

2-D / 3-D

Teaching Resource

Connecting two-dimensional and three-dimensional works at the Nasher

Teacher's Introduction

About this Resource

This classroom resource is designed to introduce middle school and high school art students to the various ways in which artists in the Nasher collection use two- and three-dimensional media in their art practice.

We suggest that you invite students to first read the text and then discuss what they read in pairs or small groups before completing the interactive components. The information on this page is provided to offer teachers a broader context to guide student discussion.



LEFT: Pablo Picasso, *Vase of Flowers on a Table (Vase de fleurs sur une table)*, also called *Bouquet*, 1969 Oil on canvas, 45 1/4 x 35 in., RIGHT: Pablo Picasso, *Flowers in a Vase (Fleurs dans un vase)*, 1951-1953.

Further Research

Press Release for 1933 MoMA exhibition: "Sculptors' Drawings"

https://www.moma.org/documents/moma_press-release_324998.pdf

Images: *Sculptor's Drawings* at MoMA, 1933

<http://spelunker.moma.org/exhibitions/2949/>

Phyllida Barlow: *Fifty Years of Drawings* at Hauser & Wirth

<https://www.hauserwirth.com/exhibitions/2162/phyllida-barlow-fifty-years-of-drawings/view/>

Henry Moore: *Works on Paper from the Henry Moore Family Collection*

<https://www.hauserwirth.com/exhibitions/579/henry-moore-br-works-on-paper-from-the-henry-moore-family-collection/view/>

David Smith: *Sprays*

<https://www.gagosian.com/exhibitions/january-17-2008-david-smith>

Suggested Curriculum Connections (TEKS)

Fine Arts: Foundations, Historical and Cultural Heritage, Critical Evaluation | §117.52. Art, Level I (c) (1), (3) and (4)

Learn More at the Nasher

You can learn more about The Nasher collection and see what's currently on view by visiting the "Art" section of the Nasher website. Discover more resources and lessons in the "Learn" section, or book a guided or self-guided tour in the "Visit" section. www.nashersculpturecenter.org

Case Studies: Artists Working in Two and Three Dimensions

"Sculpture is something you bump into when you back up to look at a painting." –Ad Reinhardt

Artist Ad Reinhardt's famous quip (above) points out one of sculpture's defining qualities—its status as a three-dimensional object that shares our physical space. Many artists who make sculpture also create related two-dimensional works. One common way for artists to plan a sculpture is to make preparatory sketches, which can help them to define ideas before working with three-dimensional materials. After completing a sculpture, some artists use drawing, photography or collage as a helpful way to visualize the work in new perspectives and contexts.

Artists who are known primarily as painters, such as Pablo Picasso and Willem de Kooning, have been known to use sculpture as a way to think through problems or seek alternative experiences. Sculptors such as David Smith, Phyllida Barlow and Richard Serra frequently turn to drawing and other two-dimensional media to plan future projects, explore their perceptions of existing work, or let their imaginations wander. These artists are just a few of the great examples of artists in the Nasher Collection who work in both two- and three-dimensional media.

Phyllida Barlow

Phyllida Barlow combines everyday materials for her large-scale sculptures and installations using repetition of form and objects to emphasize their mass, weight and texture. She thinks through her monumental works by making drawings before working with large, heavy sculptural materials.



- Collect a large number of a single everyday item (i.e. a bag of cotton balls, a container of Q tips, a bunch of zip ties, rubber bands or pencils). Thinking about the theme of repetition, join your items with hot glue, tape or string to make a small sculpture. Once your sculpture is complete, prop it up and draw it in pencil first, then a second time with charcoal or oil pastel.

LEFT: Phyllida Barlow, 25 drawings exhibited alongside *BLUFF*, Studio Voltaire, London, England, 2010. BELOW LEFT: Phyllida Barlow, *untitled/fallen column*, 2010. Acrylic on watercolor paper, 57 X 76 cm. © Hauser & Wirth. BELOW RIGHT: *untitled: hanging monument*, 2015. Timber, polyurethane foam, polystyrene, cement, bonding, steel, plywood, fabric, scrim, paint, PVA, filler, sand, 196 7/8 x 275 5/8 x 118 1/8 in.



David Smith

David Smith, known mostly as a sculptor, also used photography and collage in his art. For example, in the top left image on this page, Smith collaged a picture of one of his finished sculptures onto a piece of paper, then added a fountain base and a background with wispy lines. Collage allowed him to envision a new sculpture by using a picture of one he had already made. After that, he made a more detailed drawing of the sculpture on tracing paper with notes to capture his ideas.

In contrast to the deliberate process Smith used above, some 2-D works are made almost by accident. In the process of making a sculpture, the walls and floors of an artist's studio can collect the marks and traces of their actions—things like glue drips, spray paint or foot prints. These incidental marks can sometimes become an artwork in their own right.

Look at David Smith's sculpture, *Head*, the bottom left image on this page, next to his painting, *Two Circles on Yellow and Green*. Although these works were made at different times, they show how Smith's sculptural practice informed his paintings. Imagine the artist spraying paint on the steel parts of a sculpture before welding it together. Such a process would leave colorful negative space around white shapes on the floor or a drop cloth, making a new image.

- Using shaped cardboard or heavy card stock, make your own 'accidental' painting. Before assembling your shapes into a three-dimensional form, spray or paint their surfaces using the shapes as stencils for a 'drop-cloth' painting.



LEFT: David Smith, *Untitled (Study for Woman and Man in a Cathedral)*, 1956. Photographic collage, unframed: 15 3/8 x 6 3/8 in. RIGHT: David Smith, *Study for Man and Woman in Cathedral*, 1956. Graphite and colored pencil on vellum, 14 5/8 x 8 1/4 in.

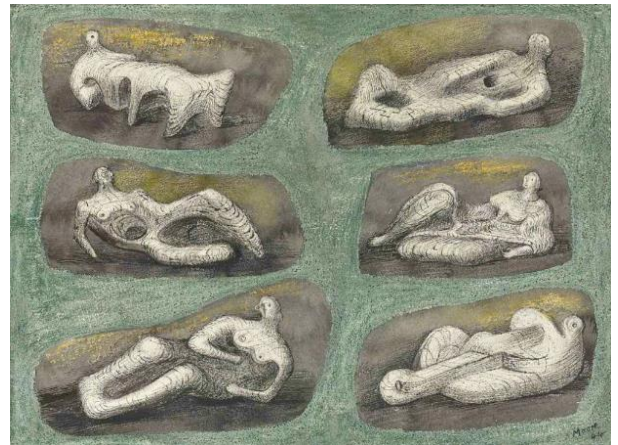


LEFT: David Smith, *Head*, 1938, Painted iron, 12 3/4 x 8 x 7 in. RIGHT: David Smith, *Two Circles on Yellow and Green*, 1959, Oil on canvas, 106 x 49 in.

Henry Moore

Henry Moore is a great example of how artists can use two-dimensional media to plan three-dimensional artworks. The biomorphic shape and twisting pose of Moore's bronze reclining figure on the left is similar to the figure drawings he made on the right. Take a closer look at the similarities and differences between the drawings and the sculpture.

- How often do you sketch plans to work through your creative ideas? When was the last time you did this and what was the picture of or about?

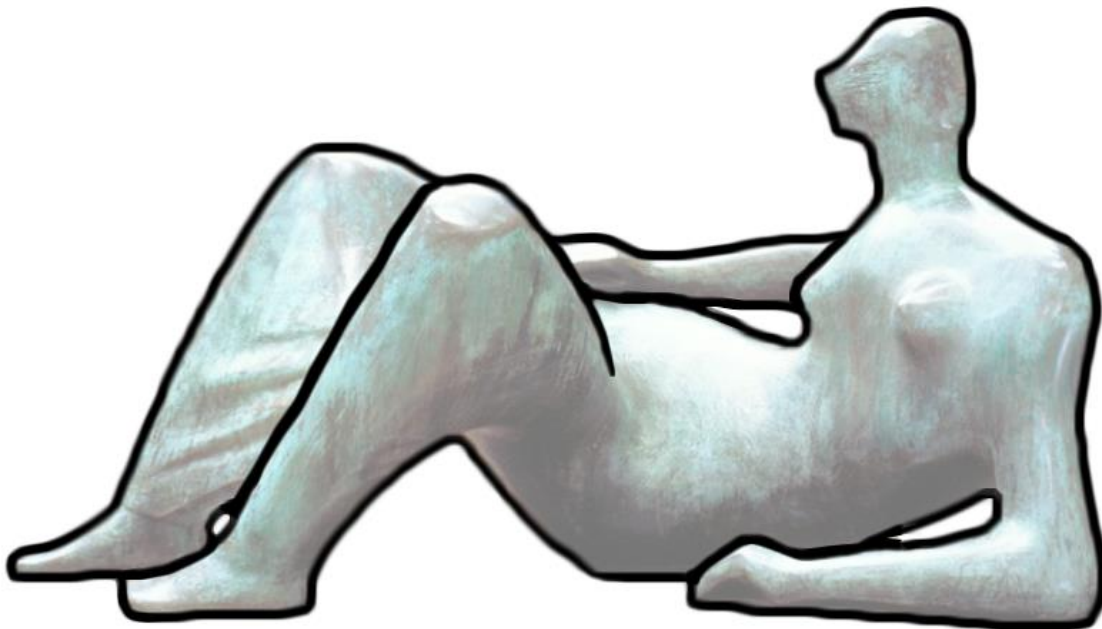


LEFT: Henry Moore, *Reclining Figure: Angles*, 1979 (cast 1980) Bronze, 48 1/4 x 90 1/4 x 61 3/4 in. RIGHT: Henry Moore, *Reclining Figures: Ideas for Stone Sculpture*.



Example of cross contour drawing

- Study the shape, contours, highlights and shadows in Henry Moore's *Reclining Figure: Angles*. Then, using a pencil or a pen, add [cross contour](#) lines to the image of the sculpture below. Cross-contour lines describe form and volume. They use a series of parallel lines to follow the roundness of the form.



2-D / 3-D Match Game

Study the images below and create pairings between a two and a three-dimensional artwork that you think were made by the same artist. Draw a line to connect each 2-D artwork to the matching 3-D artwork. Compare your findings with a classmate and discuss the reasons behind your choices. Next, Research these artists on the Nasher website to find images of their work and write the name of each artist in the blank below the image: [Frank Stella](#), [Alberto Giacometti](#), [Dorothy Dehner](#), [Claes Oldenburg](#), [Willem DeKooning](#).

