

2016–2017 ArtStart Program: Description of Four Visits



Photo by Tom McNeill, 2016

Eleven classes from five New Hampshire and Vermont schools are participating in the Hood’s ArtStart program during the 2016–2017 school year. Each class will visit Dartmouth four times to explore works of art across campus and the Hood’s new exhibition space, Hood Downtown. During each visit, students will develop their visual literacy skills as they spend time engaging with art objects from around the world and, in the studio, creating their own works of art. ArtStart provides students with an opportunity to learn from and respond to art created in diverse cultures. This experience can help students develop fundamental life skills, such as reflection, imagination, and creative and critical thinking. This year’s visits include the following:



Laetitia Soulier, *The Square Roots 3*, from the series titled *The Fractal Architectures*, 2014, C-print. Image courtesy of Claire Oliver Gallery and the artist. © Laetitia Soulier

Visit 1

Miniature Worlds: An Invitation to Wonder introduces students to the work of contemporary French photographer Laetitia Soulier. Soulier creates miniature architectural models and then uses the models to create detailed photographs of worlds that seem both realistic and imaginary. Each world is composed around a simple geometric shape, the circle or the square, which repeats to create intricate patterns, both infinitely small and large. Richly detailed with various textures, patterns, shapes, and colors, these photographs invite us to explore a range of visual qualities

and wonder about the narrative possibilities of each photograph. Students will explore formal concepts such as scale, pattern, and geometry and have the opportunity to write in response to Laetitia Soulier’s work. In the studio, students will create their own miniature worlds using a range of media.



Mark di Suvero, *X-Delta*, 1970.

Visit 2 Discovering Outdoor Sculpture

brings students outside to explore three abstract, large-scale sculptures on campus. We will spend time with sculptures by renowned American artists Mark di Suvero, Beverly Pepper, and Clement Meadmore, whose works have fascinating stories of how they came to Dartmouth and their impact since their arrival. These sculptures invite students to examine art in three dimensions to consider the messages they communicate, and to think about how they each activate outdoor spaces differently. In the studio, students will create their own sculptures using a range of materials.



Bahar Behbahani, *Report to London*, 2015–16.

Visit 3
Contemporary Abstraction introduces students to contemporary Iranian artist Bahar Behbahani, whose abstract paintings evoke the lush beauty of ancient Persian gardens. Painted

slowly in layers, these paintings invite careful looking. Students will delve into the language of abstraction, as well as the history of Persian gardens, to understand how Bahar Behbahani employs visual elements such as line, geometry, symmetry, color, and space in her paintings to create a range of effects and to communicate ideas about Iranian history. In the studio, students will experiment with a range of materials to create art using some of the processes and themes explored in the gallery.



Ingo Günther, *Foreign Aid*, 2011.

Visit 4
Global Mapping: Making Information Visual

During their final lesson, students will explore the work of contemporary German artist Ingo Günther. The gallery will be filled with a number of

illuminated globes, which are part of *World Processor*, an ongoing project visualizing data on these spheres. Günther selects various global issues or topics of concern and considers how they could be depicted graphically in ways that are compelling enough to inspire people to think and talk about them. His work covers subjects related to politics, the environment, economics, and geology. Students will use their understanding of formal elements such as color, proportion, scale, composition, and pattern to read these globes. This lesson emphasizes the development of spatial thinking and analytical skills. In the studio, students will make graphic representations related to topics of interest to them.



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In addition to the time spent at the Hood, teachers complete pre-visit activities in the classroom to prepare students for what they will see and learn about in the exhibition space. The Hood also provides the option of an ArtStart Reflection Journal, in which students can write and draw after each visit to further process what they are learning.

Schools participating in the ArtStart program during the 2016–2017 school year include:

- Grantham Village School, Grantham, NH
- Hanover Street School, Lebanon, NH
- Mount Lebanon School, Lebanon, NH
- Newton Elementary School, South Strafford, VT
- Westshire Elementary School, West Fairlee, VT

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