

No Colour Bar: Black British Art in Action 1960-1990

Archive learning resources

Teachers' notes

The use of paintings and photographs helps society to make sense of complex issues and matters and helps to communicate ideas across generations and cultures. The purpose of this learning resource is to provide an innovative and creative approach to share in the multi-cultural experience in the UK, utilising the living and historical pieces in the Huntley Archives. Crystallised by a dynamic exhibition, called **No Colour Bar: Black British Art in Action 1960-1990**, and based largely on the materials found in or inspired by the Huntley Archives, the resource includes stories about the post-war arrivals of people from the Caribbean, the discussions about migration, place making and looks at changes to the culture of the UK. These worksheets aim to encourage young people to talk about self-identification, support their personal development and to build an awareness of citizenship through interactive and self-exploratory educational processes.

BACKGROUND

Looking back over that period in recent history, *No Colour Bar* helps provide context and brings to life current conversations about citizen's rights, equality, inclusivity and diversity. The civil rights and anti-colonial struggles that were storming throughout the Americas and across Africa in this transformational period of the 1960s through to 1990s, are shown in the United Kingdom by the actions of migrant and indigenous communities. Musicians, artists and writers responded to the changes in society, and created a thriving Black British arts and cultural scene that explored identity, place, celebration and protest. *No Colour Bar* exhibition was one of the most comprehensive surveys of Black British art in recent years. Artworks from artists were juxtaposed with archive material from popular and political culture. Postcards, pamphlets, community campaign posters, private letters, books, press clippings and music punctuated each themed section, providing a journey that navigates the complexity of the social, cultural and political landscape. The works on display covered a range of themes: identity, place, celebration, and protest, as expressed by artists and cultural practitioners inside and outside of the Huntleys' immediate circle.

No Colour Bar: Black British Art in Action 1960-1990 is a collaborative project between The Friends of the Huntley Archives at the LMA, the City of London: London Metropolitan Archives, and the Guildhall Art Gallery, supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.



Teachers' Notes

Themes for Learning Across the Curriculum

The *No Colour Bar* exhibition theme headings are a useful way of thinking about the broader cultural political issues that many of the artists and activists are engaged in. The opportunity to learn from and discuss the key ideas of the time can be explored through these themes which are used to tell the story of the impact of migration on creative arts in the UK: "Elbow Room", "Broad Shoulders", "Clenched Fists" and "Open Arms".

The worksheets are organised around these four themes and provide activities on the reverse:

A. The Art in Communicating

Elbow Room: creating a space for Black art and cultural practices in Britain..

B. Making Space & Creating Spaces

Broad Shoulders: strong, yet brave struggles against oppression and injustice.

C. Activism and Campaigning

Clenched Fists: movements of resistance to and activism against racism, political violence and inequality.

D. Exploring Identity

Open Arms: embracing a new internationalism through solidarity, collaboration and creativity.

This resource aims to provide the pupils with support for:

1. Exploring and developing ideas

Pupils record from their own first hand observations, respond to the materials and explore ideas around the themes or questions.

2. Investigating and researching the use of archive materials

Pupils learn about the different ways in which the images/written materials communicate ideas, feelings or meanings by the nature of how they perceive the form or format (e.g. photograph of an artwork, photograph, copy of poem, letter, pamphlet or visual film media).

3. Evaluating and Developing Work

Pupils associate the ideas, themes and connections found in the resource materials with other forms of information, and say what they think about their own research or/and how they may go about further fact finding.

4. Increasing Knowledge and Understanding

Pupils evaluate and discuss each other's work, make reasonable judgements and are encouraged to express their opinions.

Materials have been selected to provide activities to encourage analytical thinking and observational skills by exploring differences and similarities. The resource will offer ideas to support children as readers, researchers and creative thinkers, as well as developing skills as to discover the links between history, citizenship and cultural identity.

You can view further images via:
www.nocolourbar.org

Useful Study Links include:

City of London/London Metropolitan Archives
<https://search.lma.gov.uk>

Black Cultural Archives
www.bcaheritage.org.uk

The National Archives
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/Caribbean

Hackney Museum
www.hackney.gov.uk/museum-teaching-resources

References and Further reading

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