

# Curriculum

## PULSE

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### OVERVIEW:

**Note to Teacher:** *The inspiration behind the art displayed in this exhibit contains strong imagery that may provoke various emotions and intimate dialogue. Teacher discretion advised. Before teaching this curriculum, teachers might consider familiarizing themselves with current LGBTQ+ terminology, which can be found at:*

- ***The Trevor Project Glossary***
- ***GLSEN Gender Terminology***
- ***GLAAD “Ally’s Guide to Terminology”***

**Recommended Viewing:** *Documentary “49 Pulses” for a more in-depth look through survivors’ interviews and law enforcement footage.*

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR EDUCATORS

New Jersey is the first state in the nation to require LGBTQ-inclusive teachings in all subject areas. An inclusive curriculum may be defined as one which provides all students, regardless of background and immutable characteristics, with an equal opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes of their program. This curriculum is centered around inclusivity. This benefits all students by promoting diversity and teaching them about the myriad of identities in their communities.

## ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

**In this lesson you will:**

- Be made **AWARE** of the tragedy that occurred in 2016 at the PULSE nightclub in Orlando, Florida which inspired this exhibition.
- Understand the **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRAGEDY & ART**, and how art enhances the storytelling process of history.
- Know the purpose of **INCLUSIVITY** and how crucial it is to our future.
- **MAKE LEARNING PERSONAL** so that information given becomes more retentive.
- Become the catalyst for **disseminating the necessary information** that promotes **COMMUNITY AUTONOMY** and **EGALITARIANISM** in our ever-evolving society.
- Find that art can assist in DEALING WITH FEELINGS of grief and loss.

## **THE ARTIST:**

**John Gutoskey** is an artist, designer, printmaker, & collector. Early in his career, John worked as a costume designer and as a specialist in costume crafts. He worked on productions in New York City and across the United States in theater, opera, dance, film, and television. He also taught classes in millinery, mask making, and fabric dyeing at the University of Michigan in the Department of Theater. In the 1990s, John went back to school and became certified in various forms of therapeutic bodywork and meditation. At this same time, he returned to his studio with a newfound interest in making art on his own terms, and it resulted in an outpouring of new work. Exploring the media of assemblage and collage through found objects, printmaking, and installation he was inspired by the works of Joseph Cornell, Betye Saar, Lucas Samaras, outsider art, Art Brut, and religious art to evolve his own unmistakable style: a perfect mirror for his gregarious, highly animated personality. The obsessive collector in Gutoskey met the trained visual artist halfway. John earned his BFA in theater design with a minor in sculpture from Webster University in St. Louis. He earned his MFA from the University of Michigan's Penny Stamps School of Art & Design where he studied printmaking & installation art, and also completed a certificate in LGBTQ Studies. John is the owner of JG Studio and the A2 Print Studio in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. Know:
  - **John Gutoskey artworks.**
  - The importance of using art as a vehicle for awareness of the mistreatment that has occurred within our society.

- The concept of “whitewashing,” and how it excludes marginalized voices from horrific events.

## **2. Master Objective**

- After examining this exhibit students will be able to evaluate its nature and purpose in today's culture as it pertains to consequential learning, analyze its significance and association with inclusive teachings and transcending communities, understand the importance of the message being conveyed in this exhibition, and remember the events that took place on June 12, 2016, that inspired this heartfelt work of art.

## **3. Student Learning Outcomes:**

- ALL STUDENTS WILL DEVELOP, APPLY AND REFLECT UPON KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROCESS OF CRITIQUE.
- ALL STUDENTS WILL UNDERSTAND AND ANALYZE THE ROLE, DEVELOPMENT, AND CONTINUING INFLUENCE OF THE ARTS IN RELATION TO WORLD CULTURES, HISTORY, AND SOCIETY.

## ACTIVITIES:

### LESSON 1

#### PULSE Nightclub:

*49 Elegies is a series made to honor and commemorate with a monoprint each of the 49 people massacred at the LGBTQ PULSE nightclub in Orlando, Florida on June 12, 2016. Artist **John Gutoskey** began this series in early July of that year and completed the 49th print in early October 2016. This exhibit addresses not only the loss, the grief, and the aftermath of such a tragic event, but also intersects with current issues of gun violence, homophobia, Hispanophobia, violence against people of color and the transgender community, and LGBTQ rights. The 49 mixed media monoprints in this series combine woodcut, collage, digital images from photographs and scans, stencil, spray enamel, glitter, colored pencil, art paper, gift wrap paper, and alcohol gel transfer decals. Each print measures 28"h x 20"w on Arches 88.*

**Elegies** is a series of poems of serious reflection, typically a lament for the dead.

Elegies (plural for elegy) as mentioned above, often come in the form of poetry and are a time-honored form of lamentation, used as a method of mourning the dead. As a print artist, John Gutoskey, seized upon this idea to create “visual elegies,” in the form of 49 unique monoprints, as a way of processing the Pulse nightclub shooting, an attack by a murderous gunman on an LGBTQ club in Orlando, Florida, that claimed the lives of 49 victims and wounded 53 others.

***“I began working on this a few weeks after [the shooting], because I couldn’t form words, really, to express what I was feeling,”*** said Gutoskey at a group meditation gathering to commemorate the two-year anniversary of the shooting.

