ULTIMATE MUSEUM
FIELD GUIDE
by teens, for teens (and everybody else)

YOU ARE HERE
CREATIVE MESS
EVERYDAY ART
WILD BZZZ
BREAKING BOUNDARIES
OF MODERN ART
YOU, ME, STRANGERS
AND ART
OVER THE RIM

AMELIA • NATAKIA • MOERA • THOMAS • SABINE • NICOLA
Welcome. Thank you for supporting The Aldrich and more importantly the Teen Fellows program through your acquisition of this ‘zine. The purpose of our 2022 project is to encourage the general public to visit the Museum as the pandemic clears. Now, we understand that art museums have a sense of pretentiousness about them, with most captions for exhibits seeming purposely vague and eclectic. This ‘zine will function not only as an introduction to newcomers, but as a different insight into how teenagers may view art differently. We hope you enjoy what we have to say.

— The Aldrich Teen Fellows 2022
Howdy folks! Welcome newcomers! I'm here to share my own experiences of being in an art museum, and how to brave the jungle that is an art museum! (And while you're here, come to the Aldrich to check out the cool exhibits... and test my tips & tricks out for yourself...)
As we get older, we change more: our height, personal opinions, and world views change. It so happens that our art changes and evolves in tandem.

Which is why I think humans are so blessed to have created museums—

Museums are the vessels that carry the changes and transitions of human history, and equally subject to change in order to keep up with the times. Ultimately, there are millions (probably) of people who find it difficult to find their footing among those frequent museum-goers who seem to know what they’re doing. At times, it seems dizzying to be in an art museum.

But fear not, reader! (Is feeling lost not the theme of this crazy game of life?) I came up with a few tips as to how one begins to indulge in what the museum has to offer.

First, I suggest making your rounds. Pick an exhibit you’re drawn to—there doesn’t necessarily have to be a reason why. It could be some innate feeling, or you just like the title of the exhibit.

Second is to read those placards! I’m referring to the large main ones just outside exhibit rooms. They will give you a better understanding of the artist’s ideas, process, and background.

Third is to ask questions & observe. As you peruse the artwork, you may come up with questions that even the artist’s statement can’t answer! My favorites (questions) I ask myself are: What am I most drawn to in this room? What about this piece! these pieces makes it so interesting to me? Is it the color? The composition? The message? Why am I drawn to this?
As an art teacher/mentor always tells me when they give me a critique (artist feedback!): feel free to take it or leave it! These are tips I personally find helpful if I feel lost in a museum, but of course, they may not work for everyone. And that is totally A-OK!

But remember, it’s okay to ask questions (and be befuddled)

I think a lot of people in this current generation get intimidated by art museums—contemporary art museums in particular. Why? I’ll admit, I was intimidated, too. We may struggle to find meanings in abstract paintings or sculptures, and it frustrates us. However, when it all boils down... art is subjective, at the end of the day.

 Artists welcome questions! (We Teen Fellows know this quite well... check our interview with the lovely artist, Milano Chow)

My final notes to you, dear reader—now hopefully interested museum-goer, are as follows:

Come curious!

→ observe with open eyes!

→ and stay safe!

Thank you for reading! - Sabine
[Milano Chow interview, editor's cuts]

Natalia: Our project this semester is making a zine. We were wondering if we could include our interview in that zine with you.
Chow: I’d love that, please save some copies for me!

Thomas: Do you ever plan on changing your medium from paper?
Chow: It’s not as conscious as like, oh, I want to try a new random material; it’s more like, I have an idea—what’s the best way to execute it? Right now, it’s been drawing because I’m so familiar with the medium... with painting I’ve always felt really clumsy. But yeah, so far, I haven’t [brought in new material]. At least with work that I have shown publicly, I haven’t gone off using paper and pencil.

Amelia: What or who inspires you?
Chow: I always bring up a couple of the same artists over and over again. One is Martin Wong, who is a painter, and he does a lot of, like, cityscapes—he was also really obsessed with brick buildings. He likes to paint every brick by hand. Another one is Roger Brown, he did like, really surrealistic and colorful graphic paintings [with] color gradient and he also did scenes of American suburbia against cities and skyscrapers.

Sabine: We came up with some lightning round questions—they aren’t timed, don’t worry, we thought it would be fun to include your answers in the interview. What is your favorite color?
Chow: Black, black and neutrals, tans and off-whites, yeah.

Sabine: Favorite bubble tea flavor?
Chow: I usually get like, a Melon Milk Tea.

Sabine: What is your Zodiac sign?
Chow: Cancer, [both] sun and moon.

Sabine: City or countryside?
Chow: City.

Sabine: Dogs or cats?
Chow: Dogs.

Sabine: If you had a theme song, what would it be?
Chow: Oh my god, like that yakety sax song, Benny Hill, because I’m like, really clumsy, so... I’m always tripping and bumping into stuff. People use it a lot in memes.

Natalia: What was the hardest part about getting your work into the public view?
Chow: I think it’s a certain self-consciousness. You never know how people will react. Your art isn’t going to be for everyone and the goal isn’t to win everyone’s approval. But for me, I get more satisfaction to have a niche group of people who really understand the work. The most difficult thing is sometimes I feel so disconnected from general mainstream sensitivities, everything feels fast and maximized and rushed.

Moera: We were curious as to why a lot of your pieces are paper, or mostly black and white?
Chow: That’s mostly just the medium itself. I like the immediacy of it, I can just put pencil to paper and I don’t have to prepare a ground or do a canvas.

Moera: How did your style evolve over time?
Chow: I first moved back to LA maybe like 10 years ago, and I was in this kind of rocky state where I just moved and didn’t know if I was going to be an artist or not, so then, I just started drawing windows really repetitively because they were like found composition. You can’t rush the process of making the work and getting to know yourself and your taste over time—and I’ve also made a lot of really bad artwork “laughs”.

[fin.]

A message from the Fellows: Thank you to Milano Chow, who has generously given us her time to hold this interview! We are extremely grateful. Thank you to Tara Foley, Janette Jimenez, Namulen Bayasaritian, Lorena Sforza, and the rest of the Aldrich museum staff for making this zine possible.
"I would say a visionary is someone who is a good listener and a bridge between two worlds." - Karla Knight

When I look at Karla Knight's artwork, it reminds me of a house floor plan. Maybe it's the colors & textures, or the geometric shapes, but it looks like a compartment that stores something - ideas, thoughts, memories, experiences...

...like the chain of past experiences we turn into memories, these memories can store our thoughts and emotions at a given moment in time - like the way our neurons in our brain make connections and receive signals, the mind is always growing to make room for new connections.

The black box in the middle of Knight's piece looks like a link to a more different universe. Is it a signal of hope? Depression? Excitement? What are the artist's intentions?

From 2-D to drawing and painting pieces (like this piece) why is this piece one slice in this format, unlike her other 2-dimensional pieces?

Even the sphere in the artwork looks incredibly uniform and unsettling, perfect even. No randomness, we find beauty in the imperfect. How does this juxtaposition relate to the artwork?

Everything surrounding the middle sphere, such as the "not-so-clean" holding lines that are around the border have an element of imperfection that is relatable and makes you want to understand the piece better. How do you interpret art?
Homo Indomus

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Chimaera
Order: Primates/Celesta
Suborder: Haplorhini
Infracord: Simiformes
Family: Hominidae
Subfamily: Homininae
Tribe: Hominini
Genus: Homo
Species: H. Indomius

burn varieties
heart-resistant, possibly either leathery or chitinous
exposed skin that absorbs heat, even if it has been heavily reinforced with bone, flesh, and horn or to the eyes

Ancient Specimens Uncovered

The MET 3022

Funny, Daddy? Can we go to the museum to see fossilized "monsters"?
Duane Slick / What the Wendigo Fears

Duane’s canvas pieces all have a distinct and consistent color palette. Dark red, green, blue, gray, black, and white dominate the painting. Upon closer inspection, the paint seems to stick off the edges of each work which gives them a crude touch and "ripped" feeling. It’s as if they were torn from a larger body, yet still complete. Being of Native Indian American descent, Duane touches heavily on his ancestor’s past in the U.S. in all of: “The Coyote Makes the Sunset Better.” His ability to use folklore of Native American cultures to convey the destruction and malevolence of whites towards natives is both original and eye-widening.

The motifs that stretch across multiple installations connect his works to his ancestral home in Iowa. A recurring subject in Slick’s work for some time has been the coyote. There’s even one that guards the entrance to The Aldrich, an ingenious way of calling attention to his exhibit. Instead of scaring other animals away, the coyote has had the inverse effect of pulling in new members.

The early manipulated coyote images series drew inspiration from Andy Warhol and set the stage for what was yet to come.

What arguably remains his most abstract works would be the U.S. flag remains paintings. Thick and thin horizontal stripes parallel each other in a somewhat random sequence, representing the American flag. The imprinted images of plant life, both standing tall and fallen down, show death and rebirth, possibly hinting at the destruction and revitalization western lands have experienced. Hidden too are the skulls of deceased cattle resting on the stripes. The dead may be buried, but the impact of death remains on our country.

A personal highlight would be Duane’s Wendigo series of illustrated poetry. The story that is detailed throughout the canvases likens the United States to the Wendigo: greedy, horrifying cannibalistic creatures in folklore. Duane discusses how these things have taken resources all in their lust for oil and power. The only thing these wendigos fear is the one who never forgot what they have done.

The coyote is seen as a two-sided deity. And though Duane Slick is not a mischievous demigod, he does uphold a two-sidedness in his art. Switching from expressive and contorted illustrations of an animal to muted works reflecting on a heavy loss. Slick brought his past into the contemporary art world originally and impressively, garnering the attention which he deserves. — Thomas Bittencourt
HELP US UNDERSTAND
Richard Klein / Art is Digestible

Richard has cemented himself as one of the most impactful museum curators at The Aldrich. We were fortunate enough to have a short interview that demonstrated why he’s earned that title. He dives deep into an artist’s history and collection of influences to put together exhibits that are separated largely by theme. Placement is key when working with limited spaces, so Klein does his best to communicate with the artist as well as suggest his own ideas to make every exhibit both true-hearted and creative.

Richard values talent above all else. Not the talent that people assume you’re born with, but the skill that one learns through practice and perseverance. He values an artist’s efforts in reaching the limelight and getting their message heard.

In curation, staying away from areas that you “know all the answers to” is key. Each showing or project should teach you something. When Klein was preparing for the Duane Slick exhibition, he learned about the coyote. Such as how they’re native west of the Mississippi River and wolves to the east. Broadening your scope “makes you a better curator and better person.” The more perspectives you’re introduced to, the more of the world you’ll understand. Duane’s use of the coyote fits into this ‘disruptive art.’ Richard passed on the story of how if the coyote, is this fluid trickster in Native Indian folklore. They are seen as both demigods as well as mischievous spirits.

Intriguingly, Klein seems to consistently relate art to meals. He refers to an artwork’s title as an entree, providing context to each work prior to examination. Oftentimes this is the only context viewers are given, making them that much more important for a clear understanding of the message. Furthermore, Richard views the background behind a work as “the gravy on top.” Any steps leading up to the final product or contributing to its cultural significance serve to make it all that more special. With these examples in mind, we can infer that the artwork itself is that main course. It’s where the bulk of the meat is found, although the title and history behind it may contribute to its legacy, what you came for was the art. — Thomas Bittencourt
Amaryllis DeJesus Moleski

Breaking Boundaries of Modern Art

Amaryllis DeJesus Moleski is a queer Puerto Rican American artist whose work encompasses themes of hybridity, mythology, feminism, and sexuality.

What do you associate modern art with? Wealth? Perhaps high status or expensive materials? Or that banana taped to the wall? But modern art rarely tells the story of magic, transformation, or gender fluidity. Moleski's work bends the genre's boundaries. I found myself enthralled by her pieces. The representation of queer women of color as goddesses displayed in a museum was amazing to me—I had never seen it before. The subliminal messages tied within her artwork is thought provoking (Look closely!), making you look beyond the surface of her brilliant use of pop culture symbols. I hope that every person leaving any art museum may have their perspective broadened like I have.
Consumer's Art
Nicola Andrzejewski

Art. What do you automatically think of? A majority of people would immediately visualize paintings and drawings, locked away behind glass frames, in prestigious museums, only created by the most artistic people. Yes, this is art, but many don't realize that art takes on different, more dimensional forms as well, especially in our everyday lives. Think of a vase in your living room, ceramic teacups in your cabinet, the glass window memorials in churches, a funny-shaped chair in your doctor's office; this is art! Art doesn't always present itself as intimidating and untouchable as some renowned artworks might.

Growing a connection and awareness of the art forms around us makes it seem less scary. (We may witness through haunted houses)

Now, I don't want to overwhelm you by explaining EVERY single physical, common piece of art (that's a lot of work for me!), so I'm just going to provide you some insight on one specific piece. Quilts!

A quilt is a woven, multi-layered textile piece, largely correlated with a blanket. Quilts are commonly used to portray stories or historical information, with their beautiful colors and designs. Quilts hold lots of value and meaning, however, this does not make them very "sacred" to own or even to make. Making an easy quilt can simply consist of gathering simple pieces of fabric, cutting them into even squares and sewing them together. As the patterns become more intricate, so does the entire process, however, the numerous "how-to" videos on youtube shows its accessibility. Spread throughout countless homes across the country, draped across beds, covered over sleeping children, put on sale in cute home stores, they are everywhere! Knowing how easy it is for the "common" man to make it, makes it, or art in general, less intimidating to you? I'd hope so.

Remember, each art piece has a story with its creation behind it. Every piece relies on lots of hard work and passion, that anyone can accomplish! Knowing the nifty, and "casual" process behind something, as well as realizing that it, the art, does not have to be plastered on a strictly white wall in a museum DOES NOT mean it's NOT art. Art is everywhere, it's just up to us to open our eyes and see it. :}
THIS IS ART.

YOUR BRAIN IS A COLLAGE.
**Origami Cube Instructions**

1. Fold & unfold
2. Fold to center
3. Unfold one side
4. Fold corner to the crease line
5. Unfold the bigger corner
6. Unfold one side while folding another
7. Fold z-sides at no gap at
8. Fold the sides to center
9. Fold in the remaining corner under right flap
10. Turn over
11. Fold again

**To Assemble,**

- Insert angled corner into another
- Insert bottom corner into new
- Turn over
- Fold & insert each edge to slots in inside side

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**Museums are the Sanctuaries of our Past**

**Preserve it for Future Life Forms**