COFFEE RHUM SUGAR & GOLD
A POSTCOLONIAL PARADOX

EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE
May 8—August 11, 2019
Curated by Dexter Wimberly & Larry Ossei-Mensah
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE WHEN VISITING MOAD

Due to the complex nature of colonialism, the Coffee, Rhum, Sugar & Gold Educator Resource Guide is most applicable for use with students in high school and above; however, the content may be adjusted to meet the specific learning goals of your students.

The Vocabulary can be used to introduce students to the terms they may encounter on the exhibition labels and in further reading about the home countries of the artists. These will, in turn, help students to look more carefully at the art featured in the exhibition. Prior to visiting MoAD, we suggest having students read the biographies of all exhibited artists and becoming familiar with the work of at least two of the artists through the pre-visit activities. Be sure to have your students complete the post-visit activities as soon as possible after your visit to the Museum. These are designed to help students think more deeply about the ideas of the artists included in the exhibition. Lastly, you may opt to choose either of the suggested extended art projects to provide students an even deeper exploration of themes and concepts that inspire the artists. Please note that while the Educator Resource Guide strives to help students understand many of the histories which inform the work in the exhibition, we are not able to provide a comprehensive overview in such a short number of pages.

We sincerely hope that you find this Educator Resource Guide helpful and welcome any comments or feedback you may have for us. Additionally, we would love to hear how you have chosen to integrate the material into your classroom or program. If you have developed additional handouts or found new resources to enhance this guide, please email a copy of your resource to us.

Thank you,
Demetri Broxton
MoAD Senior Director of Education • education@moadsf.org

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Coffee, Rhum, Sugar & Gold: A Postcolonial Paradox is an exhibition that looks at the legacy of European colonialism in the Caribbean through the work of 10 contemporary artists. Whether connected to the Caribbean by birth or focused on the region by choice, the exhibiting artists use their work as a means of examining the relationship between the power structure, those who are controlled by it, those who benefit from it, and those who actively seek to liberate themselves from it.

The exhibition title is inspired by some of the core products that have historically been produced in and exported from the Caribbean to the rest of the world - with a focus on Europe. Coffee, rum, sugar and gold remain highly valuable commodities and commercially important goods. However, because of their ubiquity, and the passage of time, these items have lost much of their historical gravity and visibility as key drivers of European colonialism.

According to the European Commission, the main exports from the Caribbean to the European Union are fuel and mining products, such as petroleum gas and oils; bananas, sugar and rum; minerals (notably gold, corundum, aluminum oxide and hydroxide), iron ore products; and fertilizers. However, the historic toll of colonialism remains evident in the lives of hundreds of millions of people who are the descendants of those who suffered, sacrificed, and even gained from its expansion and apparent decline.

A key driver of the exhibition is the theory that colonialism has continued to exist in other forms and is in fact spreading through the export of soft power, the use of military force, the control of international financial and banking mechanisms, as well as the increase in globalization.

“Colonialism hardly ever exploits the whole of a country. It contents itself with bringing to light the natural resources, which it extracts, and exports to meet the needs of the mother country’s industries, thereby allowing certain sectors of the colony to become relatively rich. But the rest of the colony follows its path of under-development and poverty, or at all events sinks into it more deeply.”

– Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth

NOTE: Throughout this Educator’s Resource Guide, we use the term ‘enslaved people’ rather than ‘slave’. This distinction is both purposeful and important. ‘Enslaved people’ reminds us that the people being spoken about had identities as human beings who were forced into the lowest positions within their society. On the other hand, the term ‘slave’ reduces the person’s identity solely to their social position and as property.
DEXTER WIMBERLY  b. 1973  
Brooklyn, NY, USA

Dexter Wimberly is an entrepreneur and independent curator, who organizes exhibitions that explore contemporary culture, American history, economics, and power dynamics. A passionate supporter of the arts, Wimberly has exhibited the work of hundreds of artists internationally. During his more than a decade-long career, he has organized exhibitions and programs at dozens of museums and galleries including the Contemporary Art Museum (CAM) Raleigh, The California African American Museum, The Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA), 101/EXHIBIT gallery, Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art, bitforms gallery, Koki Arts gallery (Tokyo), and The Third Line Gallery (Dubai).

LARRY OSSEI-MENSAH  b. 1980  
Harlem, NY, USA

Larry Ossei-Mensah was recently appointed the role of senior curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit. A Ghanaian-American independent curator and cultural critic, Larry is a cofounder of Artnoir, a global collective of curators, writers, artists, and other arts professionals. He has curated shows at various spaces internationally, including Marra Contemporanea in Rome, Elizabeth Dee Gallery in New York, and MASS MoCA in Massachusetts. Recently, Ossei-Mensah was named the 2017 Critic-in-Residence at ART OMI in addition to serving as Co-Chair on Russell Simmons’ RUSH Artist Advisory Board and a member of MoMA’s Friends of Education.

