

# TEACHER GUIDE

## Getting Started with Contemporary Art

Artists working today often push the boundaries of traditional media like painting and sculpture. This guide is part of a series designed for high school teachers to use in conjunction with a visit to the Hammer Museum, where students might encounter a range of contemporary art forms. Use the information and discussion prompts below while engaging with **video art** during your visit or in preparation for your visit using images available on the Hammer website. The post-visit activity is designed to extend student learning in the classroom after your visit.

### VIDEO ART

**Video art**, introduced in the early 1960s, uses videotape or digital video (and sometimes audio) to communicate a concept.

#### Key Concepts

- **Motion over time:** The viewer witnesses the artwork change over time, as in a moving picture
- **Defying narrative:** Video art doesn't have to adhere to linear plots or storylines
- **Accessibility:** Video recording devices are portable and more immediately user-friendly

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#### Discussion Prompts

1. How is video art similar to the movies you watch? How is it different?
2. How would it feel to watch something without a traditional narrative (e.g., lacks plot, characters, climax, or resolution)?
3. How is the experience of watching video art different from looking at art that doesn't move, like a painting?

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#### Post-Visit Activity

Have students work in teams of 3–4 to create a collaborative **video** about an issue affecting their community or the global community (climate change, the refugee crisis, poverty, hunger). The video can represent the issue, offer a solution to the issue, or interpret the issue. Direct your students to:

1. Research the issue.
2. Determine what is important to communicate about the issue, particularly through moving images.
3. Consider:
  - What will be in motion, people or things? How slow or fast will they be moving?
  - Will it have sound (either speech or audio)?
  - How will you challenge traditional storytelling?
4. Create a storyboard for your video.
5. Record your video on an iPad or smart phone.

**For more guides in this series visit [hammer.ucla.edu/teachers](https://hammer.ucla.edu/teachers).**