

Essential Questions: What role can artists play in bringing attention to environmental issues in the 21st century? How can environmental artists educate people about global environmental concerns? Can art serve a political and social function? How historically have artists interacted with nature? How can art be used to function as a vehicle for solving environmental issues? What materials can artists use that help the environment? How are architects designing buildings for the 21st century's environment? How can art be a force for social change?

Texts/Films: *Earthworks and Beyond: Contemporary Art in the Landscape*, John Beardsley
The Green House: New Directions in Sustainable Architecture, Alanna Stang, Christopher Hawthorne
Maya Lin: Systematic Landscapes, Richard Andrews, John Beardsley
Green Guide for Artists, Karen Michel
ReBound: Creating Handmade Books from Recycled Materials, Jeannine Stein
How Art Made the World, Nigel Spivey
Rivers and Tides, Andy Goldsworthy
Garbage Warrior: A film by Oliver Hodge, Eco-architect Michael Reynolds
Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision, Freida Lee Mock

Overview:

21st Century Art – Going Green explores the work of creative artists concerned with environmental art and social issues regarding the environment. Students learn about painters and sculptors who use organic, sustainable or recycled materials; craftsmen and women who work with natural materials; photographers who explore the natural and social environment; architects who create ecological buildings and other artists who create installations of environmental interest. Students also create their own “green art” in hands on activities in class.

It is human nature to be inspired by our surroundings. Sights, sounds, the sheer air we breathe, can affect many an artist, coming from both conscious and unconscious sources. Jacques Vesery

It is my intention to present - through the medium of photography - intuitive observations of the natural world which may have meaning to the spectators. Ansel Adams

Ideas must be put to the test. That's why we make things, otherwise they would be no more than ideas. There is often a huge difference between an idea and its realization. Andy Goldsworthy

I try to give people a different way of looking at their surroundings. That's art to me. Maya Lin

Methods:

Specifically in this class, students explore how historically the environment and the arts have always been connected. Students learn about at historical works including Stonehenge, Easter Island, Indian Land Mounds and Petroglyphs. They also research contemporary environmental artists and their work from

Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty made in the Great Salt Lake in 1970 to Christo's Gates project done in Central Park in 2005. Students also learn about photographers whose goal is to bring awareness of environmental issues through their photographs. Another aspect of green art students learn about is art made from recycled materials. Green architecture design and sustainable construction is also introduced. To more actively engage students in learning about green art, they participate in a number of hands on activities. Guest artists working with from recycled metals come to Cushing and demonstrate with students. The students are able to be active participants and make sculptures from copper tubing, washers and other scrap metals. Other hands-on projects include recycling old stools around the art building and giving them new life by creatively repainting them. Students walk around the campus picking up leaves, bark, seed pods and rocks. Back in the pottery studio, students make clay pieces inspired by the natural materials they collect. After looking at a wide variety of nature photographs, students take their own photographs inspired by nature. Inspired by the artist Andy Goldsworthy who uses leaves, rocks, ice and snow to make his art, students build stone sculptures and cairns. To further enhance their experience, the class takes a field trip to the sculpture part at the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts. This thirty-five acre art park showcases numerous sculptures that both interact with the environment and use environmentally friendly materials. Students are asked to choose their favorite piece and write about what that sculpture means to them. Interviews via Skype with artists such as Rachel Perry Welty give students a chance to hear directly from the artist. Ms. Welty works with every day materials including food stickers, bread tags, and twist ties. To keep with the spirit of being green, the class is paperless. All homework assignments and all writing and sharing of information is done on a class Ning.

Term Breakdown:

Weekly Plans for Green Art

Week One:	History of Environmental Art
Week Two:	More Recent History and Overview of Contemporary Work
Week Three:	Photographers and Environmental Issues
Week Four:	Green Architecture
Week Five and Six:	Art Using Recycled Materials
Week Seven:	Artists Using Their Art to Help the Environment
Week Eight and Nine:	Final Cumulative Project Designed by Students