



DENVER CENTER FOR THE
PERFORMING ARTS
Off-Center

INSIDE OUT

A STUDY GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

THIS IS MODERN ART





THIS IS MODERN ART SYNOPSIS

Graffiti crews are willing to risk anything for their art. Called vandals, criminals, even creative terrorists, graffiti artists set out to make their voices heard and alter the way people view the world. But when one crew finishes the biggest graffiti bomb of their careers, the consequences get serious and spark a public debate asking, "Where does art belong?" The fictional characters and theatricalized events of the play are based on graffiti sprayed on the wall of the Chicago Art Institute's new addition on Sunday, February 21, 2010.



INSIDE OUT

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THIS IS MODERN ART

By

Kevin Coval and Idris Goodwin

Directed by **Idris Goodwin**

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PLAYWRIGHT IDRIS GOODWIN

Idris Goodwin is a playwright, poet/performer, and essayist. His play *How We Got On*, developed at the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, premiered in Actors Theatre's 2012 Humana Festival, and is being produced at theatres across the country. It is the first in his "break beat play" series which includes *The*

REALNESS and *Hype Man*, winner of the 2017 Blue Ink Playwriting Award. He is an assistant professor at Colorado College, Colorado Springs. Goodwin works with forms such as spoken word, break beat poetry, hip-hop, and film.

PLAYWRIGHT KEVIN COVAL

Kevin Coval is the author of *everyday people* and *slingshots (a hip-hop poetica)*, named Book of the Year-finalist by The American Library Association. Coval has performed at hundreds of universities, high schools and theaters in seven countries on four continents including; The Parliament of the World's

Religions in Capetown, South Africa, The African Hip-Hop Festival: Battle Cry, Poetry Society of London, University of the West Indies in Jamaica, St. Xavier's College in Bombay, India, and four seasons of Russell Simmons' *HBO Def Poetry Jam*, for which he also served as artistic consultant.

WHAT IS GRAFFITI?

Graffiti is a dynamic, countercultural subcultural art form, "written" by mainly young artists, mainly male, on public walls, buildings, and surfaces, usually using spray paint as a medium, but also stencils, screen prints, acrylic paints, markers and other supplies.

Both the word "graffiti" and its singular form "graffito" are from the Italian word *graffiato* ("scratched"). "Graffiti" in art history refers to works of art produced by scratching a design into a surface. The word originates from Greek γράφειν — graphein — meaning "to write" — also the root of the word "graphite", the "lead" used in pencils.

Graffiti has always been pervasive in city life. In ancient Roman cultures, graffiti included magical curses, political slogans, secret messages, boasts, insults, declarations of love, advertisements, even warnings such as "cave canem" ("Beware of the Dog"). Graffiti have been drawn on walls, buildings and public surfaces with pencil, ink, paint, chalk or charcoal, rocks and sticks. Prison cells, boxcar walls, public restrooms, fences, pillars, subway stations, telephone booths and anywhere else people find a blank surface can become an impromptu canvas for leaving a personal mark.

Graffiti has appeared throughout recorded history in almost every culture that has had written language. Lord Byron left his name on one of the columns of the Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion in Attica, Greece. One otherwise forgotten Roman wrote "Lucius was here" on a wall in Pompeii, before Mount Vesuvius buried the city in molten lava.

Though 'graffiti' was originally defined as crude writing or drawing on walls, it has expanded to mean the elaborate and colorful street art we see today in urban neighborhoods, generally using "bubble"-style lettering. Graffiti and "tagging" were generally associated with gangs marking their territory, coming out of the hip-hop culture, and early on a source of concern for ordinary citizens. Since then, graffiti and street art have morphed more into an art form, often incorporating political and social commentary. Many graffiti artists have found making street art to be an exciting challenge, since it involves the risk of working in sometimes dangerous public spaces, without getting caught by police.

