STUDIO FIELDNOTES / MODERN & CONTEMPORARY BLACK ARTISTS / 9–12

# The Museum Label Is a Choice | Fred Wilson

Teacher guide · 9–12 · 50–65 minutes × 3–5 sessions

## Essential question

How can display choices alter historical meaning?

## Why this investigation matters

Discuss colonial collecting and ethics of museum interpretation

## The finished work

Mini-exhibit placing two objects in unexpected dialogue

## Methods and material suggestions

curation, juxtaposition, museum writing; choose materials suitable for your space: drawing and collage materials, paper, water-based media, or clean reclaimed objects as appropriate.

## Learning targets

Students will: analyze a relevant visual or disciplinary source; experiment with curation, juxtaposition, museum writing; create an original response; give and use evidence-based feedback; and explain one artistic choice.

## Teaching progression

### 01 / Engage

Show the inquiry question: How can display choices alter historical meaning? Invite a noticing, a wonder, and an initial interpretation.

### 02 / Investigate

Study at least two credited examples associated with Fred Wilson. Discuss colonial collecting and ethics of museum interpretation Students annotate the evidence that supports their thinking.

### 03 / Skill Studio

Demonstrate curation, juxtaposition with a short material experiment. Students test the technique and record what changes.

### 04 / Generate

Produce at least two distinct visual approaches to the challenge. Compare how each communicates the idea.

### 05 / Plan

Choose an approach, identify materials and sketch a sequence of actions. Name one foreseeable difficulty.

### 06 / Produce

Create the original artwork or design: Mini-exhibit placing two objects in unexpected dialogue. Photograph or annotate work in progress.

**07 / Critique**

Use evidence-based peer feedback: one element that communicates, one question, one suggested next move.

**08 / Revise**

Make one visible revision in response to critique or new evidence. Record before-and-after choices.

**09 / Present**

Display or share the result with a student-authored explanation and credits for research sources.

**10 / Reflect**

Return to the inquiry question and explain what the work now communicates, what changed and what could improve next time.

## Standards and adaptation

NCAS Visual Arts Creating, Responding and Connecting (anchor-level alignment); match grade-specific performance standards before instruction.

Students study the artist as a source of artistic inquiry and make an original response rather than a copy.

## Differentiation and access

Offer visual exemplars, tactile or large-print materials, verbal/audio explanations, partner brainstorming, alternate motor tools, and choice in subject matter. Expect a written inquiry question, evidence-based comparison, process portfolio, iterative critique, and a defended artistic decision.

## Teacher checks

Before: Ask students to answer: How can display choices alter historical meaning? Record a drawing, annotation or discussion response.

During: Look for purposeful use of curation and a clear link between research evidence and design choices. Ask students to explain an alternative.

After: Compare first plan and revised result; collect a student statement naming one choice, one change, and the evidence that motivated it.

## Source and representation care

Research original works using the cited museum or artist resources. Do not imply the supplied editorial cover graphic depicts the artist or their copyrighted artwork. Credit creators and seek permissions for reproductions. No student should have to disclose private identity or family history.