Teachers' Packet

Judy Chicago, The Birth Project and the Female Voice

Birth Trinity, 1983, Judy Chicago
For tour information, contact Viki D. Thompson Wylder at (850) 645-4681 and vwylder@fsu.edu.

The inquiry premise and all questions in this packet are taken from an article written by Pat Villeneuve titled “Inquiry in the Art Class” published in *The International Journal of Arts Education* Volume 13 Number 2 December 2015.

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Design: Stephanie Antonijuan, McKenna Britton & Hannah Kirsch

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Women in Art: Changing the Male Gaze

Throughout the history of art, men have painted images of women in a way that idealized the female form with naked flesh that was pure and lustrous. These images generally were not a celebration of the female form, rather the women in these artworks were objects for the male gaze and were mainly viewed as images of sexual objectification. Few nudes prior to those by feminist artists, such as Judy Chicago, focused on females as independent thinkers, and self-empowered entities.

Judy Chicago’s Birth Project works were the result of a collaborative five-year project with approximately one hundred fifty women needleworkers. Chicago aimed to celebrate the power of women to not only give birth physically, but to intellectually give birth to other creative acts and products as well. When viewing this work, audiences sometimes felt uncomfortable. Chicago referenced the patriarchal viewpoint of the art world by responding that, “if men had babies, there would be thousands of images of the crowning.”

Women Artists Overview

Female artists throughout history who, like Judy Chicago, fought to take back their voices.

Women artists are not a rare breed. There are thousands of women who create beautiful and impactful art across the nation and world – so why is it that we hardly ever learn their names? The number of famous women artists discussed in school curricula, and even within museum spheres, are few. Frida Kahlo, Georgia O’Keefe, and Mary Cassatt are recognizable names, but what about the remaining thousands of women artists historically and contemporaneously? Why are women artists so easily disregarded? What is the history of women in the art world? Female artists deserve our attention and respect. Below are a few other women artists who worked/are working to have their voices heard:

Vanessa Bell (1879 - 1961): Bell was one of the founders of the Bloomsbury Group, Bell helped bring Post-Impressionism to England and fought Victorian values.

Tina Modotti (1896 - 1942): Beyond being an Italian photographer and model, Modotti was a revolutionary political activist and an Avant-Garde artist alongside Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera.
Elizabeth Catlett (1915 - 2012): Catlett emphasized women’s struggles in particular to African American culture during the 20th Century in the United States.

Shirin Neshat (1957 - present): Neshat challenges women’s role in Iran through film and photography.

Sokari Douglas Camp (1958 - present): Camp predominantly works on steel sculptures with inspiration from her Kalabari heritage in Nigeria.

Lin Tianmiao (1961 - present): In her installations and textile designs, this Chinese artist explores modernization and the struggle of being a woman in contemporary society.

However, this is by no means the end to the list of women artists. There are thousands more that have influenced art and the feminist movement. Listed below are books and articles in which you can find out more information about these artists:

1. Anscombe, Isabelle. A Woman’s Touch: Women in Design from 1860 to the Present Day
3. Gaze, Delia. Dictionary of Women Artists
4. Heller, Nancy G. Women Artists: An Illustrated History
6. Slatkin, Wendy. Women Artists in History: From Antiquity to the Present

Refer to bibliography for full publisher information.

**Feminist Art Movement of the 1960s and 1970s**

*While* the Suffragists won great victories during their fight for the vote (1840s to 1920), women still faced problems and limitations in the following decades. Jobs like nursing and teaching remained the usual options available to women. Becoming an artist or landing a position as a businesswoman was nearly unachievable as they were jobs from male-dominated fields and were considered inappropriate for women. Women were unable to make medical decisions about their own health and reproductive issues.

These lingering problems sparked Second-wave Feminism in the 60s and 70s. This wave of feminism expanded its goals beyond those of First-wave to become focused on the social constructs that impeded women’s development. Second-wave Feminism continued the fight for equality in all facets of contemporary life including areas like education, medicine, and the workplace. One of the important themes of Second-wave Feminism was the critical exploration and redefining of the female role in the household.
During this time, the fight for equality also began to affect the work of female artists who wished to express themselves and their feelings about that inequality. Feminist art was born. “[Feminist art is] neither a style nor a movement, but instead a value system, a revolutionary strategy, a way of life,” said Lucy Lippard, an American art critic and curator. Female artists struggled to find an audience for their work, as they were denied access to exhibitions and galleries due to their gender. Feminist artists established alternative venues to showcase their art while they worked to change gallery biases.

One of the most influential artists of this movement was Judy Chicago, the creator of the term “Feminist Art.” Chicago began the first Feminist Art Program in the United States in the early 1970s, a program first offered at Fresno State University, which later moved to the California Institute of the Arts in the Los Angeles area. Her well-known work, The Dinner Party, is housed at the Brooklyn Museum in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art.

The Sackler Center also collects works by other important feminist artists from the 60s and 70s, such as Miriam Schapiro, a feminist artist who worked with Judy Chicago to create Womanhouse, or Martha Rosler, who worked with video and photography to create works that dealt with public issues and day to day life with their impact on women. The works of Joan Semmel, a painter whose works focused on the exploration of the human body from a female point of view, can be found in the Sackler Collection as well.

