Educator Resource Guide

Summer Wheat: Blood, Sweat, and Tears

Thursday, February 6 to Sunday, May 24, 2020
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Welcome!

Welcome to Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art! Thank you for choosing our Museum for your upcoming field trip. With art as the starting point, your students will participate in an interactive experience that sparks creative and critical thought, ignites curiosity, and invites conversation.

Because contemporary artists are reflecting on and reacting to current events, students have the unique opportunity to question and examine the art and ideas of our time. Inspired by new perspectives and ambitious thinking, an engaged museum experience can begin to shift the way we think about something and become a catalyst for change.

Our guided tours meet both Kansas and Missouri state standards in visual arts education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missouri STRAND</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product-Performance</td>
<td>Artists communicate ideas through artworks by selecting and applying media techniques and processes, subject matter, and themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements and Principles</td>
<td>Artists communicate ideas through artworks by selecting and applying art elements and principles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Perceptions</td>
<td>Viewers’ respond aesthetically to artworks based upon their personal experience and cultural values. Viewers analyze, interpret, and evaluate the quality of artwork through art criticism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Connections</td>
<td>Visual art is connected to performing arts, communication arts, math, science, and social studies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic and Cultural Context</td>
<td>Visually literate citizens understand the role and functions of art in history and culture. Artists influence and are influenced by the cultures and time periods in which they live</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kansas STRAND</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING</th>
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<tr>
<td>Creating</td>
<td>Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and works. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Refine and complete artistic work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenting</td>
<td>Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding</td>
<td>Perceive and analyze artistic work. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting</td>
<td>Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.</td>
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The following guide is designed to prepare you for your tour and familiarize you and your students with the work of artist Summer Wheat. In addition, you will find suggestions for pre-and post-visit activities to extend and enhance learning and engagement.

We look forward to seeing you at Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art. Enjoy your tour!
Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art: Who We Are


Founders Bebe (Hunt) and R. Crosby Kemper, Jr. (1927–2014) assembled a collection of modern and contemporary art donated to the Museum as its core Permanent Collection. Over the course of the past twenty-five years, the Permanent Collection has grown to over 1,400 works. While we cannot exhibit all of our art works at once, you may view current exhibitions or search our Permanent Collection by visiting: kemperart.org/permanent-collection.

Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art uniquely bridges modern and contemporary works of art from around the world, reflecting the vitality, complexity, and unfolding patterns within the art of our time. In selecting its exhibitions, the Museum strives to represent national and international aesthetics and cultural diversity.

The Charlotte Crosby Kemper Gallery, named after R. Crosby Kemper’s grandmother, is the museum’s main gallery and hosts three major exhibitions annually. Three additional galleries on the south side of the display rotating exhibitions of works from the Permanent Collection and special exhibitions.

Contemporary Art 101

At Kemper Museum, we collect and exhibit works by contemporary artists. Contemporary art is the art of our time, reflecting today’s culture and society and often characterized by experimentation and diversity.

Contemporary Artists:
- Find new ways to think about, respond to, and visualize the world around them
- Ask questions, express feelings, and challenge traditional ideas
- Experiment with color, shapes, and materials
- Invite viewers to involve themselves in the artwork and make their own meaning from it
Your Visit: Field Trip FAQs

What will we see on our tour?
During a docent-led tour, students will engage with artwork featured in the exhibition, *Summer Wheat: Blood, Sweat, and Tears*. Students will also have the opportunity to see artwork from our Permanent Collection located in adjacent galleries or on the Museum grounds. If you would like to preview any images, just email tours@kemperart.org.

How long will a tour last?
Docent-led tours last for approximately one hour. The first tour of the day begins at 10:15 a.m.

How many students can the Museum accommodate?
Because of space limitations, we can only accommodate 60 students at one time. For larger groups, please contact us to discuss bringing students over multiple times or dates.

What does it cost to take a tour of the Museum?
Guided tours, and general admission to Kemper Museum are free, and our parking is also free. Please encourage your students to come back at any time.

