2D to 3D: CHARACTER CREATIONS // TOM SACHS: MIFFY FOUNTAIN

How will you show the “scars” of your labor when making a sculpture? What two-dimensional character will you re-create in three dimensions?

Objectives:

1. Survey a range of artwork depicting characters from popular culture, art history and the community, and by Tom Sachs. Discover and describe various examples, from celebrities to cartoon characters.
2. Examine and discuss the “scars of labor” Tom Sachs intentionally includes in his finished sculptures.
3. Brainstorm ways to create three-dimensional forms from two-dimensional materials. Experiment with how a sheet of paper and other flat materials could be manipulated into a three-dimensional form.
4. Create a sculpture of your favorite cartoon/television/movie character using a variety of two-dimensional materials.

Materials: Anything you have available, including but not limited to paper, pencils, markers, colored pencils, crayons, or other drawing materials; glue, tape, stapler, or other adhesive materials or tools; reflection worksheet (last page)

Look and Describe:

- Spend time looking at images of Tom Sachs’s sculpture Miffy Fountain at Laguna Gloria. Check out any details you might notice. List 3–5 observations you made about Miffy Fountain.
- Tom Sachs has said, “I’m looking to show the scars of labor and the evidence of construction... One way of making things special is to make them by hand.”
- Tom Sachs creates sculptures of many different characters and objects from popular culture. Some examples are Hello Kitty, NASA spaceships, even a McDonald’s! Why would an artist choose to re-create a well-known character, celebrity, or object? List 3–5 reasons.

- Who/what deserves to be the subject of a work of art? Create a list of popular characters that might be a future subject of a work of art. How would you describe these characters? What attributes are well-known about these characters?

MAKE AND DO:

1. Take a minute to think about the characters you listed.

- Pick one of the characters you listed. On a sheet of paper, draw 2–4 versions of the same character. How can you draw this character doing different things?

2. Some of our favorite cartoon characters, like Miffy, begin as two-dimensional (2D) drawings in books, TV shows, and movies. When a three-dimensional (3D) toy is going to be made of a 2D cartoon character, every 2D shape needs to first be created into a 3D form. Newer cartoons are all 3D animated, so it is easy to see how to transform those shapes into 3D forms.

3. Now that you have drawn your 2D character, how would those 2D shapes pop out into 3D? Make a list of all the 3D forms you would need to make to create a sculpture of your character.

4. Gather whatever materials you have on hand. From the list of 3D forms you see in your character, how would you transform 2D paper or cardboard into each 3D form? Try not to hide your process, and show off your “scars of labor.”

5. Once you have created your form, assemble your character using any adhesive available. What do the “scars of labor” in your sculpture tell us about how you made it? Did you CRUMPLE your paper? Did you FOLD the cardboard? Make a list of 3–5 verbs, or action words, you can see in your sculpture.

6. Write why you chose this character. Why is this character worthy of becoming a work of art? What is unique about your sculpture versus machine-made toy versions of it? Share 3–5 details.

OTHER RESOURCES:

- To find out more about Tom Sachs and his artwork, follow these links:
  - The Contemporary Austin: https://thecontemporaryaustin.org/exhibitions/tom-sachs/
  - Tom Sachs’s Website: https://www.tomsachs.org/
  - Check out his TEDx talk (13:00): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8aeaX6Kozw
- Check out these two works of art on Artsy, where you can zoom in to see more details:
  - Hello Kitty: https://www.artsy.net/artwork/tom-sachs-hello-kitty-1
  - Tiffany Value Meal: https://www.artsy.net/artwork/tom-sachs-tiffany-value-meal
- In art, appropriation is when an artist borrows, adopts, or samples aspects of another artist or company’s creation. Tom Sachs did not invent Miffy! An illustrator, Dick Bruna, invented her in 1955, but Tom Sachs created his version of Miffy, just like we did today in our art activity!
  - Appropriation can be controversial in art. What do you think? Do you think it is fair to re-create a character someone else invented and call it your own? What is the right/wrong way of using someone else’s artwork in your own artwork? Here is a link to learn more about appropriation in art: https://theartofeducation.edu/2018/04/20/a-project-to-help-teach-your-students-about-appropriation/
**LOOK AND DESCRIBE:** Take some time to jot down your ideas.

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<th>4.</th>
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**MAKE AND DO:** Take some time to sketch or take notes before you start working.

| What do the “scars of labor” in your sculpture tell us about how you made it? | 1.  
| List 3–5 details. | 2.  
| 3.  
| 4.  
| 5.  |

| Why is this character worthy of becoming a work of art? What is unique about your sculpture? | 1.  
| Share 3–5 details. | 2.  
| 3.  
| 4.  
| 5.  |

From the list you created above, which is your favorite? Circle it!
- Draw 2–4 different versions of your favorite character.

<p>| List the 3D forms that make up your character and sketch them. |</p>
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<tr>
<th>How would you use a sheet of paper to create these forms?</th>
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