FIRELEI BÁEZ  b. 1981  
Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic

New York-based artist Firelei Báez creates intricate works on paper and canvas as well as large scale sculptures. Báez takes visual references from the past and reworks them to explore new possibilities for the future. Some common motifs found in her work are drawn from textiles and wall coverings with floral patterns, calligraphy, hair textures, feathered headdresses, and beaded jewelry.

Born to a Dominican mother and a father of Haitian descent, much of Firelei’s work references her own upbringing on the border between Haiti and Dominican Republic, whose longstanding history of tension is largely due to racial difference. By creating portraits that cross and blur the boundaries of human, race, and landscape, Báez frees her subjects from cultural and colonial narratives.

LEONARDO BENZANT  b. 1972  
Brooklyn, NY, USA

Leonardo Benzant is a Dominican-American artist, born and raised in Brooklyn, who refers to himself as an Urban Shaman. Benzant works in a variety of media; however, he is best known for his assemblages of objects which are wrapped and stitched in fabric and then encased in beaded bands of color.

His practice is informed by his studies of Kongo-derived religions and his own spiritual beliefs, that are shaped by his research into native African and South-American religion and rituals. Through expressive and colorful imagery, Leonardo depicts his impressions of the visual world, the unseen and the cosmos, and continuously explores his ties to his ancestral past.
ANDREA CHUNG  b. 1981  
Newark, New Jersey, USA

Andrea Chung is an American artist currently based in San Diego, CA. Her work focuses primarily on island nations in the Indian Ocean and the Caribbean Sea; specifically, on how outsiders perceive a fantastic reality in spaces deemed as “paradise”. In conjunction, she explores relationships between these cultures, migration, and labor—all within the context of colonial and postcolonial regimes. Her projects bring in elements of her own labor and incorporate materials significant to the cultures she studies. This can be seen in works such as, “Bato Disik”, displayed in 2013 at the Helmuth Projects, where the medium of sugar represents the legacy of sugar plantations and colonial regime.

ADLER GUERRIER  b. 1975  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Adler Guerrier is best known for his artwork using the media of photography and printmaking that explores the poetics and politics of place. He is particularly interested in history’s relationship to landscape and often merges images of landscapes, particularly from neighborhoods around Miami with objects, signs, and symbols.

Guerrier was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti and lives and works in Miami, FL, where he received a BFA at the New World School of the Arts. Guerrier recently had a solo exhibition at Perez Art Museum Miami, Miami, FL. He has exhibited work at Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, Miami, FL; The Bass Museum of Art, Miami, FL; Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL; and The Whitney Biennial 2008. His works can be found in public collections including the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, and the Studio Museum in Harlem, NY. His work has appeared in Art Forum, Art in America, The New York Times and ARTNews, among others.

LUCIA HIERRO  b. 1987  
New York, NY, USA

Lucia Hierro is a Dominican American conceptual artist born and raised in Washington Heights, NYC. She lives and works in The Bronx. Hierro received a BFA from SUNY Purchase (2010) and an MFA from Yale School of Art (2013). She has exhibited at the Bronx Museum of the Arts, IPCNY (in the traveling group exhibition "Black Pulp") and had a recent solo exhibition at the Sugar Hill Children’s Museum of Art and Storytelling. Hierro was included in the 2017 inaugural edition of Selections by Larry Ossei-Mensah at Elizabeth Dee. Artists’ residencies include Fountainhead Residency, The Bronx Museum of the Arts Artist in the Marketplace program, Yaddo, and the Red Bull House of Art in Detroit.

LAVAR MUNROE  b. 1982  
Nassau, Bahamas

Lavar Munroe was born and grew up in the marginalized Grants Town community in Nassau, Bahamas. In 2004, he moved to the United States at the age of 21. His work functions as a reflection of the environment of his upbringing and draws from his memories of the crude graffiti on the walls that surrounded his street. The artist maps a personal journey of survival and trauma in a world of gang violence, drugs, murder, self-discovery, development and overcoming obstacles through self-determination. Though inspired by the past, Munroe’s loud, energetic and unapologetic visual language confronts contemporary society and the strained and difficult relationships between authority and people of the ghetto.
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ANGEL OTERO b. 1981
Santurce, Puerto Rico

Angel Otero was born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico. At age 24, he moved to Chicago to earn a Master of Arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and has remained in the United States ever since. Otero’s art practice combines painting and assemblage. He creates “oil skins” by pouring paint onto glass and peeling it off in sheets once it dries. These oil skins are then applied to canvas or his sculptural pieces. His process of painting on glass and then flaying the paint and applying it to a new surface is representative of how the artist perceives the process of reconfiguring both personal and historical narratives.