Can my colleagues and I visit the Museum before our tour to visit the exhibitions?
Of course! Admission and parking are free, so feel free to stop in any time. If you would like to set up a time to meet with a museum educator, please send us an email at tours@kemperart.org.

Can we receive reimbursement for bussing or substitute teachers?
Schools and youth groups in the greater Kansas City area can apply for reimbursement for busing and substitute teacher costs. Our Field Trip Reimbursement Program will only reimburse the costs related to your field trip to Kemper Museum. Please note that funding is subject to availability. For schools in outlying areas, a stipend may be available to help offset your travel costs to and from the Museum.

Is the museum wheelchair accessible?
It is, and we also have a wheelchair available if you or anyone in your group should need it.

Want to learn more about visiting an art museum?
Check out this video featuring Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, by “the Art Assignment” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drrBd1bCiW0.
Museum Map

Read with Your Students: Field Trip Checklist

Pre-visit Activities
Be sure to check out the pre-visit activities included in this packet to help prepare your students for their time at the Museum.

Rule Review
In order for you to learn about and enjoy the artwork of our time, the Museum needs to protect and preserve it. You can help make that happen! Please review Museum rules with your students and chaperones. Make sure chaperones also read the Chaperone Guide on page 8.

- Please don’t touch the art or lean against the walls
- Leave your food, drink, gum, and candy at home. You don’t want to accidentally spill on a painting!
• Please walk and stay with your group. The art is exciting but you will have plenty of time to see everything. Plus, the Museum is free so you can always come back!
• Want to take notes or sketch while you’re in the galleries? Pencils only, please.
• Ask questions and share your ideas! If you see something interesting, please stop your docent and ask about it.
• Don’t let your phone distract you—this is the REAL thing!

Who’s Who at the Museum
A DOCENT is a guide in a museum who helps visitors look at art and explore the ideas, stories, materials, and techniques behind it.

The CURATOR is a Museum administrator who carefully select which pieces of artwork go on display, how they are organized, and what artists to bring in for special exhibitions.

You will see the SECURITY staff in each gallery you visit. They have the important job of helping keep you and our artwork safe!

Kemper Museum VISITORS come from the Kansas City community, other states, and even other countries!

Name Tags for Students & Chaperones
These help us engage with your students and bring them into discussions.

Break It Down
Prior to your arrival, please assign students to groups of 10 (+/-). This allows for in-depth conversation and greater engagement with the artwork while helping keep our collection safe.

Getting Started
If you will be more than 10 minutes late, please call 816-753-5784. Encourage students to take restroom and drinking fountain breaks before arriving at the Museum. Please leave backpacks, lunches, large bags, and umbrellas on the bus.

Parking Information & Directions
The Museum is located at 4420 Warwick Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri. Buses are encouraged to drop students off on the north side of our building; please do not use the covered drive. Parking is available and free in a lot on the west side of the building for chaperones who drive separately.

Post-Visit Activities
After you get back to your classroom, try out the post-visit activities found in this packet.
We Want to Hear From You
Following your tour, please take a moment to evaluate your visit with your students. Your docent will give you a survey to complete or you may complete it online: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CY7FS9Q

Field Trip Reimbursement Program
If you are applying for reimbursement, please submit the required documents as soon as possible following your visit. Schools will need to submit a W-9, an invoice for substitute teachers or bussing, and information about who and where a check should be made out to and sent. For more information on supporting your school’s field trip to Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, email tours@kemperart.org.

Helpful Hints for Chaperones

One adult chaperone is needed for each group of 8–10 students. You can assist us in protecting the Museum’s collection and keeping your students safe by remaining with your group at all times. Below you will find some helpful hints for chaperones to help ensure a positive experience at the Museum.

Model engaged museum behavior for the students
This is a great opportunity for students to see how exciting visiting a museum can be for all ages. Focusing on the students and the art helps keep phones (both your own and the students’) from becoming a distraction during the tour.