One very famous American graffiti found everywhere during WWII was "Kilroy was here", a simple graphic scrawled quickly on any available surface, including war planes and tanks, though the artists rarely identified themselves:



Another widespread American graffiti image was the iconic “Bozo Texino”, a cowboy logo that was drawn on the sides of trains and boxcar walls by the hobos and rail riders of the Depression and beyond. This little-known American folk art tradition is still a mystery as to its origin and meaning.

Another example of graffiti is the Rolling Stones album cover for “Beggars Banquet” picturing a bathroom wall covered with graffiti:



In a story found in the Bible (Daniel 5, Apocrypha), *Mene mene tekel upharsin* is a mysterious and frightening phrase that appears on the wall of Babylonian King Belshazzar’s palace, written as he watched by an invisible hand, in an unknown language. No one in his court can translate the phrase until Daniel of lion’s den fame is brought in, telling the king that the words read “numbered, numbered, weighed and divided”, meaning that Belshazzar’s corrupt reign is doomed to come to an end. It has given rise to the modern expression “the handwriting on the wall”.

GRAFFITI AND STREET ART

The first person thought to have started the spray paint graffiti trend was North Philadelphia high school student Darryl McCray, better known as Cornbread, who in the 1960’s began tagging all over North Philly with the phrase “Cornbread Loves Cynthia”, for Cynthia Custuss, a girl Darryl had a crush on. He then went on to paint his tag all over town. Cool Earl was Cornbread’s best friend and also became known for his tagging exploits, the pair gaining media attention. Another Philadelphia tagger, Top Cat 126, moved to New York in 1967 and helped to spark the graffiti trend there. Watch Cornbread and Taki 183 in action in the video *MOCA 2011*.

The end of the 1960’s saw the emergence of the graffiti scene in New York, when a number of writers started tagging their names, usually an alias combined with a street number, such as JULIO 204, CAY161 and the infamous TAKI183. Taki got famous when *The New York Times* ran an article on him in 1971, resulting in tagging becoming a game of who could get noticed the most. 1971 was also the time when the subway trains started to be tagged,

creating some of the most iconic artwork to have come out of the early graffiti and street art scene.

Graffiti started to evolve, with artists such as LEE 163 starting to join letters together, in the manner of Middle School PeeChee art. The early 1970’s also saw the emergence of two legends of the graffiti scene: Phase 2, who developed his distinctive bubble writing and Blade, who became known for covering entire train carriages with graffiti work. 1972 also saw the creation of United Graffiti Artists, a collective formed by Hugo Martinez, who recognized the potential of this new art form and started to display graffiti work in galleries. The remainder of the 1970’s saw graffiti spread across the USA and developing into more complex forms. In the late 70’s, artists Fab 5 Freddy and Lee Quiñones, both from Brooklyn graffiti group The Fabulous 5, were given a prestigious exhibition in Rome, Italy. Check out *10 New York Graffiti Legends Still Kicking (Ass)* — that has a list of important graffiti artists who changed the genre, with examples of their work.

Rock and Roll graffiti is a significant subgenre. A

famous graffito of the twentieth century was the inscription in the London tube reading “Clapton is God” in a link to the guitarist Eric Clapton. The phrase was spray-painted by an admirer on a wall in an Islington station on the Underground in the autumn of 1967. The graffito was captured in a photograph, in which a dog is urinating on the wall.

Graffiti also became associated with the anti-establishment punk rock movement beginning in the 1970s. Bands such as Black Flag and Crass (and their followers) widely stenciled their names and logos, while many punk night clubs, squats, and hangouts

are famous for their graffiti. In the late 1980s the upside down Martini glass that was the tag for punk band Missing Foundation was the most ubiquitous graffito in lower Manhattan, and was copied by hard core punk fans throughout the US and West Germany.

Along similar lines was the legend “Frodo Lives,” referring to the protagonist of *The Lord of the Rings*.

<https://www.widewalls.ch/tv/cornbread-and-taki-183-moca-art-in-the-streets-2011/>

<https://www.widewalls.ch/20th-century-the-rise-of-graffiti/>

<https://www.widewalls.ch/10-new-york-graffiti-legends-still-kicking-ass/phase-2/>

GRAFFITI AS AN ART FORM

Many social commentators feel that based on aesthetic considerations, graffiti has to be considered an art form. Large pieces require skill, planning and imagination. One common example is ‘wildstyle’, the calligraphic writing style of interlocking letters typical of graffiti that shows the extent of artistic elements in these works.

Wildstyle changes with each artist's interpretation of the alphabet, but it also relies on the use of

primary colors, fading, foreground and background, planning and composition to create these pieces. The artist's intention is to produce a work of art, and that must be taken into account when considering street art's legitimacy.

Supporters feel that graffiti can't be disregarded as art simply because of its location and illegality. The locations and way in which graffiti art is made is the only obstacle it faces in being considered an art form.



AEROSOL

Graffiti as we know it today wouldn't be possible without spray paint. Early pressurized spray cans were invented in 18th Century France, then improved by Danish inventors, and later, by several other individuals who experimented with various solutions. Finally, Edward Seymour of Chicago developed the first successful aerosol spray paint, suggested by his wife Bonnie. He named his company Seymour of Sycamore Inc. and is still in business today.

Aerosol paint is one of the major factors that separates graffiti writers from other artists. Although street artists and muralists, like graffiti artists, may use aerosol, they also use everything from acrylic and oil paint to projectors, wood or metal, and multimodal materials. Graffiti is all about the freehand use of aerosol. That's the art's defining factor, and as most aerosol artists will tell you, it takes years to perfect.

MURAL VS. GRAFFITI OR STREET ART

Murals in both public and private spaces may have some visual similarities with Graffiti, but most often are painted either on commission or by permission with a city or building owner, and generally include more images than text or letters. They also have artistic or social themes, artistic beauty and often great scale. Many famous West Coast muralists are Latino, and their work can be seen everywhere from Los Angeles to Denver to many Southwest towns and cities in between. Some very famous Mexican muralists include Diego Rivera, Jose Orosco, and

David Siqueiros. Contemporary Latino muralists to look up online include: Man One, MarkAK27, Farid Rueda, Vyal Reyes, TooFly, Inti, Satterugly, Werc, and Saner.

Latino muralists often use bold color, themes of daily life, the historical struggles of the Latino peoples, and religious iconography, as well as the famous Dia de Muertos or Day of the Dead images. Denver, CO, has many fine examples of Latino mural art, well worth exploring.

GRAFFITI AS VANDALISM

Graffiti continues to create disagreement between city officials and law enforcement, and graffiti artists wishing to display their work in public locations. There are many different types and styles of graffiti; it is a rapidly developing art form whose value is sharply contested by many authorities while also subject to protection, sometimes within the same jurisdiction.

Although its artistic merits can't be denied, graffiti is legally a form of vandalism in many cities. Artists tag both public and private property, which becomes costly for tax payers and business and property owners to remove. Graffiti can bring color and excitement to otherwise grim and rundown sections of cities, but can mar the beauty, classical lines and expensive materials of important landmark

architecture (The Chicago Art Institute is the example in our play).

The cost for cleanup in the U.S. has not been documented definitively, but it is estimated in the billions of dollars. In 2006 Chicago budgeted \$6.5 million while Omaha, NE, spends about \$100,000 annually, according to graffitihurts.org.

In many cities, graffiti writers if caught and charged, can face heavy fines and prison sentences. Because graffiti has long had gang associations, official and public opposition is not only concerned with the defacement of public property, but with the perceived threat of gang presence.

<http://iml.jou.ufl.edu/projects/fall07/Sanchez/vandalism.html>

SELECTED CRITICAL RESPONSES TO THE ORIGINAL PRODUCTION OF THE PLAY

The original production of *This Is Modern Art* premiered at Steppenwolf Theatre in Chicago in 2015 as part of their Steppenwolf for Young Adults series and was met with a wide range of reactions from critics and audiences alike. Below are excerpts from four of Chicago's theatre critics in reaction to the work.

Nancy Bishop | *Gapers Block* | Was what happened an act of vandalism or important artistic commentary? The question deserves to be addressed. The script and the characters acknowledge that they are committing an illegal act. But the important message the play articulates is that art shouldn't be confined to elite galleries and museums with \$18 admission tickets. The graffiti writers are artists shouting to be seen and heard. They demand visibility in a society that decrees them invisible — as artists and as individuals. [The playwrights] have written a pointed and eloquent script that is already generating controversy... And that's a good thing.

Source: <http://gapersblock.com/ac/2015/03/02/steppenwolfs-this-is-modern-art-raises-provocative-questions-about-definition-and-place-of-art-in-so/>

Chris Jones | *Chicago Tribune* | [*This Is Modern Art*] is a romantic ode to the art of graffiti and the act of tagging, a piece that demystifies authorial signatures and charts the storied history of graffiti art in Chicago, shouting out its great artists and their canvases, from Kennedy underpasses to CTA train yards [but] graffiti comes at a price. It can be invasive, self-important and disrespectful of the property of others... by all means, connect the city's kids to this artistic tradition, but I say there is a moral obligation to make them think about the price we all pay. And it's worth noting that artful graffiti is only a subset of the whole. We should stipulate that there is a true aesthetic tradition of Chicago graffiti, with its masters of the art. We should stipulate further that many of those masters felt they had no place else to create. Yes, art sometimes comes from danger, daring, subversion. All true. But graffiti never was a victimless crime.

Source: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/theater/reviews/ct-steppenwolf-show-says-graffiti-is-art-not-vandalism-20150301-column.html>

Kris Vire | *TimeOut: Chicago* | ...I won't pretend I haven't noted that some earlier reviews of the show have approached it from a hard moralistic point of view about graffiti and street art, and whether the play glamorizes this subculture too much. To my mind, the fact that defacing the property of others is against the law doesn't need to be spelled out to teenagers, though I'd say the play makes that quite clear, while also addressing the costs and potential consequences of graffiti to a satisfactory degree. This is a piece about the overwhelming urge not just to create art, but to get it seen — if only by a scant few before the sandblasters come along... But my takeaway — that a balance between outlets for self-expression and damage to yourself and others is worth fighting for — is one worth weaving into lesson plans everywhere.

Source: <https://www.timeout.com/chicago/theater/this-is-modern-art-based-on-true-events>

Hedy Weiss | *Chicago Sun Times* | To start, a hypothetical question... how would you react were you to arrive at work one morning only to discover that the entire facade of your theater had been spray-painted with graffiti, and that the message left behind went like this: "All the world is OUR stage." This play is a wildly wrong-headed and potentially damaging work — one that fails to call "vandalism" by its name, and rationalizes and attempts to justify that vandalism in the most irresponsible ways... in a way that only reinforces stereotypes and negative destinies. When graffiti became the medium of protest, I watched as thousands of subway cars, street signs, historic bridges and building walls were defaced — becoming a sort of visual virus that the city could neither control nor afford to erase. That graffiti (which later surfaced as America's "gift" to European cities, too) became the most self-destructive marker — a warning sign that a neighborhood was dangerous, infected with crime, on the decline, and a bad place to set up a business. In short, it was a form of grand-scale urban self-inflicted mugging... and while you might have been able to pick out a few bits of truly "artful" scrawl, most of the stuff was desecration, pure and simple. No amount of classroom discussion will scrub clean the irresponsible ideas promulgated in this play

Source: <https://chicago.suntimes.com/entertainment/steppenwolfs-deeply-misguided-this-is-modern-art-spray-paints-all-the-wrong-messages/>

CROSS-OVER GRAFFITI ARTISTS

Banksy is the pseudonym of a British guerilla street artist known for his controversial, often political stenciled pieces. His identity remains unknown. He's believed to have been born in Bristol, England, around 1974. He became famous in the 1990's, and is the subject of a 2010 documentary, *Exit Through The Gift Shop*, which talks about the relationship between commercial and street art and graffiti. He is probably the best-known of all graffiti artists; his work sells for hundreds of thousands of dollars.

