

50 Years | The Bronx Museum

The Bronx Museum at Home
Art Studio

80 Blocks From Tiffany's: The Insistence of Life on the Periphery of Empire

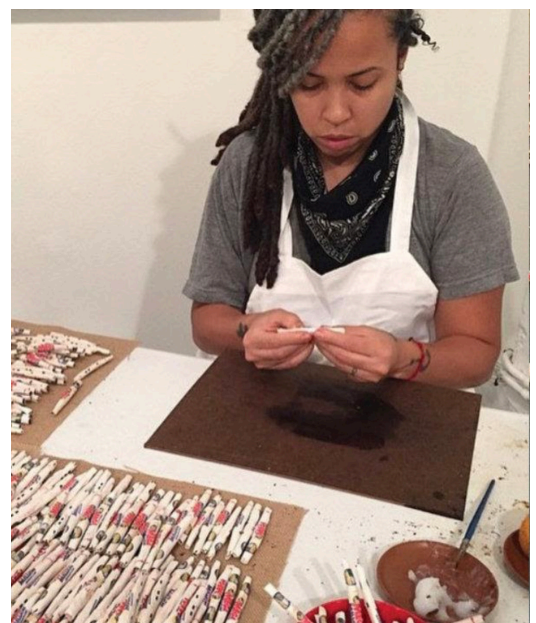
Studio Curriculum
By Shellyne Rodriguez

This 10-week studio curriculum explores many of the themes and concepts present in the exhibition *80 Blocks from Tiffany's: The Insistence of Life on the Periphery of Empire*, an online exhibition of new work by Shellyne Rodriguez at The Bronx Museum of the Arts. Shellyne's artwork depicts friends, comrades, and neighbors from the artist's community in the places they live and hustle.

Shellyne Rodriguez is an artist, educator, writer, and community organizer based in the Bronx. Her art practice is expressed through multiple mediums, such as drawing, painting, collage, sculpture and text, to depict or archive spaces and subjects engaged in strategies of survival against oppression. Shellyne's work is rooted in hip hop culture and thinks through hip hop's ability to reinvent itself, pulling from a variety of sources to create something new. The ongoing inquiry in the work is how to sway and bend and duck and run and scream and mend and scratch and break and heal and push forward, utilizing a variety of sources and mediums. To sample and remix. To think and to make. And what does that look like in an object? As a narrative? As an action? As a gesture or a sound? On paper or on canvas?



Shellyne Rodriguez, *Uptown Vinyl Supreme*, 2020, colored pencil on paper 22 x 26 in



Week 1

Sample and Remix as Collage

Shellyne describes her artwork as a “sample and remix,” which is the technique a deejay uses to mix hip hop records. Can you imagine art in this way? Is a remix a collage?

Collage is a technique of art creation by which art results from a combination of different forms, thus creating a new whole. A visual art collage may sometimes include magazine and newspaper clippings, ribbons, paint, photographs, glued to a piece of paper or canvas.

A deejay makes collages not from images but from music!

Watch: Here is the original idea of sampling and remix developed by DJ Kool Herc, who originally called the technique “merry go round”:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qwml-F7zKQ>

Here is an example of a sample and remix:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7t8eoA1jQ&t=42s>

Activity: Collect candy wrappers, labels, and other discarded papers from your community and make your own collage! You can use glue or tape, and a paper bag as the background. Use your environment to make your own collage.



Shellyne Rodriguez, *EKIN*, 2013, collage on found cigarette box, 4 x 6



Shellyne Rodriguez, *Protester*, 2017, collage with band-aids, cigarette butt paper, paper bag, 12 x 18 in



Shellyne Rodriguez, Saint George (Ogun), 2019, collage, 11 x 14 in

Week 2

Assemblage

An **assemblage** is like a collage made out of found objects. For example, Shellyne has made flowers out of cigarette butts. What can you make flowers out of in your environment? Here are some examples of assemblages in Shellyne's work!



Shellyne Rodriguez, *Orphography of the Wake*, 2018, cigarette butts, bronze wire, crate, 37 x 24 x 13 in



Shellyne Rodriguez, *We Don't Die... We Multiply*, 2016, cigarette butts, wire, found object, 11 x 17 x 17 in

Activity: Collect items such as plastic bottle tops, plastic spoons, and most importantly, whatever items YOU want to include. Attach these items together using tape, string or glue. The shape it makes doesn't matter, let the shape come to you as you work!



Shellyne Rodriguez, *Prototype for Belphegor's eye (Chandelier)*, 2014, 168 flesh tint dyed mouse trap, rhinestones, gold chains, copper wire, plywood, 28 x 30 x 30 in

Week 3

Honoring the People of Your Neighborhood

Part of the work Shellyne does as an artist is to observe the people in her neighborhood. Shellyne does this by drawing and painting the people, places and things where she lives in the Bronx.