EBONY G. PATTERSON b. 1981
Kingston, Jamaica

In her work, the Jamaica-born mixed-media artist Ebony G. Patterson re-contextualizes gender norms and explores Jamaican dancehall culture. She creates highly entrancing, colorful pieces, which are reminiscent of Kehinde Wiley’s paintings. Patterson represents the transformations of gender and body politics by blending tapestry, beading, sequins, crochet, and Internet-sourced images of violent murders. The resulting pieces seduce the viewer with mesmerizing, striking textures. “I’m hoping...to pull the viewer in to see further and raise questions about how we engage in the act of looking,” she has said. Patterson’s work elicits a civic awareness that raises the stakes for popular culture as a whole.

PHILIP THOMAS b. 1980
Kingston, Jamaica

In his oil paintings and mixed-media works, artist Philip Thomas combines the imagery and traditions of the Old Masters with contemporary textures and patterns to create a new iconography. As a starting point for these cross-cultural conversations, Thomas looks to the model of the French academies, borrowing techniques (like oil painting on stretched canvas) and imagery (such as toreadors in elaborate costumes, silhouetted portraits, elaborately staged arrangements of figures) not only as formal elements, but also as relics of art history; offering a statement on colonialism and its aftermath, especially in his native Caribbean.

“You want a way to lure people into the image, and then it unfolds itself, like a very slow car crash,” he says. “I try in many ways to present the audience to themselves.”

DIDIER WILLIAM b. 1983
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Born in Haiti and raised in Miami, FL, Didier William combines art-historical references and traditional techniques such as wood carving, printmaking, and collage to create artworks that intentionally and literally confront the viewer. In many of his works, William carves hundreds of unblinking eyes into the surface of his work. In this way, the figures in his work stare back at the viewer.

Didier William received his BFA in painting from The Maryland Institute College of Art and an MFA in painting and printmaking from Yale University School of Art. His work has been exhibited across the USA and internationally. He is currently Associate Professor of Art and the Chair of the MFA Program at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia.
NEW WORLD
One of the names used by Europeans and European explorers to refer to the majority of the western hemisphere, specifically the Americas, Caribbean, and Oceania. The term was first coined by Amerigo Vespucci, the Italian explorer for whom America is named after.

COLONIALISM
The policy or practice of taking partial or complete political control of another country. See below for more information.

SETTLER
A euphemistic word to describe a person who moves with a group of others to occupy and live in a new country or area. Settlers are usually brought to a place to colonize the area and the process of claiming an area is usually accompanied with the violent displacement of indigenous people.

METROPOLE
The homeland or parent country of a colonial empire.

LOYALIST
A person who remains loyal to the established ruler or government, especially in the case of a revolution. In the colonial era, loyalists were loyal to the metropole.

MAROONS
Members of communities throughout the Caribbean who were descended from escaped enslaved people of African descent. Jamaican Maroons are the most well-known due to them successfully fighting two wars against the British resulting in their independence.

SOFT POWER
The ability of a country to attract and persuade others to do what it wants without force. Soft power is the ability to shape the preferences of others through appeal and attraction. Coercion is achieved through companies, foundations, universities, churches and other institutions. America displays probably the most successful use of soft power by exporting its values and culture through media to win “hearts and minds”.

AGENCY
A social science term, meaning the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices.
The Caribbean played a significant role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, but the history of European colonialism in the region began in 1492 when Christopher Columbus and his fleet of ships landed in the region and claimed it for Spain.

Following emancipation from slavery, Caribbean societies inherited rigid systems of racial inequity, much like in the United States. Most islands held a strict three-tiered system of white, mixed-race, and Black with the white members of society holding the vast majority of land and wealth. The systems of inequity remained in effect at least until the 1940s, but often far later in most Caribbean societies.

BAHAMAS
When Christopher Columbus set sail to find a new route to India, he accidentally landed on the island of San Salvador in the Bahamas in 1492. The Spanish colonists found about 40,000 Lucayan natives living on the island. The Lucayans were a peaceful group, making them easy targets for the Spanish conquerors to enslave. Within 25 years, the entire population of Lucayans died from European diseases and the hardships of slavery.

