

Making a Collaborative and Interactive Installation



Lesson Plan by Kaitlynn Radloff, Art Teacher, Milwaukee High School of the Arts

Time to Complete: Approximately 12 classes and one field trip to a local zoo

Big Idea: **Interpersonal Relationships and Skills**

Suggested Grade Level: 6-12



Collaboration by Milwaukee High School of the Arts students, Teacher Fellowship Program 2023, Native Wisconsin Landscape Mural, 2022; acrylic paint on canvas.

Learning Intentions

Students are learning about the life's work of Albert and Louise Zahn. Students will view, respond to, and discuss the work of Albert and Louise Zahn and will work collaboratively to design their own projects responding to the Zahns' work. Students will be thinking about interpersonal relationships and will explore this theme in their making processes.

Success Criteria

Students are successful when they collaboratively create an interactive installation(s) inspired by the Zahns. They will work under the theme Interpersonal Relationships and will find success when they create something that shares their understanding of these types of relationships. Viewers and other artists will be encouraged to respond to their work. Students will connect the information learned about Albert and Louise Zahn to their artwork.

National Standard Connection

Create Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Performing Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.

Responding Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Connecting Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Materials

Materials depend on what the students decide to create and what educators will have access to. The following were used for these projects:

- Sketch paper
- Acrylic paint
- Brushes
- Papier-mâché
- A scanner
- A copy machine
- Huion drawing tablets and Chromebooks
- Long rolls of primed canvas
- One large canvas board
- Found/acquired objects. For one student group, this included feathers, gemstones, beads, colored plastic, glitter, and use of a braille machine.

Discuss

Questions to think about when exploring the Zahns' artwork:

1. What do you see in the image/sculpture?
2. Describe one or more details you notice in this image.
3. What does this image make you wonder about?

Questions for discussing interpersonal relationships:

1. What is an interpersonal relationship?
2. Can you think of more types of interpersonal relationships you have?

Questions to think about at the zoo:

1. How does the zoo create and nurture a relationship between us and the animals?
2. How does the zoo start conversations through its exhibits?
3. How does the zoo invite us to collaborate with the staff/exhibits/each other?

Optional Zoo Scavenger Hunt

- Photograph one or more interactive places at the zoo.
- Photograph one exhibit that asks a question you find interesting.
- Photograph one exhibit/space that encourages us to talk to each other or work together.
- Photograph and post the exhibit/space that you think has the best/most interesting design elements.
- Photograph and post the exhibit/space that you think has the worst/least interesting design elements.
- Photograph your favorite animal.

Group project discussion

How can we create artwork/an installation that will:

1. Create and nurture a relationship between the viewer and the art/artist?
2. Start conversations?
3. Invite collaboration?

Create

- Day 1: Introduce the work of Albert and Louise Zahn and the project learning intentions and success criteria. Download Kaitlynn's presentation on jmkac.org to use as a starting point.
- Day 2: Zoo field trip—Focus on how exhibits are designed to foster interaction and create relationships between the viewer and the animals. Send students on an interactive photo scavenger hunt using Padlet, responding to various questions throughout the trip.
- Day 3: Recap field trip and review photos from zoo field trip. Table groups discuss what they are interested in. Whole groups share; students move to different groups/tables based on interests. Continue this process until all students have designed project ideas and chosen groups.
- Day 4: Work in groups to begin building and designing.
- Days 5 and 6: Creating days!
- Day 7: Halfway point mini critique.
- Day 8: Creating day!
- Day 9: Work day; brainstorm for group artist statement.
- Day 10: Creating day; finalize work.
- Day 11: Work day; finalize artist statement.
- Day 12: Final day to work.
- Day 13: In-person or virtual field trip to the John Michael Kohler Arts Center and Art Preserve.

Vocabulary

- Interpersonal relationship
- Installation
- Artist-built environment



Albert Zahn, untitled, c. 1924–c. 1950; wood, paint, and metal; 40 1/4 x 20 x 13 in. John Michael Kohler Arts Center Collection, gift of Diane Hiatt and Kohler Foundation Inc.