



YSP



LEONARDO DREW
TEACHERS' NOTES

About this resource

This resource is for teachers to support exploration of the [Leonardo Drew](#) exhibition in YSP's 18th century Chapel. It contains information about the artist and exhibition, plus questions and ideas for creative activities which can be used at YSP or in the classroom. Teachers can adapt and select from these suggestions as appropriate to their groups needs and key stage. Further ideas and playful suggestions can be found in our [Talking Together card](#).

About the artist

Leonardo Drew is an African American artist who lives in Brooklyn, New York. He was born in Tallahassee, Florida in 1961 and raised in public housing in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where he shared a room with his four brothers. His home was close to a rubbish dump which he played in and salvaged materials to make things.

Drew was a talented drawer and would copy cartoons from television. He attended the ABCD Cultural Art Centre where he was mentored by a group of artists who supported children from the area. At 13 years old he had his first exhibition and was approached by DC and Marvel comics to work for them. However, it was at high school where he discovered he wanted to be an artist, after seeing photographs of Jackson Pollock's work in school library books. Drew then went to The Cooper Union College to train as an artist so he could express his ideas in his own unique way.



Leonardo Drew. Photo © Jonty Wilde

About the exhibition

Number 360 is a site-specific installation made especially for YSP's 18th century Chapel. The work is made from plywood which has been smashed apart and blackened or coloured with textured paint. The main structure is over 5 meters in height and broken shards cover the gallery floor.

Drew prefers to number his works, rather than give them specific titles. He does this to allow us the space to interpret the work ourselves and "to give the viewer enough room to find themselves in the work. The work should become mirror." Drew's work is charged with energy and explores cycles of life and death, decay and regeneration.

From 2015, Drew made numerous visits to Jingdezhen in China, known for over 1,700 years for porcelain production. He was inspired by the tight parameters of the tradition, testing them by smashing up ceramic forms and firing them together to see how they fused in the kiln. This process became a springboard for working with other materials in this way and directly contributed to the treatment of the plywood seen in *Number 360*.

Colour began to enter Drew's previously monochrome work after his experience with ceramic glazes in Jingdezhen. The coloured sections in *Number 360* are inspired by the patterns and colours in Persian rugs.



Leonardo Drew, *Number 360* (2023). Photo © Jonty Wilde

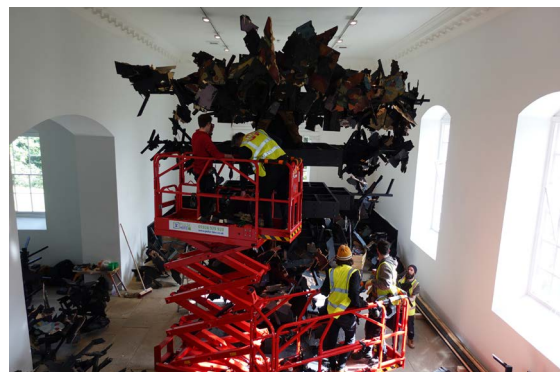


Installation of *Number 360*

YSP's team of technicians built the internal structure for *Number 360* on site at YSP over a period of weeks. Other elements of the work were also made at YSP, but a large proportion of the material in *Number 360* has been used before in several other sculptures. Drew recycles and repurposes material from past works to revisit ideas and create new work. Here are a series of images showing how *Number 360* was constructed.



"The work is only completed because it's now hanging in a museum and I can't touch it anymore. In the studio it's an ongoing dialogue between me and the works that are there. Nothing is sacred. I take things apart all the time in order to realise the next body of work."



Before your visit

Before visiting YSP with your class, prepare your pupils/students by discussing their expectations: Have you ever been to an art gallery or sculpture park before? What do you think it will look like? How do you think you should move around the gallery and why? What should you take with you? How might sculpture look differently in an indoor gallery compared to outdoors in the landscape? Research the work of Leonardo Drew and write down your initial thoughts about his work.

Enquiry questions

What are your first reactions to the exhibition?

Look at the work from different angles. What do you notice?
Consider colour, texture, shape and size.

How does the scale of the work make you feel?

What material is the work made from? Why has Leonardo Drew chosen to use this material?

If you were to describe this work to someone else, what 3 words would you use?

Can you see any elements of order in what appears to be a chaotic assemblage? Discuss the relationship between order and chaos.

What do you think Leonardo Drew is asking us to think about? Why?

The exhibition is set in YSP's 18th century Chapel. How might the history of a location such as the Chapel impact on the meaning of the artwork? What do you think *Number 360* would look like outside in the landscape?

Activities

Hold a viewfinder up to a section of the installation and draw the detail you can see through the viewing hole. Experiment with shade and tone to accentuate the different layers and 3-dimensionality. Notice where the light hits the work and where there are shadows.

Number 360 looks like an explosion that has been frozen in time – like a sculptural photograph. Imagine what might have happened in the gallery space moments before you walked in and what might happen next. Use your ideas to write a story and share with your class.

Taking inspiration from *Number 255D* (below), tear up long strips of paper or card and fold a lip along the long edge of each piece. Stick the lip of the strip of paper down to a cardboard base with tape, so that the torn edge stands proud. Add more strips using the same method to build a layered collage.



Leonardo Drew, *Number 360* (2023) Photo © Jonty Wilde



Leonardo Drew, *Number 255D*, 2020.
Copyright Leonardo Drew Courtesy Galerie Lelong and Co



Example of layered collage.

“Viewers are complicit in completing the work. I learn a lot from the people who follow the work and what they’re saying. I started showing work when I was 13, so I have been feeling out what’s possible from then.”

Back at school

After visiting the exhibition and/or exploring Leonardo Drew’s work in more depth, what do you think about his work now? Has your opinion changed? Has anything surprised you?

Rip up black card into different sized pieces. Join them together by cutting slits in the edges and slotting the pieces together in a random way. Introduce colour by ripping up comics, magazines or coloured card and add these sections into your structure. Join your structure to someone else’s. See if the whole class can join their work together to make a large collaborative sculpture.

Related artworks at YSP



James Turrell: *Deer Shelter Skyspace* (2006)
Country Park

[*Deer Shelter Skyspace*](#) is a chamber built within an 18th century deer shelter. It contains seating, lighting and a square aperture in the ceiling through which to view the sky. James Turrell is an artist who uses light and space to encourage us to look at the world in a different way and notice the changing colours of the sky.

Compare the *Deer Shelter Skyspace* with Leonardo Drew’s *Number 360*. What are the similarities and what are the differences? Think about the materials each artist has used. How does each artwork make you feel?



David Nash: *Black Mound* (2013)
Lower Lake

[*Black Mound*](#) was made on site at YSP in 2013 and overlooks YSP’s historic lakes. The work is made from oak forms which have been charred black through a carefully controlled burning process. Nash uses fire to alter the shape and surface colour and texture of his sculptures.

Black Mound and *Number 360* are both site-specific artworks. Consider how each site impacts on the meaning of the work.

David Nash only uses natural materials to make his sculptures and Leonardo Drew reuses materials to make new works. Discuss the environmental impact of these methods of working.

Past exhibitions in the Chapel

Compare and contrast the work of other artists who have also transformed the interior space of the Chapel:

[Rachel Kneebone: 399 days \(2021-22\)](#)

[Kimsooja: To Breathe \(2019\)](#)

[Chiharu Shiota: Beyond Time \(2018\)](#)


[Bill Viola \(2015-16\)](#)


Glossary


Assemblage – an artwork made by grouping together unrelated found or everyday objects.

Installation – an artwork which is often large in scale and made with different materials. Installations are usually made for a specific place and tend to be temporary.

Site-specific – artwork which is designed for a specific location and is integrated with its surroundings.

 To find out more about YSP, explore the resources on our [YouTube channel](#) with your class. Here you will find short videos about the Park which highlight the unique relationship between sculpture and the Yorkshire landscape. There is also a library of videos and artist talks from previous exhibitions which you may find useful.

 Explore YSP's world-class sculpture collection and hear from artists and curators on our digital guide, available to download and use via the [Bloomberg Connects app](#).

 YSP's IGTV channel on Instagram ([@yvspsculpture](#)) contains artist interviews. They reveal fascinating insights into their work, life and reasons for becoming an artist.

We would love to see your class's creations. Please share using **#YSPSchools**

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 [Yorkshire Sculpture Park](#)



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