

Still Undead: Popular Culture in Britain Beyond the Bauhaus

21 September 2019 – 12 January 2020

<https://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org/record/still-undead-popular-culture-in-britain-beyond-the-bauhaus/>

The resource is designed for schools and community groups.

Our activities are designed to encourage exploration and experimentation together. With a balance between skill and play to support a process driven approach, students will be encouraged to share perspectives and ideas and try out similar ways of working or thinking as the artists.

Activities often link to specific artworks, allowing for deeper engagement of a particular theme, as well as a connection to the overarching concepts that run through the exhibition. They provide an opportunity for students to make connections with the world around them.

Each activity can be expanded and developed further by teachers and group leaders. Through questioning participants ideas, especially the 'why's' and the 'what's', everyone is encouraged to debate and communicate their ideas. There are suggested discussion points within activities to consolidate learning as well as share individuals' reflections.

The activities often require participants to work in small groups. If you are working with a larger group, share your responses with everyone at the end of the activity.



Your class can meet one of our artists in the VR exhibition and receive a short welcome to each gallery from them.

Click on the blue circle next to each gallery panel to access our artist talk

Activities

Lightplay

Play with light, shadow and movement

Resources: light source such as torches or lamps, selection of objects (glue sticks, cups, pencil pot holders), paper and pencils

Basic design exercises

Five different ways to explore being creative with colour, shape and construction

Resources: string, coloured paper, everyday objects, black or white paper, pencils

Wearing feelings

Create a wearable artwork that expresses certain feelings

Resources: Large sheets of paper, pencils, slips of paper, tape or glue

Body sculpture

Change the shape and movement of the body

Resources: objects that can be attached to the body, tape or elastic, tablets, camera's or other recording devices

Additional subjects for debate

Open-ended questions to prompt discussion

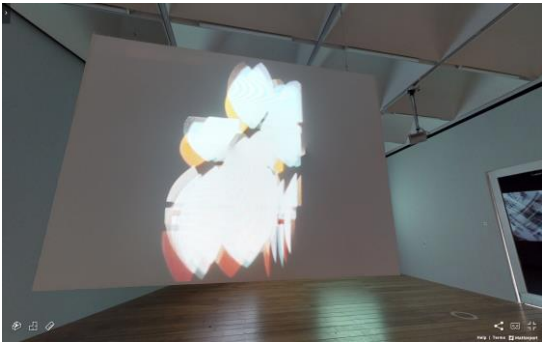
Resources required

You'll need internet access and devices available to view the exhibitions. This can be a white board for large groups or for the whole classroom. For smaller groups, individual devices such as laptops, tablets or phones are recommended.

The students can document their work with cameras or tablets.

Other materials are listed for individual activities

Light Play



Explore the artworks

Visit **Gallery 1** of the VR exhibition together.

Click on the white buttons below the screens to watch the films.

'**Reflective coloured light game**', by Kurt Schwerdtfeger is a film made in 1922 of an apparatus that creates coloured shapes in light, and is activated by performers moving the different parts back and forth.

<https://archive.org/details/192267KurtSchwerdtfegerReflektorischeFrablichtspiele> first 4 minutes 25 seconds.

László Moholy-Nagy's 1926 film **A Lightplay: black white grey** is a mechanical rotating light sculpture, called the **Light-Prop Lightspace Modulator**. The film shows the sculpture's interplay between projection and shadow, transparency and solidity.

<https://vimeo.com/111650264>



These films explore all the key themes of the exhibition: colour, light, sound, performance, experimentation and new artistic practices.

Activity

Gather the following materials in small groups of 4 or 5 students

- a few 3D objects; cups, water bottles, glue sticks, pencil pot holders etc.
- a light source, which could either be a torch, lamp or even the sun
- mirrors (optional) or reflective card or similar
- paper and pencils/drawing tool to draw the shadows created (optional)

Find a suitable space in the classroom where it is dark and you can shine and see a light, it could be in the corner of the room or even under your desk!

Arrange your objects onto a piece of white paper in the dark space

Experiment with creating shadows of your objects with a lamp or torch.

If you have a small mirror or reflective card, use it to create reflections too

Move the objects, light source and mirror around to create different shadow patterns.

Shoot a video with a phone or tablet of the moving shadow patterns.

Draw the outline of the shadows with a pencil or other drawing materials. Colour in the shadow outlines or add shading or patterns.

Share your drawings and films with the whole class

Discussion Prompts

Which objects cast the best shadows? What are they made from?

How do the shadows change when you move the light further away?

How is this way of making art different from other art activities? Have you used light before as an art material

Basic design Exercises

Explore the artworks

Visit **Gallery 2** of the 'Bauhaus' VR exhibition together.

The gallery is divided by a wooden S shaped wall. The first half of the gallery looks at what the Bauhaus artists created after they'd left Germany after the Second World War



The second half of the gallery shows work by important artist teachers in the 1950's and 1960's, who used Bauhaus methods to change how art was taught.

This new way of teaching was called Basic Design. It emphasised the importance of experimentation and exploration, using the imagination instead of relying only on skill and copying to create art.