In 1648, the Bahamas fell under British colonial rule and the British brought enslaved laborers from Africa and colonies in New England. Following the American Revolution, the British government issued land grants in the Bahamas to American Loyalists. These loyalists brought a large population of enslaved African Americans with them. In fact, the majority of the Black population in the Bahamas is descended from the enslaved people brought to work on Loyalist plantations.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
The Dominican Republic is the eastern half of the island of Hispaniola, which means “little Spain”, and is the earliest of all European colonies in the western hemisphere. The colony was established in 1496 by Diego Columbus, the younger brother of Christopher, and became the main base for Spain until the conquest of Mexico.

The Dominican Republic was the very first place to transport enslaved Africans to the Americas. The first Africans came to the Dominican Republic in 1502 from Spain. In 1510, the colony began actively participating in the Transatlantic Slave Trade to support the burgeoning mining, sugar, and cattle industries.

The majority of enslaved Africans taken to the Dominican Republic came from West-Central Africa, especially from Nigeria and the Bakongo region (modern day Congo and Angola). As a result, many customs from the region have survived through stories, religion, names, music, and even language. Interestingly, a large number of villages in the Dominican Republic have been able to maintain speaking African languages.

HAITI
Haiti occupies the western part of the island of Hispaniola, with the Dominican Republic to the East. The island was originally claimed by Spain (see description of Dominican Republic). Just as in other parts of the Caribbean, the Spanish enslaved the native Taino tribe, which became obliterated from the ravages of European disease and the inhumane conditions of slavery. After the Nine Years’ War in 1767, France took possession of the western third of Hispaniola and renamed the colony Saint-Domingue. The colony was France’s most productive and richest in the world, producing about 40 percent of all the sugar and 60 percent of all the coffee consumed in Europe. In fact, Saint-Domingue produced more sugar and coffee than all of Britain’s Caribbean colonies combined!

Saint-Domingue had one of the most brutal, inhumane systems of slavery in Americas. In the late 1780s, nearly a third of all enslaved Africans were imported into Saint-Domingue. The system of slavery and the ravages of yellow fever was so brutal that at least 50% died within a year of arriving to the island and had to be “replenished” by new African-born forced labor. As a result, the slave masters preferred to work enslaved people as hard as possible to get the most production from them at the lowest possible expense.

Saint-Domingue was renamed “Haiti” following the Haitian Revolution, the largest, most successful slave revolt in modern history. The uprising began on August 22, 1791 and was led by Toussaint L’Ouverture. The Revolution was the only slave uprising in the Atlantic that led to the formation of an independent state, ruled by formerly enslaved people of color. Additionally, the Revolution marked a turning point in how people of European ancestry thought about Black people and their capacity to self-govern. The Haitian Revolution lasted several years and in 1803, formerly enslaved Blacks and people of mixed ancestry defeated the French army at the Battle of Vertières. This event led to Napoleon’s withdrawal of troops from North America and agreeing to the Louisiana Purchase.
JAMAICA
The Caribbean island of Jamaica was inhabited by the Arawak tribe, which named the island 'Xaymaca', meaning “land of wood and water” in their native language. Much like the Lucayan tribe in the Bahamas, the Arawaks were enslaved and were completely wiped out by European diseases and the hardships of slavery. The Spanish then brought in hundreds of enslaved West Africans to replace the Arawak labor force.

In 1655, the English invaded Jamaica and defeated the Spanish colonists. Enslaved Africans took advantage of this moment to escape, fleeing to the islands interior to form independent communities called Maroons.

In the 18th century, sugar exports became Jamaica’s main source of income. Due to the extremely rigorous nature of cultivating and processing sugar, the British brought in hundreds of thousands of enslaved Africans to Jamaica to work the sugar plantations. The majority of Africans brought to Jamaica were of Akan origin from modern-day Ghana and Ivory Coast. The rest were mostly Igbo, from modern-day Nigeria.

PUERTO RICO
The history of Puerto Rico mostly mirrors the histories of the aforementioned islands. Prior to Spanish arrival, the island was occupied by the Taíno people, whose population was nearly wiped out due to infectious diseases carried by Europeans and exploitation by the Spanish settlers. The island served as a major military post for Spain during the many wars for control of the region by European powers between the 16th and 18th centuries. However, unlike the other islands, the first Puerto Ricans of African descent were free men, known as libertos, who accompanied the Spanish Conquistadors in their invasion of the island.

Shortly after taking control of the island, the Spanish settlers discovered gold in Puerto Rico and forced the Taíno people into slavery. When the population was nearly decimated, the Spanish Crown authorized the importation of enslaved West Africans. Gold was mined from 1509-1579, until the mines were depleted. In the late 17th century, huge amounts of land were dedicated to the cultivation and production of sugar. Demand for Puerto Rican sugar by the United States surged amidst the chaos of the Haitian Revolution. As a result, the enslaved population rapidly increased as new slave labor was imported from Africa to support the increased demand for sugar.

