

Learning Places Fall 2018

# SITE REPORT #2A

## name of site report

NAMING PROTOCOL. When saving and posting your site reports on OpenLab, please follow the following format: SiteReport#Letter.LastnameFirstname. Here's an example: **SiteReport2B.SwiftChristopher**.

### STUDENT NAME:

Tanner Lee

### Thinking Frame:

In the reading, audio, and video assignments for this week a number of spaces for voices of protest are discussed. The Guerilla Girls broadcast their messages across a wide variety of media and places: posters on walls and billboards, handouts on the sidewalk, t-shirts on bodies, projections on walls, installations in abandoned buildings and art galleries, magazines, zines, websites, etc. Next Epoch produces ecological art in neglected urban wastelands. Decolonize This Place conducts protests in museums, without prior permission for use of the spaces. As a group, these interventions could be described as unsanctioned or subversive events performed in spaces that were not designed or curated specifically for protest.

In response to these kinds of activities (and perhaps in recognition--aesthetically or culturally of their importance), there have been increased efforts by community leaders and cultural institutions to create spaces for critical or dissenting voices. Landers, et al, describes strategies to create sanctioned spaces for protest in libraries, plazas, and parks. Similarly, the Brooklyn Museum now seeks to create spaces for alternative, minority, and resistant cultures and voices through curation and architectural interventions.

The question remains whether resistant practices, alternative performances, and protest are more effective when sanctioned or unsanctioned. Where is Dread Scott's Impossibility of Freedom in a Country Founded on Slavery and Genocide more effective, in the original 2014 performance on a street or represented in photographic form in a museum in 2018 as part of a curated exhibition?

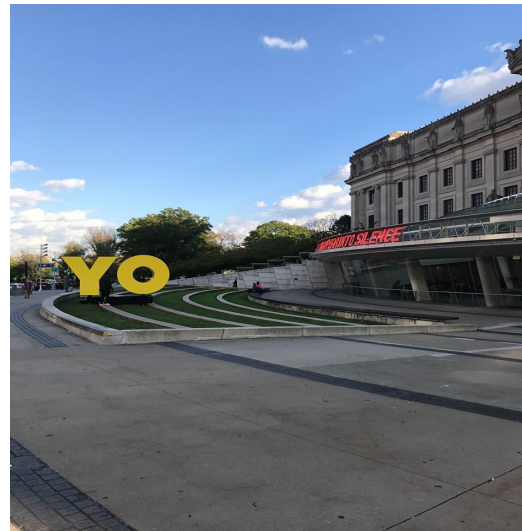
As you go through the site report collecting images and documenting your ideas, keep these tensions in mind.

## SITE OBSERVATIONS

Insert two images of Brooklyn Museum's facades. The first of a more **traditional architectural feature** for a public civic space and the second an **untraditional architectural feature**.



*This image captures the "traditional" architectural view*



*This image captures the more "modern" view of the Brooklyn Museum*

Why did you choose these images? As you look at each, what do you expect to encounter once you enter the building? Explain.

I really like these two images. That's because it really captures the traditional vs. modern look of the Brooklyn Museum. It's actually funny, because when I was a kid, and I went to the museum once, I didn't remember the museum having the old architectural look. I only remember the modern look of the museum, so I find it that in which way you approach the museum you will see the modern side, or the traditional side, and it can alter your expectations. However, my expectations of the place did change, depending on which side I view the museum. If I look at it from the modern side, I'm expecting a more modern take, like the Guggenheim, or MoMa, which is more modern art. If I see the traditional side of the museum, my expectation would be a more historical side, like the Museum of Natural History, or the Met. The interesting part is that the Brooklyn Museum, has a mix of both. It has Contemporary art, but then it has Ancient World art as well. So I believe that the art ties into the presentation of the museum well.

