



Installation view of *A Legacy of Firsts: The Everson Collects*. Photo by Jamie Young.

# EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE

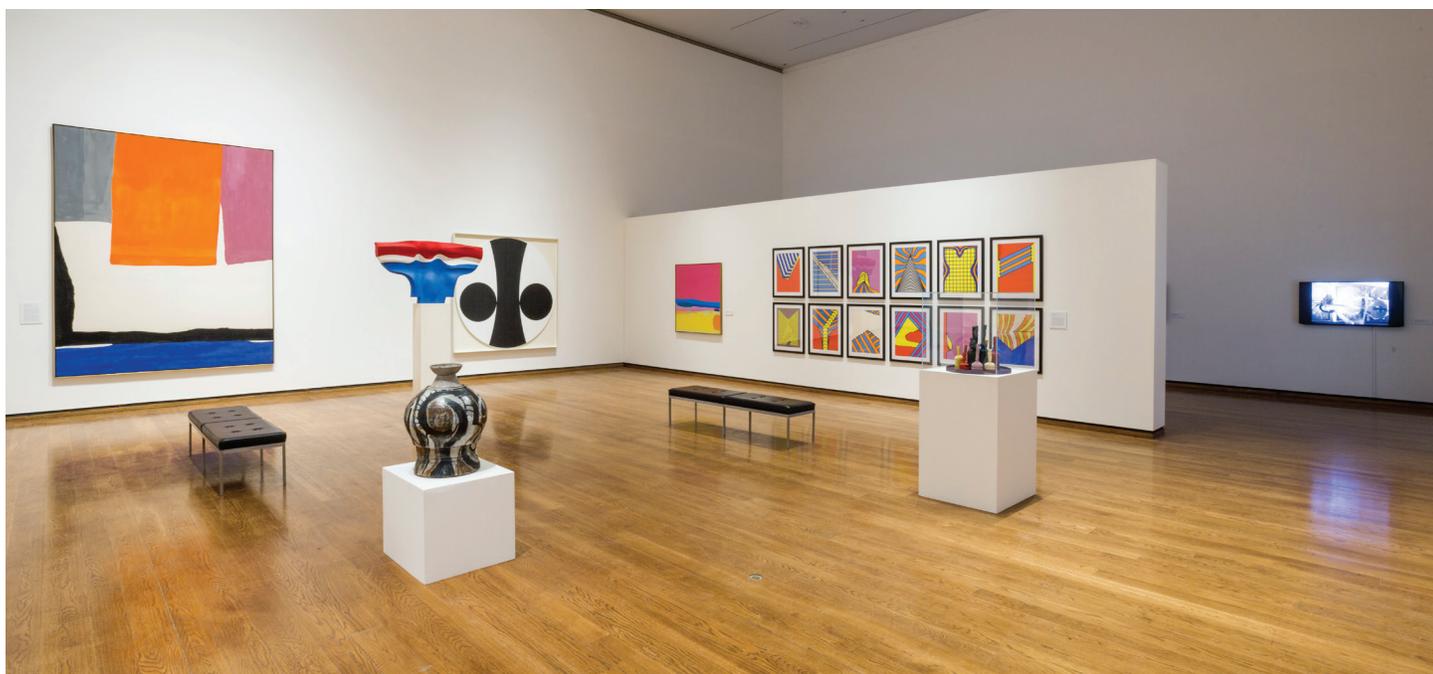
*A Legacy of Firsts: The Everson Collects*  
November 16, 2019–January 3, 2021

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Everson Docent Organization, John Ben Snow Memorial Trust, Richard S. Shineman Foundation

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

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This educator resource guide was designed by the Education Department for use in conjunction with virtual or in-person field trips to *A Legacy of Firsts: The Everson Collects* or for use as a stand-alone classroom resource. The materials included here contain curriculum connections and can be adapted for use at any grade level.



Installation view of *A Legacy of Firsts: The Everson Collects*. Photo by Jamie Young.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

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# AN INTRODUCTION

In 1911, the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts (known today as the Everson) made history as the first museum in the country to declare that it would focus on collecting works made by American artists. This decision, implemented by Museum Director Fernando Carter, was the first of many made by directors that ultimately defined the Everson's collection as it exists today. This exhibition examines over one hundred years of the Museum's collecting priorities, from the Museum's earliest acquisitions in 1911 to work acquired in 2019.