Other important female figures from the 1960s and 70s include Lowery Stokes Sims the retired curator emeritus of the Museum of Arts and Design in New York. Sims was also the first African American Curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which she left in 1999. She was responsible for the collection of Faith Ringgold’s Story Quilts at the Met. This fact was indicative of her interest in, and inclusion of, minorities as well as a feminist and multicultural viewpoint in her curatorial work. Another important and influential figure was Linda Nochlin an American art historian, and Professor of Modern Art at the New York University Institute of Fine Arts. She received many accolades, including the National Book Award for Arts and Letters, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and an Honorary Doctorate at Harvard to name only a few. She is most well known for her 1971 article “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?”
Judy Cohen (who legally changed her last name to Chicago in 1970) was born in 1939 in Chicago, Illinois to liberal Jewish parents. During her youth, she took art classes at the Art Institute of Chicago and later attended the University of California, Los Angeles to complete her B.A in 1962 and her M.F.A in 1964. She initially created pieces conforming to the extreme abstraction of the 1960s. However, as she developed, her art began to reflect her relationship with her own female identity. Chicago began to move towards feminist imagery. In the 1970s, Chicago focused on fostering the community and talent of female artists. She initiated the Feminist Art Program at Fresno State, which would eventually move to the California Institute of the Arts in 1971. Chicago and fellow artist Miriam Schapiro codirected the Feminist Art Program after it moved.

The 1972 exhibition, Womanhouse, developed as a project of the Feminist Art Program. The exhibit took place in a 17 room Hollywood house in California and ran for a month. The exhibit included several performances within the art installations of the house’s separate rooms. Titles of the room pieces were descriptive. Examples include Nurturant Kitchen, Bridal Staircase, Personal Space, Painted Room, Linen Closet, Lipstick Bathroom, Menstruation Bathroom, Nightmare Bathroom, The Dollhouse Room, and The Nursery. Performance pieces included Waiting, The Birth Trilogy, and Maintenance. Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro both participated in the exhibit along with their students. The Hollywood house has since been torn down, but a film documentary has been made of the exhibit.

Chicago would continue to explore female experience within her artworks and installations. The Dinner Party: A Symbol of Our Heritage (1974-79) and Birth Project (1980-85) are examples. The Dinner Party, permanently housed at the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, is a multi-faceted work of art that sought to introduce the richness of women’s heritage. The Dinner Party focuses on 39 important historical female figures who are given special settings at the table, as well as the contributions of 999 additional women whose names are written in gold on the supporting Heritage Floor. Together, the combined components celebrate women’s history and contributions. During the five years of its making, approximately 400 people provided collaborative assistance.
The Birth Project and Beyond

Chicago’s Birth Project, a five year project (1980-85), was also a collaborative effort. Chicago worked with over 150 needleworkers to create textile pieces that explored the experience of giving birth. While working on the Birth Project, Chicago created PowerPlay from 1983 to 1986. This collection explores masculinity and male power using bronze reliefs, weavings, and paintings.

Soon after PowerPlay and the Birth Project were finished, Chicago and her husband focused on their Jewish heritage. The Holocaust Project: From Darkness into Light, which premiered in 1993, chronicled the couple’s understanding of the horrors of the Holocaust. This project primarily utilized Chicago’s painting and the photography of her husband, Donald Woodman.

Like the Birth Project, Chicago’s Resolutions: A Stitch in Time (1994-2000) was a collaborative effort between Chicago and needleworkers to create a commentary about social values in the modern age. Chicago’s series of images in book form, Kitty City (2005), explored Judy Chicago’s love of cats and the many felines that have resided with her and her husband. The series was inspired by a medieval book of hours and the images are both playful and poignant, expressing Chicago’s respect for animals as fellow creatures.

Since the creation of the stained glass piece Rainbow Shabbat for the Holocaust Project, Chicago has continued to work with glass as a medium. Chicago went to the Pilchuck Glass School in Seattle in 2003 and her more recent glass pieces include the Toby Heads series (beginning 2007) and the Heads Up series (beginning 2013).

Below are a few of the pieces from the Birth Project that the MoFA has accessioned into its collections.

**Title:** Birth Project: Creation of the World

**Medium:** needlepoint over painting on 18 mesh canvas

**Object date:** 1984 ca.

**Title:** Birth Project: Birth Goddess Embroidery 2

**Medium:** silk embroidery over airbrush and hand painting on purple silk

**Object date:** 1982
In the 1960s and 1970s, Second-wave Feminism was in full bloom. Second-wave Feminism focused on equalizing education for women and amplifying their rights and voices in every sphere of modern life, including women’s voices in the arts. Judy Chicago was the first person to teach a feminist art class in America. Today, women enjoy more representation in galleries and have founded organizations such as the Feminist Art Project (which Chicago helped to originate). The Feminist Art Project is an international collaborative project that stems from the Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities housed at Rutgers University. As the Rutgers University website states, the Feminist Art Project strategically prevents “the ongoing erasure of women from the cultural record by promoting feminist art events, education, and publications through its website and online calendar and facilitating networking and regional program development worldwide.”

The Guerilla Girls, founded in 1985 in New York City, is a feminist group who strives to achieve equal representation for female artists. During lectures and appearances, the group wears gorilla masks in order to conceal their identity. The masks serve the purpose of deterring media focus on the activists’ physical features and personalities so that emphasis is instead placed on the group’s discussion points. The Guerrilla Girls formed in direct response to an exhibit, An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture (1984), at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Only 13 of the 169 featured artists were female and gender bias was highlighted by comments made by the show’s curator. This anonymous organization crusades for women artists by exposing sexism and racism in museums and in art through the production of publications, posters, stickers, exhibitions, and protests. The Guerilla Girls remain active and continue to organize campaigns combating inequality faced by females in the arts, for example by mounting antifilm industry billboards in Hollywood.
Another instance of the Feminist Art Movement’s progression in the late 20th century is the founding of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in 1987. This museum has been dedicated since its inception to the sole purpose of appreciating the artworks of female creators. The institution preserves women’s art history in many ways, including a permanent collection of over 4,000 objects, their publication of various art history books and magazines, their education programs that focus on the works of female creatives, and their sponsorship of various committees that advocate for women artists across the world. The NMWA’s published mission states: “The NWMA brings recognition to the achievements of women artists of all periods and nationalities by exhibiting, preserving, acquiring, and researching art by women and by teaching the public about their accomplishments.”

