



Teachers' Resource Card Eva Rothschild: Kosmos

Eva Rothschild *An Organic Threat* 2018

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Teachers' Resource Card

Eva Rothschild: Kosmos

About the Exhibition

Irish-born sculptor Eva Rothschild is eclectic. Her sculptures can be big or small; can sit on plinths, dangle from the ceiling, or surround the viewer.

She puts her own spin on the modern-sculpture tradition. With their geometric and organic abstract shapes and forms, her works nod to earlier figures like Constantin Brancusi, Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore, Anthony Caro, and the minimalists. Her works also refer to vernacular forms: barriers and enclosures, curtains and seats, displays and play spaces.

She uses diverse and novel materials, such as concrete, leather, Jesmonite, spray-painted steel, upholstered printed fabric and plastic. Her construction methods are similarly diverse and include casting, carving, welding, upholstering, threading, stacking, hanging, and assemblage.

Some of Rothschild's sculptures call for our physical engagement. There's a wall to walk around, a curtain to pass through, an enclosure, a punching bag. Rothschild even fashions stools for us to sit on while looking at other works.

Art critic Declan Long described her work as 'an ever-updating ensemble cast of sculptural characters. Her boldly zig-zagging and skinny, stripy, precariously propped-up forms appear to have strong, stand-alone personalities—variously antic and assertive, enigmatic and energetic'.

Vocabulary

Sculpture: three-dimensional art.

Formalism: art that emphasises formal qualities over representation and narrative.

Modernist sculpture: rejects representation, preferring formal experiment and inquiry.

Geometric: regular, mathematically defined shapes, e.g. circles, triangles, squares, grids, lines, points.

Organic: irregular, curved, free-form shapes, as appear in nature.

Geometric abstraction: abstract art that emphasises the geometric over the organic.

Closed-form sculptures: simple sculptures that don't have openings or distinct parts.

Open-form sculptures: more complex sculptures that incorporate openings or distinct parts.

Assemblage: sculpture made from distinct parts.

Pre-visit activity

Have a class discussion about sculptures you have seen either outdoors or in a gallery. Describe what you liked about their shapes, materials, and scale. Why are there sometimes different rules about touching sculptures in different settings?

Post-Visit Reflection and Activities

Reflect on your visit. What did it feel like to walk through, between, and around Eva's sculptures? How did you interact with her works? What did you enjoy about being in the space? What did the sculptures remind you of?

Watch the teaser for Eva Rothschild's film *Boys and Sculpture*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKZeGOqDr-Q>

Have a class discussion about your reactions to it. Then watch *The Making of ... Boys and Sculpture*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uZuCylArE>

Continue your discussion. Has your reaction changed?

Construct 3D forms from 2D nets of geometric shapes. Download shapes from here: <https://www.fun-stuff-to-do.com/printable-shapes.html>. Cut out shapes in coloured card and fix them together with double-sided tape. Try making the same forms at different scales. Arrange the forms to create an assemblage.

Create an open-form sculpture using either geometric or organic forms. Use different materials, e.g. bend or twist wire to form organic shapes, or hot glue or tape matchsticks, bamboo sticks, or thin strips of card to make geometric forms.

Experiment with casting as a sculpture technique. Press a variety of differently shaped small objects (e.g., a cube, a ball, a cylinder) into some clay. Mix up some plaster with water according to packet instructions, and pour it into the clay voids. Wait for the plaster to set, then carefully peel away the clay to reveal your cast objects. Arrange your objects to create a sculpture.

Research sculptors such as Constantin Brancusi, Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore, and Anthony Caro. What connections can you see between their work and Eva Rothschild's? How do they differ?