



Park City Education Foundation • Kimball Art Center

LESSON

6 Brie Ruais

Clay





LESSON OVERVIEW

Brie Ruais is an artist known for large clay sculptures shaped with her body, drawing inspiration from nature's forces like the sun, wind, and waves. Students will create their own clay sculptures on canvas boards, using hands, elbows, or tools to shape the material. For the Wasatch Back Student Art Show, students will collaborate with classmates to combine these sculptures into a bigger piece that tells a story about our community and the world around us.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Explore the Artistic Process of Brie Ruais.
- Create with Clay
- Collaborate on a Group Project to be exhibited

BRIE RUAIS







Brie Ruais (born 1982) is an artist from Sante Fe, New Mexico and Brooklyn, New York, who creates large, powerful ceramic sculptures using clay equal to her body weight. She shapes the clay by scraping, pushing, and pulling with her whole body, and her actions are often influenced by the natural environment around her. After shaping the clay, she cuts it into pieces, glazes them, fires them, and assembles the pieces into a wall sculpture. The finished work keeps the marks of her body, like finger and elbow prints and boot treads, making it a three-dimensional map of its own creation process. Her sculptures often reference natural elements like the sun, wind, waves, and the cycles of nature. Brie's work shows strength, emotion, and balance.



SUPPLIES

- Air-dry clay
- Sculpting tools (optional)
- Small canvas boards
- Large canvas board for colaborative piece
- Plastic tablecloths or trays
- Pictures of Brie Ruais sculptures for reference



LESSON PLAN

- 1. Introduce Brie Ruais and her artwork: Brie Ruais creates powerful sculptures by shaping clay with her body, using her hands, elbows, and even boots to leave marks. Her art is inspired by natural forces like the sun, wind, and waves, balancing strength and fragility. Share images of Brie Ruais's clay sculptures, focusing on the textures and physicality of her process. Discuss with students:
- Is this what you imagined when I mentioned we'd be exploring clay art or sculpture? In what ways does this differ from traditional sculpture? How does Brie Ruais's approach challenge our ideas of what sculpture can be?
- What do you think Brie's body movements tell us about her feelings while making art?
- How can nature inspire the abstract shapes and marks we make?
- How do the marks in the clay show energy or movement?
- What else do you notice about this artwork? What aspects of it stand out to you or capture your interest?
- 2. Project A Outdoor Snow Sculpture: Students will create their own "snow sculpture" inspired by Brie Ruais. Using their bodies, they'll make marks and shapes in the snow, scraping, pushing, and pressing with hands, elbows, or feet. They should think about how their snow sculpture can express a feeling or an idea with movement.
- 3. Project B Clay Sculpture on Canvas Board: Using modeling clay, students will create small sculptures on canvas boards, using their hands, elbows, or tools to shape the material. Encourage them to represent natural elements like ocean waves or tree shapes or to think of an idea or feeling they want to share. Students should focus on how their marks and textures express energy and movement, similar to Brie Ruais's process. Afterward, students will share their sculptures and explain their ideas.
- 4. Collaborative Project for the Wasatch Back Student Art Show: Now, we're going to take this a step further! We have the exciting opportunity to create a collaborative project for the Wasatch Back Student Art Show! Students will leave their mark in clay alongside their classmates to create something special. Encourage them to think about how their personal sculptures can connect to nature and how their pieces can combine to tell a bigger story about their community and the world they live in.











KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT TO NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS:

Based on Utah Core Arts Standards Visual Arts Requirements (Grade 1).

Strand: CREATE (1.V.CR.)
Standard 1.V.CR.1:

Engage collaboratively in exploration and imaginative play with art materials, and use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art.

Strand: PRESENT (1.V.P.)

Standard 1.V.P.3:

Identify the roles and responsibilities of people who work in and visit museums and other art venues.

Standard 1.V.P.1:

Explain why some objects, artifacts, and artworks are valued over others.



ADDITIONAL REFERENCES Click on links to learn more.

- https://brieruais.com/
- https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2024/08/brie-ruais-ceramic-sculptures/
- https://www.albertzbenda.com/artists/29-brie-ruais/
- https://www.nightgallery.ca/artists/brie-ruais

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