagery that guides Christian meditation. Various presented in book illustration, stained glass, and fresco paintings, life stories of saints have been imagined by artists for centuries in series of miraculous episodes that culminate with heroic sacrifice. By representing Nat Turner's life according to this sacred framework, Towns underscores Turner's distinct person hood and illuminates the extent to which Turner's life story has been absorbed and co-opted by competing mythologies. The *Story Quilts* ask viewers to consider what new lessons might be drawn from the prophetic events of Turner's life and invite us to contemplate the meanings his legend carries for people of different experiences and beliefs.

Text excerpted from Stephen Towns' exhibition brochure by The Baltimore Museum of Art's Associate Curator of Contemporary Art Cecilia Wichmann.



Stephen Towns, *The Prophet*, 2016, #2 from the series *Story Quilts*. Natural and synthetic fabric, nylon tulle, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, Thermoweb, cotton/polyester blend batting, crystal glass beads, resin and metal buttons. 37 x 28 1/2 inches. Private collection.

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR RAMSESS ARTWORKS ON VIEW



Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012. Fabric. 58 x 166 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT THE GATHERING, 2012

Ramsess' mural-scale quilt *The Gathering* (2012) re imagines Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495-98) as a memorial to Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed on February 26, 2012. This sacred meal is attended by twelve historical figures. The historical figures are as follows:

1. **ADEBAYO "BAYO" ADENIKA:** Bayo Adenika was 17-year-old high school senior on his way home from an after-school job when he was shot dead while waiting for the bus in Los Angeles. Bayo was mistaken for a gang member.
2. **OSCAR GRANT:** Oscar Grant was a 22-year-old African American man who was fatally shot on New Year's Day in 2009 by BART Police Officer Johanne Mehserle in Oakland, CA. Police Officer Mehserle forced Grant on the ground and shot him in the back. Both peaceful and violent protests of police actions took place the following days.
3. **EMMETT TILL:** Emmett Till was a 14-year-old African American boy who was lynched in Mississippi in 1955, after being accused of offending a white women in her family's grocery store. The brutality of Till's murder became a symbol of the Civil Rights Movement and drew awareness to the long history of violent persecution of African Americans in the United States.
4. **JORDAN DAVIS:** Jordan Davis was a 17-year-old African American high school student who was shot and killed at a gas station in Jacksonville, FL by Michael David Dunn, a 45-year-old software developer. The shooting happened following an argument over loud music playing in Davis' car.

5. **HADIYA PENDLETON:** Hadiya Pendleton was a 15-year-old African American girl from Chicago, IL who was shot in the back and killed while standing with her friends inside Harsha Park after taking her final exams. The shooters, Michael Ward and Kenneth Williams stated they mistaken the group Pendleton was standing with as members of a rival gang.

6. **LATASHA HARLINS:** Latasha Harlins was a 15-year-old African American girl who was shot by 51-year-old Korea-born convenience store owner Soon Ja Due in Los Angeles, CA in 1992. Harlins' death happened 13 days after the videotaped beating of Rodney King and some have cited that Harlins' death as one of the causes of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots.

7. **TRAYVON MARTIN:** Trayvon Martin was a 17-year-old African American teenager who was shot in Sanford, Florida by neighborhood watch coordinator George Zimmerman. On the evening of February 26, 2012, Martin was walking back to his father's finance's house from a nearby convenience store with an Arizona Ice Tea and Skittles in his hand. Zimmerman identified Martin as suspicious to the local Police and shortly afterwards killed Martin during an altercation.

8. **THE UNKNOWN VICTIM:** The Unknown Victim is a figure that represents the countless lives of people whom have lost their lives with no recognition by society, the media or people in power.

9. **FRED HAMPTON:** Fred Hampton was an African American activist and revolutionary, and leader in the Black Panther Party of the 1960s and 1970s. Hampton was murdered in his home in December 1969 during a raid by a tactical unit of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the Chicago Police Department.

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR RAMSESS ARTWORKS ON VIEW

10. HECTOR PIETERSON: Hector Pieteron was a South African schoolboy who was shot and killed during the Soweto uprising - an uprising where police opened fire on students protesting the enforcement of teaching in Afrikaans. Pieteron's death is now memorialized as a day in South Africa titled *Youth Day*. On this day, South Africans honor young people and bring attention to their needs.

11. MALALA YOUSAFZAI: Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. On October 9, 2019, Yousafzai was shot by a Taliban gunman in an assassination attempt, retaliating Yousafzai's attendance of school and taking an exam. Yousafzai survived the attack and became a prominent activist for female's right to education.

12. GEORGE STINNEY: George Stinney was an African American teenage boy convicted at the age of 14 for the murder of two white girls ages 7 and 11 in 1944 in Alcolu, South Carolina. Stinney was executed by electric chair in June 1944. The court refused to appeal Stinney's case. He was the

youngest American to be sentenced to death and executed. In 2004, it was deemed under judicial review that Stinney did not receive a fair trial.

13. LAWRENCE FOBES KING (AKA LATISHA KING): Lawrence Fobes King, also known as Latisha King was a 15-year-old student at E.O. Green Junior High School in Oxnard, California in 2008. Identified as a trans woman, King was shot twice by a fellow student, 14-year-old Brandon McInerney, and kept on life support until he died two days later. He was bullied for wearing women's accessories and clothing.

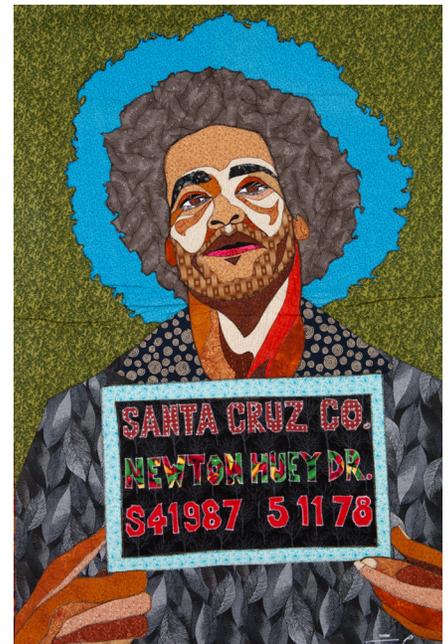
ABOUT DR. HUEY P. NEWTON, 2008

Ramsess' *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008 work appears in a suite of quilts that also picture Malcolm X and H. Rap Brown. These portraits are based on mugshot photographs. This format—close-up, repeated in profile or holding a placard—offers a framework for considering the complexity of historical legacy, while echoing the form of the religious icon to sanctify each man's quest for justice.¹

Dr. Huey Percy Newton (February 17, 1942 - August 22, 1989) was a revolutionary African-American political activist who, along with Bobby Seale, co-founded the Black Panther Party in 1966. In 1967, he was involved in a shootout which led to the death of a police officer and in 1974 was accused of shooting a woman, leading to her death. During this time, he continued to pursue graduate studies, eventually earning a Ph.D. in social philosophy. In 1989 he was murdered in Oakland, California by Tyrone Robinson, a member of the Black Guerrilla Family.²

¹ Text excerpted from Ramsess: The Gathering brochure. By Cecilia Wichmann, The Baltimore Museum of Art's Associate Curator of Contemporary Art.

² [wikipedia.org/wiki/Huey_P_Newton](https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huey_P_Newton)



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ACTIVITY 03

PATTERN DETECTIVE

Fabric patterns are more important than you may think.

For hundreds of years, fabric patterns have told us a lot about where they came from, who they belonged to, what they were used for and what messages they carry. Check out the quilts below, make your own pattern.

Here are some examples of patterns commonly used during The Underground Railroad:



Double Wedding Ring Pattern

MEANING: Symbolized the chains of slavery.



Bow Tie (or Hourglass) Pattern

MEANING: Symbolized enslaved people to travel in disguise.



Sailboat Pattern

MEANING: Symbolized that a body of water was nearby or boats were available.



Draw your own pattern

TAKE YOUR TIME

Make sure to spend time looking at the quilt before you draw the patterns you see!

FIND Stephen Towns, *The Prophet*, 2016. #2 from the series *Story Quilts*.



Draw four patterns that you find pictured in the quilt below in the space provided below:



WELCOME TO ART + PRACTICE

Art + Practice is excited to welcome you to our campus to visit the exhibitions titled *Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning* and *Ramsess: The Gathering*. A+P has prepared a few activities for you to complete during your visit, helping broaden your understanding of the artworks on view. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask an A+P staff member. We are here to help!

During your visit, please keep in mind the following words. See if you can incorporate the words into the activities listed in this worksheet.

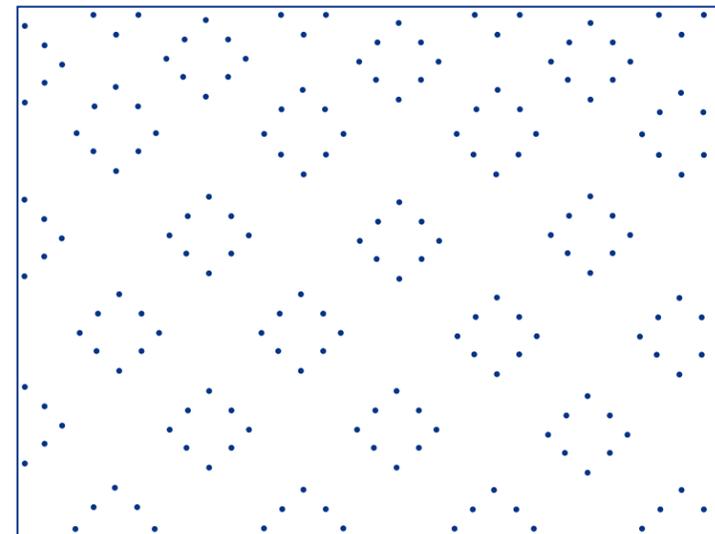
Pattern - A repeated decorative design.

Quilt - A textile, which traditionally has three layers of fiber or cloth.

Pictorial Quilt - A quilt that tells a story through pictures.

ENGAGING WITH THE WORKS ON VIEW

Quilting is an art form that can be approached in lots of different ways. Connect the dots below to see what quilt pattern emerges!



Ramsess, *H. Rap Brown*. Fabric. 55 x 67 1/2 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

FIRST TIME VISTING ART + PRACTICE?

Art + Practice is a nonprofit organization which supports the needs of our local foster youth

and provides our community with free access to museum-curated contemporary art.

STAY CONNECTED

@artandpractice
 @artandpractice

artandpractice

Student Handout

Name: _____

Date: _____

ACTIVITY 01

SEE, THINK, WONDER

FIND Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008



Identify a pattern in the quilt and draw it below:



Write about what you think it represents below:



NOW Write or draw what you see, think and wonder about Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008.

I see

I think



I wonder



ACTIVITY 02

IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS!

FIND Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, 2014



Identify a pattern in the quilt and draw it below:



Write about what you think it represents below:



I see

I think



I wonder



Greetings from Art + Practice!

Thank you for scheduling your upcoming field trip to Art + Practice's exhibition space. A+P is excited to welcome your class for a self-guided tour of the exhibition titled *Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning* and *Ramsess: The Gathering*.

In preparation for your visit, A+P suggests that you review the following gallery rules, general information about A+P's exhibition space and provided educational resources prior to your visit. This will ensure that you will be prepared to guide your students through the suggested activities. If you have any questions, please email A+P at education@artandpractice.org or call (323) 337-6887.

We look forward to welcoming your class to A+P soon.

Sincerely,

ART + PRACTICE

Teacher Resource Guide

ART + PRACTICE

Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning // Ramsess: The Gathering

GALLERY RULES

1. No food or drink is allowed. If students bring their lunches, they can leave their food/drinks with A+P near the front gallery desk.
2. No running or skipping in the gallery.
3. Backpacks and large bags are not permitted in the gallery. Students can leave their belongings with A+P near the front gallery desk.
4. No pens are allowed. A+P will provide students with pencils for the tour.
5. No flash photography permitted.
6. Visitors should use inside voices while in the gallery.
7. Limited use of cell phones is requested.



Ramsess, *H. Rap Brown*. Fabric. 55 x 67 1/2 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Duration

Self-guided tours typically range between 45 minutes-1 hour.

Group Size and Chaperon Count

Groups of 30 or less are highly encouraged. Adult to student ratio should be 1:10.

Teacher Resource Guide

This packet contains tools and activities for you to facilitate with your students during your visit to A+P. This packet is meant to integrate into your curriculum and incorporate the California State Content Standards.

Please follow the directions listed in this packet, and ask an A+P staff member if you have any questions before or during your visit. We'll be happy to help.

Student Handouts

This packet corresponds to a student handout, which A+P will have printed and ready for your students upon arrival to the exhibition space, along with clipboards and sharpened pencils.

Bathroom Code

A+P has women's and men's restrooms onsite. The code for entry is **52022**.

INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET

1. Tour Agenda
2. Key Vocabulary Words
3. List of the elements of art discussed in the artworks on view
4. List of California State Content Standards applied to the tour's activities
5. List of recommended reading materials for the tour and information about how to read the artworks on view
6. Descriptions for the exhibitions and artists' biographies
5. Tour and post visit activities (1-4)
6. Supplemental descriptions for the artworks on view

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 3rd - 5th Grades

TOUR AGENDA

- 1. Review the gallery rules with students (page 02).
- 2. Introduce the key vocabulary words to the students and encourage them to utilize them during their activities (page 03).
- 3. Provide students with background information about exhibitions and artists on view (pages 06-07).
- 4. Administer the activities included in the student handouts (pages 08-10). Reference the short descriptions included in the back of this resource guide.

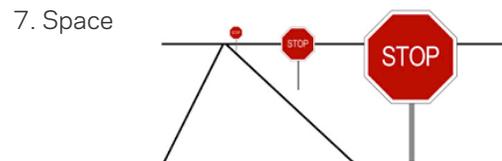
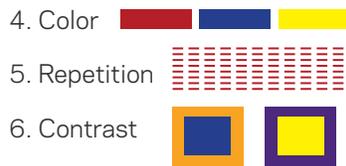
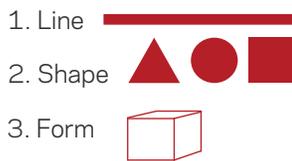
KEY VOCABULARY WORDS

Social Justice - The view that everyone deserves to enjoy the same economic, political and social rights, regardless of race socio-economic status gender or other personal characteristics.

Portraiture - The art of creating portraits.

Cultural Association - A connection with a particular place or group of people who share traditions, customs, beliefs and history.