Installation view of *A Legacy of Firsts: The Everson Collects*.

# ARTWORK/CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Shown here are key works that characterize significant time periods in the Everson Museum collection.

## 1911 – 1930: Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts

Jonas Lie's *The Black Teapot* was purchased by Fernando Carter in 1911 after the museum decided to focus its collecting efforts on American art. Known as the "Painter of Light," Lie was a key figure in American landscape painting throughout the early 20th century.

His work reflects his influences of the time, European impressionism and realism. *The Black Teapot* demonstrates his dramatic use of color palette and light.



Jonas Lie, *The Black Teapot*, 1911, oil on canvas, 35 x 42 inches, Everson Museum of Art; Museum purchase, 13.121

## 1916 – 1932: Adelaide Alsop Robineau and the Ceramic Nationals

In 1916, under Director Fernando Carter, the Museum officially acquired thirty-two porcelain works of Syracuse ceramic artist Adelaide Alsop Robineau.

These were the first ceramics to enter the collection. Robineau's famed *Scarab Vase*, purchased in 1932 is believed to be the artist's masterpiece.

In 1932, Director Anna Wetherill Olmsted, successor of Fernando Carter, established the *Ceramic Nationals* in honor of Adelaide Robineau, who died in 1929. The *Ceramic Nationals* was an annual juried exhibition until 1952, and later became biennials due to the number of submissions. The last *Ceramic National* took place in 1972, with subsequent programs in 1987, 1990, 1993, and 2000.



(Left)  
Adelaide Alsop Robineau  
*Poppy Vase*, 1910  
Porcelain, 6 x 3 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches  
Everson Museum of Art; Museum purchase  
16.4.3



(Right)  
Adelaide Alsop Robineau  
*Scarab Vase, Apotheosis of the Toiler*, 1910  
Porcelain, 16 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6 inches  
Everson Museum of Art; Museum purchase  
30.4.78

## 1968: Everson Museum of Art

In 1968, the Museum moved into its iconic I.M. Pei-designed building. To commemorate the opening, a series of abstract and sculptural works were acquired. Featured here is one of those works by artist Helen Frankenthaler, a second generation member of the New York School and a prominent artist of her time. Frankenthaler pioneered the “stain technique” of painting in the early 1950s by pouring oil paint diluted with turpentine onto her canvas.

In composing *The Human Edge*, Frankenthaler’s palette of grey, orange, and pink blocks and strip of blue is cut by black paint to soften the hard-edges created by the blocks of color. The title of the painting derives its name from this approach.

## 1972: Video Art Program

In 1971, Director Jim Harithas founded the first experimental video program in the county. In the 1970s, video art was a new innovative medium being explored. Harithas hired curator David Ross to lead the newly founded video art program. From 1972 to 1974, Ross and Harithas curated more than 40 video exhibitions and programs with works by pioneering artists such as Linda Benglis, Douglas Davis, Juan Downey, Frank Gillette, and Bill Viola.

Nam June Paik, often referred to as the “Father of Video Art,” created a live video installation at the Everson in partnership with cellist Charlotte Moorman in January 1972. Moorman performed *Concerto for TV Cello and Videotape* and *TV Bed*. For *Concerto*, Moorman played the video cello, an instrument designed by Paik and constructed out of television monitors, and for *TV Bed* she played a traditional cello while lying atop an installation of monitors resembling a bed. This video feed was streamed on multiple screens.



(Top)  
Helen Frankenthaler  
*The Human Edge*, 1967  
Acrylic on canvas, 124 x 93.25 inches

(Bottom)  
Charlotte Moorman performing *TV Bed*, January 1972  
Everson Museum of Art

## 1974: New Works In Clay

1974 ushered in an exciting new project inspired and led by artist and Syracuse University professor Margie Hughto. Hughto invited well-known painters and sculptors to Syracuse to experiment with creating ceramics. *New Works in Clay* culminated in three exhibitions between 1976 and 1981.

