

Teachers' Resource for Key Stages 3 – 5

Caribbean Connections in Art & Design

Supporting KS3 – 5 Art & Design and Design and Technology
curricula and exam specifications



V&A

vam.ac.uk/schools

Poster by René Portocarrero (1912 – 1985), published by the Organisation of Solidarity with the people of Africa, Asia and Latin America (OSPAAAL).
Cuba, 1971 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

V&A Teachers' Resource for Key Stages 3 – 5

The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in London is the world's leading museum of art, design and performance. Its collection of 2.7 million objects spans over 5,000 years of human creativity. Each object in the museum has a different story to tell and can spark different questions about our connection to design.

The Object Discussion Cards in this pack showcase objects from the V&A's collection created by designers, artists and makers from the Caribbean or of Caribbean heritage. Each Object Discussion Card encourages object-based learning and allows students to develop critical, creative and collaborative thinking skills with the support of teachers and educators.

Guidance for teachers and educators

The resource can be used while visiting the V&A or to support object-based learning in the classroom. You can use the cards as posters in your classroom after the activity. The resource has been written for Key Stage 3 – 5 students. Before starting, please read through the full resource and check the suitability of the content of the cards and questions for your students. Some of the object descriptions include sensitive language and/or topics and may require a more tailored approach.

Each card includes an object image, short object description and discussion questions. Encourage your students to take time looking at or drawing the object before starting the activities. We suggest giving students about 10 – 15 minutes to work through the questions on each card.

Student booklet

A student booklet has been provided at the end of the resource to be used in conjunction with the Object Discussion Cards as a place for students to note down and sketch their responses to the objects and the discussion points. The booklet is designed to be printed out and can be included in sketchbooks or portfolios. It can be used on a visit or for work in the classroom. The booklet includes shorter object descriptions and replicates the discussion points from the Object Discussion Cards.

Managing student discussion

This resource has been devised to highlight the important contribution to art and design made by artists and designers from the Caribbean or of Caribbean heritage. Some of the objects selected for the resource include works by artists and designers which highlight the prejudice and discrimination faced by African Caribbean communities.

Some of the discussion points and activities will help facilitate discussion around racism and the lived experiences of African Caribbean communities. If there are any African Caribbean students in your group, we would recommend letting them know in advance that some of the discussion may focus on racial discrimination and allow them to decide whether they would like to participate. Students should not feel pressurised to contribute if it makes them uncomfortable. Acknowledging the lived experiences of African Caribbean people is vital.

We recommend students do the activities in small groups to encourage peer-to-peer discussion. Think carefully about group dynamics before splitting the class into smaller groups. In some cases, it may be more appropriate for the teacher to facilitate the discussion. Allow space and time for meaningful discussion and room for students to take time out if they need to.

We recommend voicing the following discussion guidelines before students start:

- Allow everyone in the group to voice their opinion. Be kind, patient and respectful of other people's views and ideas.
- Don't worry if you don't know what your opinion is yet. Ask further questions to your group or do more research to help you decide.
- Remember that everyone's opinion is important. If someone has a different opinion to you, listen to them and ask them to explain their reasoning – it might change your own viewpoint.

Further questions

As well as the discussion points on the cards, use the questions below to encourage further object-based discussion with your students. Not all the questions will be relevant to each object:

- Aesthetic: *What does it look like?*
- Technical: *What is it made from? How does it work?*
- Industrial: *How and in what volume is it manufactured?*
- Cultural: *What or who is it responding to?*
- Behavioural: *How do you interact with it?*
- Economic: *How does it financially impact the consumer and/or manufacturer?*
- Environmental: *Is it sustainable? What is its lifespan?*

Find out more

Encourage your students to find out more about the objects by visiting vam.ac.uk/collections

About the resource

The objects in this resource will allow students to explore the work of designers, artists and makers from the Caribbean or of Caribbean heritage.

The objects have been drawn from across the V&A collections and represent a wide range of disciplines, including fashion, textiles, furniture design, poster design and photography.

Two of the objects within the resource are from the V&A Photography collection. These photographs, along with 115 others, were acquired as the result of a seven-year long research project in partnership with Black Cultural Archives and funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund. The aim of the project was to raise awareness of the contribution of Black Britons to British culture and society, as well as to the art of photography. To complement the photographs, Black Cultural Archives collected oral histories from some of the photographers, their relatives, and the people depicted in the images.

Find out more

You can find out more about this project by going to vam.ac.uk/articles/staying-power-photographs-of-black-british-experience

Visiting the museum

We hope this resource will inspire a visit to the museum. Please keep in mind that V&A displays and galleries change regularly. Do check before you visit to make sure the works you would like to see are on display. Find out more via Explore the Collections at vam.ac.uk/collections.

Prints & Drawings Study Room

Several of the works in this resource are available to view on request in the Prints & Drawings Study Room. Follow this link to find out more about booking a visit: vam.ac.uk/info/study-rooms.

Explore further

You can explore further by going to vam.ac.uk/articles/va-trail-britain-and-the-caribbean

Critical friends

The content for this resource has been devised in consultation with a group of internal and external individuals and organisations. We are grateful to them for contributing their expertise and knowledge in the selection of the objects and the development of the content. Special thanks to Ilhan Awed from The Black Curriculum, Esther Agbetteor (V&A) and Avril Horsford (V&A).

Object Discussion Cards



Skirt suit and overcoat, early 1950s (made)

Nat Gaynes, a local dressmaker in Guyana, designed this skirt suit for Dr Beryl Gilroy. Dr Gilroy first wore it in Guyana and later in England, where she moved in 1951 to continue her teaching and studies. In 1968 Gilroy became London's first Black headteacher. Later, she had a successful career as a writer. She wrote a book on her experiences as a teacher called, *Black Teacher* – the book contained a critical account of teaching in Britain and the racial discrimination she faced in her workplace and broader British society.

