

Minneapolis Institute of Art

Mia Adult Guides

Public Tour of the Month: Current Conversations

October 28, 2021

Mia



Miao, China, Asia, Embroidery Sample, S; needlework ilk, cotton, metal sequins, The Ruth Ann Dayton Chinese Room Endowment Fund, The Suzanne S. Roberts Fund for Asian Art, and The Helen Jones Fund for Asian Art, 2004.67.447

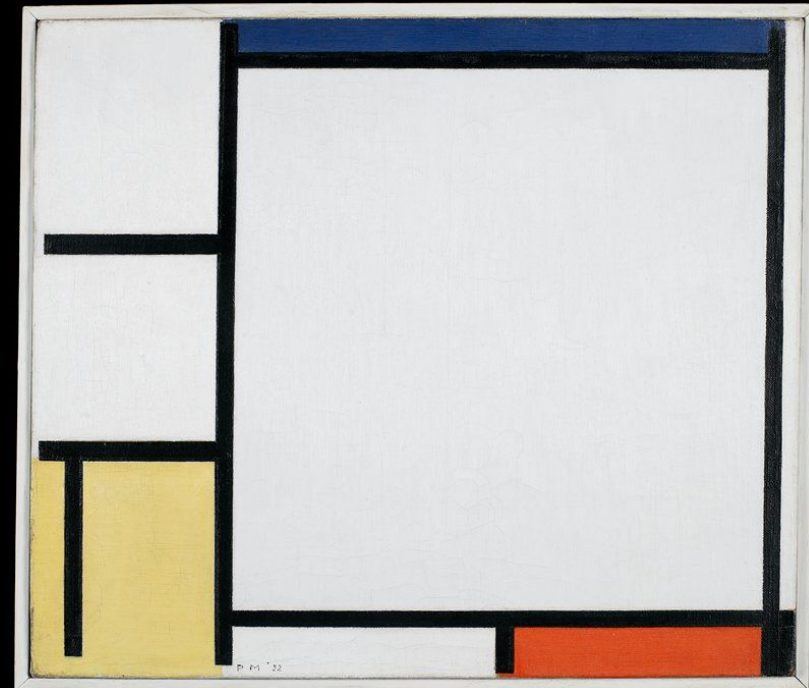
Record

Agenda

- Best practices on public tours
- Tour of the month topics: Current Conversations
- Public tour sampler: presentations by 3 Mia Guides
- Small Group Discussion: 8 artworks for “Women and Art” (March public tour) and theme development
- Questions from feedback forms
- Homework and upcoming peer learning opportunities
- Q&A

Public tours

If you are giving a public tour, you may have a disparate group of people, perhaps some families with children, tourists, or small groups of friends. You face the challenge of unifying that disparate group into a cohesive whole who feel comfortable sharing their thoughts with all.



Best practices for public tours

- Adult or multigenerational groups typically have no name tags, so spending a minute to introduce yourself by name and inviting the group to offer their names in a quick introduction starts to coalesce the group for your tour.



Shiba Kōkan, *A Meeting of Japan, China, and the West*, 18th–early 19th century, Ink and color on silk, 2013.29.158

Best practices for public tours

- Be aware of your vocabulary level and the language needs of your group. For all tours, if you use any terms that may be unfamiliar to visitors (e.g., terracotta, literati, mudras), explain the meaning when you introduce the material or term to the group.



Unknown Japanese, Amida, the Buddha of Infinite Light, 12th century, Japanese cypress with polychrome and gold, 2015.79.256a-c

Best practices for public tours

- It is not enough to simply hear information about art; people remember best when they have helped to construct the meaning. Before moving to questions, though, allow the visitors time to look at the art.



Paul Gavarni (Sulpice-Guillaume Chevalier), Le baromètre, Plate 6 from "Les Toquades", 1858, Lithograph, 2004.150.6

Best practices for public tours

- Scaffold your approach with the tour stops. The first couple of stops could be a mix of quick, simple descriptive and associative questions to put the group at ease in offering their thoughts and ideas.
- Reiterate that there are “no wrong answers” on the tour to put people at ease.



