EDUCATOR MANUAL

UMOCA +Aïsha Lehmann
My Roots, Your Roots
Identity Through Visual Narrative

UMOCA

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MEET THE ARTIST

Aïsha Lehmann grew up in Provo, Utah and is now based in Chicago. She recently graduated from Brigham Young University's Studio Art BFA program, with minors in Sociology and Africana Studies, and is starting a PhD at the University of Illinois Chicago in Sociology with an emphasis in race and ethnicity. She has participated in multiple group and solo shows across Utah as well as nationally. As an artist and researcher, Lehmann grapples with the complexities of identity in race, ethnicity, gender, and spirituality, drawing inspiration from academic research as well as individuals' personal experiences. She translates observations into imagery using paper, patterns, drawing, and printmaking techniques.

Photo by Joli Hunt

ARTIST INTERVIEW

*Suggested vocabulary words in red.

Lexie, Collage, Linocut, and Pencil on Wood Panel 35 x 46 in

Q What inspired you to become an artist? What is your favorite part of being an artist?

A I've always loved creating, especially collage and drawing. Along the way I've had incredible mentors and teachers help me see the diverse ways of being a professional artist today. Over time I've realized I'm most inspired by artists whose *concepts* and purposes are community-driven, whether that meant educating on historical *context* or installations that create community unity.

My favorite part of creating is making patterns and drawing figures. I also love printmaking, especially at the final stages when the print is working out as planned. I also love reading and learning as much as I can about a subject before trying to make art about it. Sometimes I get so excited about what I'm reading and learning, I spend all my time researching instead of making the art!

Q What do you hope students feel and think about when they view your art?

A I hope people will be able to learn about someone else's experience that is different from their own. I want students to think about their own backgrounds and stories too. Art is a powerful and inspiring way to develop *empathy* for others. I especially hope that my work inspires people to go home and study more about a specific word/term, historical event, or an identity that they are not familiar with.

Q Why are you drawn to patterns and printmaking? How would you describe your artistic process?

A Patterns have always been visually exciting and lovely to me. I also love how well they represent a cultural background. They have been used for this exact purpose throughout human history, which helps make them a *universal* symbol for *identity*.

My artistic process involves a lot of research, be it gathering imagery from museums, galleries, books, or Pinterest; to reading a lot of books and articles. It's especially important for me to read as much as I can about a subject before making artwork about it, so I can be knowledgeable on the *subject matter* and treat it with respect and *authenticity*. Also, the more I know about a subject or theme, the more I can insert subtle *symbols* and *icons* to contribute to the *metaphoric* illustration.

ART TERMS

Left: Aïsha Lehmann, *Identity Formation: Roots*, 2022, screen print, 14 x 11 in

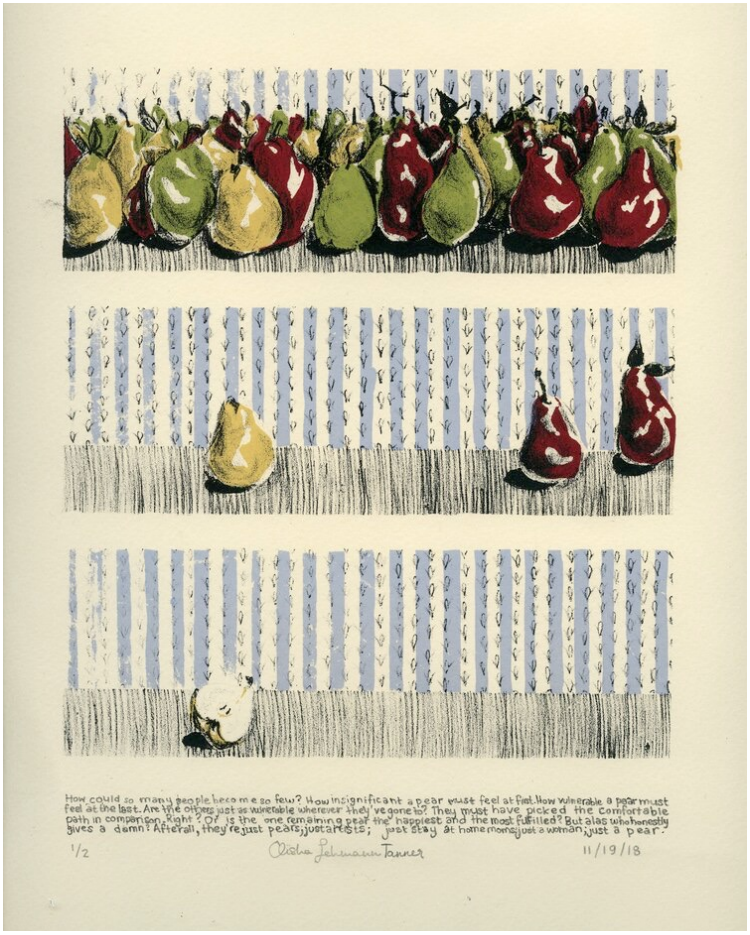
Screen Printing

The process of pressing ink onto a surface through a stencil and screen of fine material. The ink fills in the cutouts of the stencil.

