SPRING 2021

educator’s guide
Please visit kemperart.org/tours regarding the latest COVID-19 related precautions and educational offerings currently available.

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Thank you for choosing Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art as a center for learning! Experiences in our galleries and with works in the museum’s permanent collection spark creative and critical thinking, deepen sensitivity, and invite conversation. We strive to build lasting relationships with teachers and students and to make the museum a lifelong resource for learners.

HOW TO USE THE EDUCATOR’S GUIDE
This guide can make your experience more comfortable and fulfilling. It will familiarize you with Kemper Museum and with the art of Dyani White Hawk, whose work appears in the current exhibition, Dyani White Hawk: Speaking to Relatives. The final sections of the guide offer pre- and post-visit activities to extend learning and engagement, as well as a glossary of terms useful for understanding contemporary art, museums, and the Dyani White Hawk exhibition.

VIRTUAL TOURS
Are you looking for an online tour for your students? Kemper Museum offers docent-led, virtual schools tours of contemporary artworks from our Permanent Collection and in current exhibitions. Contemporary Art Online is a 50-minute tour tailored to fit the needs of individual classes and teacher lesson plans. An online tour can be a great introduction or follow-up to a tour in the Museum. Contact tours@kempermuseum.org to learn more.
OUR COLLECTION
Kemper Museum’s Permanent Collection contains works from around the world and from the early twentieth century to the present day—spanning more than a hundred years. It features works of modern art, from the early and mid-twentieth century, and contemporary art, from the mid-twentieth century to today. Exploring the collection, students can make connections across history and see how art changes to reflect the culture of the times.

Through the works in our Permanent Collection, the Museum community stays in touch with diverse, ever-changing artistic practices, and perspectives. Engaging the art of recent, past eras as well as current times encourages us to think, feel, and respond more fully in the present.

The core of the Museum's Permanent Collection came from our founders, Bebe (Hunt) and R. Crosby Kemper, Jr. (1927–2014). Over the course of the past twenty-five years, the Permanent Collection has tripled in size. It now includes more than 1,400 works, maintained by the Museum and exhibited on a rotating basis.

Explore the permanent collection online.

OUR EXHIBITIONS
The exhibitions on view in our galleries change multiple times each year. We show selections from our Permanent Collection, special group and solo artist exhibitions, and traveling exhibitions, all with a global focus on presenting artists from around the world. In our special exhibitions, we are especially proud to select promising works by emerging and underrepresented artists.

Kemper Museum hosts three major exhibitions annually in our main gallery, The Charlotte Crosby Kemper Gallery. Our other galleries offer a variety of special shows, and often display works from the Museum’s Permanent Collection. Our current major exhibition, Dyani White Hawk: Speaking to Relatives, presents paintings, photographs, audiovisual installations and sculptures by Dyani White Hawk, a member of the Sičáŋǧu Lakota, Indigenous American tribe.

The Atrium is the expansive space where guests enter the Museum. Artworks from the Permanent Collection are displayed throughout the
Atrium. Since 2016, the twenty-five square-foot wall by the Museum’s main entrance has displayed special projects by contemporary Hispanic and Latinx artists, in an ongoing presentation called *The Atrium Project*.

Café Sebastienne is also an art gallery where you can eat artful food while surrounded by a floor-to-ceiling installation of paintings by the American artist, Frederick James Brown. Many of the works are Brown’s unique interpretations of well-known artworks from throughout history such as those by Vincent van Gogh, Claude Monet, and many others. Ask your server at the Café to show you the printed Installation Guide referencing each of Brown’s paintings.

Learn more about past, current, and future exhibitions.

**OUR BUILDING**

Architect Gunnar Birkerts designed Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art’s uniquely expressive building, made of concrete, steel, and glass. Construction began in 1992 and was completed in 1994. Gunnar Birkerts was born in Latvia in 1925 and emigrated to the United States in 1949. Based in Detroit, Birkerts designed many other notable American buildings, such as the Corning Glass Museum, in Corning, New York, and The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, in Houston, Texas. He wished to let the design of his buildings unfold with “intuitive imagination,” the way music unfolds as you hear it. We hope you feel free to imagine as you move through the uncommonly shaped rooms of Kemper Museum!

The Museum’s founder, the banker and art collector, R. Crosby Kemper Jr., named our building in honor of his grandmother, Charlotte Crosby Kemper.

Learn more about the Kemper Museum building.
These tours are currently available to all Kansas City, Kansas school teachers in grades 4–6. Other teachers are encouraged to inquire about arranging an online tour, and we ask for your patience while we check on the availability of docents.

- Kansas City, Kansas School District, 4–6 grade teachers book tours online through ExplorablePlaces.com. All other teachers, please email tours@kemperart.org to check availability.