Loretta Pettway, "Log Cabin" quilt--single block "Courthouse Steps" variation (local name: "Bricklayer"), 1958, Cotton, twill, printed corduroy, denim, 2019.16.18, © Loretta Pettway / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Best practices for public tours



Pierre Bonnard, Dining Room in the Country, 1913, Oil on canvas, 54.15

- An inclusive tour builds in wait time. Remind yourself of your own familiarity with the art, and how, when seeing it for the first time, you needed more time to visually understand it (e.g., we needed more time to see that second cat in the Bonnard painting!).

Best practices for public tours

- Pair-share or small group opportunities are especially effective with improving levels of engagement in large or quiet groups. On public tours, let the visitors become more relaxed in the space and with the group dynamic before attempting a pair-share opportunity.



China, Sparrow hawk, one of a pair, 1736–74, Porcelain on ormolu bases, 77.51.1

Best practice for ANY tour

Reflection is a powerful tool for learning, especially when it is consistently practiced. As you walk your tour route before your group arrives, reflect on your expectations for the tour.

Once you have reached the end of your tour, leave a few minutes to reflect and debrief, ideally with your colleagues.



Sylvia Fein, *The Tea Party*, 1943, Egg tempera and oil on board, 2017.49, Copyright © Sylvia Fein

Tour of the month topics: Current Conversations

Add your voice to current, thought-provoking conversations

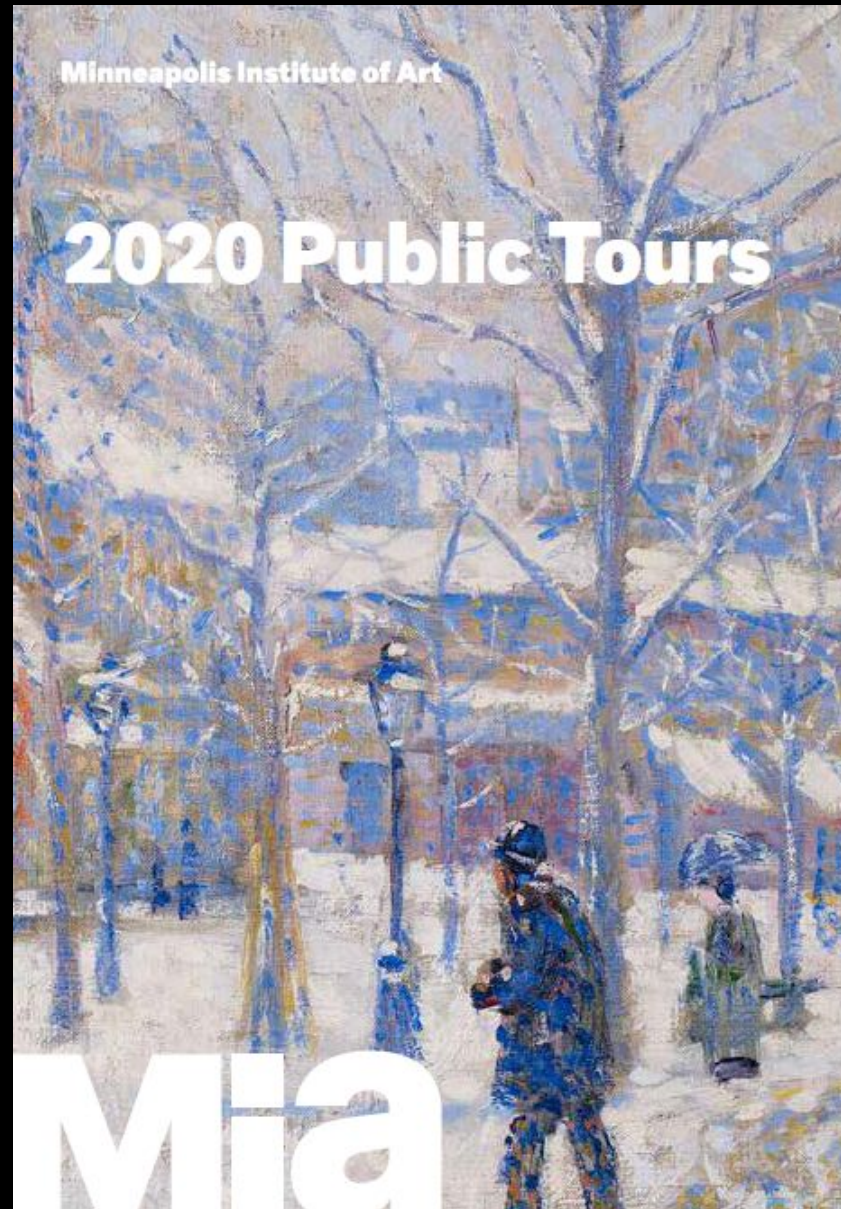
Connect and engage our audience with:

