

MIXED-MEDIA ART



Learn about artist Amalia Amaki and her mixed-media work "Twosome." Questions for looking and art-making projects can be adapted to suit different grade-level standards. Questions for looking and art-making projects can be adapted to suit different grade-level standards.

Engage in slow looking and art-making with these classroom

Amalia Amaki (American, born 1959), "Twosome," 2015. Collage, mixed-media assemblage. Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; Gift of the artist. 2016.88.

QUESTIONS FOR LOOKING

- Look closely at the work of art. What do you see or notice?
- This work is an example of mixed-media art. A medium is the material an artist uses to make art. When a work of art includes several different materials it's called mixed-media art. How many different objects and materials can you find in Amalia Amaki's piece?
- What special objects do you like to collect? Do you think the objects Amaki chose have special meaning to her? Why or why not?
- How does the artist use small found objects to create the impression of a larger object (a handheld mirror)? How might the artwork be different if she had simply painted a mirror?
- Can you find different frames inside this artwork? How many can you count?
- Read the information about the artist and her work on the back of this resource. Look at the work again. How have your observations and thoughts about it changed?
- What objects would you include in a mixed-media assemblage? What story would it tell?

ART-MAKING: MIXED-MEDIA ASSEMBLAGE

An **assemblage** is a work of art that is made by combining different elements — often everyday objects or nontraditional materials. To create your own mixed-media assemblage on a large sheet of cardstock, cardboard or canvas board start by thinking of a scene, memory or feeling you want to re-create. Your finished project doesn't need to look realistic. Cut out textures, patterns and images from magazines. Glue them onto your design to build up layers. Paint over and around the glued images using unexpected colors and brushstrokes. Now glue on found objects such as buttons or beads, building up the surface. What objects can you use that mean something special to you?

ART-MAKING: CULTURAL PORTRAITS

Culture includes the traditions, food, clothing, music and stories that surround us. Think of someone important to you. Interview them to learn more about their culture. Plan how you'd make a mixed-media portrait of them. A portrait is a painting, drawing, photograph or sculpture of a person. How will you represent them? What colors or shapes do you connect with them? What objects will you include? Explore the idea of concentricity and framing devices: how can you create the impression of a "frame" in your art?

MIXED-MEDIA ART



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Amalia Amaki is an Atlanta-born artist who creates mixed-media assemblage and collage with found objects. In mixed-media art, materials often carry meaning. For example, Amaki's work includes buttons and beads, both of which have historically been important to African American communities. Amaki's artwork also incorporates found photographs, usually of African American subjects. Her work recalls the photomontage tradition pioneered by Dada artists in Europe while responding to a different cultural history: the lived experience of African Americans in the American South.

Georgia Standards of Excellence

Elementary: VA(K-5).CN.1, VA(K-5).CR.1, VA(K-5).CR.3, VA(K-5).RE.1, SS2G2d
Secondary: VA8.CN.1/VAHSVA.CN.1, VA8.CN.3/VAHSVA.CN.3, VA8.RE.1/VAHSVA.RE.1, VA8.CR.1/VAHSVA.CR.1, VA8.CR.3/VAHSVA.CR.3

ABOUT THE WORK

"Twosome" is a mixed-media assemblage largely consisting of found buttons, beads, paper and photographs. These objects, some of which are normally used for jewelry or personal adornment, contribute to the work's themes of identity, cultural history and self-representation. Amaki creates an intimate, reflective artwork by showing a handheld mirror (which literally reflects the self). She uses concentric (or nested) framing in this work by inserting frames within frames. Notice the outermost gold and black frame of the work. Within that frame is an oval shape created by Amaki's arrangement of beads. Inside this oval is the frame of the handheld mirror, within which are even smaller framed photographs. This dynamic composition prompts us to think about the things we choose to frame in our daily lives, how we "frame" or represent ourselves and which objects are most meaningful to us.