Shellyne Rodriguez, *Neighborhood Watch*, 2020, oil on linen, 4 x 6 ft



Shellyne Rodriguez, *Dragan, the Super*, 2020, color pencil on paper, 19 x 24 in

Activity: Choose a neighbor, the guy at the bodega, the lady on the first floor—someone who is NOT a family member, but who you know from your block, and take a picture of them. (Ask them first!) Then draw a portrait of them from the picture. This is an exercise in looking closely at the person who you are drawing: a person who is part of your community and who is in your life.



Shellyne Rodriguez, Andy, 2020, colored pencil on paper, 15 x 22 in

Week 4

The Things in Our Lives

Shellyne's work pays close attention to the everyday objects people in the Bronx use. Objects tell stories about the community. What kind of stories can you tell about yours?



Shellyne Rodriguez, *The Loitering Mule*, 2019, oil on linen, 48 x 48 in



Shellyne Rodriguez, *A Pair of Timbs*, 2020, oil on wood panel, 4 x 4 ft

Activity: Collect items such as plastic bottle tops, plastic spoons, and most importantly, whatever items YOU want to include. Attach these items together using tape, string or glue. The shape it makes doesn't matter, let the shape come to you as you work!

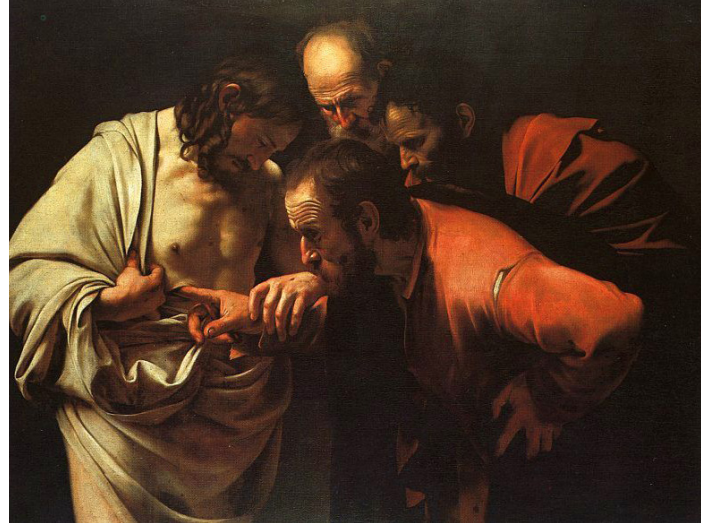
Week 5

The Emotive in the Baroque

Shellyne's work is partially influenced by the Baroque period of European art, which describes a style of European architecture, music, and art of the 17th and 18th centuries characterized by ornate detail. Baroque artists were particularly concerned with the emotive: how to express emotions such as sadness, passion, and rage in art.

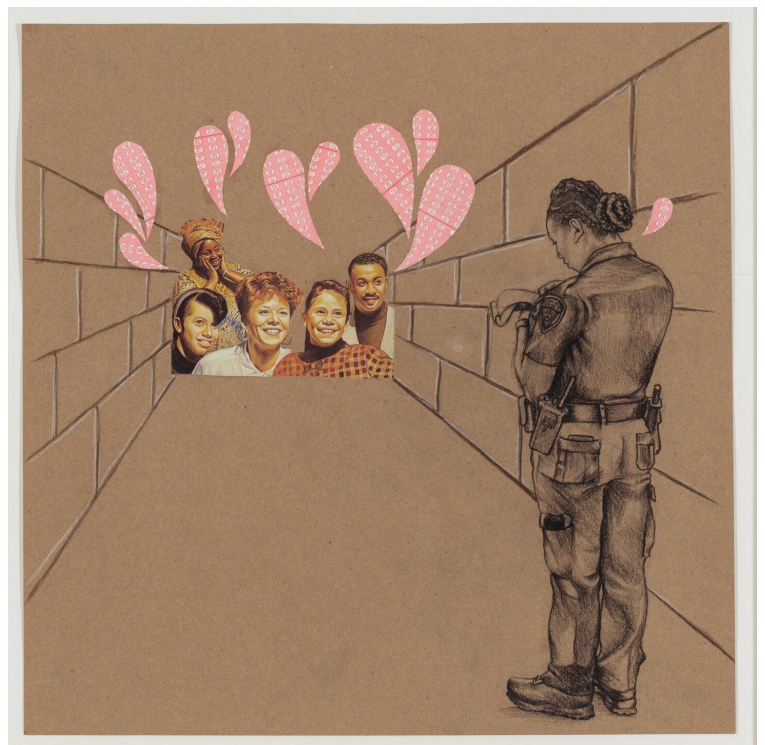


Charles Le Brun, Expressions, 1732



Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, The Incredulity of St. Thomas, 1601-1602

Activity: Utilizing Charles Le Brun's *Expressions*, explore the range of expressions he tries to record. Try to reproduce ten of these expressions through selfies and share via Instagram or other photo-sharing app.



