



Artistic Dialogues for Fine Arts Classes

Artistic Dialogues

Classroom or Gallery Visit

Specialty Class Visits

Great for: [studio art courses interested in learning about material outside the Western canon and using it as a source for student response work](#)

The galleries exhibit expressions of the human experience spanning the globe and the timeline of humanity, ranging from practical implements and the detritus of daily life to large-scale demonstrations of power or religious devotion. The Museum's collections offer the opportunity to engage with the unnamed craftspeople and artisans from the past whose work may be all we know of them as individuals, but are representative of artistic, religious, political, and cultural traditions important to peoples of the past and their descendants. In this assignment, students can respond to or engage in artistic dialogue with the material on display to learn about and from non-Western cultures and traditions.

Class Time	One visit of 1-1.5 hours
Class Level	Any
Class Size	Maximum of 15 students for classroom; unlimited for gallery
Objectives	Learn about non-Western artistic traditions and their cultural context; identify key techniques, motifs, messaging, and purpose; utilize new knowledge to create response work
Prep	Instructors or students select artifacts for study from the online database or galleries. Students research their artifact's cultural context and artistic tradition.
Visit	Students visually examine their artifact and build upon their research with additional in-person observations.
Post	Using their understanding of visual vocabulary, techniques, and cultural significance, students create a work in response to or in dialogue with their original artifact. While students may choose to recreate newly learned techniques or media in their final work (e.g., basketry, weaving), they can be creative in how they deploy this new knowledge.

Examples:

- Ceramic students exploring the medium of Egyptian faience: neither ceramic nor glass, but with a unique coloring and luster, with a long history in Egypt and the Middle East.
- Metalworking students exploring South American depletion gilding: an alloy of gold and copper, which is more durable than pure gold but more malleable than pure copper, is exposed to acids in its final state to remove the copper and leave a gold surface.