



art21.org/guadalupemaravilla

Guadalupe Maravilla

ABOUT

Born

1976 (El Salvador)

Education

School of Visual Arts, BFA
Hunter College, MFA

Lives and Works

Brooklyn, New York

About the Artist

Maravilla creates intricately layered paintings, large-scale sculptures, and therapeutic performances that draw from his personal history and Central American ancestry. Often resembling mythic creatures or ornate reliquaries, Maravilla's works examine issues of migration, disease, and generational trauma, while creating new rituals for care, healing, and regeneration.

At age eight, Maravilla was part of the first wave of undocumented unaccompanied children to migrate from Central America to the United States. Today, the artist's work is a means both to process that experience as well as to create healing spaces that address the harsh realities of migration and immigration.

TEACHING CONNECTIONS

Media and Materials

installation
painting
performance
sculpture

Key Words and Ideas

ancestry
community
healing
immigration
migration
ritual
sound
trauma

Related Artists

Tanya Aguiñiga
John Akomfrah
Allora and Calzadilla
Firelei Báez
Kevin Beasley
Nick Cave
Theaster Gates
Ann Hamilton
Nicholas Hlobo
Kimsooja
Shaun Leonardo
Jason Moran
Susan Philipsz
Jacolby Satterwhite
Rose B. Simpson
Nancy Spero

**"If you don't see the art that you like,
just invent it yourself."**
—Guadalupe Maravilla

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 Guadalupe Maravilla 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 are some ways people heal from disease or traumatic events? In what ways is art healing?
- ② How can sound act as a trigger for memory?
- ③ What does 'autobiographical' mean? Can you name any artists (such as singers, writers, actors, or directors) that make autobiographical works? Why might they feel compelled to put their story out there?

While Viewing

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

- ① How does Maravilla heal personally? How does he take his own experience and try to help others?
- ② Describe how you feel hearing the sounds Maravilla plays. Do the sounds trigger any memories for you?
- ③ What details from Maravilla's life does he incorporate into his work? Why is this important to him?

After Viewing

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

- ① Why is Maravilla focused on healing?
- ② What emotions did you feel listening to Maravilla's soundwork and viewing the artist's sculptures?
- ③ How does knowing Maravilla's biography help you understand the work? What clues does he give the viewer if they didn't watch this film?

Related Activities

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

- ✓ Maravilla states "sound is medicine." Create a work that uses sound as a healing experience. The piece can incorporate multiple mediums or focus solely on sound.
- ✓ Play a Youtube video of a sound bath or bring in a local sound bath facilitator (mediation centers, yoga studios, or art therapists should have recommendations) to give the class the experience featured in the film. After the experience, ask students to create a work in response. Limit the time to match how long the sound bath took.