Shellyne Rodriguez, Cul de Sac no. 1, 2018, mixed media, 12 x 12 in



Shellyne Rodriguez, *Cul de Sac no. 5*, 2018, mixed media, 12 x 12 in

Week 6

Ex Votos

Ex voto paintings are usually small religious paintings that illustrate an unfortunate event in a person's life which a saint helped them to overcome.



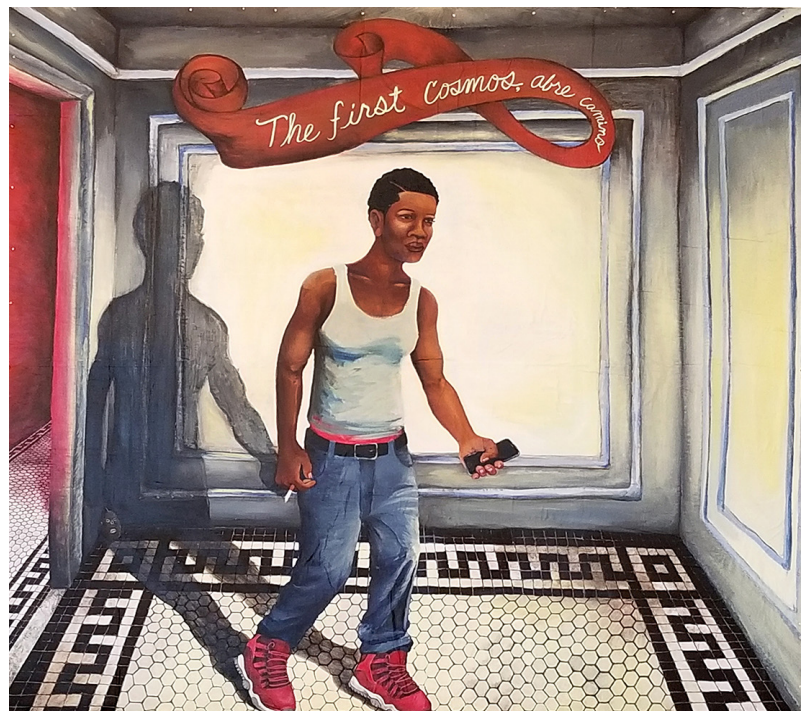
Ex-voto for Our Lady of San Juan de los Lagos, Mexico, from a man attacked on the street, 1938



Ex-voto from Tuscany for a man who survived being caught on fire

Here, Shellyne imagines the African orisha worshiped in many West African, Caribbean, and Latinx communities, Elegua or Elegba (within the figure's shadow) offering help and a path forward. This painting depicts a queer woman praying that she isn't gentrified out of her home or displaced. The text quotes French philosopher Gaston Bachelard who says that home is a person's "first cosmos." For Shellyne, this means that gentrification causes violence by removing us not just from our homes, but from the universe that makes up our lives. Our communities.

Activity: What misfortune or bad luck have you come across in your life that you have overcome? What helped you? Make a drawing depicting this event.



Shellyne Rodriguez, Ex- Voto: The First Cosmos, 2019, acrylic, paper, cardboard, wood, copper tacks, 7.7 x 7 ft

Week 7

Essential Workers Unmasked

One of Shellyne's drawings is of a delivery guy in her neighborhood. Delivery persons have kept the city fed and restaurants open during COVID-19 and the shelter-in-place the pandemic imposed.



Shellyne Rodriguez, *Essential Worker Unmasked*, 2020, colored pencil on paper, 15 x 22 in



Activity: Using collage or markers, design and decorate disposable masks to honor the labor of these underrecognized members of our community and some of our family members! Make as many different designs as you want and tie them together.

Week 8

A View From Your Window

Shellyne's work was featured in the New York Times series A View Through Your Window, describing what it has been like to be sheltering in place during Covid. The drawing included here is from her bedroom window.



Activity: Using collage or markers, design and decorate disposable masks to honor the labor of these underrecognized members of our community and some of our family members! Make as many different designs as you want and tie them together.

Week 9

ICE CREAM !!!

Nothing says summer in the BX like the sound of the Mister Softee ice cream truck rolling down the block. Shellyne commemorates this feeling with this drawing of the Mister Softee ice cream truck.