These institutions and organizations are only a few examples of the progress made by the Feminist Art Movement, of which Judy Chicago is an integral part. Since the beginning of Second-wave Feminism, the study of feminism and feminist art has been expanded by activity and research in the academic sector. Many colleges and universities have begun to integrate such study into various disciplines but many also house distinct women’s studies programs.

Feminist Art has grown significantly since the 60s and 70s but equal representation in art is still an undertaking feminist artists are fighting to accomplish. Today the term ‘Feminist’ is met with less opposition and less hostility due to the work of women who still strive for the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes. Chicago continues to produce art works that advance the presence of the feminist voice in art.

Teaching Controversial Subjects

Why Teach Controversial Issues?

Many instructors avoid controversial issues in the classroom because of the difficulty involved in managing heated discussions as well as the potential discomfort these discussions may pose on both student and instructor alike. However, controversial issues are an inevitable part of some teaching and learning, such as the discussion of ethical issues and religious beliefs. Controversial issues can be used strategically in a teaching plan to raise the complexity of an issue about which students believe there is only one perspective. Controversy can be a useful, powerful, and a memorable tool to promote learning. Research has shown that conflict or controversy during classroom discussion can promote cognitive gains in complex reasoning, integrated thinking, and decision-making.

Tips for Managing “Hot Moments” in the Gallery or Classroom

Handling controversial topics and heated discussions can be stressful and difficult. The challenges of dealing with hot moments are 1) To manage ourselves so as to make them useful and 2) To find the teaching opportunities to help students learn in and from the moment. The following are practical strategies meant to help turn difficult encounters into learning opportunities:

• To help students think productively about issues raised during hot moments, establish discussion norms early in the term, or at the moment if necessary. Don’t permit personal attacks. Model norms that encourage an open discussion of difficult material by being open to multiple perspectives and by asking all students to argue their points responsibly.
• Require that all students seek to understand each other’s perspectives, as a prerequisite to understanding the subject at all. Ask them to listen carefully to the other point of view, to ask questions, and then to be able to restate or argue for that position. This can work for the hottest of subjects.
• Ask students to think about the way their reactions mirror the subject at hand and what they might learn from their behavior.
Guidelines for Planned Discussions on Controversial Topics

The following guidelines can help instructors facilitate discussion around controversial issues. Whatever the context, it is helpful to structure such discussions in a way that defines boundaries for the process and provides some degree of closure within the gallery or classroom.

Identify a clear purpose: Starting a discussion with clearly articulated objectives can help shape the nature of the discussion and link it to other course goals. Examples of general objectives include:
• Connecting the topic with course material, including fundamental concepts and strategies for analysis and thoughtful reflection.
• Promoting critical thinking by helping students to understand the complexity of the issues.
• Increasing awareness about the topic by providing information that is not generally addressed in informal discussions.

Create a framework for the discussion that maintains focus and flow: Because any controversial subject is a complex topic, your framework can be a guide, balancing the need to have clear purpose and direction while being open to student observations and interpretation.
• Begin discussion with clear, open-ended but bounded questions that encourage discussion, avoiding questions that pose two problems simultaneously or questions that search for a specific answer.
• Prepare specific questions to use if the class is silent or hesitant about speaking. For example: “What makes this hard to discuss?” and “What needs to be clarified at this point?”
• Encourage students to elaborate upon their comments where needed. Probing questions can prompt a student to share more specific information, clarify an idea, or provide further explanation.

This information was gathered from the University of Michigan’s Center for Research on Learning and Teaching.
Lesson Plan: Creating a Female Mythos

Materials

• An image of Creation of The World, 1980-1981, can be found at the link to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts: https://www.pafa.org/collection/creation-world. This is an embroidery over painting by Pamella Nesbit.
• Version of the Greek myth Hades and Persephone (dating back to Mycenean Greece, 1400 - 1200 BCE) can be found at the following link: http://mythologyteacher.com/documents/HADESANDPERSEPHONE.pdf.
• Copy Paper or loose lined paper

Inquiry Questions:
How do the myths in Judy Chicago’s artwork compare/contrast to traditional patriarchal myths?
-What are other artworks that address the same topic?

What can I see?
-What people, places, or things does the artwork show?

Objectives:
• Students will look at myths from a female perspective.
• Students will see the patriarchal perspective of traditional myths.
• Students will explore and understand the work of Judy Chicago titled Creation of the World.

Overview & Rationale:
1. The teacher will provide the Greek myth of Persephone to students. See materials for the link site to this humorous theatrical version of the story. After reading the myth, the students will answer the inquiry questions about the myth found within the lesson plan.

2. The teacher will provide an image of Creation of the World by Judy Chicago. After viewing the image, the students will answer inquiry questions about the work found within the lesson plan.

3. Finally, the students will create Powerpoint presentations to compare and contrast Creation of the World with other works of art that demonstrate mythic overtones utilizing the inquiry questions presented during the lesson.

This lesson allows students to learn about traditional patriarchal myths and the way Judy Chicago breaks the patriarchal convention of subordinating women’s viewpoints.
Lesson Day 1: Myth of Hades and Persephone

Provide the Hades and Persephone play (link above) to the students. This illustrates a myth from a patriarchal perspective. This myth is summarized below:

Hades saw Persephone and instantly fell in love with her. Hades asked his brother Zeus for help, and the two of them concocted a plan to trap her. One sunny day Persephone played with her friends along the river edge. Zeus and Hades caused the ground to split underneath her. Persephone slipped beneath the Earth and Hades stole her to the Underworld where he made her his wife. The myth says that Persephone was very unhappy, but after much time, she came to love Hades and lived happily with him in the underworld.

