



art21.org/loiehollowell



Loie Hollowell

ABOUT

Born

1983 (Woodland, CA)

Education

University of California, Santa Barbara (BFA)
Virginia Commonwealth University (MFA)

Lives and Works

New York, NY

About the Artist

Existing between abstraction and representation, Loie Hollowell's vibrant and evocative paintings refer to human bodies as sites of sensuality and sexuality, desire and disgust, pleasure and pain. Hollowell's work depicts geometric and symmetrical forms inspired by her experiences as a woman and a mother. These forms are shaped by strong colors and dramatic chiaroscuro and suggest human genitalia, sacred geometry, and primordial origins. Hollowell further explores physicality by adding sinuous elements, sculpted from high-density foam, directly onto the surfaces of her canvases. Seamlessly protruding from the canvases, these shapes transform the paintings into three-dimensional, wall-hung works, allowing the artist to play with both real and illusory light, shadow, and space.

TEACHING CONNECTIONS

Media and Materials

painting
sculpture

Key Words and Ideas

abortion
abstraction
birth
chiaroscuro
color

geometry
light
memory
pain
pleasure

Related Artists

Janine Antoni
Louise Bourgeois
Louise Despont
Song Dong
LaToya Ruby Frazier
Ann Hamilton

Anish Kapoor
Elizabeth Murray
Catherine Opie
Elle Pérez
Tabaimo
Yin Xiuzhen

"There's always that hunting, that searching, for a light-filled experience, even if it's a dark subject matter." —Loie Hollowell

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 Loie Hollowell into your classroom. Each class will likely require different adaptations for best results.

NOTE: Please view all films before sharing them with your students. The film, "Loie Hollowell's Transcendent Bodies", contains nudity and discussion of human anatomy, sexuality, abortion, and pregnancy.

Before Viewing

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

- ① Describe the things you would think about to plan a work that's uplifting and about pleasure. Conversely, what might you consider if the work were about pain?
- ② How have artists pictured motherhood or parenthood over time?
- ③ What is abstraction "good" for? What can abstraction communicate?

While Viewing

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

- ① Take note of the kinds of pleasure and pain Hollowell describes in this film.
- ② What words might you use to describe Hollowell's paintings inspired by her experience during pregnancy, as well as her experiences as a woman and a mother?
- ③ Why might Hollowell choose to employ an abstract approach in her work?

After Viewing

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

- ① Reconsider some of the ways we might experience pleasure and pain from the Before Viewing question. What might you add in light of seeing and discussing this film?
- ② How do Hollowell's paintings affect you? What elements influence your response?
- ③ Describe how Hollowell utilizes abstraction, as well as illusory space and light, in her work.

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.

- ✓ Create an abstract work of art in any media based on a specific personal experience. This experience may be one that was pleasurable, painful, or both. Share the work with others and ask them to interpret what it may be about before telling them the story behind the work.
- ✓ Like Elizabeth Murray, an artist featured in Season 2 of *Art in the Twenty-First Century*, Hollowell's works incorporate aspects of both painting and sculpture. Challenge yourself to bridge the gap between two art making approaches. For example, create a work that bridges photography and drawing, sculpture and collage, or video and performance.