Stencil

A thin sheet of plastic, cardboard, or metal with an image cut out of it. Ink fills in the cut-out elements.

ART TERMS



Left: Aïsha Lehmann, *Women in Art*, Lithography, 11 x 15 in

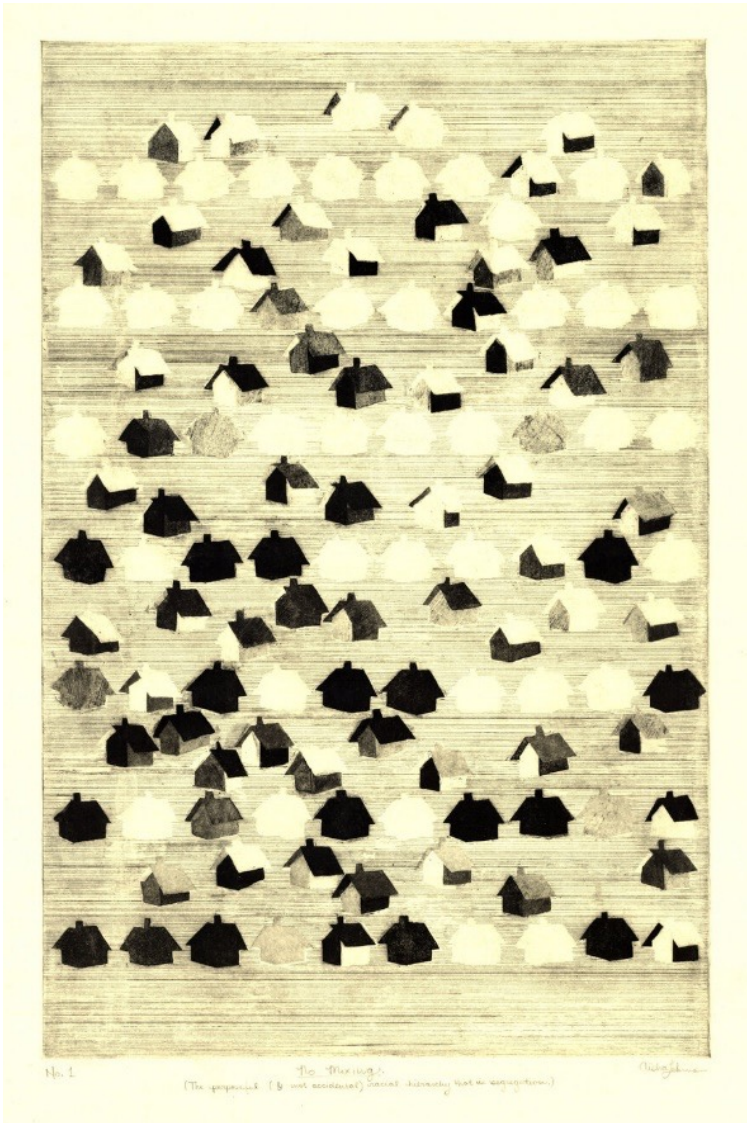
Lithography

A printing technique that relies on the repulsion of oil and water. The artist draws or paints with a nongreasy material on a flat stone (usually limestone). The stone is covered with special liquid so that the drawing absorbs and prints the ink. Everything else repels the ink.

[Watch this video to learn more.]

Linocut

An image carved in relief on a block of linoleum. Relief refers to the raised section of the artwork.



Aïsha Lehmann, *No. 1: No Mixing*, 2021, Mixed Media on Intaglio Prints, 15 x 22 in

Intaglio

A technique opposite to lithography, in that the negative etching from the original plate (usually metal) becomes positive space on the print. The artist cuts away the lines that they want to appear on the paper. Ink is spread onto the plate and builds in the grooves. The rest of the ink on the raised surface is wiped away, so that when the paper is pressed onto the plate, it absorbs the ink that has been left behind in the grooves. Learn more.

Aïsha Lehmann, *Untitled*, 2018, collage and acrylic, 10 x 8 in

Collage

A technique that uses various materials like paper, fabric, photographs, and more to overlap and create new images.

Aïsha is a contemporary artist, which means she is creating art about the world we live in and things that are happening right now.

However, printmaking techniques have been used for hundreds of years! In fact, printmaking completely changed the world and was one of the most important ways people learned and shared information.

Before printmaking, every single work of art was one-of-a-kind, so only a few people ever saw original art, and it was usually rich people like kings and queens.

Can you imagine living in a world where only a few people owned a picture? The only way to see artwork was to see it in person. There were no photographs or Google.

Take a look at this artist's attempt to draw an elephant, without ever seeing one before:

Unknown artist, early 1200s

You can imagine how the invention of printmaking changed the world! Artists could make hundreds of copies of their drawings, and it was easier to share visual information. Drawings of animals and plants were also used in science books since photography wasn't invented yet. In fact, photography wasn't invented until 400 years later, in 1822!