- Contemporary Art Online school tours have two docents assigned per class. Docent names and email addresses arrive about one week prior to the tour, in a calendar item sent to the teacher. Feel free to reach out to the docents listed there with comments or questions specific to your group.

- There is no requirement for chaperones for Contemporary Art Online. Teacher support in keeping “chat” comments focused on the artworks, and in soliciting responses to docent questions helps make conversation rich and memorable.

- Please ask your students to have a pencil and paper handy. It is important for students to be as active as possible: some docents engage students in drawing activities.

- Teachers provide a Zoom platform link for each class. Below are listed the Zoom settings needed for Contemporary Art Online:
  - Screen sharing ENABLED with these settings: **One** participant at a time. **All** can share. **Only host** can start sharing when someone else is sharing.
  - Chat ENABLED with the setting, “Everyone publicly: Participants can only send public messages.”
  - Annotation DISABLED. (This prevents students from writing on the screen.)
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<th>MISSOURI STRAND</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING</th>
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<td>PRODUCT PERFORMANCE</td>
<td>Artists communicate ideas through artworks by selecting and applying media techniques and processes, subject matter, and themes.</td>
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<td>ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES</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>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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<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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<td>KANSAS STRAND</td>
<td>ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING</td>
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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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PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY


Learning to Look
Sometimes a series of steps can help students feel comfortable looking at artworks. For this activity, you might use artwork from Kemper Museum’s Permanent Collection, found on our website at kemperart.org/permanent-collection.

Here are links to some recommended artworks for this activity:

https://www.kemperart.org/collection/nate
https://www.kemperart.org/collection/ahulani
https://www.kemperart.org/collection/still-life-shoes
https://www.kemperart.org/collection/passage
https://www.kemperart.org/collection/masters-met
### Look | Describe | Think and Feel | Connect

This activity asks students to create a four-square graph with headings that guide them to look closely at art. Students write responses to the questions on their own graphs:

#### STEP 1: LOOK
*Take a minute without distractions to observe this work of art. Feel your eyes move.*

Now turn around, facing away from the image.

What do you remember? List as many details as you can!

#### STEP 2: DESCRIBE
*Talk about what you see in this work of art.*

What lines, shapes, and colors does the artist use?

List ten words to describe the image.

#### STEP 3: THINK AND FEEL
*Interpret and give meaning to what you see.*

What part of this artwork do you find interesting or beautiful?

Are there things about it you find strange or difficult?

What is the mood of the work? What feelings do you think it shows?

Notice your eyes. How do they move around this artwork? Do they rest on certain colors or shapes?

Now that you have looked for a while: what do you see that you did not notice at first?

#### STEP 4: CONNECT
*Relate this artwork to your life or to another artwork you have seen.*

What does this work of art remind you of?

How might this artwork relate to an aspect of your own life?

Compare this work of art to other things that you have seen, either in a museum or in your everyday life. How are they similar? How are they different?
DYANI WHITE HAWK

SPEAKING TO RELATIVES

EDUCATOR’S GUIDE
THE ARTIST’S EDUCATION

Dyani White Hawk began her advanced studies about an hour’s drive from Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas, where she earned her associates degree in 2003. In 2008, she graduated from the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico with a Bachelor of Fine Art. She earned a Masters in Fine Art with a focus in painting at the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 2011, the same year she made the earliest work in this exhibition.

DYANI WHITE HAWK’S EXHIBITIONS

White Hawk’s work has been exhibited in places such as Canada, Russia, and throughout the United States. Recent solo exhibitions include See Her, New Works by Dyani White Hawk, 2019, Lilley Museum, Reno, Nevada, and Storied Abstractions, 2016, Bockley Gallery, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Her work belongs to the permanent collections of numerous Museums, including Denver Art Museum, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Tweed Museum of Art, IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, the AKTA Lakota Museum and Cultural Center, Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Saint Louis Art Museum, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and Walker Art Center.
THE EXHIBITION

“The whole concept of “I am your relative” is rooted in a Lakota philosophy and understanding of our relatedness. It’s a guiding value and how we treat one another and all life.” – Dyani White Hawk, Bomb Magazine Interview with Sheila Regan, September 2020

With the exhibition Speaking to Relatives, Kemper Museum brings together a wide range of artwork that Dyani White Hawk has created in the past ten years. Born in 1976, White Hawk is based in Minneapolis, and belongs to the Sičáŋǧu Lakota Indigenous tribe. She has made artworks diverse genres, and this exhibition represents her remarkable breadth. From painting to photography to sculpture, White Hawk’s work brings art forms from Native culture together with styles and techniques associated with modern and contemporary American and European art.
Geometric shapes, as well as the materials and imagery in White Hawk's work often refer to traditional practices and belief of universal connectedness that have existed for centuries. In the rich tradition of Lakota symbols, for instance, the X (or hourglass) figure indicates the exact reflection in the sky and universe of all that is below, on Earth.