ELEMENTS OF ART DISCUSSED IN ARTWORKS ON VIEW



CALIFORNIA STATE CONTENT STANDARDS

While carrying out the following activities in this packet, please keep in mind the following California State Content Standards (VAPA/ELA):

Visual and Performing Arts

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Enduring Understanding: People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with an analysis of art.

Essential Questions: How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures? How is art used to impact the views of a society? How does art preserve aspects of life?

Process Component: Relate

3.VA: Cn11

Recognize that responses to art change depending on the knowledge of the time and place in which it was made.

4.VA: Cn11

Through observation, infer information about time, place, and culture in which a work of art was created.

5.VA: Cn11

Identify how art is used to inform or change the beliefs, values, or behaviors of an individual or society.

CALIFORNIA STATE CONTENT STANDARDS (CONTINUED)

English Language Arts Content Standards

3: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1.C

Use linking words and phrases (e.g., because, therefore, since, for example) to connect opinion and reasons.

4: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.C

Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).

5: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 3rd - 5th Grades

READING A WORK OF ART

There are various approaches to discussing works of art with your students. A+P has briefly outlined methodologies that can be used to discuss artworks and guide students to engage in discussing, writing about and examining works of art. These strategies can be used during your visit at A+P and in the classroom as you introduce new ideas, a new lesson or unit.

VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

Visual Thinking Strategies are a great way to engage students in a group discussion. They are a series of thoughtfully facilitated questions that prompt discussion of an artwork to create a more engaging and equitable conversations with your students. Consider asking these questions when in discussion with your students at A+P:

1. After students have examined the image, ask: What's going on in this picture?
2. Whenever a student makes an inference (i.e. a comment drawing conclusions based on observations), respond first by paraphrasing, and then ask: What do you see that makes you say...?
3. In order to keep students searching for more observations, frequently ask: What more can you find?

For more information visit vtshome.org.

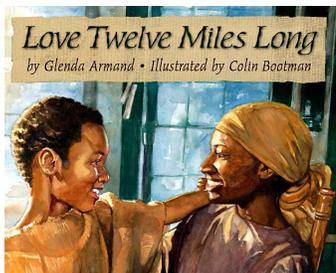
SEE, THINK, WONDER

This activity helps students make careful observations and develop their own ideas and interpretations based on what they see. By separating the two questions, *What do you see?* and *What do you think about what you see?* The activity helps students distinguish between observations and interpretations. By encouraging students to wonder and ask questions, the activity stimulates curiosity and helps students reach for new connections.

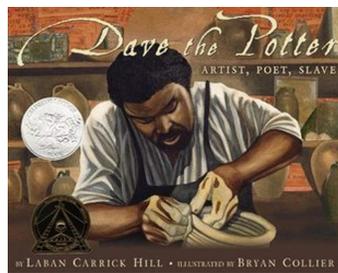
For more information visit harvard.edu/resources/see-think-wonder-at.

PRE-VISIT RESOURCES

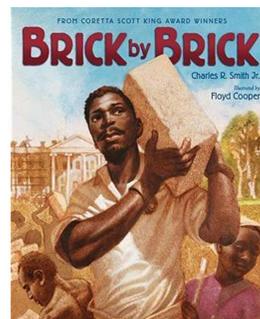
If interested in furthering your students' familiarity with American history in 1800, A+P recommends that you check out the following books. The recommended books address slavery for an elementary audience:



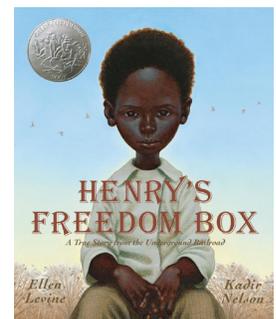
Love Twelve Miles Long
by Glenda Armand,
illustrated by Colin Bootman



Dave the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave
by Laban Carrick Hill,
illustrated by Bryan Collier



Brick by Brick by Charles R. Smith Jr.,
illustrated by Floyd Cooper



Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story From The Underground Railroad
by Ellen Levine,
illustrated by Kadir Nelson

And for more advanced readers, please reference the following middle school reading list:

1. *Facing Frederick: The Life of Frederick Douglass, a Monumental American Man*, by Tonya Bolden
2. *Africa Is My Home: A Child of the Amistad* by Monica Edinger, illustrated by Robert Byrd
3. *The Glory Field* by Walter Dean Myers
4. *Never Caught, the Story of Ona Judge* by Erica Armstrong Dunbar and Kathleen Van Cleave

ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS

Please read the following summaries for the exhibitions on view to your students:



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, (2014). Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

About Stephen Towns: *Ruminations and a Reckoning*

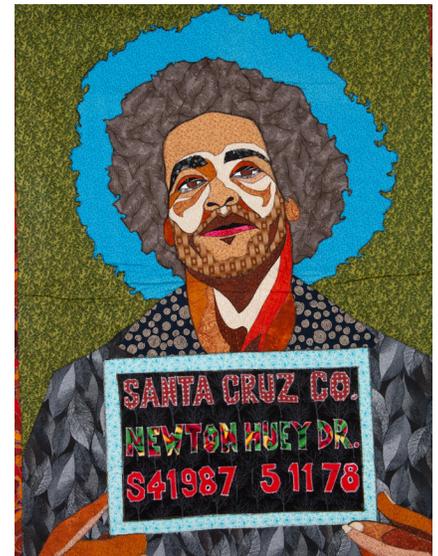
At the center of this exhibition, the monumental installation *Birth of a Nation* (2014) represents a Black woman nursing a white infant against the backdrop of the first official flag of the United States. Suspended above a mound of earth, the quilt will be surrounded by *Towns' Story Quilts* (2016–2019), a cycle of works in luminous fabrics and glass beads that chronicle the life of Nat Turner and the 1831 rebellion he led against slavery. A pair of quilted oval portraits of *Nat and Cherry Turner* (2018) adds a significant dimension to this narrative, considering the role of a marriage in historic events.

This exhibition is presented by Art + Practice in collaboration with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and is curated by Cecilia Wichmann, Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at The BMA.

About Ramsess: *The Gathering*

Ramsess' mural-scale quilt *The Gathering* (2012) re imagines Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495–98) as a memorial to Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed on February 26, 2012. This sacred meal is attended by twelve historical figures, one still living: Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani activist who becomes a symbol for peace, justice, and possibility. With *The Gathering* at its center, this focused exhibition brings together a selection of Ramsess' quilted portraits—monuments to individuals of crucial significance to American history whose stories have been suppressed or overlooked through politics of race, age, and gender: Sojourner Truth, Ruby Bridges, Cathay Williams, Malcolm X, H. Rap Brown, Huey P. Newton, and George Stinney.

This exhibition is presented by Art + Practice in collaboration with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and is curated by Cecilia Wichmann, Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at The BMA.



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Meet Stephen Towns

Stephen Towns was born in 1980 in Lincolville, South Carolina and lives and works in Baltimore. He trained as a painter with a BFA in studio art from the University of South Carolina, and has also developed a rigorous, self-taught quilting practice. His work draws visual inspiration from medieval altarpieces, nineteenth-century photography, and Dutch wax print fabrics, as well as from African American story quilts. Towns has exhibited at Arlington Arts Center, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Galerie Myrtis, Gallery CA, Goucher College, and York College of Pennsylvania, among other venues. He won the inaugural travel prize of the Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City in 2016, traveling to Ghana and Senegal to visit historical sites that mark the Transatlantic Slave Trade. He is also the recipient of a 2015 Ruby Artist Project Grant from the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance.



Stephen Towns. Photo by Jermaine T. Bell and Kirk Shannon-Butts.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Meet Ramsess



Ramsess in his quilting studio. 5 February 2018.
Photo by Natalie Hon.

Ramsess is a self-taught artist and educator who works in multiple mediums, including textiles, painting, mosaic, illustration, and stained glass. He contributed political cartoons and illustrations to the Los Angeles Times from 1976 to 1994. A longtime resident and leading creative voice in Leimert Park, Ramsess began renting his Degnan Boulevard studio from Dale and Alonzo Davis of Brockman Gallery in 1981, where he lived and worked until 2002. A Los Angeles native, Ramsess continues to live and work in Leimert Park. A life-long fan and lover of blues and jazz music, much of his art reflects that interest, honoring musicians and the music they create. He frequently travels the country to sell his jazz-focused works at music festivals. Ramsess is a member of the Afro-American Quilters of Los Angeles, a partner of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts.

ENGAGING WITH THE WORKS ON VIEW

Stephen Towns: Ruminaton and a Reckoning and *Ramsess: The Gathering* highlight two distinct and unique approaches to quilt making. Both Towns and Ramsess incorporate African American social activists in their work, drawing from historical references. For example, Towns draws visual inspiration from Medieval altarpieces, nineteenth-century photography and Dutch wax print fabrics in addition to African American story quilts; while Ramsess draws his interpretation from media based images and news archives, including mug shots, news articles and magazine clippings.

As you experience the exhibitions, consider the history of quilt making and its role in American society as quilting as been an American tradition for centuries. Originally introduced by the settlers who immigrated to the Americas in the 1600s, quilting later became a common practice that woman carried out to clothe their families in the 17th and 18th centuries. Then during the Civil War era, quilts were designed to raise funds to support the abolitionist movement as well as were used as signals to help slaves in their flight to freedom.



Medieval altarpieces incorporating iconography, such as gold plated halos and religious figures.

INTERESTED IN CONSIDERING ARTISTS WITH SIMILAR THEMES/MEDIUMS?

Faith Ringgold



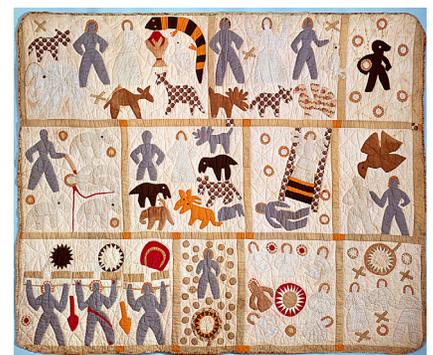
Faith Ringgold. *Coming to Jones Road Part II No 2 We Here Aunt Emmy Got Us Now*, 2010

Joyce J. Scott



Elizabeth Talford Scott. *Plantation*. 1980.

Harriet Powers



Harriet Powers. *Bible Quilt*, 1885-1886

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 3rd - 5th Grades

ACTIVITY 01 | See, Think, Wonder

ACTIVITY 01: See, Think, Wonder

Duration: 20 minutes

Objective: Students engage in *See, Think, Wonder* activity and engage in a conversation around the artworks by Stephen Towns titled *Birth of a Nation*, 2014 and Ramsess titled *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008.

See, Think, Wonder activity is designed to help students make careful observations and develop their own ideas and interpretations based on what they see. Students are encouraged to spend at least 30 seconds looking at an artwork, before writing or drawing their thoughts on paper.

- 1. Ask students to gather around the quilt titled *Birth of a Nation*, 2014.
- 2. Ask students to contemplate what they see, think and wonder about the artwork for at least 30 seconds.



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

- 3. Direct students to write their observations in their student handout.
- 4. Ask students to gather around the quilt titled *Dr. Huey Newton*, 2008.
- 5. Ask students to contemplate what they see, think and wonder about the artwork for at least 30 seconds.
- 6. Direct students to write their observations in their student handout.
- 7. Ask students to gather in pairs and discuss their observations with their partner for 5 minutes
- 8. Asks students to gather as a group. Read the short descriptions for *Birth of a Nation* and *Dr. Huey P. Newton* from the back of your teacher resource handout. Ask students to respond with any questions or remarks about what they've learned from your reading of the short descriptions.



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, 2014. Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

ACTIVITY 02 | Art + History

ACTIVITY 02: Art + History

Duration: 15 minutes

Objective: Students draw upon their own observations of an artwork and think critically.

- 1. Ask students to split into groups of 5.
- 2. Each group should select a different quilt installed at A+P.
- 3. Direct students to complete activity 02, reminding students to spend at least 30 seconds looking at the quilt before drawing the patterns that they see. Encourage students to spend time illustrating the details in the patterns they choose. Guide students to examine the shapes in the quilt.
- 4. Once students have completed activity 02, direct them to proceed with activity 03.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 3rd - 5th Grades

ACTIVITY 03 | I AM History

ACTIVITY 03: I AM History

Duration: 15 minutes

Objective: Students draw upon prior knowledge of their observations and identify what they see, think and wonder about the artworks on view.

Remind students to spend at least 30 seconds looking at the works of art before completing their activity.

1. Ask students to gather around the artworks titled *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Nat Turner, 2018* and *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Cherry Turner, 2018*.
2. Ask students to write or draw in their handouts what they see, think and wonder about the artworks.
3. Direct students to gather as a group.
4. Reference the back of this handout for the story of Nat and Cherry Turner. Read the provided story to the class.
5. Following your reading of the provided story, ask students to reflect on the Nat Turner Revolt story and inquire about what they think the significance is of Stephen Towns capturing Nat and Cherry Turner's portraits in his works of art?
6. Direct students to answer the provided question in their handout (i.e why do you think it is important for artists to honor historical figures through portraiture?)



Stephen Towns, *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Nat Turner, 2018*. Natural and synthetic fabric, nylon tulle, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, crystal glass beads, resin buttons. 30 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Stephen Towns, *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Cherry Turner, 2018*. Natural and synthetic fabric, nylon tulle, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, crystal glass beads, resin buttons. 30 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

ACTIVITY 04 | Post Visit Activity - Quilting Their Story!

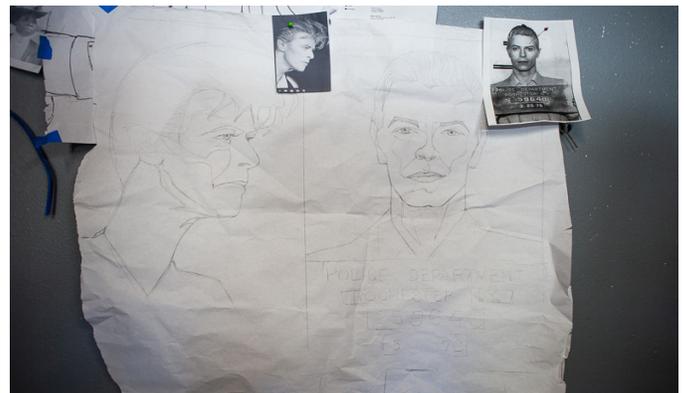
ACTIVITY 04: Post Visit Activity - Quilting Their Story!