Inside the Art Truck

You will have the opportunity to learn about and discuss Aisha's artwork for 30 minutes inside the Truck. Remember to listen closely, raise your hand, and keep an open mind.

After the Art Truck

You will leave the Truck with a half-completed art project. Inside the Truck, you will write and draw things about you. Then once you return to the classroom, you will finish the other side of the paper by following the steps below:

1 **Discuss how identity is made up of many things. Review the questions we talked about in the Truck:**

When you look in a mirror, what is your favorite thing?

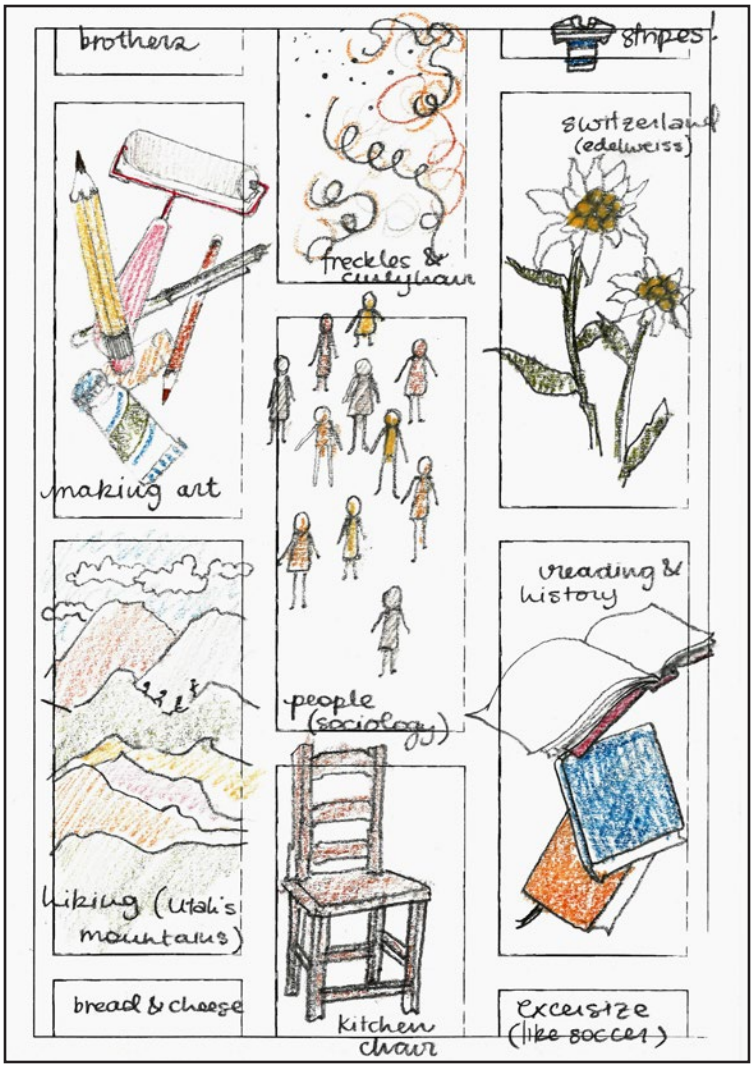
What do your friends tell you you're good at?

Where has your family lived the longest?

What is your favorite chair?

*Chairs are a big inspiration in one of Aïsha's series. Her kitchen chairs represent all the things she learned at home with her family, while getting help with homework or eating dinner together. She asked the people posing for her artwork to think about a chair that is special to them. What chair is special to you?

2 **Draw that chair somewhere on your paper.**



3 **Draw a self-portrait, a picture of yourself.**

4 **Cut out a meaningful shape, then trace it at least 15 times on the page to create a pattern for the background.**

Background: Retraced Tulip Shape for Artist's Dutch Heritage

Self-Portrait: In Charcoal

Meaningful Chair: Represents Space of Learning & Growth

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Standard 6.V.CR.3..... Demonstrate openness in trying new ideas, materials, methods, and approaches in making works of art and design.

Standard 6.V.R.2..... Compare one's own interpretation of a work of art with the interpretation of others.

Standard 6.V.R.3 ..... Analyze ways that visual components and cultural associations within images influence ideas, emotions, and actions.

Standard 6.V.P.3..... Assess, explain, and provide evidence of how museums or other venues reflect history and values of a community.

Standard 6.V.CO.2..... Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding by analyzing how art reflects changing times, traditions, resources, and cultural uses.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Thank you for exploring and creating with us!

For questions and accommodations, please contact our Education Director at:

umocaeducation@gmail.com

Share your art with us by tagging @utahmoca

Watch this video by Framework Arts to learn even more about Aïsha's art.

Framework Arts

ABOUT

The Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (UMOCA) believes in the power of the art of our time. Through programming, advocacy, and collaboration, we work with artists and communities to build a better world.

Utah Museum of Contemporary Art
20 S West Temple
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$8 Suggested Donation

Wednesday	11am-6pm
Thursday	11am-6pm
Friday	11am-9pm
Saturday	11am-6pm
Sunday	Closed
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Closed

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