



UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Emancipating the Past: Kara Walker's Tales of Slavery and Power

UMCA Education

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Office hours Mon, Tue, Thu

Overview

Through the images by Kara Walker and a written assignment the students will investigate antebellum and civil war literature.

Lesson objectives

Students should be able to:

Demonstrate an understanding of race relation in the US focusing on slavery, the civil war era and the early 20th Century.

Activities

Students will read civil war era literature and original documents. Students will view the exhibition *Emancipating the Past: Kara Walker's Tales of Slavery and Power*.

Steps

1. Students will read *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Written by Herself, by Harriet Jacobs
2. Students will read the Slave Code of the District of Columbia.
3. The teacher will explain the inspiration behind Walker's artwork and will show a clip of Art21 <http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/kara-walker>
4. Students will visit the exhibition and examine the works in detail. The museum educator will facilitate a discussion by open-ended VTS questions: what is going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that? What more can we find?
5. The teacher will engage the students in a discussion relating to Walker's way of dealing with issues of power, race, oppression, and identity in her work.

Starter

- Schedule visit to the UMCA
- View video
- Read Slave Code of Columbia

Links: <http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/kara-walker>

Agenda

- Examine the antebellum era and the Civil War through the eyes of African American women.
- Analysis of works by contemp. artist, Kara Walker
- Written assignment on slavery ar race and how artists process thei experiences.

Goals

- Develop a more nuanced understanding of the Civil War
- learn visual thinking strategies

Questions

- How does Kara Walker deal with the issues of power, race, and oppression?
- How were the experiences of female slaves different from thos of male slaves?
- How did slavery corrupt people ir power?

Essay

- Fact or Fiction. The art of Kara Walker
- How did the 1850 Fugitive Act impact the African American people?