Students will answer the questions from the following inquiries.

1. Tell the story from Persephone’s point of view. Compare and contrast the myth from Hades’ point of view with that by Persephone. Tell what is alike and what is different about their points of view.

2. Tell the story from Zeus’ and Demeter’s (Persephone’s mother) point of view. Now compare and contrast the myth from their different points of view. Tell what is alike and what is different about them.

3. What makes this traditional myth a story from a patriarchal point of view as opposed to a woman’s point of view?

Lesson Day 2: Judy Chicago’s Creation of The World

Provide an image of Judy Chicago’s Creation of the World (using the link above) and instruct the students to observe the image. Have the students answer the inquiry questions below.

1. What figure do you see? Describe that figure.
2. What components comprise this figure?
3. What surrounds the figure?
4. Where is this figure?
5. Could you describe the undulating lines of the image?
6. What is occurring in this image?

Judy Chicago’s Creation of the World tells a myth/story. Chicago’s myth can be compared and contrasted with the myth of Hades and Persephone.

1. What are the components of both stories?
   a. Identify the “characters” in both myths.
   b. Define and explain the “setting” of both myths.
   c. Define and explain the “plot” of both myths.
   d. Define and explain the “conflict” and “resolution” of both myths.

2. How do each of these components compare and contrast in both Chicago’s Creation and the Greek myth of Persephone?
Lesson Day 3: Create Powerpoint

Finally, this aspect of the lesson allows for students to juxtapose Judy Chicago’s *Creation of the World* with other artworks that address mythic topics. Some artworks may include patriarchal themes and some may not. The teacher will instruct students to work in groups to create Powerpoint presentations that compare and contrast *Creation of the World* with the works chosen. Students will employ the same inquiry methods and questions as previously used in class. Provide students with a list of works from which they can select. Suggestions are given below, but the students are not limited to these choices.

- **Niki de St. Phalle**
  - *Hannover Nana (Sophie, Charlotte, Caroline)*, 1973
    https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sculptures_Nanas_Niki_de_Saint_Phalle_Leibnizufer_Hanover_Germany_01.jpg
  - *Les Trois Graces*, 1999
  - *She, A Cathedral (Hon - en Katedral)*, 1966
    http://hyperallergic.com/178128/falling-for-niki-de-saint-phalle/
  - *Nana Noire Assise*, 1969
    http://www.mutualart.com/Artwork/Nana-noire-assise/774627C42667673E

- **Lloyd R. Moylan** (1893 - 1963)
  - *Zuni Creation Story*
    http://santafeartauction.com/art/list/2014/all/5
    https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zuni_mythology

- **Navajo Creation Story in sand painting**
  http://www.crystalinks.com/navajo.html

**Powerpoint Guidelines:**
1. Select an artwork to compare and contrast with Judy Chicago’s *Creation of the World*.
2. Include images of the two artworks and identify them: artist, title, date, medium, dimensions, collection, and source.
3. Compare and contrast selected artwork with *Creation of the World*.
   a. Analyze the selected image first. Observe the work and answer the question “what people, places, and things does the artwork show?” In addition, inquiry questions used for observing *Creation of the World* (found under the portion of the lesson plan titled “Judy Chicago’s *Creation of the World*”) can also be posited and adjusted as needed for this artwork.
   b. Compare and contrast the selected artwork with *Creation of the World* answering the myth inquiry questions (found under the portion of the lesson plan titled “Judy Chicago’s *Creation of the World*.”) The myth in some works will be more clear than in others, but try to determine some type of mythological impulse or story for every selected work.
4. Summarize answers to inquiry questions in some structured way.
5. Present powerpoint to the class.
Lesson Plan: Taking Back the Female Form

Age Group: Grades 9-12
Lesson Length: Four 45-minute lessons

Materials
• Biography of Judy Chicago (Judy Chicago Education Packet)
• Judy Chicago Birth Project Images (at end of Judy Chicago Education Packet)
• Websites with access to selected pieces and articles for research (included within the lesson plan)

Primary Inquiry Question:
How does the artwork compare/contrast to other artworks?
• <Style> How does this artwork look like other artworks by different artists?
• <Themes> What other artworks address the same general topic?

Secondary Inquiry Question:
What else can I learn?
• <Artist life> What is the background and life experience of the artist?
• <Function> What does the artwork do?
• <Cultural Context> What do people think, believe, or do in the culture in which the artwork was made? How may that have affected the artist’s creative process?

Objectives:
Students will be able to...
• Compare and contrast historical and contemporary art.
• Conduct research that leads to information such as life of artist, function of artwork, and cultural context.

Overview & Rationale:
In Phase 1 students will, as a class, compare one contemporary or Baroque piece of art with one piece from Judy Chicago’s Birth Project. In Phase 2, the students will work in groups to research two selected contemporary or Baroque artworks and compare and contrast them using the listed inquiry questions with two works from Judy Chicago’s Birth Project. This will culminate in further study presented in a class exhibit that follows guidelines given in the lesson plan. By evaluating the similarities and differences of these artworks, students will achieve a better understanding of the varying depictions of the female form in different time periods.
Activity Procedures:
Students will work in groups of three or four.

Lesson Day 1 and 2: Assignment and Research
1. Assignment is explained and Inquiry Questions are discussed
2. Students will compare and contrast one (1) Judy Chicago Birth Project piece and one (1) Baroque or contemporary piece using the questions listed below. Students could use Venn Diagrams, Compare-Contrast Charts, or whatever method is preferred by the teacher to record their findings.

- How is the portrayal of the female figures alike and different in the two depictions?
- How do the different cultures/ time periods in which the artworks were created affect the depiction of the female form?
- Has the life experience of each artist impacted his or her depiction of the female form? If so, compare and contrast those experiences.
- Does the gender of the artist influence the depiction of the female? If so, compare and contrast those depictions.
- Does the time period or gender of each artist have a greater influence on the portrayal of the female figure? If so, compare and contrast those influences.
- What do you think is the overarching message each artist is trying to convey in this painting?
- What are the varying attitudes towards women in these different depictions?