Throughout most of the 19th century, Puerto Rico, along with Cuba, were the last two Spanish colonies in the New World. In an attempt to maintain control of the colony, the Spanish crown offered free land to Spaniards and Europeans of non-Spanish origin, to settle and populate the colony if they swore loyalty to the Spanish crown and allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. As a result, Puerto Ricans are predominantly of European ancestry mixed with African and Taíno heritage. In 1898, during the Spanish-American War, the United States invaded and took possession of the island.
Colonialism and its Impact

Colonialism is when a nation seeks to expand its territory by controlling an area of land and/or people. The process of taking control of an area is most often violent as the nation forcefully enters an area and then claims the lands as its own. Next, the colonizing nation sends its own people as “settlers” to live on the land. While the term settler sounds harmless, settler colonialism functions by replacing indigenous populations with members of the invading nation’s people.

Colonialism in the Caribbean is often referred to in terms of the great Age of Exploration and began when “Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492” seeking a new trade route to India. Advances in cartography, navigation, and shipbuilding allowed Europeans to sail further and soon Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands began exploring and colonizing the Americas. Later, these same powers, plus Germany, Belgium, and Portugal, would intensify colonization efforts in Africa and around the Indian Ocean in an effort called the Scramble for Africa.

The Age of Exploration had a massive, long-standing impact on the economies of the world. Prior to this period, Greece and Italy were the wealthiest and most powerful economies in the European region. As a result of the massive extraction and cultivation of natural minerals, agricultural products and products, i.e. “Coffee, Rhum, Sugar & Gold,” the wealthiest and most powerful countries were located in western Europe. The impact of this period of conquest was so profound that countries like England, France, and Germany are still the wealthiest and most influential countries in Europe today. On the other side of the equation, many of the countries that were once colonized are among the poorest and most “underdeveloped” in the world.

Sugar

“White Gold” is the term British colonists used for sugar. The little white crystals that make everything sweet were the greatest driving force behind the Transatlantic Slave Trade that brought millions of enslaved Africans to the Americas beginning in the 16th century. In fact, sugar was such a significant economic driver that it played a major role in the United States gaining independence from Great Britain. The Sugar Act of 1974 forced a huge tax upon the American Colonies for importing sugar and sugar-related products, such as molasses and rum from non-British Caribbean colonies. The French were so concerned with preserving a stronghold over their sugar producing Caribbean colonies that a major factor for them backing the American Revolution was maintaining control of Haiti and Guadeloupe.

Sugar cane is native to Southeast Asia, but even today, the majority of sugar is grown in the Americas, with Brazil being the largest producer of sugar in the world. Colonists discovered that the tropical environment of the Caribbean was the perfect environment for sugar cultivation when planters who arrived with Christopher Columbus decided to plant a small crop upon their arrival to Hispaniola.

Sugar cultivation is labor intensive, back breaking work. Enslaved laborers would plant by hand using hoes and then cut the thick canes with machetes when it was ready to cultivate. Next, sugar has to be milled and then boiled. Before the Industrial Revolution, milling and boiling were done manually, so mills and boilers had to be operated 24 hours a day in order to process the crop and produce the sweet white crystals. The byproducts of sugar were then used to produce molasses and rum. Sugar, molasses, and rum were then shipped to Europe and/or the American colonies.

Sugar was so significant that between the 17th and 19th centuries, it produced about 1/3 of all wealth in Europe. During this period, it is estimated that more than 10 million Africans were forcibly taken to the Americas to work on sugar plantations in Brazil and the Caribbean. In the early 19th century, British people consumed about 18 pounds of sugar per year. According to the 2017 Diabetes Atlas, today Americans consume 152 pounds of sugar per year!
GOLD
The search for gold was one of the greatest factors of exploration and colonization of the Americas. Myths of islands containing endless supplies of gold had been spread across the European continent through a book chronicling the travels of Marco Polo and these myths inspired Christopher Columbus. When Columbus’s fleet landed in Hispaniola, he believed the fabled land of gold was not far from the island he had “discovered”.

The myths of the Americas being the land of endless gold were reinforced when Columbus first encountered the Taíno people on Hispaniola. Some wore pieces of gold as jewelry. Furthermore, when his ship, the Santa Maria, became stuck on the banks of the island, local people approached the ship with bits of gold to trade. This “evidence” that he had found the islands of gold began an obsessive search for more of the precious metal that lasted for centuries. While on his return journey to Spain, Columbus wrote to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella telling them about the exotic people, plants and animals he had encountered, along with “rivers that contained gold, and mines for gold and other metals”. This letter was published in cities all across Europe and prompted a search for gold that accompanied all European colonial exploration in the Americas.

