

## RESOURCES

Inspired by the exhibit, *Baltimore Rising*, a group of educators were brought together with a common desire: create a useful resource for teachers working to engage their students in making art that responds to the conditions and events that precipitated the Baltimore Uprising and its effects after. Goals were established to create a series of lessons that could be used in classrooms, after school programs, and art making events for youth in Baltimore and beyond. Baltimore is rising as we continue to respond and create in the hopes of facilitating dialog, expression, and change.

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### Notes:

Here are some notes regarding our planning process and ways to use the lessons with your students:

The goal of the lessons is to not prescribe a specific media or technique but an entry to a selection of works from the Baltimore Rising Exhibit. Teachers are encouraged to modify the making processes to best meet their students' needs or consider any new connections they make to the artwork.

The development of these lessons emerged from research of other curriculum focused toward social justice. The format was informed by the Southern Poverty Law Center's *Teaching Tolerance* lesson plans ([www.splcenter.org/teaching-tolerance](http://www.splcenter.org/teaching-tolerance)), and unit plan formats used in the Master of Arts in Teaching program at the Maryland Institute, College of Art.

The approach to planning shows a variety of ways that the exhibit could be used as inspiration in teaching. Some of our lessons use the work of one artist. Others draw on several pieces to support the themes and big ideas that lead the lesson. Themes were identified through meetings and discussion. Themes and definitions preface the plans to enrich the connection between the lesson concepts and artwork in the Baltimore Rising Exhibit.

**Essential Questions**

How can we communicate mood, feeling, and energy through abstraction?

In what ways can language and writing styles influence art making?

**Rachel Valsing**  
**Art Teacher**  
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**Shinique Smith**  
**Elegy**  
2010  
acrylic, fabric collage,  
and studs on wood panel  
36 x 60 x 1.5 inches  
catalog page 32

**Art Problem**

Elementary students will create a work of art that communicates feelings of safety or not feeling safe through abstract design.

**Activities**

**Introduction** “The graffiti of (Shinique) Smith’s youth, Japanese calligraphy, and urban culture are influences from which she extracts the graceful and spiritual qualities in written word and the everyday.” A discussion of how words can convey a feeling based on design is explored using a wide range of writing and calligraphy styles as examples.

Students can consider memories of not feeling safe and what factors led to feelings of restored safety. A class list of feelings associated with safety or not feeling safe is generated. Using brushes of different sizes, pencils, markers, or any available materials, students practice writing words from the list in a variety of styles and sizes to emphasize the emotion. One word from each list is selected and will serve as titles for their abstract artworks.

**Studio Time** Students are invited to create their own works of abstract emotion by collaging and rearranging their word designs in ways that make the text unreadable but emphasize the emotion. Painting and drawing materials can be layered into the design as well. Using Shinique Smith’s approach to creating abstract imagery with expendable materials, students add to their designs with items that can be repurposed for collage and emphasize the visual energy in their artworks.

**Closing** In a display space or long table, the word safe is placed at one end and unsafe at the opposite. Students arrange their works based on where their work fits in this spectrum. Without revealing the title or word that inspired their design, students guess each other’s titles referencing the brainstormed list of feelings created during the introduction. Students personally reflect considering the places and people that make them feel safe.

**Race and Safety**

Freddie Gray was a black man who lived in an America that consistently devalues and destroys Black and Brown lives. Racism in the criminal justice system is rampant both overtly and implicitly at all levels. African Americans are incarcerated in state prisons across the country at more than five times the rate of whites. Unconstitutional racial profiling such as “stop and frisk” persists as Black and Brown men are seen as dangerous and unjustly labeled as criminal. Black males between the ages of 15 and 34 are nine times more likely to be killed by police than any other demographic. Black males in this age range make up just 2 percent of the U.S. population yet accounted for 15 percent of all 2015 deaths from law enforcement encounters. Police across the country killed at least 102 unarmed black people in 2015, which was five times the rate of unarmed whites (Sinyangwe, 2015). In light of these appalling statistics, we must find ways for students to address these truths and respond critically.

**Additional Resources**

Shinique Smith’s art website:  
[www.shiniquesmith.com](http://www.shiniquesmith.com)

**Critical Questions**

What does it mean to empower?

How do artists use art to empower?

How do we use visual organization strategies to communicate effectively?