Historical and Contemporary artists the students may choose:
- Peter Paul Rubens
- Artemisia Gentileschi
- Frida Kahlo
- Pablo Picasso

Biographical information about each artist can be found at the web addresses listed below:

**Pablo Picasso:** [http://www.pablopicasso.org/picasso-biography.jsp](http://www.pablopicasso.org/picasso-biography.jsp)
**Frida Kahlo:** [http://www.frida-kahlo-foundation.org/biography.html](http://www.frida-kahlo-foundation.org/biography.html)
**Peter Paul Rubens:** [http://www.peterpaulrubens.org/biography.html](http://www.peterpaulrubens.org/biography.html)

3. Students will create a class exhibit. In groups of three (3) or four (4), the students will choose 4 pieces of art to research and present as part of the exhibit. Two pieces must be from Judy Chicago’s Birth Project. Each piece must be accompanied by an extended label that gives the basic information about the piece while also answering one (1) of the questions listed above. Each group must use different images to create diversity within the exhibit.

The complete pool of artworks are listed below except Judy Chicago’s Birth Project images which are listed at the end of the educational packet.
Pablo Picasso
- **Naked Woman** (1902)
  [image](http://www.pablo-ruiz-picasso.net/images/works/3570.jpg)
- **Maternity** (1905)
  [image](http://www.pablo-ruiz-picasso.net/images/works/3437.jpg)
- **Les Demoiselles d’Avignon** (1907)
  [image](http://www.moma.org/explore/conservation/demoiselles/images/demoiselles_NewFINAL.jpg)
- **The Artist and His Model** (1966)
  [image](http://www.pablo-ruiz-picasso.net/images/works/716.jpg)

Frida Kahlo
- **My Nurse and I** (1937)
  [image](http://www.fridakahlo.org/my-nurse-and-i.jsp)
- **Self-Portrait with Cropped Hair** (1940)
  [image](http://www.fridakahlo.org/self-portrait-with-cropped-hair.jsp)
- **The Broken Column** (1944)
  [image](http://www.fridakahlo.org/the-broken-column.jsp)
- **The Love Embrace of the Universe, the Earth, Myself, Diego, and Senor Xolotl** (1949)

Artemisia Gentileschi
- **Susanna and the Elders** (1610)
  [image](http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/full.php?ID=23444)
- **Cleopatra** (1621-22)
  [image](http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/full.php?ID=121601)
- **Judith Slaying Holofernes** (1614-20)
  [image](http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/full.php?ID=101893)
- **Lucretia** (1621)
  [image](http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/full.php?ID=122175)

Peter Paul Rubens
- **Pan and Syrinx** (1617-19)
  [image](http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/full.php?ID=32339)
- **Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus** (1618)
  [image](http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/full.php?ID=30906)
- **Perseus and Andromeda** (1622)
  [image](http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/full.php?ID=30992)
- **The Judgement of Paris** (1639)
  [image](http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/full.php?ID=30913)

Lesson Day 3 and 4: Presentations
All groups present their four images and explain their answers to the inquiry questions to the class. The exhibit may be set up however the teacher desires. Some suggested formats include PowerPoint presentations with images or printed pictures and extended labels posted around the classroom.
Lesson Plan: Researching the Women of The Dinner Party

Age Group: Grades 9-12
Lesson Length: Five 45-minute lessons

Materials

- Description, History, and Cultural Impact of The Dinner Party: http://www.throughtheflower.org/projects/the_dinner_party
- Chart for the list of names on The Heritage Floor: https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/dinner_party/heritage_panels/panel
- A Tour of The Dinner Party: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yMtdWxAC60&feature=youtu.be (41:15)
- Books:
  - The Dinner Party: Restoring Women to History by Judy Chicago
  - The Dinner Party: A Commemorative Volume Celebrating A Major Monument of Twentieth-Century Art by Judy Chicago
- Dinner Party Curriculum: http://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/dpcp/
- Art materials for students to use when designing their plates and place settings.

Primary Inquiry Question:
What does it mean?
Artist’s Intention: Why did the artist want the artwork to look the way it does?
Cultural Understanding: How is the artwork understood within the culture where it was made?

Secondary Inquiry Question:
What does it mean to me?
Further Inquiry: What more do I still want to know?

Objectives:
Students will be able to...
- Find and research information about important historical female figures and their achievements.
- Analyze Judy Chicago’s intention.
- Analyze the cultural impact of The Dinner Party.

Overview & Rationale:
This lesson will help familiarize students to underrepresented women in history. With the assistance of an informational packet, students will be introduced to Chicago’s The Dinner Party and will be asked to make cultural connections to the work through inquiry. Students will also select a woman from The Heritage Floor to research. They will then design their own place settings for the woman selected using inquiry questions as a guide for the design. Students will present their projects to the class using various methods, for example through PowerPoint presentations.
Lesson Day 1: Introduction to Judy Chicago’s The Dinner Party
Watch the tour:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yMtdWxAC60&feature=youtu.be (41:15)

Lesson Day 2: Review The Dinner Party
Students will be shown images of The Dinner Party and the inquiry questions below will be asked to the class as a whole.

1. What do you think Judy Chicago’s intentions were when creating the place settings for The Dinner Party?
   - Each place setting includes the following components: runner, plate, utensils, chalice, napkin
   *See link below for place settings.
   - When looking at a runner ask the following questions:
     a) Describe the imagery and designs on the runner.
     b) What does Chicago emphasize or tell us about the woman with these images and designs?
     c) What does the illuminated first letter of the woman’s name represent?
   - Ask questions related to the plate being observed:
     a) Describe the imagery and/or design on the plate.
     b) What does Chicago emphasize or tell us about the woman with this imagery/design?
   - Ask questions related to the utensils, chalice, and napkin:
     a) What is the reason the utensils, chalice, and napkin are repeated for each place setting?