Help your docent connect with your students
Are there any students in your group with special learning needs? Please let us know prior to the start of the tour.

Our docents depend on and appreciate your ability to help manage group behavior. You have the advantage of established relationships with the students and can assist in encouraging positive behaviors. Throughout your visit, please help students stay together, stay engaged, and stay a comfortable distance from the artwork. Quietly address any issue, and if necessary, remove a student from the group.

Encourage Participation
Encourage your students to respond to activities and questions posed by your docent. We ask that, rather than answering questions yourself, you allow the students to respond and help draw them out if need be.
About the Exhibition: For Educators

In *Blood, Sweat, and Tears*, artist Summer Wheat’s vibrantly colored paintings depict a community of heroic females doing the “heavy lifting and running things.” Using an inventive process of pushing paint through aluminum mesh, Wheat’s large-scale paintings resemble medieval tapestries showing female figures as hunters, fishers, and beekeepers. These women rewrite historical imagery through themes such as labor, discovery, and expressions of joy where traditionally only men were present.

Introducing the technical progression of Wheat’s work over the last three years and debuting new paintings and drawings, this exhibition further emphasizes the relationship between drawing, painting, and sculpture. Beginning with drawings referencing inspiration from a broad spectrum of art historical references, ranging from Egyptian pictography to Native American imagery, from French Post-Impressionism to American Pop Art, Wheat questions the history of these narratives by proposing a contemporary perspective. She translates these drawings into brilliantly colorful, thickly encrusted paintings that appear almost sculptural as they bend slightly away from the wall like a tapestry. This exhibition is a milestone for Wheat as she continues to be inventive with her process and the reauthoring of everyday life.

*Blood, Sweat, and Tears* is organized by Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, Missouri, and curated by Erin Dziedzic, director of curatorial affairs. A full-color catalogue is available in conjunction with this exhibition.
About the Artist: Summer Wheat

Growing up in Oklahoma City, which she describes as a “mishmash” of Native American imagery and Western Americana, artist Summer Wheat had a non-traditional introduction to art. Her school classroom provided comic books and catalogs of Native American art; she wasn’t exposed to traditional Western art history until she was older. As a young student, she found herself drawn to the repetition and forms in Navajo blankets and what she called “psychedelic color schemes.” Wheat found that mimicking the lines, shapes, and patterns in the weavings became a form of meditation and helped develop her skills as an artist.

Wheat earned a BA (Bachelor of Arts) from University of Central Oklahoma in 2000 and an MFA (Master of Fine Arts) from the Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah, Georgia in 2005.

In 2006, Wheat visited the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Georgia, to see the exhibition *The Quilts of Gee’s Bend*, showcasing quilts by four generations of African American women. The quilts were large scale and abstract, and hanging on the wall, operated like paintings. While there, she also visited the museum’s permanent collection and was inspired by the relationship she saw between traditional craft based works exhibited like paintings and the modern and contemporary works.

Wheat began exploring new materials, trying to find a way to bring the texture of textiles like the quilts to her paintings. She experimented with non-traditional tools; scrub brushes, floor mats, mops, windshield wipers, plastic wrap, and more. Combining paint with other materials until it resembled a moldable clay, she tried pushing it through a window screen. The result was exactly what she had been searching for; she was able to use paint to create an intersection between drawing and sculpture. Wheat’s artwork presents an alternate narrative to traditional stories and mythologies. Wheat places women in stereotypically male roles where they are warriors, hunters, farmers, and beekeepers, “getting things done and running things.” In her paintings, Wheat weaves pattern and shape among her female figures, creating a community of empowered females, embodying a space of mutual support.

Wheat’s artwork has been included in several solo and group exhibitions and museum collections. She currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

“I wanted to make paintings that were like sculptures, paintings where the lines of my drawings could become three-dimensional.”

—Summer Wheat
Helpful Resources

Kemper Museum APP
The Kemper Museum smartphone app offers in-depth content on featured exhibitions like Summer Wheat: Blood, Sweat, and Tears in both English and Spanish. In addition, visitors can engage with the outdoor works through the app’s Sculpture Tour. Download from the app store onto your smartphone or view on an iPad in the Museum’s Learning Gallery.

