



art21.org/marelazacarias

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.

TEACHING CONNECTIONS

Media and Materials

mural, sculpture, installation

Key Words and Ideas

abstract color	shape
pattern	texture
site-specific	

Related Artists

Tanya Aguiñiga	Katharina Grosse
Diana Al-Hadid	Mary Heilmann
assume vivid astro focus	Barbara Kasten
Phyllida Barlow	Guadalupe Maravilla
Mark Bradford	James Turrell
Olafur Eliason	Monica Valentine
Keltie Ferris	

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

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.

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

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.