***“As I often do, I retreated to my studio and decided I would make a monoprint to honor each of the victims — who I did not know personally. I decided that would be the best way to work through what I was feeling. It really allowed me to look at that event through a bunch of different lenses.”***

It is significant to note Gutoskey’s use of monoprint for the project — in a context where an edition of 49 prints was to be produced, many print artists might choose to leverage a more replicable print form. Gutoskey’s decision to make each print as a unique one-off emphasizes

the personal and individual nature of the loss of each victim, though the works aren't assigned to specific people, nor titled individually. This exhibit answers the concerns of the victim's loved ones as well as the LGBTQ, Hispanic, and African American communities. The concern was not for this tragic event to be whitewashed (having unpleasant facts concealed about someone or something) but for its true details to be brought to the attention of communities everywhere.

- Based on the information above, why might John Gutoskey have been at a loss for words?
- What makes this art compilation so important? What does each piece represent?
- What is an Elegy and why do you think John chose this title for his collection?
- Can you think of other moments, movements, events, topics, spaces, or otherwise that have been “whitewashed”? How does this particular form of whitewashing exclude other perspectives?

## **Lesson II**

**Choose one of the 5 pictures below to analyze. Answer the questions below.**

- 1) What is something that stands out most to you in this piece and why?**
- 2) Is there anything in this piece that you can relate to?**
- 3) What do you think the crows represent in this piece?**
- 4) How does the piece relate to feelings of loss, grief, and the aftermath of this tragic event?**

**IMAGE 1**





**Fig. 274. Taking of the pulse.**  
1—Support for thumb. Z A—Place  
apply pressure to feel pulse.

**IMAGE 2**

**IMAGE 3**



**IMAGE 4**



**IMAGE 5**



### **LESSON III & IV**

In these lessons, students will learn the purpose of inclusivity in a larger discussion about LGBTQ+, by collaborating with other students in analyzing the purpose of understanding our similarities and respecting our differences. Students will also explore the ways that violence has played a part in tragic events that stem from misconceptions and biases relating to our races, lifestyles, beliefs, and cultures.

### **Lesson III**

#### **CURRICULUM AS WINDOW AND MIRROR**

A curriculum can serve as a mirror when it reflects individuals and their experiences back to themselves. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books. At the same time curriculum can serve as a window when it introduces and provides the opportunity to understand the experiences and perspectives of those who possess different identities. These windows can offer views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. Applied to LGBTQ-inclusive curricular content, these mirrors and windows can help create a more positive environment and healthy self-conception for LGBTQ students while also raising the awareness of all students. An inclusive curriculum supports students' abilities to empathize, connect, and collaborate with a diverse group of peers, skills that are of increasing importance in our multicultural, global society.

#### **GATHER STUDENTS IN GROUPS OF 3:**

Have students read the paragraph above and take their time to answer the questions below. Make sure that each student contributes to the conversation to ensure that they understand the importance of this subject matter.

- What does **inclusive learning** mean?
- What does **LGBTQ** mean?
- Why is it important for students to relate to characters used in teaching tools?
- Why is it important for students to be introduced to new or unfamiliar characters and life experiences?
- Why is it important to respect our differences?
- Summarize the Window and Mirror Concept.

## **LESSON IV**

### **Consequential Learning**

As previously stated, this exhibit addresses feelings of loss, grief, and the aftermath of this tragic event within our society. This brings us to the topic of consequential learning. Author Jack Shelton speaks out about the disconnect between school systems and the communities around them in his book "A Public Approach to Better Schools." Shelton's concept, "consequential learning, recognizes that students' learning takes place both in the classroom and in the community, and therefore suggests the development of pedagogies (the method and practice of teaching) with ties to both students' educations and the formation of their personal characters. By encouraging students to use classroom lessons to the benefit of their communities, the students learn critical thinking and judgment and bolster community involvement in school systems."

Once again divide students into small groups. Using the consequential learning theory ask students to name at least 3 ways that they will apply the information that they have learned in this curriculum to:

- 1.) Better understand those in their communities that may be different from them.**
- 2.) Help educate those who are less receptive to our evolving society.**
- 3.) Feel confident about their own differences.**
- 4.) Use art as a vehicle to spread the message of egalitarianism within their community.**
- 5.) Take time to appreciate art and detail as well as share this experience with a family member.**

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## **References & Resources**

*Learning and Teaching Handbook: SECTION 3: Curriculum Development - Durham University.*

<https://teachrock.org/lesson/yall-better-quiet-down-black-and-latinx-lgbtq-pioneers>

<https://nationalseedproject.org/Key-SEED-Texts/curriculum-as-window-and-mirror>

<https://www.kettering.org>

[www.glsen.org/safespace](http://www.glsen.org/safespace)

*New Jersey State Department of Education, (1996). New Jersey core curriculum content standards. Trenton, NJ: Author*

### **New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards**

*1.3.2 D. Visual Art 1. Identify the basic art elements of color, line, shape, form, texture, and space. 2. Discuss how art elements are used in specific works of art.*

*1.3.6 D. Visual Art 1. Describe the emotional significance conveyed in the application of the elements. 2. Describe a work of art that clearly illustrates a principle of design.*

*1.4.12 A. Knowledge 1. Examine the artwork from a variety of historical periods in both western and non-western culture(s). 2. Categorize the artistic subject, the formal structure, and the principal elements of art used in exemplary works of art. 3. Determine the influence of tradition on arts experience, as an arts creator, performer, and consumer.*

*1.4.12 B. Skills 1. Develop criteria for evaluating art in a specific domain and use the criteria to evaluate one's personal work and that of their peers, using positive commentary for critique. 2. Provide examples of how critique may affect the creation and/or modification of an existing or new work of art.*

*1.5.8 A. Knowledge 1. Analyze how technological changes have influenced the development of the arts. 2. Examine how the social and political environment influences artists in various social/historical/political contexts.*