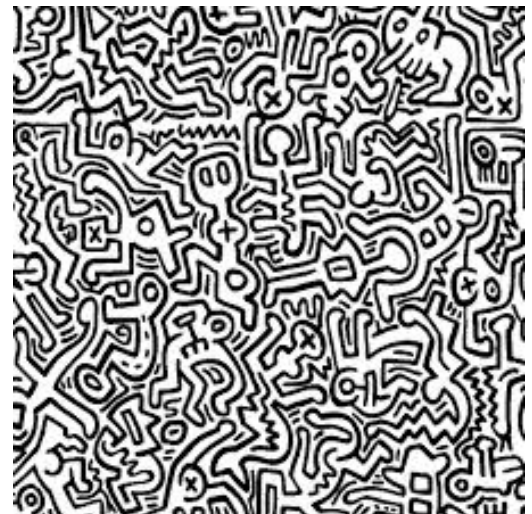


Chaz Bojórquez brought his style of Asian calligraphy and the Chicano graffiti style of the '50s to the streets of East Los Angeles. Bojórquez is now considered the godfather of the "cholo"-style letters seen on the hoods of pimped-out rides, motorcycle jackets and tattoos that usually goes along with an image of a skull or a red rose placed next to them.



Keith Haring (May 4, 1958 – February 16, 1990) was an American artist whose pop art and graffiti-like work grew out of the New York City street culture of the 1980s. His style was unique and unmistakable.

Haring's work became popular from his exuberant spontaneous drawings in New York City subways depicting radiant babies, flying saucers, and deified dogs. After public recognition he created larger colorful murals, many of them commissioned. His imagery has become widely recognized and used in commercial products — featured for sale in his self-created Pop Shop. His later work often addressed political and societal themes — especially homosexuality and AIDS — through his unique style. The Keith Haring Foundation supports not-for-profit organizations that assist children, as well as organizations involved in education, research and care related to AIDS.



Jean-Michel Basquiat was a gifted and multi-talented Latinx/ African-American artist who started out as part of SAMO, a graffiti crew in Manhattan's lower east side in the late 1970s where the hip hop, punk, and street art movements were focused. By the 1980s, he was exhibiting his neo-expressionist paintings in galleries and museums internationally. He collaborated with Andy Warhol and other pop figures, such as Madonna and many others. On May 18, 2017, at a Sotheby's auction, Basquiat's 1982 painting, *Untitled*, created with oil stick and spray paint, set a new record high for any U.S. artist at auction, selling for \$110 million dollars, after the artist's death at age 27.



Shepard Fairey is one of the most influential street artists of our time. His work combines elements of graffiti, pop and commercial art, and Marxist theory, and has been used in screen-prints, stencils, stickers, collages, sculptures, posters, paintings, and murals. His most famous art includes images of Andre the Giant, and one of his most famous works, his portrait of Barack Obama, seen on the cover of *Time Magazine*.



Sandra Fabara, better known as **Lady Pink**, is an Ecuadorian writer who was raised in Queens and graduated from the High School of Art & Design in New York City, made her mark in the male-dominated graffiti world from 1979 to 1985. Like most writers, **Lady Pink** painted in the darkest and most dangerous subway tunnels in NYC to display her artistry. Quickly, the graffiti community recognized her creativity and fearlessness. Now, more than 30 years later, the respected, beloved and admired Lady Pink is still a highly sought-after painter, muralist and graffiti writer with works featured in art galleries, museums and sponsored building walls all over the U.S.



SOME COMMON TERMS IN GRAFFITI

Blockbuster, A blockbuster is like a massive throw-up usually in big blocky letters. Blockbusters are used to cover a large area in a small amount of time, and can be painted with rollers, which makes them faster and easier to do.

Bomb, To *bomb* or *hit* is to paint many surfaces in one area. Bombers often choose to paint throw-ups or tags instead of complex pieces, as they can be executed more quickly. A 'bomb' can also refer to a single large piece executed in a short time. During the '70s and '80s the term "bombing" meant that your tag, name or artwork was spray-painted on one of the Metropolitan Transit Authority's subways that traveled all over the concrete jungle of New York City. Along with break dancing, DJing and rapping, writers no older than 19 considered this unlawful, risky and dangerous act as one of the four elements of hip-hop.

Crew, A *crew*, *krew*, or *cru* is a group of associated writers or graffiti artists that often work together. Crews are differentiated from gangs in that their main objective is to paint graffiti. Any group of friends can quickly and informally form a crew if they are interested in graffiti and want to start collaborating. Often crews will recruit new members over time in order to maintain their relevance. Coming up with a crew name is an art, with lots of help from various internet sites.

Handstyle, or Hand, is a term in graffiti culture denoting the unique handwriting, style or signature of an artist, also known as a 'writer'. Writers are perceived as having "good" or "bad" handstyles by those in the graffiti community.

Heaven, heaven spots (or shorter as *heavens*): Graffiti that is found in hard-to-reach places such as rooftops, billboards and freeway signs, thus making them hard to remove. By the nature of the spot, graffiti work here often pose dangerous challenges to execute, but may increase an artist's notoriety. This term also encompasses a double-meaning as the locations are often very dangerous to paint there and it may lead to falling deaths, thus, going to heaven (also known as "hitting up the heavens").

Piece, is short for a masterpiece. As the play notes, pieces are "large, detailed, intricate and complicated."



Tagging, Some of the most common styles of graffiti have their own names. A tag is the most basic writing of an artist's name; it is simply a handstyle. A graffiti writer's tag is his or her personalized signature. Tagging is often the example given when opponents of graffiti refer to any acts of handstyle graffiti writing (it is by far the most common form of graffiti). Tags can contain subtle and sometimes cryptic messages, and may incorporate the artist's crew initials or other letters.



Throw-up, A throw-up or "throwie" sits between a *tag* and a *bomb* in terms of complexity and time investment. It generally consists of a one color outline and one layer of fill-color. Easy-to-paint bubble shapes often form the letters. A throw-up is designed for quick execution, to avoid attracting attention to the writer. Throw-ups are often utilized by writers who wish to achieve a large number of tags while competing with rival artists. Most artists have both a tag and a throw-up that are essentially fixed compared to pieces. It is mostly so because they need to have a recognizable logo for others to identify them and their own individual styles.



Wild-style, a complicated and intricate form of graffiti, usually incorporating interwoven and overlapping letters and shapes, often very hard to read by people who are not familiar with it.



Writer: Another word for a graffiti or street artist.

Writing: slang for tagging graffiti

MORE READING AND WATCHING

A comprehensive glossary of graffiti terms can be found here on Wikipedia:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_graffiti

The World Atlas of Street Art and Graffiti: Focuses on the world's most influential urban artists and artworks. Website: www.widewalls.ch

Movies: *Wild Style*, *Exit the Gift Shop*, *Piece by Piece*, *Bomb It*, *Stations of the Elevated*, *Jean-Michel Basquiat*, *Style Wars*, *Next: A Primer on Urban Painting*, *Just to Get a Rep*, *Wall Writers*, and many many others. (Google the keywords).

Documentary: Starring Cornbread and Taki183
<https://www.widewalls.ch/tv/cornbread-and-taki-183-moca-art-in-the-streets-2011/>

PBS Newshour: The History of American Graffiti: From Subway to Gallery
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEbYFrWUgTQ>

Best books and films about graffiti and street art:
<https://grafftours.com/2015/03/18/best-books-and-films-about-graffiti-and-street-art/>

Subway Art by Martha Cooper, Henry Chalfant

George C. Stowers: *Graffiti Art: An Essay Concerning The Recognition of Some Forms of Graffiti As Art, and Art Through Vandalism*
<https://www.graffiti.org/faq/stowers.html>

A great Westword article about the difference between “Street Art” and “Graffiti”:
<http://www.westword.com/arts/ten-ways-to-tell-the-difference-between-street-art-and-graffiti-6961170>

Check out Facebook: There are many pages about Graffiti, including “Graffiti is My Life”.

Erica Gonzalez is a teacher at the Girls Athletic Leadership School in Denver, CO, who helped her students participate in a mural painting project that raises consciousness regarding women in Central Asia.

There are many many blogs and articles online about Graffiti, which can be found through a Google search.

THIS IS MODERN ART

STUDY QUESTIONS

Pre-Performance Questions

1. What is your definition of legitimate art? How would you define graffiti? What characteristics do they share and what characteristics are at odds?
2. When do you consider graffiti art and when is it vandalism? What causes this difference?

Post-Performance Questions

1. How do the elements of set design, costuming, lighting, projections and sound help tell the story? Which are the most effective and why?
2. After seeing the play, does your definition of graffiti change as art changes? What influenced your change or solidified your initial opinion?
3. How does Seven explain the different forms of graffiti to Selena? Which forms do you see in Denver or surrounding communities?
4. How would you describe the crew? What do we know about each of the members: Seven, JC, DOSE and Selena?
5. How do physical risk and the possibility of being caught fuel the crew's drive as artists? What other forms of expression can you think of that mix these elements?
6. Do you agree with Selena's definitions for acts that are suspicious but not illegal?
7. In what ways would you consider the crew to be artists; in what ways vandals?
8. Do you share any of the opinions expressed by the people of Chicago as expressed in the play?
9. One of the most notable moments, positive and negative, in the play for Chicago critics was the crew's explicit explanation of how to prepare and execute a graffiti bomb. What were your reactions to this?
10. Does the play present effective arguments regarding who gets to define what is art and where art is/is not displayed?

THIS IS MODERN ART

ACTIVITIES

Art Critiquing

1. Using the internet, look at a few works that are deemed modern art (Kahlo, Picasso, Dali, Rothko, etc.) and some images from the graffiti canon.
2. Pick one of these images from each medium and critique it.
3. Start with **describing** the work. Make a list of what you see in each work. Do not add any judgments about the work's quality or subject — list your observations as facts.
4. Next, **analyze** the work. Make a list of specific elements in the work or expand the descriptions that you made earlier. What colors are used? What shapes are used? What textures are used?
5. Next, **interpret** the work. What do you think the artist was trying to say? How do you feel when you look at the work? What do you think it means?
6. Then, make a **judgment** about the work. Explain why you believe the artwork is successful or unsuccessful? Why do you like or dislike the work? If you had an art gallery, would you want to display it; would you be able to sell it? Does the work have artistic value for you? If not, can you see why the piece might have value for others?
7. Discuss how the process for evaluating modern art and graffiti held both similarities and differences.
8. What questions arose for you when applying your critiques?

Visual Art PG: Make informed critical evaluations of visual and material culture, information, and technologies.

Visual Art PG: Analyze, interpret, and make meaning of art and design critically using oral and written discourse.

Creating a Mural

1. Either in a small group or individually, start by finding a topic to explore. What is important to you? What cause would you like to comment on? How can you convey this idea to a visual art medium?
2. Sketch a small version of the mural. Incorporate shape, line, form, color and other elements and also your name. This could either be a “code” name or your actual name.
3. Share your sketch with the larger group. If needed, use the art critiquing exercise as a guide.
4. Discuss if your sketch embodies your feelings and if it conveys your feelings. Where would you place this art for its greatest impact?

Visual Art PG: Analyze, interpret, and make meaning of art and design critically using oral and written discourse.

Visual Art PG: Recognize, articulate, and debate that the visual arts are a means for expression.

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