The stated *mission* of the Brooklyn Museum is “to create inspiring encounters with art that expand the ways we see ourselves, the world and its possibilities.” Take a photo of one piece of artwork that expands the way you see yourself or the world. Give the photograph a caption and explain why it expands your vision of yourself or the world.



### ***Painting from Soul of a Nation Exhibit***

I picked this image because for me it really stood out to me. This image is implementing a huge message to the masses. The message is clearly the racism that is still prevalent in even today's society. The picture shows an African American man, a white woman, and a white man standing linked together by their arms. It then shows the African American man wielding a knife and some type of wound on his shoulder that he's holding at. The message conveyed to me is something similar coming from the book *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. In summary a black man is convicted of trying to rape a white girl, when in reality the girl was attempting to seduce him, and was caught by her father in doing so. The father beat her, and tried to cover up for it by saying the black man did it, and he was thus found guilty. Despite the irrefutable evidence, he was still found guilty. He tried to escape jail, and was shot dead by a guard. So the wound on the African American man in the painting to me, stands for the wounds inflicted by lingering strands of racism that still scars and shape how society is today.

The stated vision of the Brooklyn Museum is to create a place “where great art and courageous conversations are catalysts for a more connected, civic, and empathetic world.” Consider the curated areas of the museum. How is space arranged in order to create “courageous conversations”? Can you describe conversations between spaces?

The spaces between exhibits is extremely linear. It's just one small room leading from one exhibit to another. One interesting thing is the position of the two almost connecting exhibits. One wing is the Schapario Wing showcasing the Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power exhibit, connecting via a small room is the Half the Picture: A Feminist Look at the Collection. Both subjects are prevalent in our nation today and spark heavily engaged conversations. So the conversation between the spaces,

is that of a controversial one. It ignites deep talks, and the space in between creates a conversation, because both topics create loud messages, that can elicit thoughtful and meaningful conversations.

Insert an image of designed space (not art objects themselves) that suggest “connection.” How is the concept of “connection” articulated in the way art is arranged in space? (Consider the walls, walkways, display boards, pedestals, rooms, etc.)



*An art piece of a depiction of “home”*

I know this art piece is not part of the exhibits we were supposed to visit, but to me this art piece does convey how art is arranged in spaces. When the painting is meant to be captivating, and supposed to invoke a strong feeling; the art piece is more often or not dead center, or has it’s own wall space or its own floor space, like the art piece above. The art piece is in constant conversation with the space, because every angle you take and look at the art piece from. It will look entirely different from every angle due to the sheer size of the art piece. That made the walkways of the art piece, part of the art piece, because it contextualized the art, and was in constant conversation with the art piece.

Brooklyn Museum declares that “since we see ourselves as a conduit for open sharing and learning, we accept the controversies that may accompany courageous conversations.” Consider the way art objects are arranged in space for the *Half the Picture* exhibition in relation to viewers. How would you describe the arrangement of objects for viewers. Did the arrangements accept controversies? Did they encourage courageous conversations? If so, how? If not, why?

*Half the Picture* is arranged in a sense to accept any and every idea from the viewers. It's explicit in its messages conveyed, and encourages people to speak up and start conversations. The way paintings or photographs are arranged, and the types of paintings or photographs displayed, it's a vast array to the viewers. To me, the best arrangement is the plates in the dining hall. It's shaped in a triangle and it's a number of notable females throughout history, mixed in with some female gods like Kali the goddess of destruction. The arrangement has plates all designed in their own respective way, but to me, it accepts controversies. It wants to ignite conversations about women empowerment, which is relevant in today's society. So the art pieces in my opinion do accept controversy, and allow for an array of conversations to ignite, because most of the art is up in the air, and allows for anything to be said.

# SITE REPORT #2B

Based on your observations at the Brooklyn Museum, **develop a complex research question** about the relationship between 1 piece of art that you viewed and a social or political issue.

Remember, your research question should be specific and researchable.