Columbus and his men never found an endless supply of gold in the Caribbean islands, but they continued searching. Initially, somewhat large quantities of gold were found in Hispaniola and Puerto Rico, with lesser quantities found in Cuba. Expeditions created huge amounts of debt for European explorers and debt was a quick way to not only pay back the debt, but also make an explorer very wealthy. However, by the 1520s, most of the gold mines in the Caribbean were depleted and Spanish citizens began fleeing the islands in search of other locations within the Americas that had a higher chance of yielding great fortunes. To prevent a mass exodus from the islands, the Spanish crown began offering loans to help individuals establish sugar estates.

Rumors of gold compelled Hernán Cortés and several hundred men to explore Mexico in 1519. The Aztec ruler Montezuma II wanted to keep the Spanish out of his city Tenochtitlan so he sent emissaries to the coast bearing extravagant gifts made of gold, silver, turquoise and other rare materials. However, Montezuma’s plan backfired and Cortés imprisoned him and claimed the Aztec treasury.

A few years later, in the mid-1520s, Francisco Pizarro sailed to Peru and found that the Inca people had been mining gold for at least 3,000 years. The Inca use of gold was highly refined and since the use of gold was limited to Inca nobility, creations of great size made entirely of gold were made by artisans. According to Spanish chroniclers, the Inca had created “miniature gardens made entirely of gold.” Unfortunately, most of these creations didn’t survive because the Spanish conquerors melted them into gold bars to send back to Spain.

COFFEE
Coffee, which is sometimes referred to as “black gold” originates in East Africa. Coffee was rare in the western world due to a centuries-long ban imposed by Arab traders who controlled trade routes from Africa and the Middle East. The coffee tree was first introduced to the Caribbean island of Martinique (a French colony) in about 1720 by Gabriel Mathieu de Clieu, who reportedly stole clippings from the plant in Paris’ Royal Botanical Garden belonging to King Louis XIV. According to legend, De Clieu’s ship was attacked by pirates and nearly sunk in a storm. Going through such an arduous journey, all but one of his seedlings survived. Once planted in Martinique, the plant flourished. Within 50 years, there were over 19 million coffee trees in Martinique and coffee became well established through most of the islands of the Caribbean, most notably Haiti and Mexico. 90% of coffee in the Americas can be traced back to the plants in Martinique. In 1727, the Brazilian Colonel, Francisco de Melo Palheta stole plant clippings from French Guiana and brought them back to Brazil. Today, Brazil is the world’s largest coffee growing region in the world.

As with other labor-intensive crops in the Caribbean, the rise in popularity of coffee throughout North America and Europe relied on slave labor. The growth of coffee plantations was even more staggering than sugar. In Brazil, 125,000 tons of coffee were exported in the first half of the 1820s. By the first few years of the 1850s, coffee exports rocketed to 1.5 million tons. Mainly fueled by the increase in American consumption of coffee, by 1850, enslaved people of African descent were producing half the world’s coffee in Brazil. By 1900, Brazil exported five times as much coffee as the rest of the world combined.
Before visiting MoAD, it is recommended that you and your students explore and discuss the islands and other themes in the exhibition. We recommend introducing students to at least two works of art in the exhibition. See the Artworks section of this resource guide for a selection of artwork included in the exhibition.

OBJECTIVES

- Introduce students to the works of artists of Caribbean ancestry and examine how they see the world around them.
- Introduce students to key concepts that frame the artworks they will encounter on their visit to the museum.
- Explore the impact colonialism has had historically and how that impact has continued into the present.

PRE–VISIT ACTIVITIES

In 2018, Didier William mounted a two-venue exhibition of large and very elaborate paintings at two galleries in New York City. The titles of William’s paintings were in Haitian Creole and left untranslated. The choice to not translate the titles into English was intentional. The artist wanted to make viewers have the same linguistic challenges faced by his own parents and other immigrants.

William’s work was created on wooden panels, combining paint, collage, and carved elements. Didier’s unique process of working involves him carving eyes all over the figures of and then meticulously painting in detail with black ink. The artist describes the multiplicity of eyes as giving agency back to the figures he creates, allowing the figure to stare back at the viewer. William connects this level of agency back to the Haitian Revolution.

For older students (Grades 10 and above) read and discuss the HyperAllergic article about Didier’s work online at https://hyperallergic.com/473563/didier-william-on-painting-a-revolution/

If time permits, listen to the podcast and discuss as a class.

See next page for questions about Didier William’s work.
1. What do you think is happening in the painting?