Bomb Magazine’s interview with Summer Wheat (Spring 2018)
https://bombmagazine.org/articles/summer-wheat/

Twilight Talk’s interview with Summer Wheat (May 18, 2019; her interview begins at 15:04)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSDBLA3HIGo

Beyond the Brush: Inventive Use of Media for Painting Students
https://www.studentartguide.com/articles/inventive-mixed-media-techniques

Art is Fun: Patterns in Art
https://www.art-is-fun.com/patterns-in-art

The Quilts of Gee’s Bend: A Slideshow
https://www.arts.gov/art-works/2015/quilts-gees-bend-slideshow

Also on Display

Students will also view exhibitions in up to three smaller galleries, the Museum’s atrium, and on the Museum grounds (weather permitting). For more information on what is currently on display, visit www.kemperart.org/current-exhibitions

Frank Stella, The Prophet, 1990, mixed medium on aluminum., 161 ½ x 109 ½ x 68 inches
Pre-Visit Activities

Know | Want to Know
On a piece of paper, have students make three columns. At the top of each column, write the questions below. Answer questions before your visit:

1. What do I know about contemporary art?
2. What do I want to know about contemporary art?

After your visit, students will complete the third column (see page 14).

Learning to Look
Using artwork that is both familiar and new to your students, walk them through the steps of looking at art. Feel free to utilize artwork from our permanent collection, found on our website at https://www.kemperart.org/permanent-collection.

Tell students that before your visit to Kemper Museum, you are going to take some time to practice looking at art. A good way to practice is using a four-step process: look, describe, think, and connect.

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<tr>
<th>STEP 1: LOOK</th>
<th>STEP 2: DESCRIBE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take at least thirty seconds without distractions to observe the work of art.</td>
<td>Talk about what you see in the work of art.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Now turn around, facing away from the image.</td>
<td>• What lines, shapes, and colors does the artist use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do you remember?</td>
<td>• What is the subject matter?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• List as many details as you can!</td>
<td>• List ten words to describe the image.</td>
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<tr>
<th>STEP 3: THINK</th>
<th>STEP 4: CONNECT</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpret and assign meaning to what you see.</td>
<td>Relate it to your life or other artwork you have seen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What story is taking place?</td>
<td>• What does this work of art remind you of? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is the setting, or the time and place depicted?</td>
<td>• How does this work of art relate to an aspect of your own life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is the mood of the work? How do you know?</td>
<td>• Compare this work of art to other images/objects that you have seen, either in a museum or in your everyday life. How are they similar? How are they different?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is this work of art about?</td>
<td>• What do you think the artist was trying to communicate through the creation of this work of art?</td>
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Myth (re)Making
Summer Wheat likes to take traditional stories or mythologies and turn them on their head. In the exhibition, the artist rewrites historic representations of women from pre-historic to contemporary—depicting heroic hunters, fisherwomen, and beekeepers, or as Wheat puts it, women doing the “heavy lifting and running things.”

Ask your students to think of a popular myth or story. Instruct them to write down a brief summary of the story, including the main characters, the setting, and the plot. Then, instruct students to change the narrative by altering one or more components of the story.

Questions for Discussion:
- How would the story change if the main character was a different gender?
- What if the story took place in the future or in a different place?
- What impact would that have on the overall story?
- What images or symbols might you use you change the meaning of your story?
- What is the purpose of reframing myths or stories?

Get Creative!
Have your students recreate a book cover, using images that represent their new mythology. Don’t forget to retitle your book!

Terms to Know
The following vocabulary terms may come up during your upcoming visit. Help your students get comfortable with the various terms.

