Art Toy Design: Junk Art MUNNYWORLD

Description

This lesson focuses on using 3-D and "found objects" for sculptural customization. Students will learn about the Art toy Movement and the Pop Art genre that informs it, customizing their own art toy figures using Kidrobot's MUNNYWORLD do-it-yourself toys.

Objectives

Students will:

– Learn how popular and commercial culture, "street a rt," and the art shown in galleries and museums influence each other and gain creative energy through the exchange of ideas and visual imagery.

– Be introduced to the Pop Art movement.

– Learn to see the objects and images in their everyday lives as a source of inspiration for their own art, as well as pieces that can be incorporated into their own art.

– Create their own toy character, exploring possibilities for individual self-expression.

Materials

Kidrobot MUNNYWORLD do-it-yourself toys
Acrylic paints
Paint markers
Sharpie markers in different colors
Glue Gun
Elmer's or Tacky Glue
Scissors
Paper, pencils, and markers for preliminary sketches
Zipper storage bags to hold students' materials

You will want to have several boxes of "found objects" to use in the creation of the students' "junk art" MUNNYWORLD art projects. Your supply might include:

Wire (plain and colored)
Googly eyes
Fabric scraps and felt
Needle and thread
Modeling clay or Plastimold paper pulp for modeling
Acrylic jewels
Glitter or glitter glue
Buttons
Pipe cleaners
Old toys or dolls
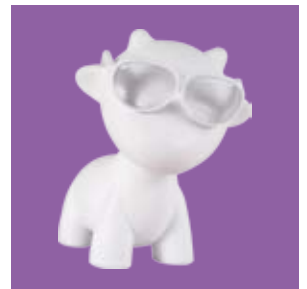
Old watches (broken is fine!)
Stuffed animals (can be taken apart or unstuffed for use as MUNNYWORLD clothing)
Game pieces and puzzle pieces
Colored masking tape
Beads, sequins, and old costume jewelry
Pom-poms
Yarn
Feathers
Wood scraps, clothespins, and toothpicks
Hairpieces or wigs
Burlap, old denim, or camouflage pants
Anything else you can think of!!

NOTE: Have students bring contributions to the junk art supply boxes.

Procedure

Introduce students to Pop Art and designer "art toys."

Background: Pop Art is an art movement that became popular in the United States and England in the late 1950s and 1960s and continues to have a strong influence on the art world today. It is based on the idea of using imagery from everyday life and consumer culture as subject matter for art. One of the most famous pop artists was Andy Warhol, whose paintings and prints of movie stars and of consumer goods such as Campbell's Soup cans celebrated pop culture and American consumerism. American artist Roy Lichtenstein focused on imagery from comic books. Claes Oldenburg made gigantic sculptures of household items. All of these artists drew from the popular culture and the world of everyday images and objects to make their art.

Contemporary Pop Art, particularly the work being done by several prominent Japanese artists, carries on this vibrant tradition, commenting on consumer culture and using images from Japanese "manga" comics and animation or "anime." Most students will be familiar with the Pokémon and Digimon cartoon and collector fads, which swept through the country in the last decade.

CLASS 1: Discussion and Sketches

Discussion

Show students several examples of Pop Art and contemporary Japanese art, for instance:

• Andy Warhol's "Campbell Soup" prints
• Chinatsu Ban's "Yellow Elephant" from Central Park installation, 2005
• Roy Lichtenstein's "Whaam!"

Questions

• Where did these artists get their inspiration?
• Do these pieces of art look like things you might see in your everyday life?
• Is it okay for artists to "borrow" images that already exist?
• Why do you think the artists focused on these images?

Demonstration

Show students examples of finished MUNNYWORLD toys, either one that the teacher has done, or images from the gallery at www.kidrobot.com/munnyworld, or both!.

As students to imagine a character that they want to create, keeping in mind that it can be as realistic or abstract as they'd like.

At this age, the invitation to create a character is very powerful and exciting, and students usually need little direction to come up with ideas. If students need motivation, the teacher can encourage them to use ideas from pop culture, mythology, book characters, fantasy, or the media. The MUNNYWORLD figures can have a theme (e.g., nature, or outer space), represent powers the students would like to have, or express an emotion.

Have students sketch the basic MUNNYWORLD figure's shape in outline form, front and back. Depending on the age of the class and general skill level, the teacher can also download MUNNYWORLD templates at www. kidrobot.com/munnyworld/?p=edu.

Using pencils, markers, or colored pencils, students should plan out the design for their MUNNYWORLD figure. Students should keep in mind that, after they begin, their plans might change. This initial sketch is a "blueprint" for their toy rather than an exact depiction of what it wil be.

CLASS 2: Making MUNNYWORLD

Set-Up

Have tables covered with paper, as this tends to get really messy!

Set up a glue gun station and decide whether teacher or students will be using this.

Set up a tool station (drill, matte knife, needle-nose pliers, hammer and nails are all handy. Decide who uses these, too—teacher or students.

Set out paints, brushes (including small sizes for detail work), and water in cups for rinsing. Acrylic paints should be used full strength, not thinned with water.

Set up tables with "junk art" supplies for students to choose from.

Have markers, paints, and some basic supplies on all work tables.

Students should look at their sketches. They can lightly pencil the painting patterns onto their MUNNYWORLD figures, or they can work spontaneously from the "junk art" supplies. They should feel free to change their ideas as they work.

Have students go to the supply tables to get fun stuff for their MUNNYWORLD figures.

Clothing patterns are available and can be downloaded from http://www.kidrobot.com/munnyworld/downloads/munny_clothing.pdf.

Help students use glue guns and power tools as they work.

Encourage them to look at one another's work and share ideas!

NOTE: The heads of each MUNNYWORLD figure can be removed (and replaced later) to make painting easier.

For more customizing tips, please refer to our MUNNYWORLD Customizing Guide. Go to www.kidrobot.com/munnyworld/?p=customize.

CLASS 3: Sharing MUNNYWORLD

Set the toys up in the classroom so that the students can see everyone's work.
Have them each talk about their design:
• Who is their character?
• What inspired it?
• Does it have any special powers/characteristics?
• Why did they choose the colors they did?

Additional Activities:

– Have the students write a brief story featuring their character.

– Ask the students to take the toy with them for a week and photograph it in various places that the student goes: at home, on vacation, the grocery store, the park, the Laundromat, the mall, wherever! Assemble the photos in a journal, and have students tell a funny story about the toy's "travels."

kidrobot®

– Have students make accessories for their characters.

– Look at toys from various cultures, like Native American Kachina storyteller dolls, early American rag dolls, or Russian nesting dolls, and compare them to the MUNNYWORLD figures. Discuss: "What do the characters people create say about the people and cultures who make them?"

Resources

Images of toys are available at kidrobot.com.

Teachers may choose to focus on one aspect of pop culture or another. Artists whose work provides rich source material for discussion include:

Andy Warhol
www.warholfoundation.org
www.warhol.org

Claes Oldenburg
www.oldenburgvanbruggencom

Robert Rauschenberg
www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/rauschenberg_robert.html
www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/rauschenberg_r.html

Roy Lichtenstein
www.lichtensteinfoundation.org

Keith Haring
www.haringkids.com
www.haring.com

Takashi Murakami & Contemporary Japanese Art
www.jca-online.ocm/murakami.html

Murakami Exhibit
www.moca.com/murakami
www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/murakami

Graffiti Artists
www.graffiti.org

kidrobot®