

Black British Art Movement

- 1) Starter activity, drawing warm ups

Continuous line, non-dominant hand, end of utensil, etc.

- 2) Introduce the theme: Black British Art Movement

The movement was founded around the time of the First National Black Art Convention organised by the Blk Art Group and held at Wolverhampton Polytechnic. Their work was both inspired and promoted by the cultural theorist Stuart Hall, who was one of the main proponents of reception theory, particularly in relation to race and the media. The group were highly influential, instrumental in de-imperialising the institutional mind and in changing the nature and perception of British culture.

A key moment in the British black arts movement was the exhibition *The Other Story* staged at the Hayward Gallery in 1989 and curated by Rasheed Araeen. Featuring Modern artists of African, Caribbean and Asian ancestry, the show revealed how these artists had been marginalised in the West through discrimination.

Formed in Wolverhampton, England, in 1979, The Blk Art Group was an association of young black artists who, inspired by the black arts movement, raised questions about what black art was, its identity and what it could become in the future. All of the members of the group were children of Caribbean migrants raised in the industrial landscape in and around the West Midlands. Their first exhibition, *Black Art An' Done*, was held at Wolverhampton Art Gallery and focused on the concerns of the black community and racial prejudice. The group sought to empower black artists as well as encouraging young white artists to be more socially relevant in their practice. Working with a variety of mediums such as painting, installation, assemblage and sculpture they questioned Britain's social, cultural and political legacies by appropriating, critiquing and reinventing past art.

- 3) Introduce the artist:

Sonia Boyce

Sonia Dawn Boyce, (born 1962), is a British Afro-Caribbean artist, living and working in London. She is a Professor of Black Art and Design at University of the Arts London. Boyce's research interests explore art as a social practice and the critical and contextual debates that arise from this area of study. With an emphasis on collaborative work, Boyce has been working closely with other artists since 1990, often involving improvisation and spontaneous performative actions on the part of her collaborators. Boyce's work involves a variety of media, such as drawing, print, photography, video, and sound. Her art explores the interstices between sound and memory, the dynamics of space, and incorporating the spectator. To date, Boyce has taught Fine Art studio practice for more than thirty years in several art colleges across the UK.

- 4) Look at the art piece and write your response:

She ain't holding them up she's holding on, 1986

- 5) Visual analysis discussion:

Do you like the painting – for what reason? Which parts stand out and why? What colours, composition and techniques have been used? What is the effect?

6) Discuss our stories of identity:

How do we identify? What are our roles within careers, family, friends and society?

7) Paint your black identity

Use the materials provided or ones you have brought yourself to paint a selfie or a portrait of yourself within your group inspired by the work of Sonia Boyce

8) Extra time, introduce the artist:

Eddie Chambers

Eddie Chambers was born in Wolverhampton, England and gained a BA (Hons) Fine Art degree from Sunderland Polytechnic in 1983. He now holds a PhD from Goldsmiths College, University of London, awarded in 1998, for his dissertation researching press and public responses to Black visual arts practice in England in the 1980s. Chambers began organising exhibitions while still a student. Since then, he has organised a large number of exhibitions in Britain and abroad. In 1989 he established the African and Asian Visual Artists' Archive, a Black artists' research and reference facility, co-ordinating the project for several years until the autumn of 1992. Living between Bristol, England, Edinburgh, Scotland, and Austin, Texas, he continues to research visual arts activity, organise exhibitions and write on various aspects of visual arts practice, alongside his teaching.

9) Look at and discuss the artwork:

The Destruction of the National Front, circa 1979

Do you like the work – for what reason? Which parts stand out and why? What colours, composition and techniques have been used? What is the effect?