## **Research Question:**

"How does Faith Ringgold's 1967 painting 'American People Series #18: The Flag Is Bleeding' address and discuss structures of racism in the United States?"

**Find 2 sources.** \*For this report, one of your sources **MUST** be an academic journal article. Your other source can be a news article, internet source, or book.

**1 source** should have to do with the **artwork, artist, artistic style, or some element of the work** you chose. For example, if you were interested in learning more about realistic photography depicting women engaged in domestic activities, you might search for sources about "domestic imagery AND photography" or "realistic photography" rather than sources about the specific artist.

**1 source** should be about the **social / political issue** that is articulated in your research question. This source may or may not have to do with art.

## **Write an MLA citation for each source:**

### **Source 1**

Ponds, Kenneth T. "The Trauma of Racism: America's Original Sin." *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2013, pp. 22–24.

### **Source 2**

Valentine, Victoria. "For Faith Ringgold, the American Flag Has Always Been a Potent and Powerful Symbol." *For Faith Ringgold, the American Flag Has Always Been a Potent and Powerful Symbol*, Culture Type, 4 July 2018, [www.culturetype.com/2018/07/04/for-faith-ringgold-the-american-flag-has-always-been-a-potent-and-powerful-symbol/](http://www.culturetype.com/2018/07/04/for-faith-ringgold-the-american-flag-has-always-been-a-potent-and-powerful-symbol/).

Describe the process you used to find these sources including any **keywords** and the **specific search engine or tool** you used to search.

The searching process wasn't complicated. The only difficulty I had searching was for an article about the artist of the painting I picked that I liked. The article about my social issue which is racism in America, was easy. It was easy, because the controversial topic of racism is prevalent in today's society. For article about the artist I just used google to find an article relevant on her. The keywords I used, being that the painting I chose involved the American Flag as the backdrop and the rest of the painting portraying the message. I used that as a search to find an article about her. In regards to the other article; I at first had racial violence, but I wasn't finding anything. I was searching too specifically, so I broadened up and did "Racism in America". That's when I find an article discussing the lasting effects of racism, which is perfect for my question. The idea that racism can be a lingering effect, because it alters societies thoughts

In a sentence or 2, describe the main point of each source. Then consider: how do these sources address all or part of your research question?

#### **Source 1**

Source 1 which is my academic journal fits into my question, because it solidifies the question about racism within America. It addresses how the painting on the backdrop of the American flag answers to racism. It brings forth the idea that racism is a lasting effect, and still alters and changes how our society today is.

#### **Source 2**

This source is describes the American flag and how the artist Faith Ringgold uses it in her paintings. The flag stands for the United States, and sends powerful messages when viewed. For Ringgold, she knows that, so she uses it and then paints the messages of what's really going on in America.

Describe ways the two sources you chose are similar and different. Would it be difficult to integrate these two sources into a single writing assignment? Why or why not?

These 2 sources are both about the social issues going on in America, so they share similar common qualities. They can both be used somehow to fit into a writing assignment, because both can discuss the effect of racism on American Society. It can also discuss how the effects are buried, and artist like Ringgold helps shine light on the problems. The only thing I might seeing that might cause a problem is trying to find more stories about the artist Ringgold, because I was trying hard to find an article about her, but I had to really search. That might be the only problem, but other than that I can see a single writing assignment coming out of these two sources.

What other sources or further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for that information?

Other sources I could use is cases of racism today that can further express the ongoing nature of racism within the U.S. Then I can be able to correlate the both between the lingering effects of racism causing today's society to hold onto some degree of racism, whether they see it or not. Other paintings of the artist of Ringgold would greatly help. Since she has a whole collection of paintings of the American flag; it won't be hard to find more. For more articles about racism of the U.S I can find on the City Tech Library, because they're peer reviewed and are meant for academic purposes, so they're trustworthy sources. For more paintings from the artist Ringgold, I would look her up works up, and I'll be able to find any art piece from her.