2. What details do you see that make you say this?

3. List words that describe the painting to someone who can’t see it.

4. How might this painting connect to the artist’s heritage as a Haitian American?
Kingston, Jamaica-born artist Ebony G. Patterson works in multiple media, using materials associated with both wealth and beauty to explore themes of global Black youth culture, class, race, gender norms, and pageantry. Her artworks combine Jacquard tapestries, jewelry, glitter, beading, crochet, flowers, wildly patterned materials, and even toys. Patterson’s works often reference gardens, which she views as an extension of the body. She collects images from newspapers, particularly of victims of acts of violence or their relatives caught in the act of mourning and she covers them with layers of sparkling patterns and materials. In this way, the figures become like a garden, which Patterson also sees as a metaphor for death and post-colonial spaces.

Much of the extreme patterning and “bling” in Patterson’s work connects to the swagger found in Jamaica’s dancehall scene. Jamaica is the birthplace of reggae, with international stars like Bob Marley and the Wailers. In the 1970s, the sound and focus of Jamaican music changed to a style known as dancehall, which was influenced by advances in technology and the political violence of the time. Dancehall is the form of music that influenced the creation of hip hop music in the United States – most of the pioneers of hip hop in New York were of Caribbean ancestry, particularly Jamaica.

With the development of dancehall in Jamaica came bling culture, a term referring to dancehall artists and youth attendees dressing up in high-end clothes such as Louis Vuitton, excessive jewelry, elaborate hairstyles, etc. Patterson’s artwork has also explored and been inspired by the Jamaican Bling funeral – a phenomenon where mostly lower-class Jamaicans stage elaborate, expensive funerals costing thousands of dollars, often exceeding the financial means of the person whose life is being celebrated. An impetus of bling funerals for poor people is as Patterson puts it, to say, “you may not have noticed me when I was alive, but you will damn well see me as I leave.”

1. Describe the figures in these artworks. How are they standing and how are they dressed?

2. How do their postures and dress relate to the titles of the artworks?

3. List words that describe the pieces to someone who can’t see them.

4. How might these pieces connect to bling culture in Jamaica?

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: ANGEL OTERO


Angel Otero, Untitled (Red), 2013. Oil paint & oil paint skins collaged on canvas. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul.
Angel Otero created his own method of painting which involves him applying oil paint to Plexiglas. Once the paint begins to dry, he scrapes it off into what he calls a “skin”. He then slides this skin, with its wrinkles and imperfections, onto a stretched canvas. The images Angel paints are sometimes completely abstract, but other times, he paints representational objects or landscapes. The process of scraping the paint distorts the image and even his representational images become abstracted.

His desire to experiment with materials and use them in unexpected ways, led Otero to dabble in sculpture, particularly with porcelain. The works on view at MoAD are made from gates he found at antique stores. He has to sandblast and clean the iron and then cut them into smaller sections. Porcelain is a ceramic material that originated in China and is renowned for both being strong and translucent. While porcelain is strong for a ceramic product, it is also licate. To meld the steel gates and porcelain together, Otero has to expose them to intense heat by placing them in a kiln. Exposure to extreme heat destroys the materials while also creating something new as the materials meld together.

Angel Otero has lived in New York for almost a decade and this summer will open up a second studio in his hometown of San Juan, Puerto Rico. As an artist, Otero likes to invent new ways to interact and use materials. Similarly, he wants to be innovative and creative when it comes to participating in revitalizing efforts in his native Puerto Rico following the devastation of Hurricane Maria in 2017.

1. How is the painting connected to the sculptures?

2. What details do you see that make you say this?

3. List words that describe what porcelain represents.

4. List words that describe what steel gates represent.

5. By melding together porcelain and steel gates, what ideas might the artist want to convey to viewers? Explain your thinking.
OBJECTIVE:

Provide space for students to reflect upon and discuss the ideas and themes of the exhibition.

1. Museum Visit Reflection

a. Following your museum visit, ask students to take a few minutes to write about their experiences and key concepts they took from the museum visit. Use the space below.

b. Next, students will choose one artist to further reflect upon.

• Artist:

• Medium/Materials Used:

Create a quick sketch of something you remember from the artist’s work.

List words that describe the artist’s work to someone who wasn’t there to see it.

What questions would you have for the artist?

What did you find the most interesting about the artist’s work? Be descriptive.
SOCIAL ISSUES POSTERS
(Middle School Students and Older)

Timeline: 3-4 45-minute class periods

OBJECTIVES
Students will:
• Choose a social issue they care deeply about and would want to change.
• Explore why they care about the issue and how it impacts them or others around them.
• Depict their social issue in an visual art project.