**Janelle Sanders**  
Art Teacher  
Southwest Area Charter School  
Baltimore, MD

**Nate Larson**  
Holding that Line,  
Part Two: Citizen Protection Line  
from North to South,  
on North Avenue  
at Pennsylvania Avenue,  
Baltimore, Maryland, April 28, 2015  
(detail)  
2015  
pigment ink on polyester  
5 x 110 inches  
catalog page 21



**Derrick Adams**  
Show Down  
2014  
mixed media collage  
on paper  
48 x 72 inches  
catalog page 06



**Nether**  
Survival, 1301 N. Monroe Street  
2015  
exterior latex and spray paint  
18 x 40 feet  
catalog page 22

**Art Problem**

Middle school students will make a work of art using paint/ mixed media that will empower lives of their home communities or school community.

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**Race and Power/ Empowerment**

“In times of crisis it is so important for all artists to be active contributors in their surrounding community. The contribution could be a product of one’s artistic practice donated to a cause, volunteering time to a local organization, or simply mentoring others.” Artist, Derrick Adams, quote opens an important discussion about the role artists can play in support and advocacy for those suffering racism and the resulting violence in their neighborhoods. Many of the works in the Baltimore Rising Exhibit represent voices from communities that have been subject to the authority of racist power structures leaving their own self-determined interests unheard. Artwork that shapes, enhances, and empowers the lives within a community is of vital importance in the wake of the Baltimore Uprising and similar movements throughout the country.

**Activities**

**Introduction** Use this quote from artist Derrick Adams quote to open a discussion about the responsibility of artists: “In times of crisis it is so important for all artists to be active contributors in their surrounding community. The contribution could be a product of one’s artistic practice donated to a cause, volunteering time to a local organization, or simply mentoring others.”

**Dialog**

What does this quote mean to you? Do you agree? Why or Why not?

Students examine *Show Down* by Derrick Adams

What do you see? Who do you think is the intended audience? What do you think Derrick Adams is trying to say? How might this empower the people in his community and/ or people in Baltimore?

Read Tony Shore’s quote: “Young black men face to face with the police officers who they felt were there to shut them down and take away their voice the way they took away the life of Freddie Gray. These were beautiful images of horrible things. It was a moment of reckoning. It needed to be recorded, and we needed to bear witness.”

Does this quote change what you see in Tony Shore’s paintings? How could these images be empowering?

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**Studio Time** Students create questions about where the community is vs. where they want it to be and interview members of their community (older, middle aged, and young). What do people of this community need?

**Draft ideas/ Sketch**

Have students write and draw about a time or situation that made them proud of their community and a time they were sad to be a member of their community.

Students explore materials like painting, collage, and photography. Students generate lists of what they see in their community and organize them into themes such as poverty, violence, dance, art and music, community gatherings etc. Students photograph or sketch topics from brainstorm lists and group the images based on a chosen topic.

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**Closing** A rubric should include student created criteria for what ways that artists can use art to empower, such as the use of visual organization strategies and craftsmanship. Students should go over the rubric before the creation process so that they are aware of the expectations.

Students present their final works with these critical questions in mind:

- What does the artist want us to see? What draws your attention?
- How do you know that? What techniques were used to bring our attention to certain parts of the image?
- What do you think is the mood? What did the artist do the show this? Does the mood feel empowering? How so?



**Tony Shore**  
**Hands Up, Don't Shoot**  
2015  
acrylic on velvet  
30 x 44 inches  
catalog page 31



**Tony Shore**  
**Confrontation**  
2016  
acrylic on velvet  
32 x 46 inches  
catalog page 30

**Critical Questions**

What makes an object ubiquitous?

What makes a symbol iconic?

What is your definition of citizenship, and how could you represent that meaning?

How can a mood or feeling be expressed through abstraction?

How can we transform a symbolic object to convey a message?

**Rachel Valsing**  
**Art Teacher**  
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Baltimore, MD



**Sonya Clark**  
**Unraveled**  
2015  
deconstructed cotton confederate  
battle flag  
14 x 30 x 7 inches  
catalog page 13

**Art Problem**

Using a variety of materials, high school students will design an American flag in order to express a specific disposition toward the meaning of citizenship in their lives.

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**Activities**

**Introduction** In preparation for creating, students learn about Sonya Clark’s work. Works by other artists who have used flags symbolically are presented to provide more context to the assignment. Questions about the choice of materials and techniques used in Sonya Clark’s work are asked and students share their interpretation of the message based on those choices. Students will explore a range of emotions about their associations with the word, citizenship, through abstract mark making. From these exercises, a connection to a personal story of their association with citizenship in America is drafted. Consideration for the arrangement of shapes, the mood expressed through mark, and the abstraction of flag elements is given toward transforming this iconic image into a personal work of art.