Duration: 1 hour

Objective: Students draw upon concepts from their visit to A+P to create content for their own visual artwork inspired by Stephen Towns and Ramsess' artworks.

Recommended Materials: Paper with various colors and patterns, colored pencils, markers, magazines and glue sticks.

1. Direct students to select an advocate of social justice that they admire.
2. Ask students: What about the person you selected inspires you? / What social justice cause has this person advocated for? / What can others do to bring attention to the issue that your person advocates/ed for?
3. Direct students to sketch the portrait of their person of choosing on a piece of paper, using a pencil.



In process image of Ramsess' quilt making. Photo by Natalie Hon.

ACTIVITY 04 | *Post Visit Activity - Quilting Their Story!*

- 4. Using various types of paper and magazines, ask students to recreate the sketched portrait with a quilted pattern. Students should use glue sticks to adhere their patterns to the paper.
- 5. Once completed, ask students to discuss their work in a group setting. What does the portrait convey? Why did they select certain patterns? How does the quilt capture their social justice advocate



In process image of Ramsess' quilt making. Photo by Natalie Hon.

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR ARTWORKS ON VIEW

ABOUT THE NAT TURNER REVOLT

I had a vision—and I saw white spirits and black spirits engaged in battle, and the sun was darkened—the thunder rolled in the Heavens, and blood flowed in streams—and I heard a voice saying, 'Such is your luck, such you are called to see, and let it come rough or smooth, you must surely bare it.
— Nat Turner, *The Confessions of Nat Turner*

The total eclipse of the sun in February of 1831 signaled to Nat Turner that he should carry out his insurrection. Turner planned to begin the revolt on July 4th, but was delayed by illness and fear. A second celestial event in August, convinced Turner that now was the time.

On the night of Sunday, August 21st, 1831, Turner and six of his trusted comrades commenced to carrying out Turner's planned revolt. Mimicking the prophets of the Bible and American enslavers, Turner's plan took an unflinching approach of divide and conquer. The bands would quietly sneak into each farm and kill every white man, woman, and child. They would then recruit other enslaved blacks to join the crusade. Turner's then owner, Joseph Travis, was the first to succumb to fate of the band. Throughout the skirmish Turner's army was able to recruit 50- 60 insurgents. Their planned seizure of Jerusalem, Virginia failed when Virginia militia overtook Turner's army.

Turner was able to escape capture by the Virginia militia. He hid in a makeshift cave while exploring the town at night. On October 30th he was discovered by farmer Benjamin Phipps and jailed. Turner was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death in November 1831.

Religion served a dual purpose in early America. A master could employ scripture to bind a person in chains and the slave could use scripture to free themselves from their master. Though some sects of Christianity spoke out against slavery at the time, many slave holding parishioners found it improbable to give up that "peculiar institution." Not only was owning enslaved persons profitable and a status symbol, it was an effective means for establishing and maintaining white supremacy in American society.

Benjamin Turner, Turner's first enslaver, was Methodist and held prayer services on his farm for his enslaved people and allowed them to accompany him to Sunday chapel. Benjamin's son Samuel Turner, Turner's second owner, built a Methodist church he dubbed Turner's Meeting House where his enslaved people were witness to carefully crafted sermons that emphasized obedience.

Turner learned to read at an early age and was encouraged to study the Bible. Turner was later permitted to preach to other enslaved blacks in Southampton. Impressed with his religiosity, intelligence and charisma, he was referred to as *The Prophet*.

SOURCES

Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed.

Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

Jacobs, Harriet A. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* Written by Herself. N.p. 1861. Amazon. Web. 1 Jan 2014. Cromwell, John W. "The Aftermath of Nat Turner's Insurrection." *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1920,

SOURCES CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

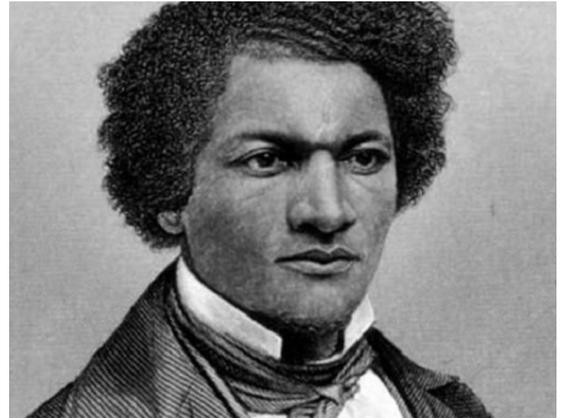


IMAGE CREDITS (TOP TO BOTTOM):

Portrait of Nat Turner. / Scene from the Nat Turner Revolt. / Nat Turner being captured by Benjamin Phipps.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 3rd - 5th Grades

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR STEPHEN TOWNS ARTWORKS ON VIEW

pp. 208–234. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2713592>. Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

Jacobs, Harriet A. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself*. N.p. 1861. Amazon. Web. 1 Jan 2014.

Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

ABOUT *BIRTH OF A NATION*, 2014

Stephen Towns' *Birth of a Nation*, 2014 captures an African American slave wet nurse feeding a white baby. *Birth of a Nation* brings to mind decorated altarpieces and processional banners of the medieval era with its ionic presence and soaring height. Evoking a Madonna and Child, its central pose affirms with tender solemnity the foundational roles of women of color have played in American history.

In viewing *Birth of a Nation*, consider some of the symbols included in the work. Towns captures an early version of the American flag, which is made up of fabric from clothing worn by the artist's mother, Patricia Towns. Additionally, Towns incorporated fabric in the pictured woman's hair wrap from clothing worn by the artist's late sister Mabel Ancrum.



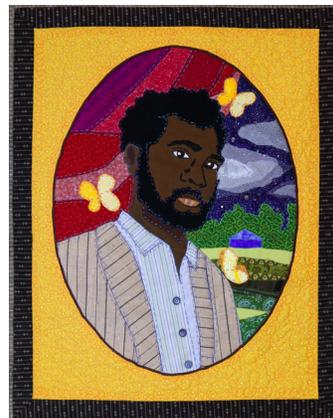
Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, (2014). Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

ABOUT *LET NO MAN PUT ASUNDER: PORTRAIT OF NAT TURNER*, 2018 AND *LET NO MAN PUT ASUNDER: PORTRAIT OF CHERRY TURNER*, 2018

Portraits of Nat and Cherry Turner suggest the passage between sacred and earthly realms that is embodied in rituals surrounding marriage and the death of a spouse. Side-by-side and mirrored in posture, the pair connects its subjects to the tradition of courtly wedding portraits. It also refers to the looping Double Wedding Ring quilt pattern made to commemorate a marriage. Oval formats and brilliant yellow 'frames' evoke daguerreotypes, and their less expensive successor ambrotypes: early photographic processes that were frequently used for portraiture in the United States from 1839 to the 1860s. For Towns, the elaborately embossed brass mats that protect these antebellum photographs recall the gold-leaf grounds of medieval icons, similarly enveloping their sitters in preciousness and light.

By representing Nat and Cherry Turner through the lens of a portrait technology invented years after Nat Turner's death, as if reanimated from beyond the grave, these portraits also echo the use of daguerreotypes in 19th century mourning rituals. These small, lifelike photo- graphs of the deceased served as memory aids for loved ones. In this intimate gesture, we find a metaphor for Stephen Towns' human-centered model of history—one that clears a sacred space in which to meditate on the complexity of our representations of the past and to illuminate our relationships to one another in the present.

Text excerpted from Stephen Towns' exhibition brochure by The Baltimore Museum of Art's Associate Curator of Contemporary Art Cecilia Wichmann.



Stephen Towns, *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Nat Turner*, 2018. Natural and synthetic fabric, nylon tulle, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, crystal glass beads, resin buttons. 30 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Stephen Towns, *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Cherry Turner*, 2018. Natural and synthetic fabric, nylon tulle, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, crystal glass beads, resin buttons. 30 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR RAMSESS ARTWORKS ON VIEW



Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012. Fabric. 58 x 166 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT THE GATHERING, 2012

Ramsess' mural-scale quilt *The Gathering* (2012) reimagines Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495-98) as a memorial to Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed on February 26, 2012. This sacred meal is attended by twelve historical figures. The historical figures are as follows:

1. **ADEBAYO "BAYO" ADENIKA:** Bayo Adenika was a 17-year-old high school senior on his way home from an after-school job when he was shot dead while waiting for the bus in Los Angeles. Bayo was mistaken for a gang member.
2. **OSCAR GRANT:** Oscar Grant was a 22-year-old African American man who was fatally shot on New Year's Day in 2009 by BART Police Officer Johanne Mehserle in Oakland, CA. Police Officer Mehserle forced Grant on the ground and shot him in the back. Both peaceful and violent protests of police actions took place the following days.
3. **EMMETT TILL:** Emmett Till was a 14-year-old African American boy who was lynched in Mississippi in 1955, after being accused of offending a white woman in her family's grocery store. The brutality of Till's murder became a symbol of the Civil Rights Movement and drew awareness to the long history of violent persecution of African Americans in the United States.
4. **JORDAN DAVIS:** Jordan Davis was a 17-year-old African American high school student who was shot and killed at a gas station in Jacksonville, FL by Michael David Dunn, a 45-year-old software developer. The shooting happened following an argument over loud music playing in Davis' car.

5. **HADIYA PENDLETON:** Hadiya Pendleton was a 15-year-old African American girl from Chicago, IL who was shot in the back and killed while standing with her friends inside Harsha Park after taking her final exams. The shooters, Michael Ward and Kenneth Williams stated they mistaken the group Pendleton was standing with as members of a rival gang.

6. **LATASHA HARLINS:** Latasha Harlins was a 15-year-old African American girl who was shot by 51-year-old Korea-born convenience store owner Soon Ja Due in Los Angeles, CA in 1992. Harlins' death happened 13 days after the videotaped beating of Rodney King and some have cited that Harlins' death as one of the causes of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots.

7. **TRAYVON MARTIN:** Trayvon Martin was a 17-year-old African American teenager who was shot in Sanford, Florida by neighborhood watch coordinator George Zimmerman. On the evening of February 26, 2012, Martin was walking back to his father's finance's house from a nearby convenience store with an Arizona Ice Tea and Skittles in his hand. Zimmerman identified Martin as suspicious to the local Police and shortly afterwards killed Martin during an altercation.

8. **THE UNKNOWN VICTIM:** The Unknown Victim is a figure that represents the countless lives of people whom have lost their lives with no recognition by society, the media or people in power.

9. **FRED HAMPTON:** Fred Hampton was an African American activist and revolutionary, and leader in the Black Panther Party of the 1960s and 1970s. Hampton was murdered in his home in December 1969 during a raid by a tactical unit of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the Chicago Police Department.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 3rd - 5th Grades

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR RAMSESS ARTWORKS ON VIEW

10. HECTOR PIETERSON: Hector Pieteron was a South African schoolboy who was shot and killed during the Soweto uprising - an uprising where police opened fire on students protesting the enforcement of teaching in Afrikaans. Pieteron's death is now memorialized as a day in South Africa titled *Youth Day*. On this day, South Africans honor young people and bring attention to their needs.

11. MALALA YOUSAFZAI: Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. On October 9, 2019, Yousafzai was shot by a Taliban gunman in an assassination attempt, retaliating Yousafzai's attendance of school and taking an exam. Yousafzai survived the attack and became a prominent activist for female's right to education.

12. GEORGE STINNEY: George Stinney was an African American teenage boy convicted at the age of 14 for the murder of two white girls ages 7 and 11 in 1944 in Alcolu, South Carolina. Stinney was executed by electric chair in June

1944. The court refused to appeal Stinney's case. He was the youngest American to be sentenced to death and executed. In 2004, it was deemed under judicial review that Stinney did not receive a fair trial.

13. LAWRENCE FOBES KING (AKA LATISHA KING): Lawrence Fobes King, also known as Latisha King was a 15-year-old student at E.O. Green Junior High School in Oxnard, California in 2008. Identified as a trans woman, King was shot twice by a fellow student, 14-year-old Brandon McInerney, and kept on life support until he died two days later. He was bullied for wearing women's accessories and clothing.

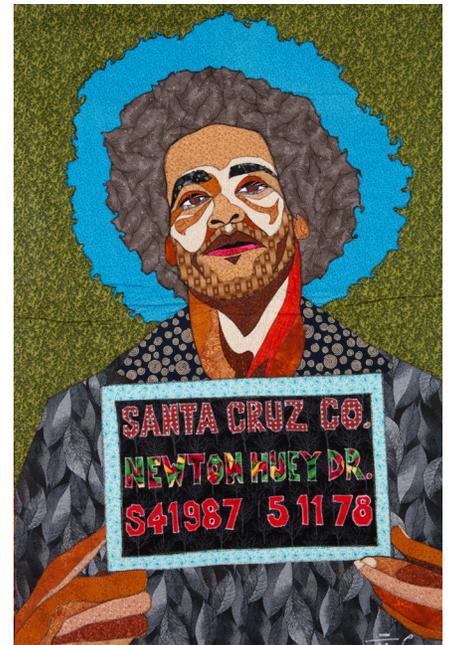
ABOUT DR. HUEY P. NEWTON, 2008

Ramsess' *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008 work appears in a suite of quilts that also picture Malcolm X and H. Rap Brown. These portraits are based on mugshot photographs. This format—close-up, repeated in profile or holding a placard—offers a framework for considering the complexity of historical legacy, while echoing the form of the religious icon to sanctify each man's quest for justice.¹

Dr. Huey Percy Newton (February 17, 1942 - August 22, 1989) was a revolutionary African-American political activist who, along with Bobby Seale, co-founded the Black Panther Party in 1966. In 1967, he was involved in a shootout which led to the death of a police officer and in 1974 was accused of shooting a woman, leading to her death. During this time, he continued to pursue graduate studies, eventually earning a Ph.D. in social philosophy. In 1989 he was murdered in Oakland, California by Tyrone Robinson, a member of the Black Guerrilla Family.²

¹ Text excerpted from Ramsess: The Gathering brochure. By Cecilia Wichmann, The Baltimore Museum of Art's Associate Curator of Contemporary Art.