2. What do you think Judy Chicago’s intentions were when creating The Heritage Floor?
   - Describe the arrangement of names across The Heritage Floor.
   - The names create streams that flow from underneath the place settings. What is the relationship of the women in each stream?
   *See resources below for list of names.

3. How do you think The Dinner Party impacted the culture of the time?
   - What were the conflicting ways The Dinner Party was received when it was first shown?
   *See resources below for historical information.

Resources:
- Examples of place settings: http://www.throughtheflower.org/projects/the_dinner_party
- List of names on The Heritage Floor: https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/dinner_party/heritage_panels/panel
- Information regarding the history of The Dinner Party:
  2. The Dinner Party: Restoring Women to History by Judy Chicago (pages 268-275)
Lesson Day 3 and 4: The Heritage Floor
Revisit the chart listing the women on *The Heritage Floor* (see materials for link). Students will briefly research several women from *The Heritage Floor*. Each student will pick one woman from the list and conduct further research. Students will sketch designs for a plate and runner related to the woman chosen.

*Sketch materials needed.*

The sketch of the plate should be a representation of the woman herself, and the sketch of the runner should be a representation of the time period and/or culture in which the woman lived or it will provide details from the life of the woman.

Each student will then write a brief report (written or a PowerPoint) on the woman chosen and have it ready to present with sketches of a place setting design.

Provide students with the following questions to help guide research:

1. Why is this woman an important historical figure?
2. Which of her accomplishments means the most to me?
3. Why did Judy Chicago choose this woman for *The Heritage Floor*?
4. Describe the culture of the time and place when and where this woman lived.
5. Which images/designs would you use to relate this information about the woman on a plate and on a runner?

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*The Dinner Party (The Heritage Floor), 1974–79, Judy Chicago*

Lesson Day 5: Presentations
Display the sketches of the place settings and have each student present his/her sketches, describing a rationale for each part of the setting and its relationship to the life of the woman presented.
Lesson Plan: Ancient Connections

Age Group: Grades 9-12
Lesson Length: Several 45 minute lessons

Materials

- Article on the mother goddess of various cultures: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother_goddess
- Article on the Birth Project and the works included in the collection: http://www.judychicago.com/gallery/birth-project/bp-artwork/

Primary Inquiry Question:
How does the work compare and contrast?
How does this artwork look like other artworks, either by the same or different artists?

Secondary Inquiry Question:
What can I see in the work?
What people, places, or things does the artwork show?
What tools, materials, and processes did the artist use?

Tertiary Inquiry Question:
What else can I learn?
What is the background and life experience of the artist?
What do people think, believe, or do in the culture in which the artwork was made?

Objectives:
For a work of art, students will be able to...
- Analyze and interpret the subject matter and technical features.
- Compare and contrast subject matter, medium, and technique.
- Apply information about the artist’s life as well as cultural context to interpretation.

Overview & Rationale:
The students are to select two ancient artworks and two works from the Birth Project to compare and contrast. Students will compare and contrast through inquiry questions provided within the lesson plan. Students will present their research, sharing the information gathered from their inquiry questions. Students will gain knowledge of the way creation and women’s roles are represented in both ancient and contemporary culture through study of the differences and similarities of the artwork. In sharing their research and interpretations with their classmates, the students will expand their knowledge of the connections between ancient art and Chicago’s Birth Project work.
Lesson Day 1: Introduction of Artworks

Introduce the students to the following artworks included in Judy Chicago’s *Birth Project* and objects created by ancient cultures. Teachers will be able to read the articles provided in the material list and the *Birth Project* packet to prepare for this process.

Suggested Image List: Ancient Art
- Woman of Willendorf
- Halaf culture Female Figurines
- Ceramic Neolithic female figurine, Cucuteni-Trypillian culture
- Woman in Childbirth (Tlazolteotl)
- Bird Lady
- Terra Mater of the Ara Pacis

Suggested Image List: *Birth Project*
- The Crowning
- Creation of the World PP 2
- Birth Tear, Tear
- Guided by the Goddess
- Birth Trinity
- Smocked Figure
- Earth Birth

*Birth Project* images can be found at the website located in materials or at the end of this packet.

Ask about the overarching theme of these artworks and assess student responses and reactions. Engage the students with the inquiry questions below, facilitating open discussion and interpretation of a selected ancient work and a *Birth Project* work from the list.

a) What do you see? How did the artists communicate what is important about the theme or subject? What kind of forms, colors, or materials did they choose? How do these qualities and characteristics of the artwork affect your interaction with it?

b) How do the artworks from different times and cultures compare and contrast to each other? How are they alike or different? How do the works differ in subject matter, medium, and technique? Why do you think they differ? What conclusions can you draw about the representation of creation and birth in comparing and contrasting these artworks?

c) What role do you think the artist’s training or life experience played in these artworks? What role or function does art serve in the cultures that created these works? What can these artworks tell you about the artist and culture that made them?

Lesson Day 2: Individual Research

Ask each student to research and select one ancient artwork and one work from the *Birth Project*, which can be found on the Internet or the list provided. While researching, have the students answer the inquiry questions from the previous lesson.
Lesson Day 4 and 5: Research Project and Presentations

From the list or their own research using the inquiry questions from lesson one, students, in pairs, will create a 4-8 slide presentation, comparing and contrasting the works selected by both students. The presentation should include the following information:

- What is the basic information (artist, title, date, medium, dimensions: items of information that would be presented on a museum label for the artwork) for the works?
- What conclusions have the students drawn regarding the differences and similarities between the artworks?
- What is the artist’s background? What is the background of the culture that created the artwork? How do the ancient and contemporary cultures of the works differ? How does this affect the subject matter of the works?