- Current topics you're interested in
- Current topics in the news
- National/international commemorative events and celebrations
- Local events
- What we have in common

Amoako Boafo, *2pc Floral Suit*,
2020, Oil on canvas with collage
L2020.173.1



Public tour promotion



**Add your voice to current,
thought-provoking conversations.**

FREE public tours

Every day at 1PM. No reservations necessary.

January Snow Days

Venture boldly into images of snow and cold as artists depict the beauty and challenges of winter.

February Celebration of African American Art History

Discover African American artists' contributions to art history in the United States.

March Women in Art

Discuss how women, as both creators and inspiration, have changed and influenced art making around the world.

April Finding Home

Explore ideas of home as artists reflect on the universal desire for safety and acceptance.

May Points of View

Express yourself while viewing artworks from multiple perspectives.

June Pride

Celebrate the LGBTQ+ community through artworks that explore gender identities and social constructs of gender.



Find updates about Mia book & public tours on Facebook and Twitter.

Paul Signac, *Snow, Boulevard de Clichy, Paris*
(detail), 1886, oil on canvas, Bequest of Putnam
Dana McMillan 61.36.16

Minneapolis Institute of Art
2400 Third Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404





Public tour promotion

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Self-Guided Tour

PRIDE: Gender Identity and Social Constructs

These six artworks reflect social and cultural constructions of queer identity, gender, and sexuality. Some include the multicultural perspectives of ritual and religion, especially those of Black and Indigenous people. All but one of the works are featured in the exhibition "Rituals of Resilience," which explores themes of identity, culture, spirituality, and power by reimagining new worlds and possibilities. We present this work for celebration and conversation with open-ended questions provided to inspire your viewing.

	<p>Gallery 259 Jeffrey Gibson, <i>Nothing is Eternal</i>, 2017 Punching bag, acrylic felt, glass beads, metal jingles, artificial sinew, nylon fringe L2018.228.3</p>	<p>Jeffrey Gibson is a member of the Choctaw and Cherokee nations. He blurs the line between Native American traditional art and Modernism to explore the meeting of identity, culture, history, and social narratives. His work exists between cultures. How do you react to the forms, colors, and textures in the work? Gibson uses materials typical of powwow regalia to express his view that powwow ceremonies are a way to bring people together during difficult times.</p>
	<p>Gallery 375 Harmony Hammond, <i>Chicken Lady</i>, 1989 Quilt, canvas, acrylic, oil paint, corrugated roofing tin L2021.36a-c</p>	<p>Harmony Hammond has combined used corrugated roofing tin, a quilt left behind by a friend, and elements of a letter about a homeless woman who lived among chickens and old cars along a river. What does this combination of materials say to you? Hammond tells us, "Chicken Lady refer[s] to the complexities of gender and social class—the homeless, the misfit, the alien, the artist, [those] who can't integrate themselves into society or who choose not to." With this work, Hammond honors freethinking women who refuse to conform to societal expectations and choose to navigate life on their own terms.</p>
	<p>Gallery 373 Didier William, <i>Touye Tout Konchon Yo</i>, 2018 Ink, collage, and acrylic on paper, mounted on partially carved wood panel L2019.60.8</p>	<p>Look closely at the figure in this work and what it's composed of. Didier William developed his eye motif "as a way to return some of [the] gaze back onto the viewer." As a Haitian gay immigrant, he knows what it is like to be stared at. His figures acknowledge the historical erasure of Black and Indigenous knowledge systems. The figures have been perceived as sexless and genderless. What do you think this figure represents? What might the figure be doing and where is it?</p>
	<p>Gallery 374 Zanele Muholi, <i>Sasa, Bleeker, New York</i>, 2016 Archival pigment ink on Baryta Fibre paper 2019.133</p>	<p>Zanele Muholi is a visual activist and lesbian who uses they/them pronouns. This self-portrait provokes the viewer with an intense and intimate gaze. How would you describe the artist's use of light? How does the light affect the facial expression? With this image, Muholi asks us to also reflect upon ourselves and how we view our own bodies. Muholi produces their work outside of South Africa, because challenging race and sexuality in such an explicit and sensual way is likely to provoke targeted violence in their homeland.</p>

