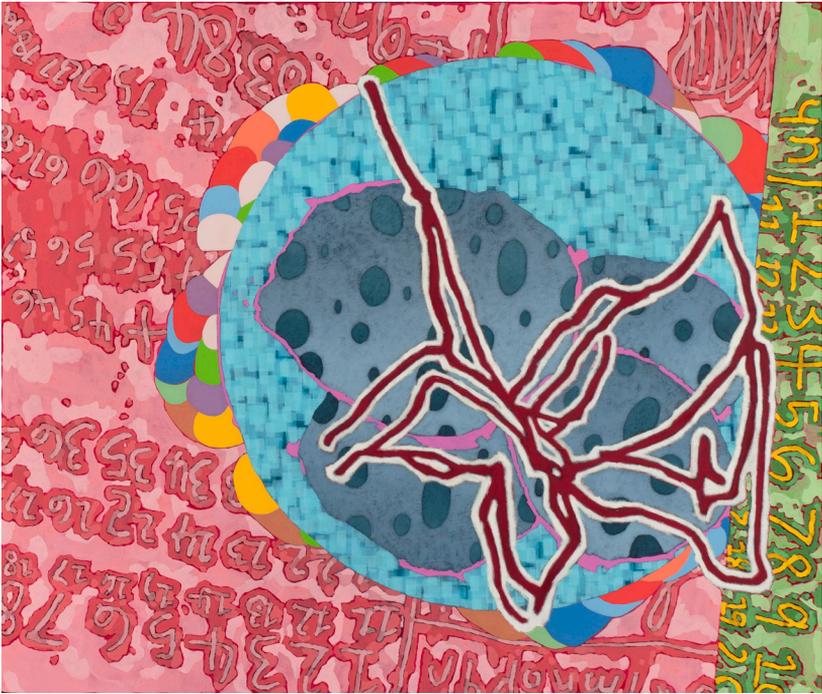


LOOKING TOGETHER

FAMILY AND SMALL-GROUP
DISCUSSION GUIDE



A companion piece to

CHAOS AND **AWE**

PAINTING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Some of the paintings in *Chaos and Awe: Painting for the 21st Century* feature recognizable images, while others are more abstract, using color and shape to communicate ideas. The artists convey their ideas to us about invisible and sometimes hard-to-understand things that influence our lives, such as technology and belief systems. This guide was created to help you discuss what you see and determine which paintings relate to your own lives. Some paintings may feature mature or difficult subject matter.



Above: Sue Williams (b. 1954, Chicago; based in New York). *Ministry of Hate*, 2013. Oil and acrylic on canvas, 72 x 84 in. Courtesy of Skarstedt, New York. © Sue Williams, image courtesy 303 Gallery, New York

Cover: Hamlett Dobbins (b. 1970, Knoxville; based in Memphis). *Untitled (For M.R.M./J.N./D.G.G.)*, 2016. Acrylic on canvas, 46 x 54 in. Courtesy of the artist and David Lusk Gallery. © Hamlett Dobbins

NO PLACE

In this section, artists express their feelings about the unseen systems that allow large cities to function. Have you ever visited a new city and felt overwhelmed by its size, intimidated by its chaotic traffic, or mystified by its complicated electrical grid?

In these paintings, look for parts within city systems, like tunnels, cables, and pipes, and think about how the images of these things make you feel. Share your thoughts with the group.

SHADOWS OF HISTORY

Artworks in this gallery reflect historical attitudes about things like colonialism and racism that may affect how people act, think, and feel today, even when they might not be aware of how these attitudes have influenced them.

Spend a minute looking closely at a painting without reading the object label. Allow each person in your group to share their answers to the following questions:

What is going on in this painting?

What makes you think that?

Now read the object label. What did the group notice that the artist intended to convey? What surprised you about the information on the object label? There are no right or wrong answers.

COLLISIONS

Some paintings in this exhibition show the consequences of conflict in the world. Think back to an argument or a fight that really upset you. What feelings arose from this conflict?

Choose an artwork that intrigues your group. Ask each person to provide an adjective or noun that describes how the painting makes them feel. Then, use these words to start a diamante poem. A diamante poem has elements that form a diamond shape:

noun

adjective adjective

-ing word -ing word -ing word

noun noun noun noun

-ing word -ing word -ing word

adjective adjective

noun

Put each word you have into a blank labeled with its type. Then ask your group for more words for the remaining blanks.

Read the finished poem aloud. How did its combination of words surprise you?

INTERZONE



The artworks in these galleries suggest the diversity that can arise when cultures are combined.

Look closely at *Springfield—Butterfly Dream*, by Jiha Moon.

How many images can you find that are associated with Asian cultures? How many can you find that are associated with popular culture? What do you think the artist is communicating by putting these together in her painting?

Jiha Moon (b. 1973, Daegu, South Korea; based in Atlanta). *Springfield—Butterfly Dream*, 2010. Ink and acrylic, fabric, and embroidery patches on hanji (mulberry paper), 81 1/2 x 30 in. Courtesy of the artist and Curator's Office.
© Jiha Moon

VIRTUAL WORLDS

These paintings describe the influence of the internet on how we understand the world. As you look at them, ask yourself how your perception of reality comes from digital media, or what you sense, experience, and think. Ask the people with you what makes an image “real” or “unreal.” How is seeing something on a screen different from seeing it in a painting?

**Look for the giant painting called
Bibliothèque/CDG-BSL, by Corinne Wasmuht.**

Bibliothèque is a French word for “library,” CDG stands for Charles de Gaulle Airport, in Paris, and BSL is a code for EuroAirport Basel Mulhouse Freiburg, in Switzerland. What do you think the artist is saying about systems or communications in this painting?



Corinne Wasmuht (b. 1964, Dortmund, Germany; based in Berlin). *Bibliothèque/CDG-BSL* (detail), 2011. Triptych: oil on wood mounted on aluminum; each panel: 83 x 95 in.; overall: 83 x 285 in. Collection Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; Sarah Norton Goodyear Fund, 2011, 2011:44a-c. © Corinne Wasmuht. Image courtesy of the artist and Petzel, New York

THE BOUNDLESS

Paintings in this gallery give form to strong feelings. Choose a painting that shows pure emotion. What emotion does it suggest?

Words to describe feelings often do this by comparing different senses: that color is loud, that music is sweet. People who have the condition known as synesthesia experience sensations in this way. For example, someone might hear a song and instantly see different colors.

Ask your group the following questions:

If the painting could make noise, what sounds would you hear?

If the painting had a smell, what would it smell like?

How do you think this painting would taste? Sweet, salty, sour, or bitter?

EVERYTHING

These paintings combine such things as mathematical equations, scientific charts, philosophical ideas, and even science fiction as they explore how information, ideas, and emotions are interconnected now and in the future.

Some of the paintings look like maps, diagrams, or scientific measurements. Choose an artwork and imagine aloud what it symbolizes.

If you were to move a painting from another part of the exhibition to this one, which would it be and why?

Martin ArtQuest

Visit the Martin ArtQuest Gallery to make
artwork in response to the exhibition
Chaos and Awe: Painting for the 21st Century.

Chaos and Awe was organized by Mark W. Scala,
chief curator, Frist Art Museum

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