The students will then spend an entire class period presenting their slide presentations to the class.
The following teachers met to discuss and brainstorm ideas provoked by the *Birth Project*. These are not lesson plans, but simply their additional thoughts and questions to consider when making art or art history lesson plans that incorporate the *Birth Project*. They all teach in the Leon County School System in Tallahassee, Florida.

- Marcia Meale: J. Michael Conley Elementary School at Southwood
- Linda Johnson: Deerlake Middle School
- Shannon Takacs: Lincoln High School
- Emily Westfall-Crouch: Kate Sullivan Elementary School

1. Utilize the novel titled *My Name Is Mary Sutter* by Robin Oliveira. Mary Sutter, the main character, is an American midwife during the Civil War who strives to become a surgeon.

2. Have students do a study of the stories of mothers they know.

3. Have students do a study of the birth stories of people they know.

4. Have students do a study of mothers’ views of birth as opposed to fathers’ views of birth.

5. Research and discuss with students the way birthing has changed since the advent of medicine – thinking about midwives, doctors, hospitals, home births.

6. Research and discuss power issues surrounding birth:
   - Who is in charge? Who makes the decisions? The birthing woman, the doctor, the hospital?
   - Is the doctor male or female? Does this matter?
   - Who names the child?

7. Discuss with students the way women’s lives have changed since World War II and the advent of the Women’s Movement in the late 1960s, particularly as this relates to working women and pregnancy.

8. Discuss with students the idea of the sense of self and sense of self-strength. Ask them to describe visual aspects of strength – inner strength, outer strength, traditional views of strength, non-traditional views of strength. How do these ideas relate to women and men? To the images in the *Birth Project*?

   - What is the reason for the dearth of birthing images in western culture, traditionally?
   - What is the reason for the greater number of birthing images in previous or pre-historic cultures?
   - What is the reason birthing images are increasing in contemporary western culture?
10. Give the definition of craft and art: craft emphasizes skill with materials and technique; art emphasizes message/meaning.
– Needlework has been traditionally associated with women and craft. The medium of Chicago’s Birth Project is needlework and women needleworkers worked with/assisted Chicago in the making of the Birth Project pieces. The emphasis of the Birth Project is the message/meaning.
– Have students do the following:
  • Determine the ways in which the Birth Project changes the traditional view of needlework and work by women.
  • Find exemplars of work with and without an emphasis on meaning and determine in which category they would fall – art or craft. These exemplars could be found in books, exhibitions, or even at home. Defend the category chosen. Discuss the skill emphasized in those works deemed as craft and discuss the message/meaning in those works deemed as art.

11. The women of the Birth Project provide an energized, creative, and empowered view of the female self.
Discuss this aspect of the work. Then look at historical empowered women.
Cool Women gives graphically designed, informative vignettes on a cross section of women for the younger reader, from Lozen, Apache Warrior, to Mother Jones, to Madame C. J. Walker. Discuss the characteristics and vision of an historical empowered woman.
Answer the question: what did an empowered woman look like?

12. Next look at empowered women living today like those listed below. These are only a few of the thousands and thousands of women living today who could be on this list. Again, discuss the characteristics and vision of an empowered woman and answer the question: what does an empowered woman look like?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ruzena Bajcsy – science</th>
<th>Jaune Quick-to-see Smith – art</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jacqueline K. Barton – science</td>
<td>Maya Lin – art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mia Hamm – athletics</td>
<td>Judy Chicago – art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serena Williams – athletics</td>
<td>Toni Morrison – literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indra Nooyi – business</td>
<td>Isabel Allende – literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irene Rosenfeld – business</td>
<td>Maggie Hassan – politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Yellen – finance</td>
<td>Nikki Haley – politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arundhati Bhattacharya – finance</td>
<td>Muriel Bowser – politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michele Obama – First Lady</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Birth Trinity Needlepoint 1, Judy Chicago, 1983 Exhibition Unit 28
Textile: 51” x 130.5”, needlepoint by the “Teaneck Seven,” Susan Bloomenstein, Elizabeth Colten, Karen Fogel, Helene Hirmes, Bernice Levitt, Linda Rothenberg, and Miriam Vogelman
Collection: The Albuquerque Museum of Art

Birth Tear E2, Judy Chicago, 1982 Exhibition Unit 4
Textile: 20.5” x 27.5”, embroidery by Jane Gaddie Thompson
Collection: The Albuquerque Museum of Art
The Crowning Needlepoint 3, Judy Chicago, 1983 Exhibition Unit 18
Textile: 35.5” x 51.5”, hand painting assistance by Lynda Healy, needlepoint by Kathryn Haas Alexander
Collection: Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts

Earth Birth, Judy Chicago, 1983 Exhibition Unit 22
Textile: 63” x 135”, quilting by Jacquelyn (Moore) Alexander
Collection: Through the Flower, Inc.