Activity

There are five quick exercises to do together, in small groups. Each group does one exercise and uses different materials.

Collect objects from around the classroom to complete each exercise

1. **Line** – Gather some string or other threads such as wool or wire. Create a line drawing inspired by the shapes in the room you are in
2. **Colour** – find some brightly coloured things around the classroom. They could be coloured paper, books, water bottles, pencils, etc. Make an arrangement with them so that the colours contrast strongly together
3. **Form** – build a 3D structure out of 5-7 different shaped and sized boxes, thick books, tubes, rubbers, glue sticks, whatever you can find. Think about the spaces between as well as the solid shapes.
4. **Shape** – Using black or white paper, cut out a range of geometric shapes – squares, triangles, circles, hexagons. Arrange the shapes so that they only touch at the corners and smallest points on their edges, leaving spaces between.



Pattern – collect some small sticks, pencils or leaves outside. Arrange the materials to make a repetitive pattern, based on nature.

Share your exercises with the whole class

Swap activities and try a new Basic Design activity.

You can find more exercises like this from our Space for Making in Gallery 5. Framed as a series of Experiments, each activity explores themes including pattern, shape and space

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Discussion Prompts

How do you think doing these exercises helps develop creativity?

How many different ways do you think you could do the exercise? If you did it again, what would you do differently?

How is this way of learning different from copying?

Wearing Feelings

Explore the artworks

Visit **Gallery 3** of the VR exhibition together.

In this gallery there are works by artists that mimic advertising and commercial products, alongside 60s fashion designers such as Mary Quant who designed mass produced, practical, pop-inspired clothes based on Bauhaus principles.



Stephen Willats' 'Multiple Clothing', has interchangeable words in the plastic pockets of a PVC waistcoat and bag to express the mood of the wearer. You can see it on a shop mannequin in the window of the gallery.

Activity

Each small group will need

- Large sheets of paper to make a tabard or apron with

- Pens/pencils and paper

- Scissors

- Tape

- Any fabrics/wool/coloured paper/tissue paper/crepe paper or other materials to decorate the tabards with

- Glue and other resources to attach the materials to the paper tabard with

- Camera or tablet

Choose one or two artworks to focus on and discuss how they make you feel. Think about the colours used and how they are presented in the gallery space

Write down your responses, with each emotion written on a separate piece of paper. Think of as many as you can.

Nominate one person to be the 'model' who will wear and act out different feelings and emotions.



Create a paper outfit using large sheets of paper (ideally A2 or A1) and tape. Place each piece of paper at either side of the body and tape them together at the top on the shoulders

In your group, choose a selection of everyone's words. Attach the words using tape or glue to the paper outfit.

'The model' wearing the paper outfit **expresses** these emotions while they walk up and down as if on a catwalk. It can be positive, negative or even mixed! Think about how to convey these emotions, how you might stand or move to show how you feel

Find materials and objects with different colours, textures and shapes that also express the emotions written. (tissue paper, fabric, wool etc.) Use these to decorate the model

If time, everybody has a go at being a model and expressing a different emotion

Discussion prompts

How do you think different colours affect how you feel?

What shapes would you use to describe different feelings?

How can the clothes you choose to wear affect how you feel?

Body Sculpture

Please read the Teachers Notes about content in Gallery 4 first.

Explore the artworks

Visit **Gallery 4** of the 'Bauhaus' VR exhibition together.



The dancers in Oskar Schlemmer's revolutionary ballets from the 1920s wore futurist geometric costumes. These costumes affected how the body moved and created abstracted images.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3M21tYbQQM>

Leigh Bowery, fashion designer, performer and nightclub personality, was famous for his self-made costumes which turned the human body into moving sculptures. Videos and images in the exhibition of performances by Leigh echo Schlemmer's ballets.

Activity

Working in small groups, **transform** your body into a moving sculpture using large objects.

Gather a selection of objects that can be safely attached to the body.

These could be Hula hoops or relevant sports equipment, brooms or other large sticks

You will also need:

Tape or elastic

A camera or tablet to video

Try attaching a hard piece of furniture such as a stool or a small chair onto yourself with some elastic, string or tape.

Maybe put broom handles inside the back of your top and trouser leg or in your sleeves across your shoulders.

If you have a hula hoop or sports equipment, be creative with them to change how your body can bend and move.

The person who is transformed must feel comfortable and be able to move, but they may look a different shape to usual and move in new ways.

The groups then create some dance moves for their moving sculpture which all the group can perform.

Each group shows off their moves to the whole group.

Nominated students to video the performances.

Discussion Prompts

How does adding hard geometric shapes to a body change how it can look and move?

What kind of clothes or shoes do people sometimes wear that may affect how they move?
Why do you think they wear them?

Why do you think a costume designed nearly 100 years ago still looks futuristic?



Additional Subjects for Debate

How much do you think furniture, fashion and advertising are influenced by artists and their work and vice versa? Can you think of anything you have seen that are?

What is modern? Why do you think some art and design stays looking modern for a long time and some is quickly dated?

What do you think would help students think creatively? What different approaches can teachers use?

Why do you think the Bauhaus ideas about design and teaching have been so important to artists and designers for 100 years?