

Lesson Plan 3: Pop Art self-portrait diorama



Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing? by Richard Hamilton, 1956 © Richard Hamilton

Introduction

During this activity students will create a miniature self-portrait diorama (a type of theatre or model set). Students can also photograph themselves using digital cameras to include themselves in the diorama. This activity will enable students to consider the composition of an artwork, e.g. the foreground, middle ground and background, so that they gain a greater understanding of these terms.

Activity steps:



1. Students will start by looking at *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* by Richard Hamilton, 1956. The artists will ask students to try and describe how the image is made. Is it a photograph? A painting? A print?

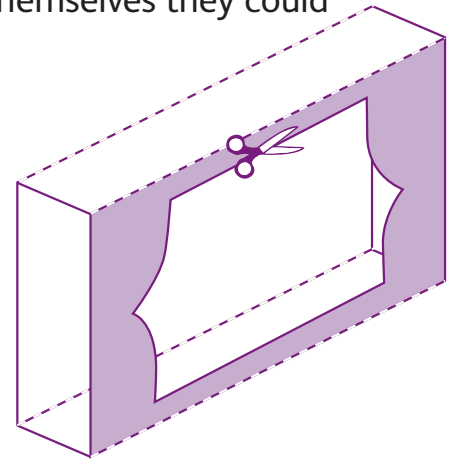
This collage was made in 1956; a lot of the furniture and objects in the home depicted would have been seen as 'ideal' or 'fantasy' to most people at the time. The furniture is cut out of the latest magazines, the giant tin of ham would have been seen as a luxury to those that had food rationed during the war, and most homes still did not have TV sets (radio was still really popular). The artists will ask students to pick out some of the details and symbols in this collage.

2. The artists will draw the students' attention to these fantasy elements in the picture. If they appeared in the collage how would they like to be portrayed? What would their ideal home look like? What objects would they have around them?

POP ART PORTRAITS: TEACHERS' NOTES

Students will be asked to imagine their own interiors and settings inspired by this image and create their own diorama, looking at the finished example, which shows a pop-up environment with sitter and setting. If students prefer they can create their own collage on an A3 sheet of card and instead of representing themselves they could choose their favourite famous person.

3. Students will be given a template to create their own diorama. They will cut out the front of the diorama (theatre set) in order to create their composition, then fold along the dotted lines to create the box shape.



4. Students will then cut, colour and collage their setting. They can also have a photograph taken to put inside their pop-up diorama using the postcard printer.

5. Finally, the students will think about the story their diorama tells and at the end of the session they will discuss and 'exhibit' their work within the group.

Primary follow-up idea:

Using a digital camera, students can take photographs at different stages of their story (or theatre performance) and create a storyboard. They can print these images out and arrange them on a sheet of A3 card or use a computer to create their storyboard.

Secondary extension idea:

Using A4 card trimmed down to create a square composition, students can create their chosen environment, which can include

POP ART PORTRAITS: TEACHERS' NOTES

objects or furniture. Ask students to create 2D collages of themselves, friends and family to place in their environment. Ask them to think about whether the layout affects the way they view these portraits. Do the sitters look as if they are communicating their thoughts and feelings to each other?

Materials:

Theatre template
Photocopies of artwork
A3 colour/white card
Furby colour pencils
HB pencils
Berol fine felt pens
Pritt stick
Scissors
Magazine images/stamps/stickers etc
Mirrors
Digital camera
Postcard printers