² wikipedia.org/wiki/Huey_P._Newton



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ACTIVITY 03

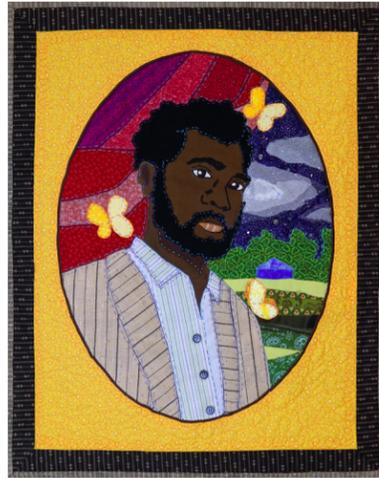
I AM HISTORY

IDENTIFY

THE NAT TURNER REVOLT

On the night of August 21, 1831, an enslaved preacher and self-styled prophet named Nat Turner organized and launched the most deadly slave revolt in the history of the United States.

In retaliation white militias and mobs launched another attack where over 200 enslaved people lost their lives. Many had nothing to do with The Nat Turner Revolt.



Stephen Towns, *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Nat Turner*, 2018. Natural and synthetic fabric, nylon tulle, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, crystal glass beads, resin buttons. 30 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Stephen Towns, *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Cherry Turner*, 2018. Natural and synthetic fabric, nylon tulle, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, crystal glass beads, resin buttons. 30 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

 Write or draw what you see, think and wonder about Stephen Towns, *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Nat Turner*, 2018 and Stephen Towns, *Let Not Man Put Asunder: Portrait of Cherry Turner*, 2018 below:



I see



I think



I wonder

 Write below why you think it is important for artists to honor historical influential figures through portraiture:

Student Handout

Name: _____

Date: _____

WELCOME TO ART + PRACTICE

Art + Practice is excited to welcome you to our campus to visit the exhibitions titled *Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning* and *Ramsess: The Gathering*. A+P has prepared a few activities for you to complete during your visit, helping broaden your understanding of the artworks on view. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask an A+P staff member. We are here to help!

During your visit, please keep in mind the following words. See if you can incorporate the words into the activities listed in this worksheet.

Social Justice - The view that everyone deserves to enjoy the same economic, political and social rights, regardless of race socio-economic status, gender or other personal characteristics.

Cultural Association - A connection with a particular place or group of people who share traditions, customs, beliefs and history.

Portraiture - The art of creating portraits.

ENGAGING WITH THE WORKS ON VIEW

Quilting is an art form that can be approached in lots of different ways. For example, artists Stephen Towns and Ramsess incorporate African American social activists in their work, drawing from historical references. Towns is inspired by Medieval altarpieces, 19th century photography, Dutch wax print fabrics and African American story quilts. Ramsess is inspired by the images in the media and the news. See if you can find other forms of inspiration in their work!



Ramsess, *H. Rap Brown*. Fabric. 55 x 67 1/2 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

FIRST TIME VISITING ART + PRACTICE?

Art + Practice is a nonprofit organization which supports the needs of our local foster youth

and provides our community with free access to museum-curated contemporary art.

STAY CONNECTED

 @artandpractice
 @artandpractice

 artandpractice

Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning // Ramsess: The Gathering

Greetings from Art + Practice!

Thank you for scheduling your upcoming field trip to Art + Practice's exhibition space. A+P is excited to welcome your class for a self-guided tour of the exhibition titled *Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning* and *Ramsess: The Gathering*.

In preparation for your visit, A+P suggests that you review the following gallery rules, general information about A+P's exhibition space and provided educational resources prior to your visit. This will ensure that you will be prepared to guide your students through the suggested activities. If you have any questions, please email A+P at education@artandpractice.org or call (323) 337-6887.

We look forward to welcoming your class to A+P soon.

Sincerely,

ART + PRACTICE

Teacher Resource Guide

ART + PRACTICE

Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning // Ramsess: The Gathering

GALLERY RULES

1. No food or drink is allowed. If students bring their lunches, they can leave their food/drinks with A+P near the front gallery desk.
2. No running or skipping in the gallery.
3. Backpacks and large bags are not permitted in the gallery. Students can leave their belongings with A+P near the front gallery desk.
4. No pens are allowed. A+P will provide students with pencils for the tour.
5. No flash photography permitted.
6. Visitors should use inside voices while in the gallery.
7. Limited use of cell phones is requested.



Ramsess, *H. Rap Brown*. Fabric. 55 x 67 1/2 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Duration

Self-guided tours typically range between 45 minutes-1 hour.

Group Size and Chaperon Count

Groups of 30 or less are highly encouraged. Adult to student ratio should be 1:10.

Teacher Resource Guide

This packet contains tools and activities for you to facilitate with your students during your visit to A+P. This packet is meant to integrate into your curriculum and incorporate the California State Content Standards.

Please follow the directions listed in this packet, and ask an A+P staff member if you have any questions before or during your visit. We'll be happy to help.

Student Handouts

This packet corresponds to a student handout, which A+P will have printed and ready for your students upon arrival to the exhibition space, along with clipboards and sharpened pencils.

Bathroom Code

A+P has women's and men's restrooms onsite. The code for entry is **52022**.

INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET

1. Tour Agenda
2. Key Vocabulary Words
3. List of the elements of art discussed in the artworks on view
4. List of California State Content Standards applied to the tour's activities
5. List of recommended reading materials for the tour and information about how to read the artworks on view
6. Descriptions for the exhibitions and artists' biographies
5. Tour and post visit activities (1-3)
6. Supplemental descriptions for the artworks on view

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 6 - 8th Grades

TOUR AGENDA

- 1. Review the gallery rules with students (page 02).
- 2. Introduce the key vocabulary words to the students and encourage them to utilize them during their activities (page 03).
- 3. Provide students with background information about exhibitions and artists on view (pages 05-07).
- 4. Administer the activities included in the student handouts (pages 08-09). Reference the short descriptions included in the back of this resource guide.

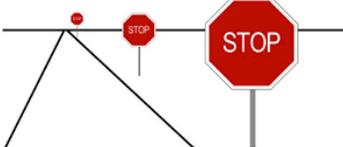
KEY VOCABULARY WORDS

Political Activist - A person who is involved in the political process for the sake of promotion, stopping or raising awareness about a certain issue or set of issues.

Symbology - The use of symbols to express meaning in an artwork.

Social Change - A significant change in the social structures and cultural patterns within our society that affect marginalized groups. Examples of significant social changes having long-term effects include the industrial revolution, the abolition of chattel slavery and the feminist movement.

ELEMENTS OF ART DISCUSSED IN ARTWORKS ON VIEW

1. Shape  4. Repetition  6. Depth 

2. Form  5. Contrast 

3. Color 

CALIFORNIA STATE CONTENT STANDARDS

While carrying out the following activities in this packet, please keep in mind the following California State Content Standards (VAPA/ELA):

**Visual and Performing Arts:
Responding: Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent
and meaning in artistic work.**

Enduring Understanding: People gain insights into meanings of artworks by engaging in the process of art criticism.

Essential Questions: What is the value of engaging in the process of art criticism? How can the viewer “read” a work of art as text? How does knowing and using visual arts vocabularies help us understand and interpret works of art?

Process Component: Interpret

6.VA: Re8

Interpret art by distinguishing between relevant and non-relevant contextual information and analyzing subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.

7.VA: Re8

Interpret art by analyzing art-making approaches, the characteristics of form and structure, relevant contextual information, subject matter, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.

8.VA:Re8

Interpret art by analyzing how the interaction of subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, use of media, art-making approaches, and relevant contextual information contributes to understanding messages or ideas and mood conveyed.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 6 - 8th Grades

CALIFORNIA STATE CONTENT STANDARDS (Continued)

English Language Arts Content Standards:

6: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.B

Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

7: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.B

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

7: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.A

Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

8: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1.A

Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 6 - 8th Grades

READING A WORK OF ART

There are various approaches to discussing works of art with your students. A+P has briefly outlined methodologies that can be used to discuss artworks and guide students to engage in discussing, writing about and examining works of art. These strategies can be used during your visit at A+P and in the classroom as you introduce new ideas, a new lesson or unit.

VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

Visual Thinking Strategies are a great way to engage students in a group discussion. They are a series of thoughtfully facilitated questions that prompt discussion of an artwork to create a more engaging and equitable conversations with your students. Consider asking these questions when in discussion with your students at A+P:

1. After students have examined the image, ask: What's going on in this picture?
2. Whenever a student makes an inference (i.e. a comment drawing conclusions based on observations), respond first by paraphrasing, and then ask: What do you see that makes you say...?
3. In order to keep students searching for more observations, frequently ask: What more can you find?

For more information visit vtshome.org.

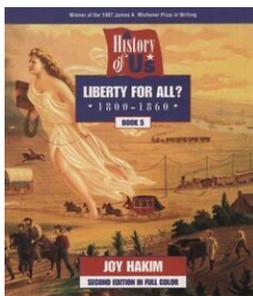
SEE, THINK, WONDER

This activity helps students make careful observations and develop their own ideas and interpretations based on what they see. By separating the two questions, *What do you see?* and *What do you think about what you see?* The activity helps students distinguish between observations and interpretations. By encouraging students to wonder and ask questions, the activity stimulates curiosity and helps students reach for new connections.

For more information visit harvard.edu/resources/see-think-wonder-at.

PRE-VISIT RESOURCES

If interested in furthering your students' familiarity with American history in 1800, A+P recommends that you check out the following books. The recommended books are appropriate for your students' reading level:



Liberty for All: 1720-1860 (A History of U.S., Book 5) by Joy Hakim



Khanacademy: Transatlantic Slave Trade
SOURCE: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/precontact-and-early-colonial-era/before-contact/a/african-societies-and-the-beginning-of-the-atlantic-slave-trade>



Teaching Hard History by Kate Shuster
SOURCE: <https://www.splcenter.org/20180131/teaching-hard-history>

And for more advanced readers, please reference the following reading list:

1. *Facing Frederick: The Life of Frederick Douglass, a Monumental American Man*, by Tonya Bolden
2. *Africa Is My Home: A Child of the Amistad* by Monica Edinger, illustrated by Robert Byrd
3. *The Glory Field* by Walter Dean Myers
4. *Never Caught, the Story of Ona Judge* by Erica Armstrong Dunbar and Kathleen Van Cleave

ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS

Please read the following summaries for the exhibitions on view to your students:



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, (2014). Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

About Stephen Towns: *Ruminations and a Reckoning*

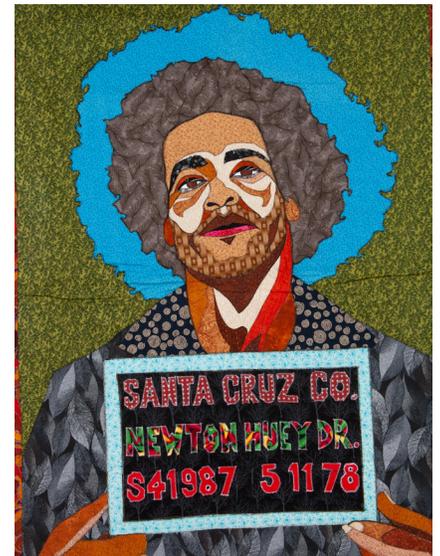
At the center of this exhibition, the monumental installation *Birth of a Nation* (2014) represents a Black woman nursing a white infant against the backdrop of the first official flag of the United States. Suspended above a mound of earth, the quilt will be surrounded by *Towns' Story Quilts* (2016–2019), a cycle of works in luminous fabrics and glass beads that chronicle the life of Nat Turner and the 1831 rebellion he led against slavery. A pair of quilted oval portraits of *Nat and Cherry Turner* (2018) adds a significant dimension to this narrative, considering the role of a marriage in historic events.

This exhibition is presented by Art + Practice in collaboration with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and is curated by Cecilia Wichmann, Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at The BMA.

About Ramsess: *The Gathering*

Ramsess' mural-scale quilt *The Gathering* (2012) re imagines Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495–98) as a memorial to Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed on February 26, 2012. This sacred meal is attended by twelve historical figures, one still living: Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani activist who becomes a symbol for peace, justice, and possibility. With *The Gathering* at its center, this focused exhibition brings together a selection of Ramsess' quilted portraits—monuments to individuals of crucial significance to American history whose stories have been suppressed or overlooked through politics of race, age, and gender: Sojourner Truth, Ruby Bridges, Cathay Williams, Malcolm X, H. Rap Brown, Huey P. Newton, and George Stinney.

This exhibition is presented by Art + Practice in collaboration with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and is curated by Cecilia Wichmann, Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at The BMA.



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Meet Stephen Towns

Stephen Towns was born in 1980 in Lincolville, South Carolina and lives and works in Baltimore. He trained as a painter with a BFA in studio art from the University of South Carolina, and has also developed a rigorous, self-taught quilting practice. His work draws visual inspiration from medieval altarpieces, nineteenth-century photography, and Dutch wax print fabrics, as well as from African American story quilts. Towns has exhibited at Arlington Arts Center, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Galerie Myrtis, Gallery CA, Goucher College, and York College of Pennsylvania, among other venues. He won the inaugural travel prize of the Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City in 2016, traveling to Ghana and Senegal to visit historical sites that mark the Transatlantic Slave Trade. He is also the recipient of a 2015 Ruby Artist Project Grant from the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance.



Stephen Towns. Photo by Jermaine T. Bell and Kirk Shannon-Butts.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Meet Ramsess



Ramsess in his quilting studio. 5 February 2018.
Photo by Natalie Hon.

Ramsess is a self-taught artist and educator who works in multiple mediums, including textiles, painting, mosaic, illustration, and stained glass. He contributed political cartoons and illustrations to the Los Angeles Times from 1976 to 1994. A longtime resident and leading creative voice in Leimert Park, Ramsess began renting his Degnan Boulevard studio from Dale and Alonzo Davis of Brockman Gallery in 1981, where he lived and worked until 2002. A Los Angeles native, Ramsess continues to live and work in Leimert Park. A life-long fan and lover of blues and jazz music, much of his art reflects that interest, honoring musicians and the music they create. He frequently travels the country to sell his jazz-focused works at music festivals. Ramsess is a member of the Afro-American Quilters of Los Angeles, a partner of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts.

ENGAGING WITH THE WORKS ON VIEW

Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning and *Ramsess: The Gathering* highlight two distinct and unique approaches to quilt making. Both Towns and Ramsess incorporate African American social activists in their work, drawing from historical references. For example, Towns draws visual inspiration from Medieval altarpieces, nineteenth-century photography and Dutch wax print fabrics in addition to African American story quilts; while Ramsess draws his interpretation from media based images and news archives, including mug shots, news articles and magazine clippings.

As you experience the exhibitions, consider the history of quilt making and its role in American society as quilting has been an American tradition for centuries. Originally introduced by the settlers who immigrated to the Americas in the 1600s, quilting later became a common practice that women carried out to clothe their families in the 17th and 18th centuries. Then during the Civil War era, quilts were designed to raise funds to support the abolitionist movement as well as were used as signals to help slaves in their flight to freedom.



Medieval altarpieces incorporating iconography, such as gold plated halos and religious figures.

INTERESTED IN CONSIDERING ARTISTS WITH SIMILAR THEMES/MEDIUMS?

Faith Ringgold



Faith Ringgold. *Coming to Jones Road Part II No 2 We Here Aunt Emmy Got Us Now*, 2010

Joyce J. Scott



Elizabeth Talford Scott. *Plantation*. 1980.

Harriet Powers



Harriet Powers. *Bible Quilt*, 1885-1886

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 6 - 8th Grades

ACTIVITY 01 | See, Think, Wonder

ACTIVITY 01: See, Think, Wonder

Duration: 20 minutes

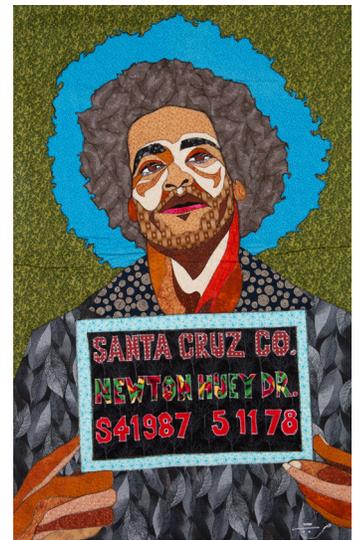
Objective: Students engage in *See, Think, Wonder* activity and engage in a conversation around Stephen Towns' *Birth of a Nation*, 2014 and Ramsess *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008.

See, Think, Wonder activity is designed to help students make careful observations and develop their own ideas and interpretations based on what they see. Students are encouraged to spend at least 30 seconds looking at an artwork, before writing or drawing their thoughts on paper.

- 1. Ask students to gather around Stephen Towns' quilt titled *Birth of a Nation*, 2014.
- 2. Ask students to contemplate what they see, think and wonder about the artwork for at least 30 seconds.
- 3. Direct students to write their observations in their student handouts and draw 3 patterns that are visible in the quilt.
- 4. Ask students to gather around Ramsess' quilt titled *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008.
- 5. Ask students to contemplate what they see, think and wonder about the artwork for at least 30 seconds.
- 6. Direct students to write their observations in their student handouts and draw 3 patterns that are visible in the quilt as well as identify the art elements that are applied in the work of art.
- 7. Ask students to gather in pairs and discuss their observations with their partner for 5 minutes.
- 8. Asks students to gather as a group. Read the short descriptions for *Birth of a Nation* and *Dr. Huey P. Newton* (located in the back of your teacher resource handout). Ask students to respond with any questions or remarks about what they've learned from your reading of the short descriptions.
- 9. Direct students to gather in small groups of 2-3 people. Prompt students to facilitate student-centered discussions. This is meant to allow for organic conversations amongst the students.
- 10. Based on the responses ask students: What's going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say...? What more can you find?



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, 2014. Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ACTIVITY 02 | The Last Supper

ACTIVITY 02: The Last Supper

Duration: 25 minutes

Objective: Students interpret and describe the quilt by artist Ramsess titled *The Gathering*, 2012.

- 1. Ask students to gather in the Education Display room.
- 2. Direct students to view the materials on the wall pertaining to Ramsess *The Gathering*. Read the short description for

ACTIVITY 02 | *The Last Supper (continued)*



Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012. Fabric. 58 x 166 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

the work (located in the back of your teacher resource guide).

- 3. Following your reading of the short description, ask students to reflect on what they learned. Give them time to ask questions and share their thoughts as a group.
- 4. Direct students to visit the back gallery and spend 3-5 minutes viewing Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012.
- 5. Following the students' viewing of Ramsess *The Gathering* ask students to answer the listed prompts and questions (i.e. Describe the artwork above. How do you think this artwork was created? What does this artwork symbolize? How is the artwork address ideas of social change?)
- 6. Following the students completion of the prompted questions in their handout ask students to gather in a group and share their responses.
- 7. Based on the responses ask students: What's going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say...? What more can you find?

ACTIVITY 03 | *Post Visit Activity - Quilting Their Story!*

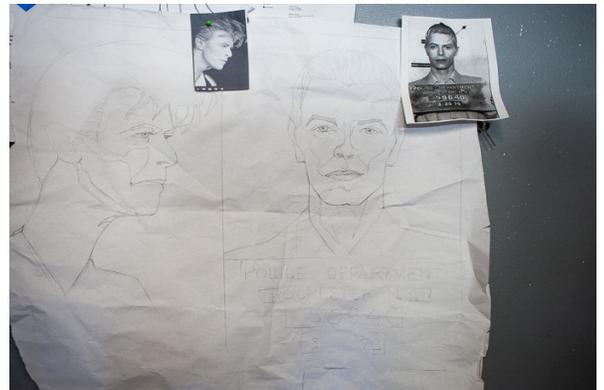
ACTIVITY 04: Post Visit Activity - Quilting Their Story!

Duration: 1 hour

Objective: Students draw upon concepts from their visit to A+P to create content for their own visual artwork inspired by Stephen Towns and Ramsess' quilts.

Recommended Materials: Paper with various colors and patterns, colored pencils, markers, magazines and glue sticks.

- 1. Direct students to select an advocate of social justice that they admire.
- 2. Ask students: What about the person you selected inspires you? / What social justice cause has this person advocated for? / What can others do to bring attention to the issue that your person advocates/ed for?
- 3. Direct students to sketch the portrait of their person of choosing on a piece of paper, using a pencil.
- 4. Using various types of paper and magazine clippings, ask students to recreate the sketched portrait with a quilted pattern. Students should use glue sticks to adhere their patterns to the paper.
- 5. Once completed, ask students to discuss their work in a group. What does the portrait convey? Why did they select certain patterns? How does the quilt capture their social justice advocate?



In process images of Ramsess' quilt making. Photo by Natalie Hon.

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR ARTWORKS ON VIEW

ABOUT THE NAT TURNER REVOLT

I had a vision—and I saw white spirits and black spirits engaged in battle, and the sun was darkened—the thunder rolled in the Heavens, and blood flowed in streams—and I heard a voice saying, 'Such is your luck, such you are called to see, and let it come rough or smooth, you must surely bare it.

— Nat Turner, *The Confessions of Nat Turner*

The total eclipse of the sun in February of 1831 signaled to Nat Turner that he should carry out his insurrection. Turner planned to begin the revolt on July 4th, but was delayed by illness and fear. A second celestial event in August, convinced Turner that now was the time.

On the night of Sunday, August 21st, 1831, Turner and six of his trusted comrades commenced to carrying out Turner's planned revolt. Mimicking the prophets of the Bible and American enslavers, Turner's plan took an unflinching approach of divide and conquer. The bands would quietly sneak into each farm and kill every white man, woman, and child. They would then recruit other enslaved blacks to join the crusade. Turner's then owner, Joseph Travis, was the first to succumb to fate of the band. Throughout the skirmish Turner's army was able to recruit 50- 60 insurgents. Their planned seizure of Jerusalem, Virginia failed when Virginia militia overtook Turner's army.

Turner was able to escape capture by the Virginia militia. He hid in a makeshift cave while exploring the town at night. On October 30th he was discovered by farmer Benjamin Phipps and jailed. Turner was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death in November 1831.

Religion served a dual purpose in early America. A master could employ scripture to bind a person in chains and the slave could use scripture to free themselves from their master. Though some sects of Christianity spoke out against slavery at the time, many slave holding parishioners found it improbable to give up that "peculiar institution." Not only was owning enslaved persons profitable and a status symbol, it was an effective means for establishing and maintaining white supremacy in American society.

Benjamin Turner, Turner's first enslaver, was Methodist and held prayer services on his farm for his enslaved people and allowed them to accompany him to Sunday chapel. Benjamin's son Samuel Turner, Turner's second owner, built a Methodist church he dubbed Turner's Meeting House where his enslaved people were witness to carefully crafted sermons that emphasized obedience.

Turner learned to read at an early age and was encouraged to study the Bible. Turner was later permitted to preach to other enslaved blacks in Southampton. Impressed with his religiosity, intelligence and charisma, he was referred to as *The Prophet*.

SOURCES

Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed.

Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

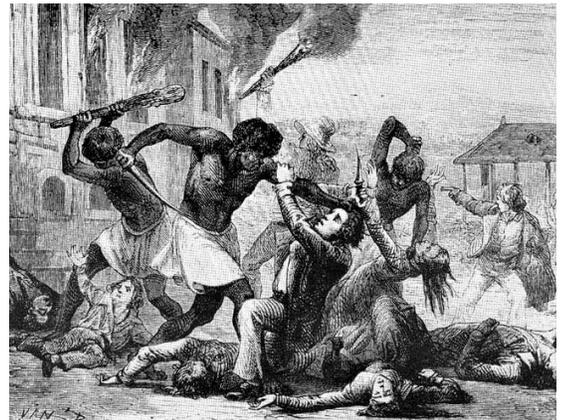
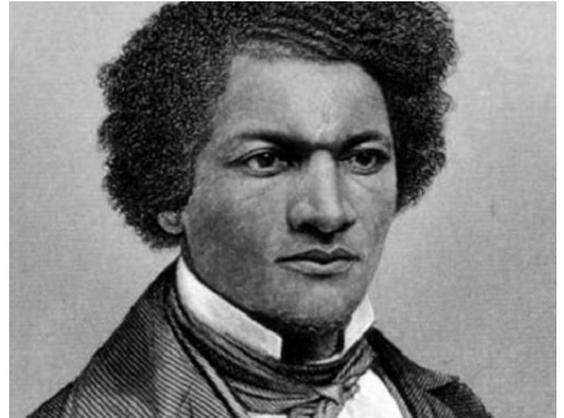


IMAGE CREDITS (TOP TO BOTTOM):

Portrait of Nat Turner. / Scene from the Nat Turner Revolt. / Nat Turner being captured by Benjamin Phipps.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 6 - 8th Grades

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR STEPHEN TOWNS ARTWORKS ON VIEW

Jacobs, Harriet A. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* Written by Herself. N.p. 1861. Amazon. Web. 1 Jan 2014.

Cromwell, John W. "The Aftermath of Nat Turner's Insurrection." *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1920, pp. 208-234. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2713592>. Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

Jacobs, Harriet A. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* Written by Herself. N.p. 1861. Amazon. Web. 1 Jan 2014.

Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

ABOUT *BIRTH OF A NATION*, 2014

Stephen Towns' *Birth of a Nation*, 2014 captures an African American slave wet nurse feeding a white baby. *Birth of a Nation* brings to mind decorated altarpieces and processional banners of the medieval era with its ionic presence and soaring height. Evoking a Madonna and Child, its central pose affirms with tender solemnity the foundational roles of women of color have played in American history.

In viewing *Birth of a Nation*, consider some of the symbols included in the work. Towns captures an early version of the American flag, which is made up of fabric from clothing worn by the artist's mother, Patricia Towns. Additionally, Towns incorporated fabric in the pictured woman's hair wrap from clothing worn by the artist's late sister Mabel Ancrum.



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, (2014). Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR RAMSESS ARTWORKS ON VIEW



Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012. Fabric. 58 x 166 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT THE GATHERING, 2012

Ramsess' mural-scale quilt *The Gathering* (2012) re imagines Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495-98) as a memorial to Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed on February 26, 2012. This sacred meal is attended by twelve historical figures. The historical figures are as follows:

1. **ADEBAYO "BAYO" ADENIKA:** Bayo Adenika was 17-year-old high school senior on his way home from an after-school job when he was shot dead while waiting for the bus in Los Angeles. Bayo was mistaken for a gang member.
2. **OSCAR GRANT:** Oscar Grant was a 22-year-old African American man who was fatally shot on New Year's Day in 2009 by BART Police Officer Johanne Mehserle in Oakland, CA. Police Officer Mehserle forced Grant on the ground and shot him in the back. Both peaceful and violent protests of police actions took place the following days.
3. **EMMETT TILL:** Emmett Till was a 14-year-old African American boy who was lynched in Mississippi in 1955, after being accused of offending a white women in her family's grocery store. The brutality of Till's murder became a symbol of the Civil Rights Movement and drew awareness to the long history of violent persecution of African Americans in the United States.
4. **JORDAN DAVIS:** Jordan Davis was a 17-year-old African American high school student who was shot and killed at a gas station in Jacksonville, FL by Michael David Dunn, a 45-year-old software developer. The shooting happened following an argument over loud music playing in Davis' car.

5. **HADIYA PENDLETON:** Hadiya Pendleton was a 15-year-old African American girl from Chicago, IL who was shot in the back and killed while standing with her friends inside Harsha Park after taking her final exams. The shooters, Michael Ward and Kenneth Williams stated they mistaken the group Pendleton was standing with as members of a rival gang.

6. **LATASHA HARLINS:** Latasha Harlins was a 15-year-old African American girl who was shot by 51-year-old Korea-born convenience store owner Soon Ja Due in Los Angeles, CA in 1992. Harlins' death happened 13 days after the videotaped beating of Rodney King and some have cited that Harlins' death as one of the causes of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots.

7. **TRAYVON MARTIN:** Trayvon Martin was a 17-year-old African American teenager who was shot in Sanford, Florida by neighborhood watch coordinator George Zimmerman. On the evening of February 26, 2012, Martin was walking back to his father's finance's house from a nearby convenience store with an Arizona Ice Tea and Skittles in his hand. Zimmerman identified Martin as suspicious to the local Police and shortly afterwards killed Martin during an altercation.

8. **THE UNKNOWN VICTIM:** The Unknown Victim is a figure that represents the countless lives of people whom have lost their lives with no recognition by society, the media or people in power.

9. **FRED HAMPTON:** Fred Hampton was an African American activist and revolutionary, and leader in the Black Panther Party of the 1960s and 1970s. Hampton was murdered in his home in December 1969 during a raid by a tactical unit of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the Chicago Police Department.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 6 - 8th Grades

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR RAMSESS ARTWORKS ON VIEW

10. **HECTOR PIETERSON:** Hector Pieteron was a South African schoolboy who was shot and killed during the Soweto uprising - an uprising where police opened fire on students protesting the enforcement of teaching in Afrikaans. Pieteron's death is now memorialized as a day in South Africa titled *Youth Day*. On this day, South Africans honor young people and bring attention to their needs.

11. **MALALA YOUSAFZAI:** Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. On October 9, 2019, Yousafzai was shot by a Taliban gunman in an assassination attempt, retaliating Yousafzai's attendance of school and taking an exam. Yousafzai survived the attack and became a prominent activist for female's right to education.

12. **GEORGE STINNEY:** George Stinney was an African American teenage boy convicted at the age of 14 for the murder of two white girls ages 7 and 11 in 1944 in Alcolu, South Carolina. Stinney was executed by electric chair in June 1944. The court refused to appeal Stinney's case. He was the youngest American to be sentenced to death and executed. In 2004, it was deemed under judicial review that Stinney did not receive a fair trial.

ABOUT DR. HUEY P. NEWTON, 2008

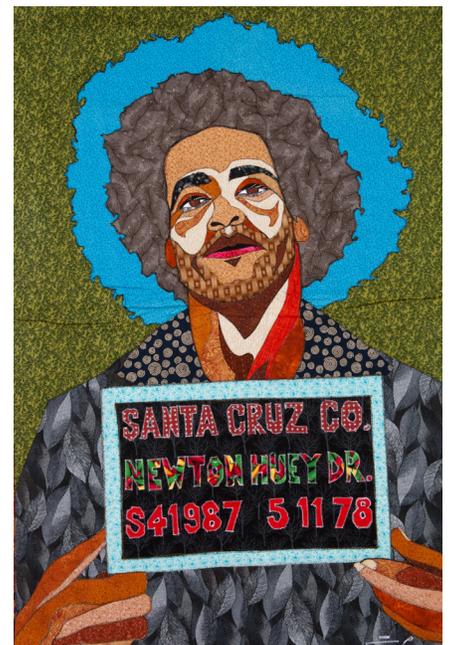
Ramsess' *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008 work appears in a suite of quilts that also picture Malcolm X and H. Rap Brown. These portraits are based on mugshot photographs. This format—close-up, repeated in profile or holding a placard—offers a framework for considering the complexity of historical legacy, while echoing the form of the religious icon to sanctify each man's quest for justice.¹

Dr. Huey Percy Newton (February 17, 1942 - August 22, 1989) was a revolutionary African-American political activist who, along with Bobby Seale, co-founded the Black Panther Party in 1966. In 1967, he was involved in a shootout which led to the death of a police officer and in 1974 was accused of shooting a woman, leading to her death. During this time, he continued to pursue graduate studies, eventually earning a Ph.D. in social philosophy. In 1989 he was murdered in Oakland, California by Tyrone Robinson, a member of the Black Guerrilla Family.²

¹ Text excerpted from Ramsess: The Gathering brochure. By Cecilia Wichmann, The Baltimore Museum of Art's Associate Curator of Contemporary Art.

² [wikipedia.org/wiki/Huey_P_Newton](https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huey_P_Newton)

13. **LAWRENCE FOBES KING (AKA LATISHA KING):** Lawrence Fobes King, also known as Latisha King was a 15-year-old student at E.O. Green Junior High School in Oxnard, California in 2008. Identified as a trans woman, King was shot twice by a fellow student, 14-year-old Brandon McInerney, and kept on life support until he died two days later. He was bullied for wearing women's accessories and clothing.



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ACTIVITY 02

THE GATHERING

LOCATE A+P's education room (i.e. in the front of the gallery, towards the entrance). Read the bios of the 13 figures pictured in Ramsess' quilt titled *The Gathering* (2012).



Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012. Fabric. 58 x 166 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

IDENTIFY Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012 and answer the listed questions below:

Describe the artwork above: _____

How do you think this artwork was created? _____

What does this artwork symbolize? _____

How is this artwork address ideas of social change? _____

Student Handout

Name: _____

Date: _____

WELCOME TO ART + PRACTICE

Art + Practice is excited to welcome you to our campus to visit the exhibitions titled *Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning* and *Ramsess: The Gathering*. A+P has prepared a few activities for you to complete during your visit, helping broaden your understanding of the artworks on view. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask an A+P staff member. We are here to help!

During your visit, please keep in mind the following words. See if you can incorporate the words into the activities listed in this worksheet.

Political Activist - A person who is involved in the political process for the sake of promotion, stopping or raising awareness about a certain issue or set of issues.

Symbology - The use of symbols to express meaning in an artwork.

Social Change - A significant change in the social structures and cultural patterns within our society that affect marginalized groups. Examples of significant social changes having long-term effects include the industrial revolution, the abolition of chattel slavery and the feminist movement.

ENGAGING WITH THE WORKS ON VIEW

Quilting is an art form that can be approached in lots of different ways. For example, artists Stephen Towns and Ramsess incorporate African American social activists in their work, drawing from historical references. Towns is inspired by Medieval altarpieces, 19th century photography, Dutch wax print fabrics and African American story quilts. Ramsess is inspired by the images in the media and the news.

As you experience the exhibitions, consider the history of quilt making and its role in American society as quilting as been an American tradition for centuries. Originally introduced by the settlers who immigrated to the Americas in the 1600s, quilting later became a common practice for women to clothe their families in the 17th and 18th centuries. Then during the Civil War era, quilts were designed to raise funds to support the abolitionist movement and were used as signals to help those enslaved in their fight to freedom.



Ramsess, *H. Rap Brown*. Fabric. 55 x 67 1/2 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

FIRST TIME VISITING ART + PRACTICE?

Art + Practice is a nonprofit organization which supports the needs of our local foster youth

and provides our community with free access to museum-curated contemporary art.

STAY CONNECTED

 @artandpractice
 @artandpractice

 artandpractice

ACTIVITY 01

SEE, THINK, WONDER

Identify this artwork

Artist's Name: _____

Artwork info: _____ Title _____ Date _____

DON'T MISS THE DETAILS!
At first glance, an artwork may seem like a combination of shapes and colors, however, there are dozens of subtle details in each piece. See what details you can find!



 **WRITE** Your first thoughts or any initial questions you might have below:

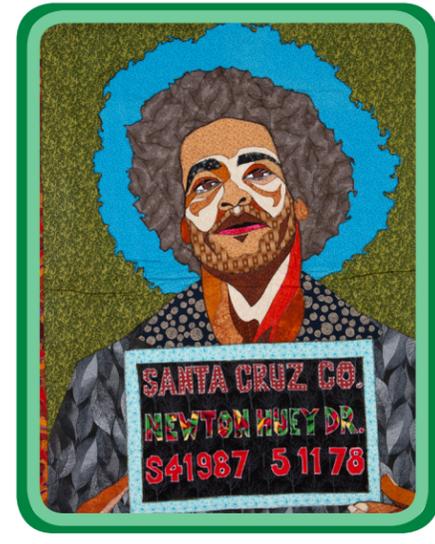
 In this artwork I see... _____

 I think that... _____

 I wonder if/how... _____

 **DRAW** 3 patterns that are visible in the quilt, and draw those patterns in the space provided below.

PATTERN A
PATTERN B
PATTERN C



← Identify this artwork

Artist's Name: _____

Artwork info: _____ Title _____ Date _____

 **WRITE** Your first thoughts or any initial questions you might have below:

Write what you see, think and wonder about Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton, 2008.*







 **DRAW** 3 patterns that are visible in the quilt, and draw those patterns in the space provided below.

PATTERN A
PATTERN B
PATTERN C

IDENTIFY ART ELEMENTS

What Art Elements can you identify in the quilt? (check all that apply)

- Line 
- Shape 
- Form 
- Value 
- Rhythm 
- Organic Shapes 
- Geometric Shapes 

WHO IS DR. HUEY P. NEWTON?
Dr. Huey P. Newton was an African American activist who, along with Bobby Seale, co-founded the Black Panther Party in 1969.

Learn more at: britannica.com/biography/Huey-P-Newton

Student Handout continues on back of this page →

Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning // Ramsess: The Gathering

Greetings from Art + Practice!

Thank you for scheduling your upcoming field trip to Art + Practice's exhibition space. A+P is excited to welcome your class for a self-guided tour of the exhibition titled *Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning* and *Ramsess: The Gathering*.

In preparation for your visit, A+P suggests that you review the following gallery rules, general information about A+P's exhibition space and provided educational resources prior to your visit. This will ensure that you will be prepared to guide your students through the suggested activities. If you have any questions, please email A+P at education@artandpractice.org or call (323) 337-6887.

We look forward to welcoming your class to A+P soon.

Sincerely,

ART + PRACTICE

Teacher Resource Guide

ART + PRACTICE

Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning // Ramsess: The Gathering

GALLERY RULES

1. No food or drink is allowed. If students bring their lunches, they can leave their food/drinks with A+P near the front gallery desk.
2. No running or skipping in the gallery.
3. Backpacks and large bags are not permitted in the gallery. Students can leave their belongings with A+P near the front gallery desk.
4. No pens are allowed. A+P will provide students with pencils for the tour.
5. No flash photography permitted.
6. Visitors should use inside voices while in the gallery.
7. Limited use of cell phones is requested.



Ramsess, *H. Rap Brown*. Fabric. 55 x 67 1/2 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Duration

Self-guided tours typically range between 45 minutes-1 hour.

Group Size and Chaperon Count

Groups of 30 or less are highly encouraged. Adult to student ratio should be 1:10.

Teacher Resource Guide

This packet contains tools and activities for you to facilitate with your students during your visit to A+P. This packet is meant to integrate into your curriculum and incorporate the California State Content Standards.

Please follow the directions listed in this packet, and ask an A+P staff member if you have any questions before or during your visit. We'll be happy to help.

Student Handouts

This packet corresponds to a student handout, which A+P will have printed and ready for your students upon arrival to the exhibition space, along with clipboards and sharpened pencils.

Bathroom Code

A+P has women's and men's restrooms onsite. The code for entry is **52022**.

INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET

1. Tour Agenda
2. Key Vocabulary Words
3. List of the elements of art discussed in the artworks on view
4. List of California State Content Standards applied to the tour's activities
5. List of recommended reading materials for the tour and information about how to read the artworks on view
6. Descriptions for the exhibitions and artists' biographies
5. Tour and post visit activities (1-3)
6. Supplemental descriptions for the artworks on view

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 9 - 12th Grades

TOUR AGENDA

- 1. Review the gallery rules with students (page 02).
- 2. Introduce the key vocabulary words to the students and encourage them to utilize them during their activities (page 03).
- 3. Provide students with background information about exhibitions and artists on view (pages 06-07).
- 4. Facilitate the activities included in the student handouts (pages 08-10). Reference the short descriptions included in the back of this resource guide.

KEY VOCABULARY WORDS

Political Activist - A person who campaigns for some kind of political change.

Symbology - The use of symbols to express meaning in an artwork.

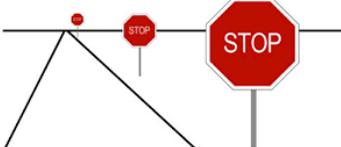
Social Change - A significant change in the social structures and cultural patterns within our society that affect marginalized groups. Examples of significant social changes having long-term effects include the industrial revolution, the abolition of chattel slavery and the feminist movement.

ELEMENTS OF ART DISCUSSED IN ARTWORKS ON VIEW

1. Variety 

2. Unity 

3. Repetition 

4. Depth 

CALIFORNIA STATE CONTENT STANDARDS

While carrying out the following activities in this packet, please keep in mind the following California State Content Standards (VAPA/ELA):

Visual and Performing Arts:
Responding: Anchor 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Enduring Understanding: People gain insights into meanings of artworks by engaging in the process of art criticism.

Essential Questions: What is the value of engaging in the process of art criticism? How can the viewer “read” a work of art as text? How does knowing and using visual arts vocabularies help us understand and interpret works of art?

Process Component: Interpret

Prof.VA:Re8

Interpret an artwork or collection of works, supported by relevant and sufficient evidence found in the work and its various contexts.

Acc.VA:Re8

Identify types of contextual information useful in the process of constructing interpretations of an artwork or collection of works.

Adv.VA:Re8

Analyze differing interpretations of an artwork or collection of works in order to select and defend a plausible critical analysis.

CALIFORNIA STATE CONTENT STANDARDS (Continued)

English Language Arts Content Standards

9-10:CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

11-12:CCS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

11-12: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1A

Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 9 - 12th Grades

READING A WORK OF ART

There are various approaches to discussing works of art with your students. A+P has briefly outlined methodologies that can be used to discuss artworks and guide students to engage in discussing, writing about and examining works of art. These strategies can be used during your visit at A+P and in the classroom as you introduce new ideas, a new lesson or unit.

VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

Visual Thinking Strategies are a great way to engage students in a group discussion. They are a series of thoughtfully facilitated questions that prompt discussion of an artwork to create a more engaging and equitable conversations with your students. Consider asking these questions when in discussion with your students at A+P:

1. After students have examined the image, ask: What's going on in this picture?
2. Whenever a student makes an inference (i.e. a comment drawing conclusions based on observations), respond first by paraphrasing, and then ask: What do you see that makes you say...?
3. In order to keep students searching for more observations, frequently ask: What more can you find?

For more information visit vtshome.org.

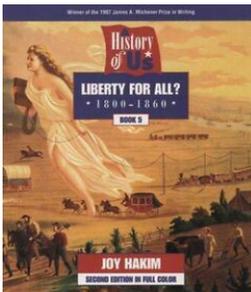
SEE, THINK, WONDER

This activity helps students make careful observations and develop their own ideas and interpretations based on what they see. By separating the two questions, *What do you see?* and *What do you think about what you see?* The activity helps students distinguish between observations and interpretations. By encouraging students to wonder and ask questions, the activity stimulates curiosity and helps students reach for new connections.

For more information visit harvard.edu/resources/see-think-wonder-at.

PRE-VISIT RESOURCES

If interested in furthering your students' familiarity with American history in 1800, A+P recommends that you check out the following books. The recommended books are appropriate for your students' reading level:



Liberty for All: 1720-1860 (A History of U.S., Book 5) by Joy Hakim



Khanacademy: Transatlantic Slave Trade
SOURCE: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/precontact-and-early-colonial-era/before-contact/a/african-societies-and-the-beginning-of-the-atlantic-slave-trade>



Teaching Hard History by Kate Shuster
SOURCE: <https://www.splcenter.org/20180131/teaching-hard-history>

Please reference the following middle school reading list:

1. *Facing Frederick: The Life of Frederick Douglass, a Monumental American Man*, by Tonya Bolden
2. *Africa Is My Home: A Child of the Amistad* by Monica Edinger, illustrated by Robert Byrd
3. *The Glory Field* by Walter Dean Myers
4. *Never Caught, the Story of Ona Judge* by Erica Armstrong Dunbar and Kathleen Van Cleve

Please also reference the following high school level reading list for more advanced readers:

1. *Beloved*, by Toni Morrison
2. *47*, by Walter Mosley
3. *The Resurrection of Nat Turn (Parts 1 and 2)* by Sharon Ewell Foster

ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS

Please read the following summaries for the exhibitions on view to your students:



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, (2014). Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

About Stephen Towns: *Ruminations and a Reckoning*

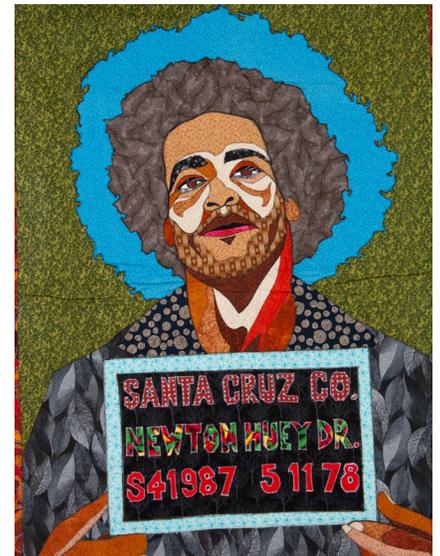
At the center of this exhibition, the monumental installation *Birth of a Nation* (2014) represents a Black woman nursing a white infant against the backdrop of the first official flag of the United States. Suspended above a mound of earth, the quilt will be surrounded by *Towns' Story Quilts* (2016–2019), a cycle of works in luminous fabrics and glass beads that chronicle the life of Nat Turner and the 1831 rebellion he led against slavery. A pair of quilted oval portraits of *Nat and Cherry Turner* (2018) adds a significant dimension to this narrative, considering the role of a marriage in historic events.

This exhibition is presented by Art + Practice in collaboration with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and is curated by Cecilia Wichmann, Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at The BMA.

About Ramsess: *The Gathering*

Ramsess' mural-scale quilt *The Gathering* (2012) re imagines Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495–98) as a memorial to Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed on February 26, 2012. This sacred meal is attended by twelve historical figures, one still living: Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani activist who becomes a symbol for peace, justice, and possibility. With *The Gathering* at its center, this focused exhibition brings together a selection of Ramsess' quilted portraits—monuments to individuals of crucial significance to American history whose stories have been suppressed or overlooked through politics of race, age, and gender: Sojourner Truth, Ruby Bridges, Cathay Williams, Malcolm X, H. Rap Brown, Huey P. Newton, and George Stinney.

This exhibition is presented by Art + Practice in collaboration with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and is curated by Cecilia Wichmann, Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at The BMA.

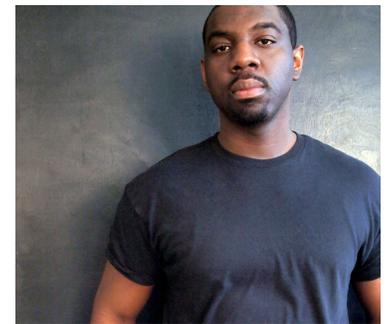


Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Meet Stephen Towns

Stephen Towns was born in 1980 in Lincolville, South Carolina and lives and works in Baltimore. He trained as a painter with a BFA in studio art from the University of South Carolina, and has also developed a rigorous, self-taught quilting practice. His work draws visual inspiration from medieval altarpieces, nineteenth-century photography, and Dutch wax print fabrics, as well as from African American story quilts. Towns has exhibited at Arlington Arts Center, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Galerie Myrtis, Gallery CA, Goucher College, and York College of Pennsylvania, among other venues. He won the inaugural travel prize of the Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City in 2016, traveling to Ghana and Senegal to visit historical sites that mark the Transatlantic Slave Trade. He is also the recipient of a 2015 Ruby Artist Project Grant from the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance.



Stephen Towns. Photo by Jermaine T. Bell and Kirk Shannon-Butts.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Meet Ramsess



Ramsess in his quilting studio. 5 February 2018.
Photo by Natalie Hon.

Ramsess is a self-taught artist and educator who works in multiple mediums, including textiles, painting, mosaic, illustration, and stained glass. He contributed political cartoons and illustrations to the Los Angeles Times from 1976 to 1994. A longtime resident and leading creative voice in Leimert Park, Ramsess began renting his Degnan Boulevard studio from Dale and Alonzo Davis of Brockman Gallery in 1981, where he lived and worked until 2002. A Los Angeles native, Ramsess continues to live and work in Leimert Park. A life-long fan and lover of blues and jazz music, much of his art reflects that interest, honoring musicians and the music they create. He frequently travels the country to sell his jazz-focused works at music festivals. Ramsess is a member of the Afro-American Quilters of Los Angeles, a partner of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts.

ENGAGING WITH THE WORKS ON VIEW

Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning and *Ramsess: The Gathering* highlight two distinct and unique approaches to quilt making. Both Towns and Ramsess incorporate African American social activists in their work, drawing from historical references. For example, Towns draws visual inspiration from Medieval altarpieces, nineteenth-century photography and Dutch wax print fabrics in addition to African American story quilts; while Ramsess draws his interpretation from media based images and news archives, including mug shots, news articles and magazine clippings.

As you experience the exhibitions, consider the history of quilt making and its role in American society as quilting has been an American tradition for centuries. Originally introduced by the settlers who immigrated to the Americas in the 1600s, quilting later became a common practice that women carried out to clothe their families in the 17th and 18th centuries. Then during the Civil War era, quilts were designed to raise funds to support the abolitionist movement as well as were used as signals to help slaves in their flight to freedom.



Medieval altarpieces incorporating iconography, such as gold plated halos and religious figures.

INTERESTED IN CONSIDERING ARTISTS WITH SIMILAR THEMES/MEDIUMS?

Faith Ringgold



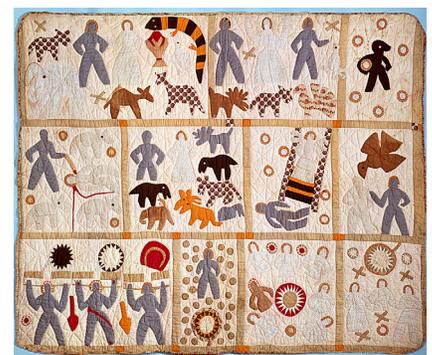
Faith Ringgold. *Coming to Jones Road Part II No 2 We Here Aunt Emmy Got Us Now*, 2010

Joyce J. Scott



Elizabeth Talford Scott. *Plantation*. 1980.

Harriet Powers



Harriet Powers. *Bible Quilt*, 1885-1886

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 9 - 12th Grades

ACTIVITY 01 | See, Think, Wonder

ACTIVITY 01: See, Think, Wonder

Duration: 20 minutes

Objective: Students engage in *See, Think, Wonder* activity and engage in a conversation around Stephen Towns' *Birth of a Nation*, 2014 and Ramsess' *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008.

See, Think, Wonder activity is designed to help students make careful observations and develop their own ideas and interpretations based on what they see. Students are encouraged to spend at least 30 seconds looking at an artwork, before writing or drawing their thoughts on paper.

- 1. Ask students to gather around Stephen Towns' quilt titled *Birth of a Nation*, 2014.
- 2. Ask students to contemplate what they see, think and wonder about the artwork for at least 30 seconds before starting their handout.
- 3. Direct students to write their observations, draw patterns that they see and identify art elements in the quilt.



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

- 4. Ask students to gather around Ramsess' quilt titled *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008.
- 5. Ask students to contemplate what they see, think and wonder about the artwork for at least 30 seconds before starting their handout.
- 6. Direct students to write their observations and complete the activity as prompted in their student handouts.
- 7. Ask students to gather in pairs and discuss their observations with their partner for 5 minutes.
- 8. Asks students to gather as a group. Read the short descriptions for *Birth of a Nation* and *Dr. Huey P. Newton* (located in the back of your teacher resource handout). Ask students to respond with any questions or remarks about what they've learned from your reading of the short descriptions.



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, (2014). Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

- 9. Direct students to gather in small groups of 2-3 people. Prompt students to facilitate student-centered discussions. This is meant to allow for organic conversations amongst the students.
- 10. Based on the responses ask students: What's going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say...? What more can you find?

ACTIVITY 02 | The Gathering

ACTIVITY 02: The Gathering

Duration: 30-40 minutes

Objective: Students interpret and describe the quilt by artist Ramsess titled *The Gathering*, 2012 and contextualize the work with the poem text titled *They Just* by Ramsess.

- 1. Ask students to gather in the Education Display room.
- 2. Direct students to view the materials on the wall pertaining to Ramsess *The Gathering*. Read the short description for the work (located in the back of your teacher resource guide).
- 3. Following your reading of the short description, ask students



Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012. Fabric. 58 x 166 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ACTIVITY 02 | *The Last Supper (continued)*

to reflect on what they learned. Give them time to ask questions and share their thoughts as a group. Students should further reflect about their thoughts in their handouts.

- 4. Encourage students to visit the back gallery and spend 3-5 minutes viewing Ramsess' *The Gathering*.
- 5. Following the students' viewing of Ramsess' *The Gathering* ask students to write personal statements about *The Gathering* and answer the provided prompts and questions in the handouts (i.e. Describe what you see below. How do you think this artwork was created? Why do you think Trayvon Martin is represented as the central figure of this quilt? What social change would you like to see in your lifetime? What does this quilt symbolize to you?)
- 6. Read the a poem titled *They Just* by artist Ramsess. Following your reading of the poem, ask students to talk about any initial impressions that they might have about the poem.

They Just by Ramsess

They just wanted what we all want- to live in peace without the burden of prejudice, lawlessness, bigotry, sexism, and brutality. They just wanted to live in a world that did not judge and condemn them because they were the wrong color, the wrong gender, loved the wrong person, or were on the wrong side of history. They just wanted to live and love; to be allowed to follow their dreams and their bliss. They just wanted an education and to live in a world where other people's beliefs and ideas didn't make it impossible for them to live freely. They just wanted what we all want; freedom, justice, equality, understanding, love and the right to be left alone. They just wanted to live. In a world of tolerance and inclusiveness, each of these people would have enjoyed the rights and privileges we all hope to take for granted. Every day that we inflict our views on others and deny them their human rights, we are setting up the next victim, the next life marred and cut short, the next "I just."

- 7. Read the excerpt from the poem titled *The Last Supper Club* by Michael W. Twitty.

Excerpt from the poem titled *The Last Supper Club* by Michael W. Twitty

*...all of you, at the Lord's last supper club
and now a stomach laced with skittles
a last taste of 17 year old sweetness
for a boy hunted down
on the streets of Sanford
sitting himself in sorrow
next to the ancestors*

*the freedom fighters
the justice seekers
all of them, all of us, all of us*

hungry

hungry

hungry

for peace.

—Rest In Peace, Trayvon, it could have been any of us.

- 8. Direct students to respond, as a group, about what they've heard.

ACTIVITY 03 | Post Visit Activity - Quilting Their Story!

ACTIVITY 04: Post Visit Activity - Quilting Their Story!

Duration: 1 hour

Objective: Students draw upon concepts from their visit to A+P to create content for their own visual artwork inspired by Stephen Towns and Ramsess' quilts.

Recommended Materials: Paper with various colors and patterns, colored pencils, markers, magazines and glue sticks.

1. Direct students to select an advocate of social justice that they admire.
2. Ask students: Why did they choose the selected advocate? What about the person you selected inspires you? / What social justice cause has this person advocated for? / What can others do to bring attention to the issue that your person advocates/ed for?
3. Direct students to sketch the portrait of their person of choosing on a piece of paper, using a pencil.
4. Using various types of paper and magazine clippings, ask students to recreate the sketched portrait with a quilted pattern. Students should use glue sticks to adhere their patterns to the paper.
5. Once completed, ask students to discuss their work in a group. What does the portrait convey? Why did they select certain patterns? How does the quilt capture their social justice advocate?



In process images of Ramsess' quilt making. Photo by Natalie Hon.

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR ARTWORKS ON VIEW

ABOUT THE NAT TURNER REVOLT

I had a vision—and I saw white spirits and black spirits engaged in battle, and the sun was darkened—the thunder rolled in the Heavens, and blood flowed in streams—and I heard a voice saying, 'Such is your luck, such you are called to see, and let it come rough or smooth, you must surely bare it.

— Nat Turner, *The Confessions of Nat Turner*

The total eclipse of the sun in February of 1831 signaled to Nat Turner that he should carry out his insurrection. Turner planned to begin the revolt on July 4th, but was delayed by illness and fear. A second celestial event in August, convinced Turner that now was the time.

On the night of Sunday, August 21st, 1831, Turner and six of his trusted comrades commenced to carrying out Turner's planned revolt. Mimicking the prophets of the Bible and American enslavers, Turner's plan took an unflinching approach of divide and conquer. The bands would quietly sneak into each farm and kill every white man, woman, and child. They would then recruit other enslaved blacks to join the crusade. Turner's then owner, Joseph Travis, was the first to succumb to fate of the band. Throughout the skirmish Turner's army was able to recruit 50- 60 insurgents. Their planned seizure of Jerusalem, Virginia failed when Virginia militia overtook Turner's army.

Turner was able to escape capture by the Virginia militia. He hid in a makeshift cave while exploring the town at night. On October 30th he was discovered by farmer Benjamin Phipps and jailed. Turner was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death in November 1831.

Religion served a dual purpose in early America. A master could employ scripture to bind a person in chains and the slave could use scripture to free themselves from their master. Though some sects of Christianity spoke out against slavery at the time, many slave holding parishioners found it improbable to give up that "peculiar institution." Not only was owning enslaved persons profitable and a status symbol, it was an effective means for establishing and maintaining white supremacy in American society.

Benjamin Turner, Turner's first enslaver, was Methodist and held prayer services on his farm for his enslaved people and allowed them to accompany him to Sunday chapel. Benjamin's son Samuel Turner, Turner's second owner, built a Methodist church he dubbed Turner's Meeting House where his enslaved people were witness to carefully crafted sermons that emphasized obedience.

Turner learned to read at an early age and was encouraged to study the Bible. Turner was later permitted to preach to other enslaved blacks in Southampton. Impressed with his religiosity, intelligence and charisma, he was referred to as *The Prophet*.

SOURCES

Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed.

Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

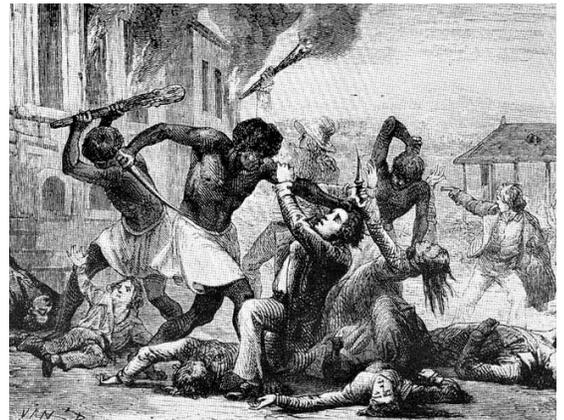
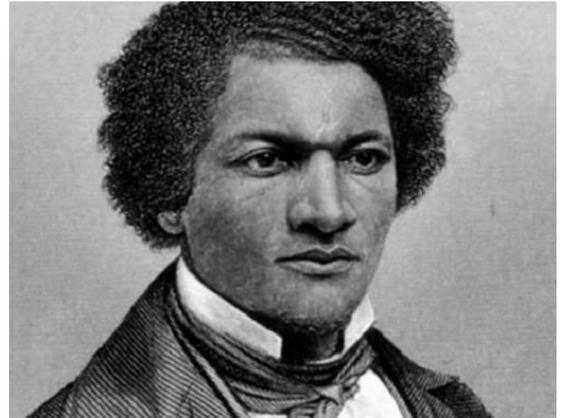


IMAGE CREDITS (TOP TO BOTTOM):

Portrait of Nat Turner. / Scene from the Nat Turner Revolt. / Nat Turner being captured by Benjamin Phipps.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 9 - 12th Grades

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR STEPHEN TOWNS ARTWORKS ON VIEW

Jacobs, Harriet A. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* Written by Herself. N.p. 1861. Amazon. Web. 1 Jan 2014.

Cromwell, John W. "The Aftermath of Nat Turner's Insurrection." *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1920, pp. 208-234. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2713592>. Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

Jacobs, Harriet A. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* Written by Herself. N.p. 1861. Amazon. Web. 1 Jan 2014.

Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents*. New York, NY: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Print Greenberg, Kenneth. Ed. *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print Oates, Stephen B. *The Fires of Jubilee: Nat Turner's Fierce Rebellion*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc. 2007. Epub Edition.

ABOUT *BIRTH OF A NATION*, 2014

Stephen Towns' *Birth of a Nation*, 2014 captures an African American slave wet nurse feeding a white baby. *Birth of a Nation* brings to mind decorated altarpieces and processional banners of the medieval era with its ionic presence and soaring height. Evoking a Madonna and Child, its central pose affirms with tender solemnity the foundational roles of women of color have played in American history.

In viewing *Birth of a Nation*, consider some of the symbols included in the work. Towns captures an early version of the American flag, which is made up of fabric from clothing worn by the artist's mother, Patricia Towns. Additionally, Towns incorporated fabric in the pictured woman's hair wrap from clothing worn by the artist's late sister Mabel Ancrum.



Stephen Towns, *Birth of a Nation*, (2014). Natural and synthetic fabric, polyester and cotton thread, metallic thread, coffee and tea stain, acrylic paint. 90 x 66 inches. Private collection.

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR RAMSESS ARTWORKS ON VIEW



Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012. Fabric. 58 x 166 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT THE GATHERING, 2012

Ramsess' mural-scale quilt *The Gathering* (2012) re imagines Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495-98) as a memorial to Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed on February 26, 2012. This sacred meal is attended by twelve historical figures. The historical figures are as follows:

1. **ADEBAYO "BAYO" ADENIKA:** Bayo Adenika was 17-year-old high school senior on his way home from an after-school job when he was shot dead while waiting for the bus in Los Angeles. Bayo was mistaken for a gang member.
2. **OSCAR GRANT:** Oscar Grant was a 22-year-old African American man who was fatally shot on New Year's Day in 2009 by BART Police Officer Johanne Mehserle in Oakland, CA. Police Officer Mehserle forced Grant on the ground and shot him in the back. Both peaceful and violent protests of police actions took place the following days.
3. **EMMETT TILL:** Emmett Till was a 14-year-old African American boy who was lynched in Mississippi in 1955, after being accused of offending a white women in her family's grocery store. The brutality of Till's murder became a symbol of the Civil Rights Movement and drew awareness to the long history of violent persecution of African Americans in the United States.
4. **JORDAN DAVIS:** Jordan Davis was a 17-year-old African American high school student who was shot and killed at a gas station in Jacksonville, FL by Michael David Dunn, a 45-year-old software developer. The shooting happened following an argument over loud music playing in Davis' car.

5. **HADIYA PENDLETON:** Hadiya Pendleton was a 15-year-old African American girl from Chicago, IL who was shot in the back and killed while standing with her friends inside Harsha Park after taking her final exams. The shooters, Michael Ward and Kenneth Williams stated they mistaken the group Pendleton was standing with as members of a rival gang.

6. **LATASHA HARLINS:** Latasha Harlins was a 15-year-old African American girl who was shot by 51-year-old Korea-born convenience store owner Soon Ja Due in Los Angeles, CA in 1992. Harlins' death happened 13 days after the videotaped beating of Rodney King and some have cited that Harlins' death as one of the causes of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots.

7. **TRAYVON MARTIN:** Trayvon Martin was a 17-year-old African American teenager who was shot in Sanford, Florida by neighborhood watch coordinator George Zimmerman. On the evening of February 26, 2012, Martin was walking back to his father's finance's house from a nearby convenience store with an Arizona Ice Tea and Skittles in his hand. Zimmerman identified Martin as suspicious to the local Police and shortly afterwards killed Martin during an altercation.

8. **THE UNKNOWN VICTIM:** The Unknown Victim is a figure that represents the countless lives of people whom have lost their lives with no recognition by society, the media or people in power.

9. **FRED HAMPTON:** Fred Hampton was an African American activist and revolutionary, and leader in the Black Panther Party of the 1960s and 1970s. Hampton was murdered in his home in December 1969 during a raid by a tactical unit of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the Chicago Police Department.

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 9 - 12th Grades

SUPPLEMENTAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR RAMSESS ARTWORKS ON VIEW

10. HECTOR PIETERSON: Hector Pieteron was a South African schoolboy who was shot and killed during the Soweto uprising - an uprising where police opened fire on students protesting the enforcement of teaching in Afrikaans. Pieteron's death is now memorialized as a day in South Africa titled *Youth Day*. On this day, South Africans honor young people and bring attention to their needs.

11. MALALA YOUSAFZAI: Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. On October 9, 2019, Yousafzai was shot by a Taliban gunman in an assassination attempt, retaliating Yousafzai's attendance of school and taking an exam. Yousafzai survived the attack and became a prominent activist for female's right to education.

12. GEORGE STINNEY: George Stinney was an African American teenage boy convicted at the age of 14 for the murder of two white girls ages 7 and 11 in 1944 in Alcolu, South Carolina. Stinney was executed by electric chair in

June 1944. The court refused to appeal Stinney's case. He was the youngest American to be sentenced to death and executed. In 2004, it was deemed under judicial review that Stinney did not receive a fair trial.

13. LAWRENCE FOBES KING (AKA LATISHA KING): Lawrence Fobes King, also known as Latisha King was a 15-year-old student at E.O. Green Junior High School in Oxnard, California in 2008. Identified as a trans woman, King was shot twice by a fellow student, 14-year-old Brandon McInerney, and kept on life support until he died two days later. He was bullied for wearing women's accessories and clothing.

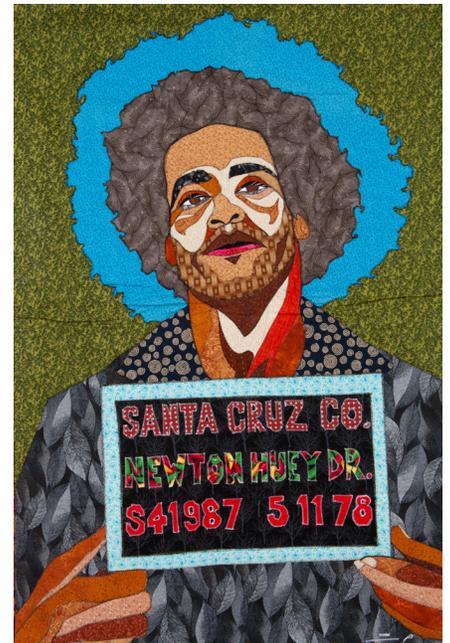
ABOUT DR. HUEY P. NEWTON, 2008

Ramsess' *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008 work appears in a suite of quilts that also picture Malcolm X and H. Rap Brown. These portraits are based on mugshot photographs. This format—close-up, repeated in profile or holding a placard—offers a framework for considering the complexity of historical legacy, while echoing the form of the religious icon to sanctify each man's quest for justice.¹

Dr. Huey Percy Newton (February 17, 1942 - August 22, 1989) was a revolutionary African-American political activist who, along with Bobby Seale, co-founded the Black Panther Party in 1966. In 1967, he was involved in a shootout which led to the death of a police officer and in 1974 was accused of shooting a woman, leading to her death. During this time, he continued to pursue graduate studies, eventually earning a Ph.D. in social philosophy. In 1989 he was murdered in Oakland, California by Tyrone Robinson, a member of the Black Guerrilla Family.²

¹ Text excerpted from Ramsess: The Gathering brochure. By Cecilia Wichmann, The Baltimore Museum of Art's Associate Curator of Contemporary Art.

² wikipedia.org/wiki/Huey_P_Newton



Ramsess, *Dr. Huey P. Newton*, 2008. Fabric. 62 x 42 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

ACTIVITY 02

THE GATHERING



Before you begin this activity, please describe what you see below:



Ramsess, *The Gathering*, 2012. Fabric. 58 x 166 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

How do you think this artwork was created? _____

Why do you think Trayvon Martin is represented as the central figure in this quilt? _____

What social change would you like to see in your lifetime? _____

What does this quilt symbolize to you? _____

LOCATE A+P's education room (i.e. in the front of the gallery, towards the entrance). Read the biographies of the 13 figures pictured in Ramsess' quilt titled *The Gathering* (2012).

ABOUT THE GATHERING

Ramsess' mural-scale quilt *The Gathering* (2012) reimagines Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495-98) as a memorial to Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old who was shot and killed on February 26, 2012. This sacred meal is attended by twelve historical figures, one still living: Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani activist who becomes a symbol for peace, justice, and possibility.

Student Handout

Name: _____

Date: _____

WELCOME TO ART + PRACTICE

Art + Practice is excited to welcome you to our campus to visit the exhibitions titled *Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning* and *Ramsess: The Gathering*. A+P has prepared a few fun activities for you to complete during your visit, helping broaden your understanding of the artworks on view. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask an A+P staff member. We are here to help!

During your visit, please keep in mind the following words. See if you can incorporate the words into the activities listed in this worksheet.

Political Activist - A person who campaigns for some kind of political social change.

Symbology - The use of symbols to express meaning in an artwork.

Social Change - A significant change in the social structures and cultural patterns within our society that affects marginalized groups. Examples of significant social changes having long-term effects include the industrial revolution, the abolition of chattel slavery and the feminist movement.

ENGAGING WITH THE WORKS ON VIEW

Quilting is an art form that can be approached in lots of different ways. For example, artists Stephen Towns and Ramsess incorporate African American social activists in their work, drawing from historical references. Towns is inspired by Medieval altarpieces, 19th century photography, Dutch wax print fabrics and African American story quilts. Ramsess is inspired by the images in the media and the news.

As you experience the exhibitions, consider the history of quilt making and its role in American society as quilting as been an American tradition for centuries. Originally introduced by the settlers who immigrated to the Americas in the 1600s, quilting later became a common practice for women to clothe their families in the 17th and 18th centuries. Then during the Civil War era, quilts were designed to raise funds to support the abolitionist movement and were used as signals to help those enslaved in their fight to freedom.



Ramsess, *H. Rap Brown*. Fabric. 55 x 67 1/2 inches. Photo by Damian Turner. Courtesy of the artist.

FIRST TIME VISITING ART + PRACTICE?

Art + Practice is a nonprofit organization which supports the needs of our local foster youth

and provides our community with free access to museum-curated contemporary art.

STAY CONNECTED

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artandpractice

ACTIVITY 01

SEE, THINK, WONDER

HINT You can find the artwork information on the wall.

Identify this artwork

Artist's Name: _____

Artwork info: _____ Title _____ Date _____



Write about what you see, think and wonder about the artwork below:



In this artwork I see... _____



I think that... _____



I wonder if/how... _____



Identify 3 patterns that are visible in the quilt, and draw those patterns in the space provided below.

PATTERN A
PATTERN B
PATTERN C

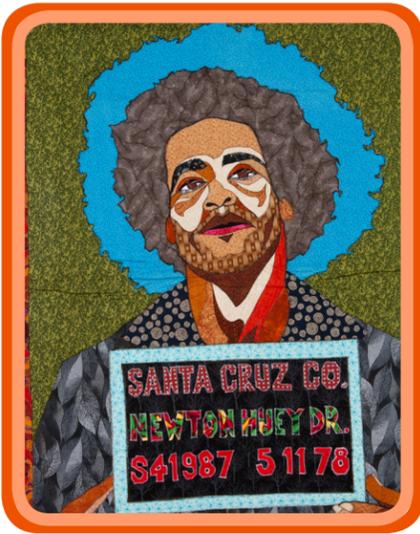
IDENTIFY ART ELEMENTS

What Art Elements can you identify in the quilt? (check all that apply)

- Line
- Shape
- Form
- Value
- Rhythm
- Organic Shapes
- Geometric Shapes



OBSERVATION IS KEY!



DON'T MISS THE DETAILS!
At first glance, an artwork may seem like a combination of shapes and colors, however, there are dozens of subtle details in each piece. See what details you can find!



I wonder if/how... _____



Identify 3 patterns that are visible in the quilt, and draw those patterns in the space provided below.

PATTERN A	PATTERN B	PATTERN C

Who is Dr. Huey P. Newton?
Huey P. Newton was an African American political activist who, along with Bobby Seale, co-founded the Black Panther Party in 1969.

Learn more at: [britannica.com/biography/Huey-P-Newton](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Huey-P-Newton)

Identify this artwork

Artist's Name: _____

Artwork info: _____ Title _____ Date _____



Write about what you see, think and wonder about the artwork below:



In this artwork I see... _____



I think that... _____