Viewing this exhibition, we not only take in the beauty of White Hawk's bold, clear colors, evocative materials, and symbolic forms; we also engage with the questions about history that are posed by her work. Lakota belief systems view all living beings as blood relatives, and this belief is crucial in the artworks exhibited in *Speaking to Relatives*. Through her work, White Hawk asks why Native art and culture are often separated from the cultures defined as American. She has pointed out that the important influence of Native art on non-Native artists and movements often goes unacknowledged in museum collections and American art history. As we view these works, we think about the circumstances that have set Indigenous artwork outside the living cultural history shown in most museums and taught in most schools. More broadly, we begin to question why the stories of some groups of people are left out, despite important contributions to culture and society.
At the entrance to this exhibition is White Hawk’s 2016 mixed media painting, *Untitled, (coral, turquoise, and yellow)*. Curator Jade Powers has installed this work directly opposite *The Moroccan*, a 1982 oil painting in Kemper Museum’s Permanent Collection, by abstract artist Sean Scully (Irish, born 1945). The two canvases are similar in both color and form. They speak a similar language of *minimalism* and *abstraction*. With bold, horizontal stripes extending to the edges of their canvases, they guide the eye to imagined spaces beyond.

But the turquoise and yellow stripes that overlay White Hawk’s painted canvas are sewn there with beadwork. By crafting an abstract field out of vintage beads, White Hawk draws her painting into an ancient tradition of Native *textiles*. Viewing the two works side by side, Powers emphasizes the strong connections that exist between Indigenous and Euro-American abstraction that is highlighted in White Hawk’s work.
Drawing on work from the past decade, *Speaking to Relatives* shows White Hawk's mastery of numerous artistic genres. But in all of her work, she asks about tradition and how it is perceived. This is certainly apparent in the *Mocassin Series* which portrays traditional, Native shoes painted in oil and acrylic, sometimes with beadwork. The painting techniques have
roots in European art, while White Hawk’s brushwork ingeniously imitates the stitching and weaving of Native American handcraft. In the moccasin series, an everyday object crafted and decorated since ancient times by Native people, appears as an abstract figure, posed in open space. White Hawk’s abstracted moccasins might evoke mountains or human beings. Their standing figures bring together diverse traditions and express feelings shared by all people.

Engaging with White Hawk’s view of tradition might cause viewers to ask why many museums isolate Native artworks in separate galleries. It can make us aware that Indigenous culture is often represented as history—something past—when in fact it is very much alive and contemporary. As a whole, the exhibition asks how the ways of seeing in an empowered culture with colonial roots can hide the enduring, vital force of Native people. Speaking to Relatives leads us into many views of this problem, as White Hawk asserts the intelligence and beauty of Lakota life with a wide range of artistic media.

For this exhibition, White Hawk has added new works to her recent Carry series, a group of sculptures based on the form of traditional Lakota carrying bags. She builds large-scale objects from materials traditionally used for making functional or ceremonial items—sinew, canvas, glass
DYANI WHITE HAWK: SPEAKING TO RELATIVES

beads, feathers. A copper ladle forms the upper rim of Carry II (2019) and Carry III (2020). But these bags are too large to be functional. Their extremely long fringe and dynamic geometry expand the view of everyday, useful objects. Over nine feet high, these sculptures call on viewers to respect useful objects as works of contemporary, abstract art.

The questions that this exhibition poses about art history are linked to human history, and Speaking to Relatives has at its center the reality of Indigenous American people. White Hawk's large-scale photographs and multimedia works portray individuals, and remind us of the harm done to real people when a culture is made invisible.

I Am Your Relative is a series of two-sided, large scale photographic prints portraying Lakota women dressed in traditional skirts. White Hawk devised this series to draw public attention to the widespread disappearances of Native women, a phenomenon of crimes that go uninvestigated because Native women do not enjoy the legal recognition most Americans take for granted. While their skirts reflect the rich colors and patterns echoed throughout the exhibition, the women's modern T-shirts are emblazoned with English words which together make up the sentence, “I am/more than your desire/more than your fantasy/more than a mascot/ancestral love, prayer, sacrifice/your relative.”

Speaking to Relatives reveals the remarkable range of Dyani White Hawk's artistic practice. Across many genres and techniques, she makes dramatic light and moving symbolism. This artwork also reaches beyond its own beauty. It enables viewers to see ideas and artistic traditions shift toward greater inclusivity and increased respect for Native people.
Tradition in Mind: Connecting Students to the Work of Dyani White Hawk.