*Mother India*, Judy Chicago, 1985
Exhibition Unit 69
Textile: 127” x 96”, border design
assistance by Judith Meyers,
panels by
Jacquelyn (Moore) Alexander (applique) and
Judy Kendall (embroidery),
mirrored and embroidered strips by
Judith Meyers’ group:
Norma Cordiner,
Sharon Fuller, Susan Herold, Peggy
Kennedy, Linda Lockyer,
Lydia Ruyle, and Ruth Savig
Collection: Through the Flower, Inc.
Birth Tear/Tear BT ST 1, Judy Chicago, 1985
Exhibition Unit 81
Textile: 46" x 55.5"
macramé over drawing by Pat Rudy-Baese
Collection:
The Albuquerque Museum of Art

Hatching the Universal Egg E5: Birth Power, Judy Chicago, 1984
Exhibition Unit 56
Textile: 20.25" x 20.25", embroidery by Sandie Abel
Collection:
The Albuquerque Museum of Art
Birth Figure 6: Smocked Figure, Judy Chicago, 1984 Exhibition Unit 53
Textile: 61.5” x 22”, smocking and embroidery by Mary Ewanoski
Collection:
The Albuquerque Museum of Art
Creation of the World E 3/9, Judy Chicago, 1984 Exhibition Unit 55
Textile: 23.25" x 40.5", embroidery by Merrily Rush Whitaker
Collection: The Albuquerque Museum of Art

The Crowning Q5, Judy Chicago, 1982 Exhibition Unit 2
Textile: 56.5" x 89", reverse applique and quilting by Jacquelyn (Moore) Alexander
Collection: Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts
Creation of the World PP2, Judy Chicago, 1984 Exhibition Unit 45
Textile: 10.75” x 15”, petit point by Jean Berens
Collection: The Albuquerque Museum of Art

The Crowning from
Retrospective in a Box, 2010 Judy Chicago
Lithograph: 30” x 30”
Collection: Through the Flower, Inc.
Guided by the Goddess, 1985 Judy Chicago
Silkscreen: 34" x 44"
Collection: Through the Flower, Inc.

Birth: Special Technique 1, Judy Chicago, 1984 Exhibition Unit 70
Textile: 94" x 252", filet crochet by Dolly Kaminski
Collection: The Albuquerque Museum of Art
Birth Garment 1: Pregnant Amazon and Birth Garment 2: Flowering Shrub, Judy Chicago, 1984 Exhibition Unit 34
Textiles: Birth Garment 1, 44” x 42.25”, dyeing, weaving, needlepoint by Dr. Helen Courvoisie with garment fabrication by Sally Babson, Birth Garment 2, 44” x 42.5”, spinning, weaving, dyeing, and needlepoint by Penny Davidson with embroidery outline and garment fabrication by Sally Babson
Collection: The Albuquerque Museum of Art
Lesson Plan 1: Creating a Female Mythos

Visual Arts:
VA.912.C.3.3 Examine relationships among social, historical, literary, and/or other references to explain how they are assimilated into artwork
VA.912.H.1.1 Analyze the impact of social, ecological, economic, religious, and/or political issues on the function or meaning of the artwork
VA.912.J.2.5 Analyze artwork from a variety of cultures and times to compare the functions, significance, and connection to other cultures or times
G.K12.4.1.3b Compare and contrast multiple perspectives of a problem
G.K12.4.1.2c Integrates multiple points of view into a problem statement

Lesson Plan 2: Taking Back the Female Form

Visual Arts:
VA.68.H/VA.912.H: Historical and Global Connections
VA.68.H/VA.912.H.2: Enduring Understanding
Language Arts:
LAFS.68.RH.3/LAFS.1112.RH.3: Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12
LAFS.68.RH.3.7/LAFS.1112.RH.3.7: Integrate and Evaluate Multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem
LAFS.6.SL.1-LAFS.12.SL.1: Standards for Speaking and Listening
LAFS.6.SL.1.1-LAFS.12.SL.1: Comprehension and Collaboration

Lesson Plan 3: Researching the Women of The Dinner Party

Visual Arts:
V.A.68.H/VA.912.H: Historical and Global Connections
V.A.68.H.2/VA.912.H.2: Enduring Understanding, The arts reflect and document trends and historical events, and help explain how new directions in the arts have emerged.
V.A.68.C/VA.912.C.1: Enduring Understanding, Reflection shows the biases that may or may not be present within our own understanding of history.
Language Arts:
LAFS.68.RH.3/LAFS.112.RH.3: Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12
LAFS.68.RH.3.7/LAFS.112.RH.3.7: Integrate and Evaluate Multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem
LAFS.6.SL.1-LAFS.12.SL.1: Standards for Speaking and Listening
LAFS.6.SL.1.1-LAFS.12.SL.1: Comprehension and Collaboration

Lesson Plan 4: Ancient Connections

Visual Arts:
VA.68.C/VA.912.C: Critical Thinking and Reflection
VA.68.H/VA.912.H: Historical and Global Connections
VA.68.H/VA.912.H.2: Enduring Understanding
These arts act as retellings of history through the lens of women, allowing for a different world view and interpretation of one’s own surrounds.
VA.68.H/VA.912.H.2.5: Enduring Understanding
Analyze artwork from a variety of cultures and times to compare the function, significance, and connection to other cultures or times.
VA.68.H/VA.912.H.1.In.a: Enduring Understanding
Compare historical and cultural influences that have inspired artists to produce works of art.
VA.68.O.1/VA.912.O: Organizational Structure
VA.68.O.1/VA.912.O.1: Enduring Understanding
Understanding the origin and the creative process of an art form can build a relationship with similar movements.
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Websites used for source material:


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http://www.judychicago.com/gallery/thedinnerparty/dpartwork/

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http://www.judychicago.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TTF.10452_EU_70_Birth_Special_Technique.jpg
Evaluation: Judy Chicago Packet

Please circle your response. Please return to:

FSU Museum of Fine Arts
Room 250 FAB
Tallahassee, FL 32330-1140

1. Was the material presented adaptable for introduction to your students?
   All    Some    None

2. Did you feel the packet adequately provided the information and materials on the topics raised by the exhibition?
   All    Some    None

3. Was the packet presented in an organized manner?
   All    Some    None

4. Would you like to continue to receive materials from the FSU Museum of Fine Arts?
   All    Some    None

5. Did you use any of the lesson plans or other suggested activities in your classroom? Was it successful?

6. Comments or suggestions: