Marela Zacarías

**About**

BORN
1978 (Mexico City, Mexico)

EDUCATION
Kenyon College, BA
Hunter College, MFA

LIVES AND WORKS
Brooklyn, New York
Mexico City, Mexico

**About the Artist**

A muralist painter for more than ten years, Zacarías wanted to bring walls into three-dimensional space. Her resulting wall-mounted painted sculptures twist and turn in unruly ways, built from window screens, joint compound, and polymer before being painted in bold, geometric, abstract patterns.

Zacarías' works are often inspired by the sites for which they are planned, such as Works Progress Administration murals in the Brooklyn Museum, Mayan textile colors for an installation in Mexico, and a map of Brooklyn for a new hotel in the borough.

**Media and Materials**

MURAL, SCULPTURE, INSTALLATION

**Key Words and Ideas**

ABSTRACT COLOR
PATTERN
SITE-SPECIFIC
SHAPE
TEXTURE

**Related Artists**

TANYA AGUINIGA
DIANA AL-HADID
ASSUME VIVID ASTRO FOCUS
PHYLLIDA BARLOW
MARK BRADFORD
OLAFUR ELIASON
KELTIE FERRIS

KATHARINA GROSSE
MARY HEILMANN
BARBARA KASTEN
GUADALUPE MARAVILLA
JAMES TURRELL
MONICA VALENTINE

"My nature is very colorful. I want to express color."
—Marela Zacarías

art21.org/marelazacarias
How to Use This Guide
Art21 encourages active engagement when teaching with our films. The questions and activities below are recommendations for incorporating Art21 films featuring Marela Zacarías into your classroom. Each class will likely require different adaptations for best results.

### Before Viewing
Establish key ideas, in anticipation of viewing the film(s):

1. What colors inspire joy or particular emotions to you?
2. What facets make a sculpture? What elements make a painting? How are they different? The same?
3. How does scale influence the viewer’s experience of an artwork?

### While Viewing
Support active viewing, and pause the film to clarify particular ideas:

1. What colors does Zacarías use in her work? Why does she pick those colors?
2. Note how Zacarías creates a new work. What steps does she take?
3. From where does Zacarías draw her inspiration? How does she incorporate those sources into the final work?

### After Viewing
Follow-up on key ideas and synthesize information learned from the film(s):

1. How does Zacarías’ color choice influence your experience viewing the work?
2. How does Zacarías give each artwork a sense of movement, although the work is stationary?
3. Consider the places where the works are displayed. Does location change the interpretation of the pieces?

### Related Activities
Engaging in creative activities after watching Art21 films can reinforce learning and stimulate ideas. Art21 encourages educators to adapt these activities to their classrooms.

- Pass out sheets of paper, ideally different colors and patterns. Encourage students to take as much as they like. Watch the film again; while watching, use a piece of paper to create a shape inspired by Zacarías’ work. After viewing the film, discuss the experience of making an object while watching. What did students respond to? Why?
- In the films, Zacarías' work is installed in a museum, apartment, and government building. Choose a space outside the classroom to make a site specific work. Be sure to get approval from the site's owners or governing officials before starting. Have the students collaborate together to research the space, create a plan, and work together to create and install it.

**NOTE:** Please view all films before sharing them with your students.

Did you use this guide, Art21 films, or Art21-featured artists in your classroom? If so, tag Art21 on social media or email us at education@art21.org.