Dorothy Hood was one of the first visiting artists to undertake the project. She experimented with solid slabs imbedded with colored clay, including *Tiara Way*. Hood was interested in clay's tendency to crack and change during the firing process, and embraced any imperfections in the slabs that resulted from firings.

## Collecting Today

Vanessa German's *The Boxer* is a recent acquisition. Based in Homewood, the historic black neighborhood of Pittsburgh, German creates work in response to systemic racism, violence, and brutality experienced by Black and Brown communities. *The Boxer* is one of more than thirty female warriors that German constructed as a group in 2016, each a radical empowerment object reminiscent of Congolese (Central Africa) Nkisi power figures believed to bestow protection. German intends for her soldiers to absorb the challenges of daily life and create an environment open to radical amounts of peace, beauty, and love.

(Top)  
Dorothy Hood  
*Tiara Way*, 1975  
Stoneware, 31 x 24 x 24 inches  
Everson Museum of Art; Gift of the artist  
76.48

(Bottom)  
Vanessa German,  
*The Boxer*, 2016  
Mixed-media assemblage, 78 x 38 x 22 inches  
Everson Museum of Art; Museum purchase  
2017.8



# PLANNING

## Themes

- Contemporary Art
- Video Art
- Art and Activism

## Activities

- Hand-building using slabs inspired by Dorothy Hood
- Power figure collage or clay sculpture inspired by Vanessa German
- Tiktok or Youtube video inspired by Nam June Paik

## Lesson Planning

Use the following prompts to create a lesson for your students.

## Inspired by *Legacy of Firsts*

Using any of the featured works in this guide, facilitate a Visual Thinking Strategies discussion encouraging students to consider the medium, process, and message of the works.

## Student Choice

After students have had a chance to discuss works featured in the *Legacy of Firsts* exhibition, offer them a choice to create an individual or collaborative art piece using one of the following mediums; clay, video, or collage. Students can focus their project on a social issue that they care about, or focus on applying some of the processes mentioned in this guide. Some ideas to consider: creating tiles or slabs with a social message, creating a power figure using clay or collage techniques, or creating a spoken word, rap or performance video using Tiktok or Youtube.

## Visual Thinking Strategies

Follow the easy steps below. Visit [vtshome.org](http://vtshome.org) to learn more

STEP 1 Take a moment to look at what's going on in this picture.

STEP 2 What's going on in this picture?

STEP 3 Take turns talking about what you see.

STEP 4 What do you see that makes you say that?

## New York State Learning Standards

Arts Anchor Standards 1 – 11

ELA, Reading Anchor Standards 1, 4, 6, 7

ELA, Writing Anchor Standards 3, 4

ELA, Speaking and Listening Anchor Standards 1, 2, 3 Social Studies Learning Standards 1, 2, 5

Visual Arts, 1.1, 1.2

Visual Arts, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3

Visual Arts, 6.1

Visual Arts, 7.1, 7.2

Visual Arts, 8.1

Visual Arts, 10.1

Visual Arts, 11.1, 11.2



# EVERSON MUSEUM OF ART

## EVERSON TO YOU REQUEST FORM

The Everson Museum of Art can come to you! Using Zoom video conferencing a Museum educator will provide a Museum-themed lesson in real time (each session lasts approximately 30 minutes). This program is meant for schools, homeschool groups, and area community organizations. Requests should be made at least two-weeks in advance.

REQUESTOR'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL / ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE OF GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER IN GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF SESSIONS REQUESTING: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF LIVE VIRTUAL SESSION REQUESTING (Check options below)

**Visual Thinking Strategies**

**Exploring the Everson's Collection**

**Conveying Meaning Through Art (HS only)**

**Other (describe needs here) :** \_\_\_\_\_

DATE(S) REQUESTING SESSION: \_\_\_\_\_ PREFERRED TIME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE SUBMIT FORM TO: [education@everson.org](mailto:education@everson.org)  
401 Harrison Street . Syracuse NY . 13202 (315) 474-6064 [www.everson.org](http://www.everson.org)