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Tour of the month topics: Current Conversations

Celebration of African American Art

History - Discover African American artists' contributions to art history in the U.S.

Telling Stories - Gather around works of art to look, listen, and tell your own stories.

Body Language - Decipher the messages we send as expressed in images of the human body.



Egon Schiele, Portrait of Paris von Gütersloh, 1918, Oil on canvas, 54.30

Tour of the month topics: Current Conversations

Going Global - Marvel at stunning artistic achievements spanning centuries of trade and travel.

Points of View - Express yourself while viewing art from multiple perspectives.

Highlights of Native American Art - Experience the role of tradition and innovation in superb works of Native American art.

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Holly Young, *Floral Legacy*, 2019, Quills, beads, tin cones, brass sequins, thimbles, satin, calico, fabric, brass bells, feathers, elk hide, 2019.65

Tour of the month topics: Current Conversations

State Fair-ish - Explore themes related to The Great Minnesota Get-together.

Women and Art - Discuss how women, as both creators and inspiration, have influenced and changed the production of artwork around the world.

Winter Solstice Stories - View works of art that anticipate the triumph of light over darkness through stories of redemption and renewal.



Carla Hemlock, *Boomin' Out*, 2015,
Cotton fabrics, glass beads, wampum,
2016.5.20

If you are
assigned a public
tour . . .

Description,
theme, and
object ideas

August 2018 Public Tour: **Telling Stories**

Website tour description:

Gather around works of art to look, listen, and tell your own stories.

These are ideas, suggestions and approaches from which to build your own tour! Choose objects from several of these areas.

Visual Story Telling

Artists have a long tradition of telling familiar stories using symbols and significant details. The artists' specific choices are what brings each story to life in our imagination.

- **Anthony van Dyck's Betrayal of Christ (57.45)** tells a story from the Christian Bible. It's familiar to many but not all. Use visual elements to talk about how Van Dyck has created drama, action, noise. Where is there quiet and stillness? How is our eye drawn there? What is the effect of combining action and stillness in the painting?
- Compare **Barye's Theseus Slaying the Centaur (55.11A,B)** and **Harry Jackson's Stampede (91.150A,B)**. Why do you think the artist chose these particular moments? What does each hero really conquer?
- **Soga Shōhaku's Zen Encounter: Niaoke Daolin and Bai Juyi (2013.29.113, G222)**. What aspects of this 250-year-old story seem modern? How does the artist make each person seem real?

Does it matter who tells the story?

Until the story of the hunt is told by the Lion, the tale of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.

– *African Proverb*

- In **Dear America (2015.57.1, G259)** Tom Jones tells the story of Native American contributions and history in his response to the song "America" using postcard images of native people. For background with images, check his website: http://www.adrianelittle.com/tom/4america_state.html
- **The Dollhouse**, accompanied by an explanatory screen, is located in the first floor McKim hallway. The house's evolving story expands our vision of those living 100 years ago, but also has an impact today. Current events around the Dollhouse started a community dialog about how an African-American maid was portrayed. Here's an additional reference: <https://new.artsmia.org/stories/the-doll-returns-from-difficult-conversations-a-fresh-start/>
- **Roger de la Fresnaye's Married Life (52.1)** invites smiles and discussion. Whose story is this? How would it look if the other person was the storyteller? How would/could the story be told jointly? How would you tell the story of "Married Life" in visual form?
- **William Hogarth's Sleeping Congregation (58.10)** encourages discussion of what makes a good storyteller.

Public Tour Sampler: Rose

A Change of View

Recently we have become aware that our world is changing in many ways.

Things we have taken for granted are different than we imagined and we have needed to adjust.

Our tour “A Change of View” is about the experience of adjusting to change.

Public Tour Sampler: Rose

Spend a moment looking at this portrait painted in 1928. What questions would you like to ask the artist about the man in the portrait?



Macena Barton, Portrait of José Mojica, 1928, Oil on canvas, 2018.69.1, © Macena Barton

Public Tour Sampler: Rose

Imagine this as a black
and white photo of 1928...
How would that change
the way you see him?

In your opinion, what does
color add?



Macena Barton, Portrait of José Mojica, 1928, Oil on
canvas, 2018.69.1, © Macena Barton

Public Tour Sampler: Rose

The artist Marisol has chosen to focus on certain things in her sculpture. Look carefully for the details that seem important ... what catches your eye?

Some things have been created with less detail. What do you see?

Marisol, Portrait of Martha Graham (version at Crystal Bridges), 1981

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Public Tour Sampler: Rose

Now that you know a little about Martha Graham's life, look at her face and eyes. Do you think she is looking at something? Imagining something? Or a little of both? How did you decide? There are no wrong answers on this!

Marisol, Portrait of Martha Graham (version at Crystal Bridges), 1981

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Public Tour Sampler: Nancy

Reflections on Identity - The Female Perspective

Many artists create artwork to express and explore ideas about identity. The artist's gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cross cultural experience and the the human body can shape their concept of identity. On our tour today, we will explore what these female artists are expressing about their identity.

Public Tour Sampler: Nancy

What questions come to mind
as you look at this photograph?

What does her body language
say to you?

Cara Romero, Kaa, 2017, Archival pigment print on
legacy fibre photography paper, 2019.64, © Cara Romero

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Public Tour Sampler: Nancy

Describe the expression on the woman's face. What else do you notice?

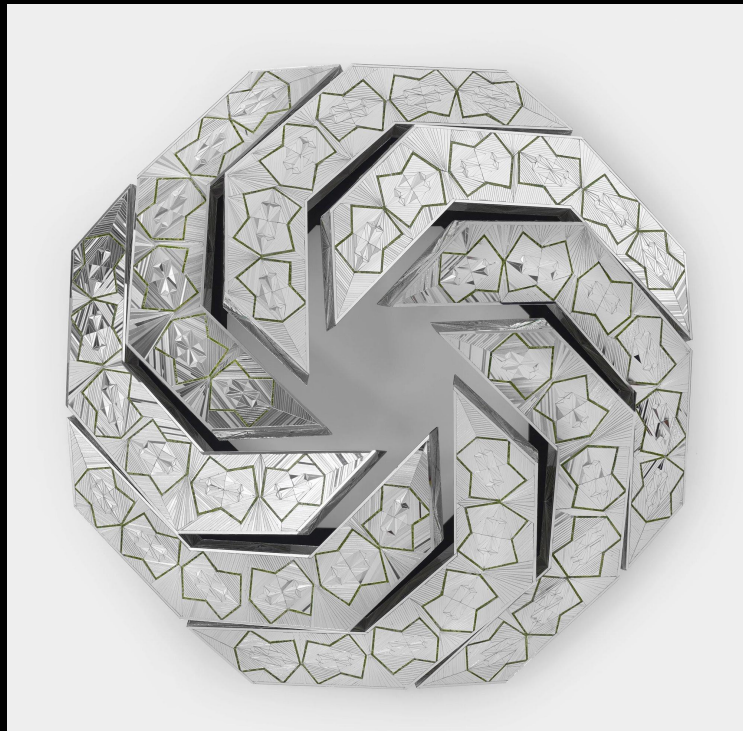
Cara Romero, Kaa, 2017, Archival pigment print on legacy fibre photography paper, 2019.64, © Cara Romero

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Public Tour Sampler: Nancy

What is it that attracts you to this artwork and why?



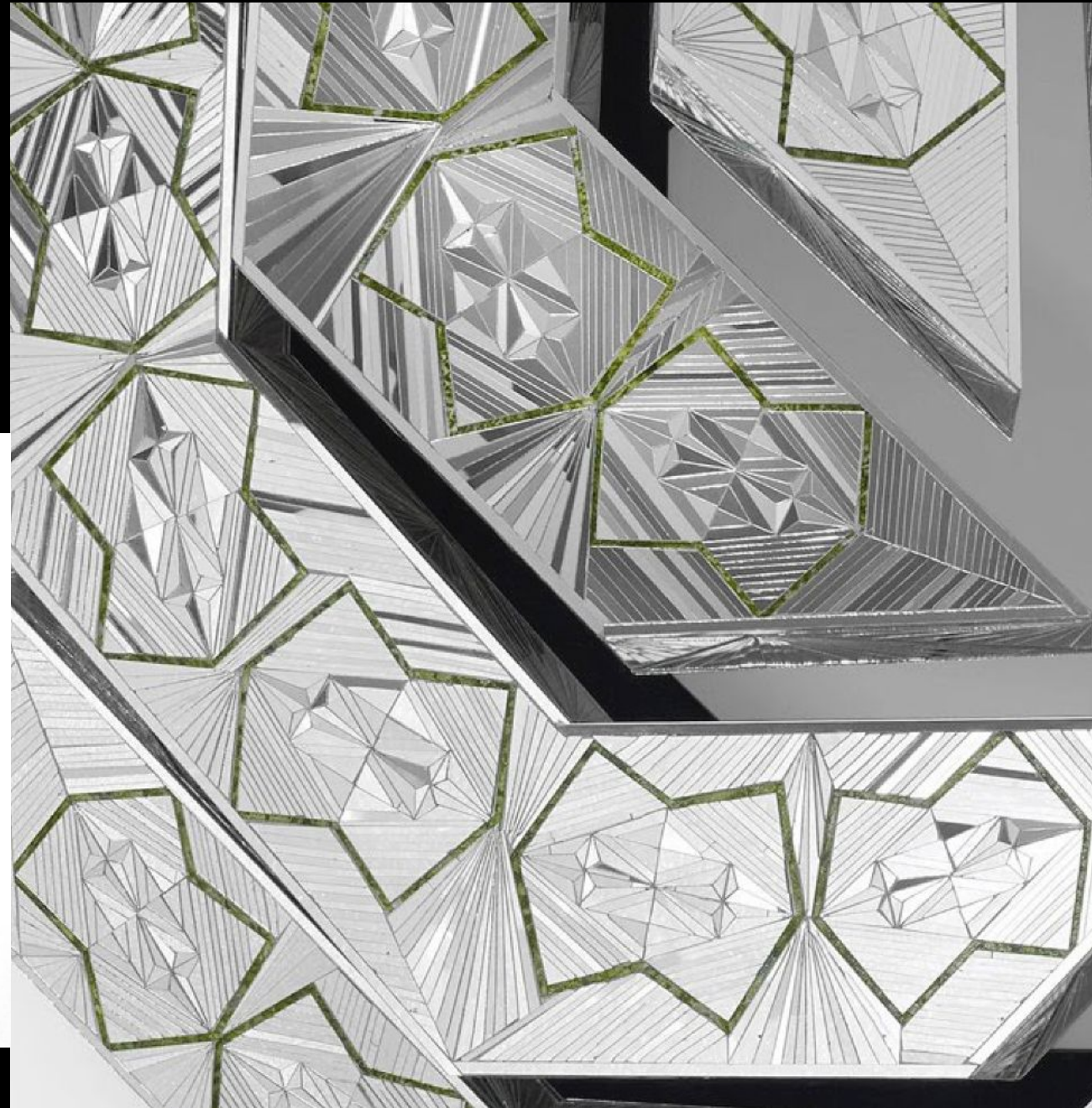
Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Iranian, 1922–2019. Fourth Family Octagon, 2013. Reverse painted glass, mirrored glass, plaster, 2021.35.2

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Public Tour Sampler: Nancy

What do you see when you look closely into this artwork?



Stretch Break (5 minutes)

Paul Wolff, *Gymnastik auf dem Juvens-Hausboot im Wannsee*, 1934, Gelatin silver print, 98.195.45, © Paul Wolff



Public Tour Sampler: Fran

Traveling Together...

Let's Pack Our Bags and Cruise the Baltic Sea

- There are many countries surrounding the Baltic Sea.
- Today we will only visit a few Ports of Call on our cruise adventure.
- At each port visit we will consider a work from Mia's collection reflecting a bit of the culture of country.
- I look forward to our trip and hearing all the connections you will make as we travel together.



Why do we travel?

What is your dream travel destination?



Chest, 1777 Ivar Kvalen, Norway Painted wood, iron. Gift of Joel and Irene Njus in memory of Siri Ivar's Datter Grosberg 99.93A



Tulip glass (Tulpanglas), 1957
Nils Landberg; Manufacturer: Orrefors
Glasbruk, Småland, Sweden
Blown glass, 98.276.277

Share out your ideas, tips, and techniques for public tours

Kongo, Democratic Republic of
Congo, "Ntadi" figure, 19th century,
Stone, 2017.28

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Small group discussion in breakout rooms (15 minutes)

Share your “Women and Art” public tour ideas:

- How did you decide on the theme for the tour?
- Discuss an artwork you chose and how it relates to your theme.

Debrief and sharing your thoughts

For each small group, what were some of the themes that emerged for this topic of Women and Art?

Question on feedback form: When will we choose our tour day?
We are in the process of refining the tour day questionnaire, and we hope to send out to you all in mid-November.

Question on feedback form: Do we have to give virtual tours?
No, you do not need to give virtual tours. We have a question on the tour day questionnaire, asking if you wish to give only in-person tours, only virtual tours, or are open to touring either format. If you choose only in-person tours, you will not be assigned virtual tours. For those interested in virtual tours, we will provide a refresher training in December.

Question on feedback form: Please clarify what a Cross Currents tour assignment entails. Could I shadow a Cross Currents tour?

For Cross Currents tours, each guide chooses only one artwork within an assigned theme for the two-hour tour (and you can use a gallery stool). Visitors are given a map with all guide locations and artworks marked.

When we return to in-person tours, we will determine how to best provide shadowing opportunities for those interested.

Homework

Worksheet to be sent on Friday:
Choose a book and 3 artworks to use on a
book tour. Explain how each artwork
connects to your book.

Next session:
November 4, 6 to 8 pm, virtual



Naomi Schindler, Boy Reading, 2nd half of the 20th century,
Woodcut, 2018.125.5, © Estate of Naomi Schindler

Upcoming peer learning opportunities

Sample public tours

- Fran, Friday, 11/5, 11 AM
- Fran (virtual) Thursday, 11/11, 6:30 PM
- Nancy, Friday, 11/12, 11 AM
- Rose, Saturday, 11/13, 11 AM

Graham Sutherland, *Three Standing Forms in a Garden*, 1951, Oil on canvas, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John Rood, 63.73, © The Estate of Graham Sutherland



Other Questions?