Acrylic paint: a water-based paint with a polymer binder; dries to a permanent finish

Contemporary art: the art of today; contemporary artwork ranges from the mid-1900s to the present and often uses experimental media and techniques; it reflects the diversity of society and the blending of cultures and frequently as comments on society and current events

Expressionism: a style of art in which the artist tries to capture not the reality of what they see, but their emotional or intellectual response to the world around them
**Extrude:** to thrust, push through, or force out

**Impasto:** paint applied very thickly to make a textured surface

**Line:** element of art which refers to the mark(s) made on a surface by a moving point; the element of line has a wide range of qualities and expressive possibilities: curved lines, diagonal lines, dotted lines, straight lines, etc.

**Matriarchy:** a family, society, community, or state governed by women

**Narrative:** a work of art whose primary purpose is to tell a story

**Sculpture:** the art of carving, modeling, welding, or otherwise producing figurative or abstract works of art in three dimensions

**Symbol:** something representing something else by association; objects, characters, or other concrete representations of abstract ideas, concepts, or events

**Tapestry:** a piece of thick textile fabric with pictures or designs formed by weaving colored threads, used as a wall hanging or furniture covering

### Post-Visit Activities

**Know | Want to Know | Learned**
Following your trip to Kemper Museum, have students return to the worksheet from the pre-visit activity, *Know | Want to Know.*

1. What do I know about contemporary art?
2. What do I want to know about contemporary art?

Insert the third question:

3. “What did I learn about contemporary art?” and have them share their answers.

**I can be a contemporary artist!**
One of the learning goals during tours at the Museum is to help students understand and engage with contemporary art – the art of our time. Contemporary artists use their creativity and skill to interpret and respond to the world around them. Following your visit to the Museum, ask your students to brainstorm topics, issues, and ideas important to them and their community. Have students list at least three options.

Once they have made their list, ask students to select one topic from their list that will serve as inspiration for their work of art. Depending on time and available materials, this is where you can be flexible. The work of art can vary from a quick sketch to a more in-depth collage or even a three dimensional sculpture. Consider leaving it up to the students to choose the medium they think would best communicate their ideas.
Questions for Discussion:

• What issues or topics are subject matter in Summer Wheat’s work?
• Does your artwork focus on small-scale issues or are you exploring larger issues that affect your community, nation, or world?
• How does your chosen medium influence your audience’s understanding of your artwork?

Beyond the Brush

Many contemporary artists find creative ways to use everyday objects. Trying to discover a way to make a painting have the look and feel of textiles, artist Summer Wheat experimented with non-traditional tools and techniques.

Questions for Discussion:

• Do you have to use paint, paintbrushes, and canvas to be an artist?
• What was unique or non-traditional about Summer Wheat’s artistic process?
• What kinds of tools does the artist use to create her work?
• Where do you think the artist Summer Wheat buys or finds her art materials and tools?

Encourage your students to think about everyday objects that could be used for creating art. To brainstorm ideas, have students list objects from the classroom, the outdoors, and their homes that could be repurposed as artists’ tools.

With permission, have each student bring in one or two non-traditional artist tools (or borrow something from the classroom). Create space for them to make their own works of art using these found materials/objects, then have them share their work. See if their classmates can identify the everyday tool they used in their creation.

Master Challenge! 2D to 3D

Combining paint with other materials until it resembles a moldable clay, Summer Wheat is able to create a dimensional paint, that when pushed through a window screen, gives the appearance of a pixelated tapestry or weaving.

During this activity, students will be faced with the same challenge Summer Wheat confronts in her work: how can a drawing become three-dimensional? Have students begin with a basic drawing of shapes and patterns, just as Summer Wheat does.

Offer students a variety of art materials and tools to choose from as they experiment with ways to turn their drawing into a three-dimensional work of art.

The following is a list of materials you might consider having available:

  - Stiff burlap, puffy paints, cardstock paper, glue, scissors, cardboard, plastic weaving mesh, squeeze bottles, model magic, pipe cleaners in assorted colors, plastic needles, plastic lacing cord, mesh tubing, rug hooking mesh canvas, etc.

Have students present the materials and process they used to transform their drawing into sculpture.