Issues may include, but are not limited to:
• Pollution
• AIDS
• Gentrification
• Government
• Racism
• Human Rights
• War
• Discrimination
• Suicide
• Bullying
• Teen Pregnancy
• Domestic Violence
• Gender Inequality

Materials
• Student sketchbooks
• Watercolor or Bristol Paper
• Watercolor
• Colored pencils
• Oil Pastels

OPTIONAL
• Newspapers
• Magazines
• Printouts from the internet
• Glue

PROCESS
1. Explain that students will explore and depict a social issue on a large sheet of paper. They can choose from watercolor, colored pencils, oil pastels, and/or collage to depict their issue.

Student imagery should be direct and should be closely cropped images. Show students a wide variety of sample artwork made by contemporary artists that deal with social issues. Examples may include, but are not limited to: Emory Douglas, Kerry James Marshall, Chéri Samba, Bayete Ross Smith, Hank Willis Thompson, Pablo Picasso’s painting Guernica, Eric Almanza, Norman Rockwell’s painting The Problem We All Live With, Tania Bruguera, Adrian Piper, Shepard Fairey, Titus Kaphar, and Ai Weiwei.

2. Have students conduct an internet search to research their chosen issue. Using their sketchbooks, have students take notes, making sure to capture quotes, statistics, and any other topics that jump out at them.

3. In their sketchbooks, have students create thumbnail sketches to plan out their compositions.

4. Students will then spend several sessions completing their posters.

5. Extension: Have students write a short essay addressing their social issue, explaining the following questions:
SUGGESTED EXTENDED ART ACTIVITIES

Social Issues Patches (4th grade and Older)

Timeline: Four 30-45 minute class sessions

Objectives

• Students will review the basic elements of art and create a protest patch.

SESSION 1 - CHOOSE A SOCIAL ISSUE

Materials: Work sheets

Procedure:

1. What do people usually do to protest a social problem? Introduce some of the ways to address issues. (running campaigns, posting on social media or blogs, joining activist groups, etc.)

2. Explain that art can also be one of the ways to protest and express our thoughts.

3. Provide students with several examples of protest art. Examples include art by Ai Weiwei, Banksy, Guerrilla Girls, Emory Douglas, Carrie Reichardt, Jacob Lawrence, Nancy Spero, Felix Gonzalez-Torres.

4. Have students choose a social issue they would want to solve. i.e. environmental issues (global warming, endangered species, etc.), racism, sexism, gentrification, poverty, bullying, immigration, etc.

5. Ask questions to clarify their standpoints.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social issue</th>
<th>Why is it important?</th>
<th>How can we solve it?</th>
<th>What can you do?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why do you think it is important? How do you think that we can solve this problem? What can we do in our daily-life to change the problem?

6. Have students share their thoughts as a pair, or in a small group.
**SESSION 2 - DESIGN PROTEST PATCHES**

Procedure:

1. Have students develop a design for their protest patch.

2. Have students think of the words or phrases they want on their protest patch.

   **Sample Protest Patch Design**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protest Patch Design</th>
<th>Words or Phrases</th>
<th>Female Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. Have students share their designs as a pair, or in a group.

4. Introduce monoprint as a way to make protest patches. Point out that when a print is transferred, the image is reversed.

5. If time permits, have students start transferring their designs to a foam plate.

**SESSION 3 - MAKE A PRINTING PLATE**

Materials: Styrofoam plates, pencils, acrylic paint, brayers

Procedure:

1. Have students transfer their designs to a foam plate by tracing their design using pencils.

2. Have students keep in mind that letters will be reversed when transferred from a print. Example of a “flipped alphabet” are provided below.

3. When students are done transferring their designs, have them practice the printing on a piece of paper.

4. Inform students that they will have a piece of cloth to transfer their prints during the next session, and if you'd like, they can also bring extra clothes, bags, or any other fashion items that they want to make prints on.

**SESSION 4: PRINT AND SEW**

Materials: acrylic paint, brayers, cloth, beads, thread

Procedure:

1. Have students print their plates onto a piece of cloth. Allow to dry.

   **OPTIONAL:**

2. Have students decorate the cloth with beads and thread.

3. Have students try printing on different materials that they brought to the class.
STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS GUIDE
The activities in this resource guide may be adapted to meet the standards in almost any subject or grade level. Due to the themes of the exhibition connected to apartheid and the complexity of some of the content, the activities are most compatible for use with high school students. However, adjustments may be made to meet the content standards requirements for many of the elementary and middle grade levels.

VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS
To see which Visual Arts Standards are met in each activity, please visit the California Visual and Performing Arts Standards at http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/vpastandards.pdf

HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS