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Inspired by Nengudi's process and how artists connect personal identities and universal experience, we challenge you to do the same by creating a short, three-minute, performance artwork using at least one ready-made object (an ordinary article from your life used in your art).

Create a performance artwork that explores an aspect of your identity using your everyday object as a tool in the artwork. Transform the function of the object you selected and give it new meaning.

1. Look inward: What personal experiences are fruitful to explore through artmaking? What might transcend your personal realm and connect to others universally? Use this Brainstorming organizer to choose the topic or topics that feel most interesting to explore.

BRAINSTORMING ORGANIZER

2. Gather everyday objects that connect to your topic in some way

a. What is the object? Why might it connect to your topic?

b. Experiment with your objects. Place them in bizarre or unfamiliar locations to view them from another perspective or point of view. How do they move? How can they be combined in unusual ways? What other experiments can you come up with?

3. Engage in self-reflection. Write about your initial ideas and plans for executing the work. This could take the form of a storyboard or an outline of your plan.

4. Clarify and refine your process or approach as you prepare for your performance.

5. Conduct your three-minute performance for an audience.

6. Reflect by describing what actually happened, record viewers' responses, and analyze the process as a whole. Make note of possible new directions to explore.

Reflection Questions:




- In what ways did you explore a personal topic in your work?
- How do you think your personal exploration might relate or resonate with others, therefore becoming universal?
- How did your performance go? What actually happened? How did your audience react? What might you do differently next time?

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE ART?

Performance art is an act of doing—it is not recounting, re-enacting, or representing. The distinguishing difference between performance art and performance in the theatre is that performance art is real, a direct action, whereas theatrical performances recreate a written narrative. Performance art often incorporates four elements: temporality or duration, space, bodily action including stillness, and often the presence of the artist. Performance art can be enacted outdoors or in a studio or gallery context. Performance art is often about an experiment by the artist rather than about entertaining an audience. Frequently a performance artist has created a challenge for themselves and, driven by curiosity, they perform to discover.

Performance art is about using your body and being present in the moment and often embraces playfulness in its creation. Many performances rely on interaction or reactions from an audience, but not always. We are using performance art to explore how personal can be universal. Because this mode of artmaking is about the personal and the political, it's figurative and conceptual, sometimes simple and sometimes complicated.

DIG DEEPER

-  Get warmed up into a performance mode by trying out some of these improv games
-  Here are some practical tips for teaching about performance art
-  Videos to help students define performance art
 - o Tate Shots: History of Performance Art
 - o MOMA, Maria Abramović defines Performance Art