Talking Points: Paula Scher

A collection of imagery and sources designed to introduce pupils to the work of graphic designer Paula Scher.

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Paula Scher

Paula Scher is an American graphic designer, painter and art educator in design.

Paula creates branding, but she also created a series of "maps" which contain "errors and mistakes". Explore in the video and link below.

"Paula Scher painted two 9-by-12-foot maps that resembled patchwork quilts from afar, but contain much textual detail. She created lines that represented the separation of political allies or borders dividing enemies. Scher created the maps into layers that reference what we think when we think of Japan, Kenya, or the Upper East Side.

For instance, The United States (1999) was painted in blocky white print and full with a list of facts that we comprehend when we think about cities. Africa (2003) is represented in a stark

black and white palette, hinting at a tortured colonial past. The land of the red rising sun is represented when we think of Japan (2004).

Scher decided to produce silk-screened prints of The World that contained large-scale images of cities, states, and continents blanketed with place names and other information. It is full of mistakes, misspellings, and visual allusions to stereotypes of places such as South America, painted with hot colours and has two ovaries on the sides. It was not created to be a reliable map but convey a sense of the places that are mediated and mangled." [Wiki](#)

www.pentagram.com/news/paula-scher-maps

Abstract: Art of the Design/ Paula Scher

Please Note: At timecode 8.00 Paula Scher talks about her maps.

Questions to Ask Children:

How would you describe one of Paula's maps to someone who couldn't see them?

In what ways do Paula's maps differ from regular maps?

How would these maps change if you held them in your hand?

This Talking Points Is Used In…
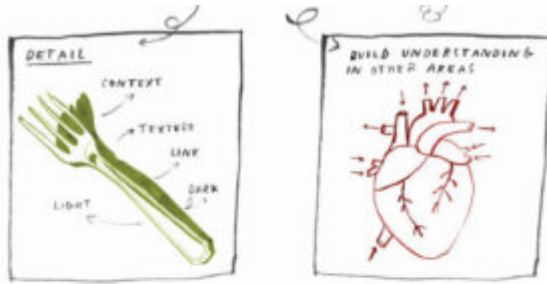
Pathway: Typography and Maps

[This is featured in the 'Typography and Maps' pathway](#)

using sketchbooks to make visual notes

Show me what you see

DETAIL

CONTEXT

TEXTURE

LINE

DARK

LIGHT

BUILD UNDERSTANDING
IN OTHER AREAS

SHOW ME WHAT YOU SEE METHOD:

1) GUIDE SEEING

"SHOW ME..."

2) RULES

SMALL

BIG

SHARP

3) CHALLENGE EXPECTATIONS

4) COUNT DOWN