Shellyne Rodriguez, *Mr. Softee*, 2020, colored pencil on paper, 16 x 19 in

Listen: Hear the Ice Cream Truck song using this link:

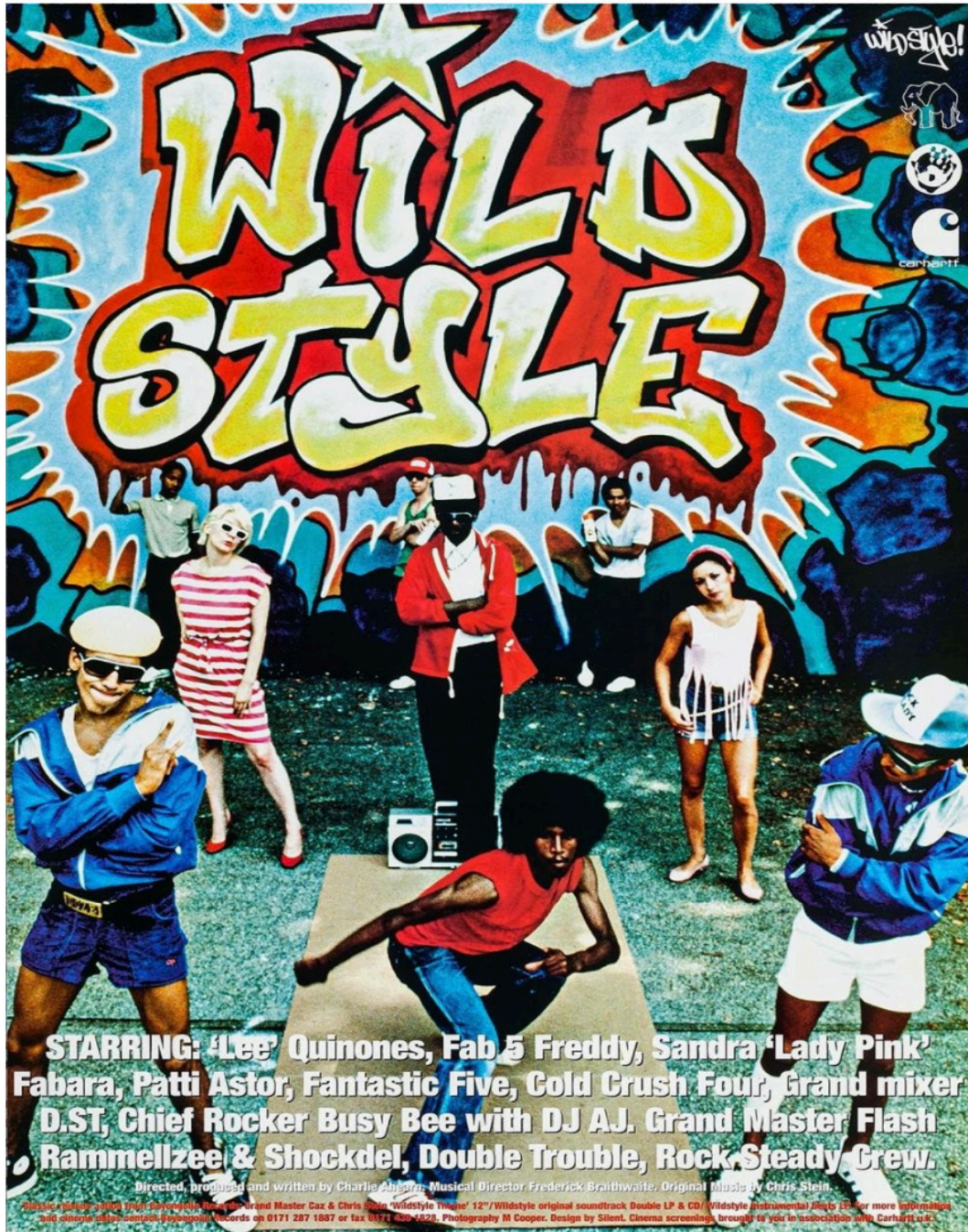
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EQm_5_XrAU

Activity: For this assignment, try and imagine lyrics to this classic jingle! Maybe it's about ice cream, maybe it isn't? What lyrics would fit the feeling of the music? It's up to your imagination. Share with your classmates what you come up with!

Week 10

Hip Hop as a Foundation

Hip Hop culture is extremely important to the way Shellyne thinks of her artwork.



Watch: This week your activity will be to watch the classic film Wild Style by Charlie Ahearn.

Watch the film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GaXMfw0IJ0o&t=1786s>

Activity: Choose one figure from the movie and research them. Make a drawing or collage of them!



Shellyne Rodriguez, TALLY, 2015, Mega Millions lotto tickets, tobacco, glue rolled into 734 cigarettes