Dyani White Hawk’s artwork focuses on traditions in art and in people’s lives. Over the days and weeks before your tour, ask students to sketch the shape of traditional objects in their lives. Draw their attention to the “outline” of each object and ask them to recreate its shape in the most simple form possible.

Below are conversation starters for discussing the doodles, drawings, or artworks your students make of everyday objects. Often, talking about everyday things makes us smile or even laugh: humor is an important part of contemporary art!

- Which everyday objects mean the most to you, and why?

- Consider an object that people in your home use often. Do you like to use it? Do you find it beautiful? If so, in what way?

- What everyday objects do you know of that belong to other cultures?

- Are there objects in your home that have had the same, basic form for many generations? (Beds, cups, etc.) Can you draw one of those shapes?
GLOSSARY: USEFUL TERMS FOR ENGAGING WITH THE MUSEUM

These terms are found throughout this Educator’s Resource Guide. Some pertain to museum visits in general, and others are especially useful for discussing the exhibition, *Dyani White Hawk: Speaking to Relatives*.

**Abstract Art** or **Abstraction** focuses less on showing things and places we can recognize, and instead uses lines, shapes, colors, forms and expressive marks to affect how we feel and think.

An **Art Collector** is anyone who collects art. Art Collectors study, purchase, and protect artworks. For centuries, art collectors have supported artists by buying and showing their work. Rare collections often end up belonging to museums.

A private art collection reflects a collector's interests and values, as with the collection of R. Crosby Jr. and Bebe (Hunt) Kemper, which they gifted at the founding of Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in 1994.

An **Artifact** is an object made by human beings. This word usually refers to an object from a past culture. When these objects come from current times, they are sometimes called, “found objects.”

**Contemporary Art** is a term that usually refers to artworks made during or after the 1960’s. Contemporary artists face the questions of our times. They have a lot of freedom in how they use materials and techniques. Their art frequently reflects the diversity of society and the blending of cultures. Often, it directly challenges popular ways of viewing things. It can be helpful to compare this term to “Modern Art,” also listed in this glossary.

**Indigenous** describes people or things that evolve in a certain place for a long time. An Indigenous form of art or architecture has a unique ability to reflect both tradition and change.

**Medium, Media, Mixed Media, Multimedia.** A medium is any material used to make a work of art. The plural of this word is media, and when an artwork includes many materials it might be called a mixed media artwork. Multimedia artworks also include diverse materials, and include electronics.
Minimalism is a style that became accepted among European and American abstract artists in the 1960's. Minimalist art focuses on the art object itself, and tries to avoid representing or symbolizing things beyond the artwork. This style often uses geometric forms, grids, simple patterns, black, white, and uninterrupted fields of color.

Modern Art is art that reflects the changes in many human populations since the mid-nineteenth century, when industry, technology, and ideas changed quickly, and the world's cultures began to combine more often. While the term Modern Art can refer to all artworks made since that time, people often use the term Contemporary Art (listed above) for artwork made during or after the mid-twentieth century.

Native refers to people born in a specific place, but the term is also used to describe the first of any species known to live in a particular place. The first humans to inhabit the land now called America are sometimes called Native Americans. Their descendents are often referred to as Native people. Of course, the lands of Native people extended beyond today's political boundaries. Art created by people of Native heritage can be referred to as Native art. Native peoples often have individual preferences on how they would like to be addressed.

The Permanent Collection of a museum is made up of artworks that are acquired by and are in the care of the museum. Museum Curators make exhibitions from these works to highlight themes and ideas.

The scale of an artwork is its size in comparison to the viewer. If it is noticeably larger than the person looking at it, an artwork is called large-scale. If its size in relation to the viewer is so small that seeing it requires standing close or using a magnifying glass, then the artwork is called small-scale.
The **Sičáŋǧu Lakota Native American Tribe** is one of the three main subcultures of the Sioux people. Their current lands are in North and South Dakota, and originally the Lakota people occupied what is now Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North and South Dakota. Sičáŋǧu is pronounced like See-COHN-Goo.

**Sinew** is a tough fiber that connects bone to muscle in an animal’s body. Sinews have been used around the world, and by the Lakota people, for thousands of years to fasten together objects like clothing and tools.

A **symbol** is something used to stand for another thing. Often a tangible or concrete symbol leads us to think of an idea, concept, or feeling. A toy, for example, might cause us to think about childhood.

A **textile** is something made by weaving or interlocking materials. Usually, textiles include fabric or thread, but not necessarily.
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Sustaining Sponsors
Barbara and Peter Gattermeir

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