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**Studio Time** Sketching and planning activities include drawing flags from observation, deconstructing sketches by cutting them apart and rearranging elements, and making thumbnail sketches for a final piece. From the preliminary sketches and activities, a single artwork or series of designs are created to show the American flag transformed in a way that projects a personal message about each student’s connection with the country, history, and/ or current events.

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**Closing** Students consider the range and types of art responses in presenting final works. Students work in small groups to create an arrangement based on the goals they have established for making their flag artwork. Artworks are grouped based on common themes, concepts, and/ or material application. The entire group works together to create a display that best exhibits all of the artwork together.

**Race and Citizenship**

This reflection from a high school student at Baltimore City College examines the need to evaluate the implications of citizenship and the rights that are conferred to some and denied to others:

“Citizenship has a lot more to do with identity than with allegiance to a country. If you look at how countries are formed – there is no difference between people born in one place or another. What it means to be a citizen is often based on models that are racist and sexist. A better concept of citizenship could be not having one definition.”

Our relationship to citizenship by way of family, community, and personal stories express the diverse role this term plays in our lives. In America’s past and present, rules of “belonging” have denied rights to Black and Brown people and have led to segregation and poverty in communities within and out of Baltimore. Using symbols of citizenship, flags, Sonya Clark transforms the objects to reveal stories that speak to the complexities of citizenship.



**Critical Questions**

How are different races represented in the media?

What stereotypes does that media perpetuate?

How can art challenge stereotypes?

**Becky Slogeris**  
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**Derrick Adams**  
**Show Down**  
2014  
mixed media collage  
on paper  
48 x 72 inches  
catalog page 06

**Art Problem**

Students in middle and high school will create a collage about the Baltimore Uprising in order to challenge media stereotypes.

**Activities**

**Introduction** Invite students to pause and reflect on their experience during the Baltimore Uprising after the death of Freddie Gray. On a dry erase board or sheet of chart paper, create a t-chart with the following categories: “What I saw” and “What the media showed.”

Ask students to share examples things that they saw in person, not on TV, during the Uprising. As students share, write their examples under “what I saw.” Next, watch this “Last Week Tonight with John Oliver” segment from the Baltimore Uprising: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0\\_SLoDa44](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0_SLoDa44). Ask students to share examples of things that they saw on TV or on social media. Have students compare and contrast the two columns. Ask: *What are the similarities? What are the differences? What stereotypes did the media perpetuate?*

**Studio Time** Share *Show Down* by Derrick Adams to students. Ask students to describe what they see in the piece. Have students read the New York Times review, “Derrick Adams: ‘Live and in Color’” by Roberta Smith, to learn more about his work: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/10/arts/design/derrick-adams-live-and-in-color.html?mcubz=0>

Invite students to create a collage to share their perspective of the uprising.

**Closing** Ask students to prepare a short artist statement for their piece that responds to the following questions:

What did you choose to share in your collage?

What is unique about your perspective?

What artistic choices did you make and why?

How does the way you portrayed the Baltimore Uprising compare to the way the media portrayed the event?

What do you want others to understand as a result of seeing your work?

Have students hang their piece and artist statement up around the room. Invite students to take a gallery walk around the room and explore the work that their peers created.

**Race and Media**

Media creates meaning about race, and plays an important role in shaping the way we understand race as part of our identity, our history, our social institutions, and our everyday lives. Race is a way of classifying individuals and groups on the basis of physical characteristics, particularly one’s skin color.

Despite the concrete physical and sometimes geographical roots tied to specific racial identities, it is important to understand that race are also ideologies, or ways of seeing and understanding the world around us. Race is therefore imbued with meaning. They not only get used as descriptors, but also as markers of broader concepts and relationships. Race can mark you as belonging to a group or as an outsider, as different. These markers not only designate one’s skin color or cultural background, but also function in a larger system and in relation to other racial identities. In this system, certain groups have more power and privileges than others.

Given that many of the messages that we receive about race come to us through the media, it’s important for us to ask questions about media representations. Such questioning, in turn, can help us think critically about the media (and the people and industries behind them).

[www.criticalmediaproject.org](http://www.criticalmediaproject.org)

**Additional Resources**

Derrick Adam’s portfolio website:  
<http://www.derrickadams.com/>

Baltimore Uprising digital repository:  
<http://baltimoreuprising2015.org/>

The Critical Media Project:  
Media Literacy and the Politics of Identity –  
Resources for Educators  
<http://www.criticalmediaproject.org/cml/topicbackground/race-ethnicity/>

Baltimore Uprising digital repository:  
<http://baltimoreuprising2015.org/>

*Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*  
segment from the Baltimore Uprising:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0\\_SLoDa44](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0_SLoDa44).

**Essential Questions**

What can we learn from exploring what is known or unknown?

What is the value of comparing our knowledge of the places we interact in socially?

What questions arise about history and its influence on urban space through mapping?

How can we define physical and/ or cultural segregation through artwork?

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**Rachel Valsing**  
Art Teacher  
Towson High School  
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**Susan Waters-Eller**  
City Planning  
2016  
oil and collage on panel  
39 x 98 inches  
catalog pages 34-35



**Race and Place**

Racially segregated spaces have historically skewed opportunity and life chances along race lines; space has been one of the primary ways racial meaning has been constructed, teaching what places – and by extension who and what – matter (Lipsitz, 2011). Olivia Robinson investigates the legacy of “redlining” in Baltimore, one of a myriad of legal and extralegal strategies used to create racially segregated neighborhoods in the United States. Susan Waters Eller explores the effects of racialized transportation policies that often have resulted in super highways cutting through neighborhoods and displacing residents. These policies have a legacy of far reaching effects in both the public and private sectors of Baltimore and its suburbs as well as urban, suburban, and rural places across the county resulting in racial disparities in health care, access to healthy food, incarceration, resources allotted for schools, and public infrastructure investment such as the privileging of the suburban highway system at the expense of the city’s public transportation.

**Additional Resources**

Redlining segment of Race and the Power of Illusion. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmMs8eQP4T0>

Why is this the only place in Portland I see Black people? *Teaching young children about redlining*. Retrieved from [http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/27\\_01/27\\_01\\_johnson.shtml](http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/27_01/27_01_johnson.shtml)

*How Racism Takes Place* – George Lipsitz

*Keywords for American Cultural Studies* – Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler ed.

A map of Baltimore shows how its current poverty rates reflect the legacy of redlining. Retrieved from <http://www.citylab.com/politics/2015/04/a-er-nearly-a-century-redlining-still-divides-baltimore/391982/>

Kuthy, D. (2017, January). Redlining and Greenlining: Olivia Robinson Investigates Root Causes of Racial Inequity. *Art Education*, 50-57.

**Olivia Robinson**  
**Near and Far Enemies: Shade**

2015  
two quilts, cotton fabric, copper taffeta, steel thread, LEDs, microcontroller, electronics  
quilt 1, 216 x 96 inches  
quilt 2, 48 x 48 inches  
catalog pages 24-25



**Art Problem**

High school students will design maps using drawing, diagramming, and charting that visually amplify their experience and knowledge of familiar vs. foreign spaces.

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**Activities**

**Introduction** Students will explore a variety of mapping processes based on personal experience. Planning questions would include: what is your journey from home to school? what are the places that you visit regularly and how do you get there? Students can document their experiences through charting movements on maps, creating their own map designs, and collaborating to show patterns within their learning groups

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**Studio Time** Maps are designed using techniques to exaggerate areas that are familiar. Students could choose one specific aspect of their experience, for example, the way to school, walking to the store, or a regularly chosen method of transportation.

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**Closing** Students share their work and critique. If this project takes place over multiple schools/ sites/ venues a larger exchange between those spaces could happen in the form of a group exhibit, meeting of student groups, or online meeting.

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**Art Problem**

Preservice teachers working as interns in communities that are new to them will create maps using a variety of materials and mapping strategies to chart the history and legacy of racism in the communities where they will teach.

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**Activities**

**Introduction** Students will explore a variety of mapping processes and components through an interdisciplinary study of historic and contemporary maps. Students will then research the racialized history of their teaching placement.

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**Studio Time** Using a racial equity lens, maps are designed to visualize and emphasize their teaching placements over time and the interconnected features and effects of racialized spaces.

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**Closing** Students share their work to critique and reflect on their teaching communities. Since pre-service teachers are placed in a wide variety of schools within a local area they will begin to collaboratively map the interconnected and mutually dependent nature of their placements. As a follow up problem and culminating studio assignment the class might collaboratively create a web-based map or a map that has digital features such as QR codes to convey their research. A follow up activity with an asset-based mapping problem should be included so that students are not left with a deficit perspective of their school communities.

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