

Educator Notes

Abraham Cruzvillegas: Hi, how are you, Gonzo?

October 18, 2019–January 26, 2020



About the Artist

Abraham Cruzvillegas was born in 1968 in Mexico City and studied pedagogy at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). The artist's work has been included in numerous solo and group exhibitions at institutions such as the Kunsthaus Zürich, Switzerland in 2018 and at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands in 2017. His work is inspired by the architecture of his childhood neighborhood in Mexico City.

About the Exhibition

The AAM exhibition is a collaborative effort between the artist, the Contemporary Austin, and the Aspen Art Museum that focuses on play, interactivity, and local community. Using found materials, everyday objects and an improvisational construction technique, Cruzvillegas assembles whimsical sculptures that pay tribute to creative architectural solutions commonly found in working class and marginalized communities. Describing his work as *autoconstrucción*, or "self-construction," the artist's approach is a way of celebrating the possibilities that arise from adverse circumstances, while addressing larger social and economic issues.

Questions for Discussion

- 1 The artist believes there is hope and optimism to be found in things that are unfinished or incomplete. What do you think?
- 1 What does the architecture around you say about the environment where you live?
- 1 What materials do you currently have on hand that could be used to create an artwork? Generate a list of these materials and work with a friend to build something together!

Suggested Activity

Interactive Art

Prepare for the activity by gathering different types of adhesives, rope, twist ties, and various found objects such as crates, cardboard, wood, etc.

Have students begin by looking at Abraham Cruzvillegas's exhibition *Hi, how are you, Gonzo?*, and ask them what they see. After students have shared their answers, ask them why Abraham would want to use found materials to make art and encourage them to share their thoughts with one another.

After students have had a conversation about what they see and develop theories about why Abraham uses found materials, explain to the students that he wants people to interact with his artwork as a way to bring communities together.

Once students understand the concept of interacting with art, have students think about how they could make their own interactive art piece from found materials. Have students break up into groups of four or five to create their own project from materials they can find in the classroom. Students can also bring items into school from home.

After all groups have finished their artwork, have the entire class work together to create a final exhibition of art pieces. Encourage students to interact with all of the works of art.

Following page: Installation view: Abraham Cruzvillegas, *Hi, how are you, Gonzo?*, 2019. Photo: Tony Prikryl

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