

Talking Points: Contemporary Masks

A collection of sources to explore contemporary artists who create masks.

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Romuald Hazoumè

West African artist Romuald Hazoumè creates contemporary African masks made using discarded plastic containers, in particular petrol canisters. The petrol canisters are used by lots of people in West Africa and represent the artist's heritage. They also represent his critical vision of political systems.

"I send back to the West that which belongs to them, that is to say, the refuse of consumer society that invades us every day."

Questions to Ask Children

How do the masks make you feel?

Do you like the masks? Why?

What do you think the artist is trying to say through the artwork?

What other recycled or waste materials could we use to make masks?

Damselfrau

Damselfrau focuses on play and make as few conscious decisions as possible to let the materials lead. Damselfrau design the masks as she makes, responding to materials as opposed to a drawn design.

The masks are perhaps more accurately described as

wearable sculptures. The ornate creations fuse the boundaries between fashion and design.

Questions to Ask Children

How do these masks make you feel?

How do these masks compare to Romuald's masks?

If you encountered someone wearing the of the masks how would you feel?

Thalassic Masks

The Thalassic Masks project focuses on rethinking the protective mask, transforming a medical product, born in a state of emergency, into a design statement expressing contemporary identities.

The artists Filippo Nassetti and Vincezo Reale believe that beyond Covid-19, further implications of climate change and the disruption of ecological environments, such as air pollution and transformations in the atmosphere, may see protective devices become more and more an essential extension of the human body.

Questions to Ask Children

Do you like the Thalassic masks?

How does the mask make you feel?

Do you think that it's an improvement on the

surgical masks you've had to wear over the past 2 years?