This bright pink suit is characteristic of the style of dress worn by Caribbean women in Britain in the early 1950s. Women took American fashion magazines to local dressmakers and had copies of popular designs made up. Dr Gilroy stated that her clothes were much more colourful than standard post-war clothes and included items such as pedal pushers (cropped trousers for women), which had not previously been seen in Britain.

The fabric used to make the suit skirt would have been considerably lighter than the material used for similar suits made in Britain owing to a much warmer climate in Guyana. The overcoat was bought by Dr Gilroy on arrival in Britain because of the colder weather.

Find out more

You can find out more about these objects by going to
collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O138168
collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O138163

Discuss

- How would you describe the style of the skirt suit?
- How does the colour of the jacket and skirt contrast with that of the overcoat? Why do you think the bright colour of the skirt suit was significant for the person who wore it, Dr Beryl Gilroy?
- Consider the statements below by V&A Curator, Fashion Historian and Designer Dr Christine Checinska from her TEDx talk 'Disobedient Dress: Fashion as Everyday Activism'

'Being well-dressed is a way of showing respect for ourselves and to others.'
'As a migrant... the only way to dress is up, it's about dignity and personhood.'

How do these statements make you view the skirt suit worn by Beryl Gilroy differently? How might they help develop your understanding of Gilroy's experience of moving from the Caribbean to Britain?



Felt hat, 1950s

This black felt hat formed part of an outfit put together by Derek Lilliard for the exhibition *Streetstyle, From Sidewalk to Catwalk, 1940 to Tomorrow* held at the V&A in 1994 – 95. The complete outfit consisted of the hat, a poly-wool suit with horn buttons, a cotton shirt, a silk tie and leather shoes (pictured below). The outfit reflected a style of dress worn by West Indian men in Britain in the 1950s.

The hat was made in Jamaica and is one of the most representative items of fashion worn by men in the Caribbean in the 1940s and 1950s. This style would continue to be worn when people from the Caribbean settled across the UK.

Felt hats such as this one, also known as a trilby hat, had been imported from England into the Caribbean in earlier years. It was said to be one of the most packed items by men of the 'Windrush Generation' as they only brought essential items with them to start their new life.

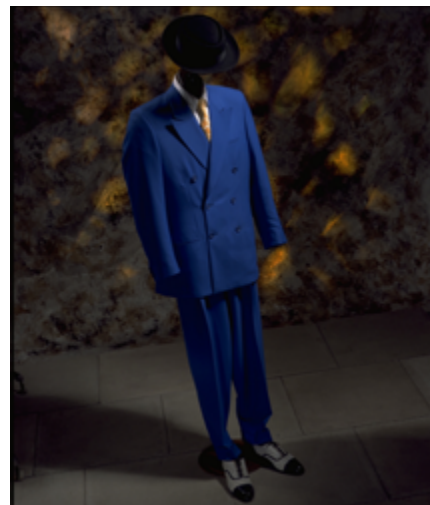
Trilby or Fedora hats were often worn by Caribbean men paired with the 'zoot suit' consisting of high-waisted, wide-legged trousers and a long blazer. The suits were influenced by the style of 1940s African American Jazz musicians, vastly popular among the Caribbean communities at the time.

Find out more

You can find out more about this object by going to collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O138133

Discuss

- How would you describe the style of this hat?
- Why do you think it would have been a popular accessory for men coming over from the Caribbean to settle in Britain?
- Do you have an outfit or accessory that you wear for specific occasions or in certain places? How does it make you feel when you wear it?
- How can clothing be used to present yourself in a certain way?





Golden Harvest fabric, 1960s

This textile was designed by Althea McNish (1924 – 2020), a designer originally from Trinidad who came to live in Britain in 1951. The textile depicts an abstracted image of wheat growing in a field. When McNish encountered a wheat field in the English countryside for the first time it reminded her of sugar cane plantations in Trinidad. The organic forms found in the English countryside made a significant impression on McNish, and in 1959 she used the wheat motif in Golden Harvest – her first design for commercial design company Hull Traders.

Althea McNish was amongst the first, if not the first, designer of African Caribbean descent to achieve international recognition. Dazzling contrasting colours, full of movement and expressive lines, McNish's designs for furnishing and fashion fabrics captured attention from the moment she graduated. Her designs featured natural imagery drawn from the abundance of tropical flora and fauna from her native Trinidad, and a 'tropicalised' interpretation of the British landscape. Her designs also took the form of lively abstract patterns, bursting with energy and visual complexity.

On seeing her graduation show at The Royal College of Art, Arthur Stewart-Liberty – chairman of London's Liberty department store – famously commissioned the young graduate to create new and exclusive designs for both fashion and furnishing fabrics. McNish's reputation was such that her textiles were bought by couture clients including Christian Dior and she designed fabrics for Queen Elizabeth II's wardrobe for the 1966 Royal Tour of Trinidad and the Caribbean.

Find out more

You can find out more about this object by going to collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O270435

Find out more about Althea McNish vam.ac.uk/articles/althea-mcnish-an-introduction

Discuss

- Look closely at the Golden Harvest textile design. How would you describe the style of the design?
- What aspects of the textile design do you feel convey the designer's Caribbean heritage and adopted home in Britain?
- Althea McNish said that the wheat field reminded her of the sugar cane plantations of her native Trinidad. What do you think is the significance of this reference?

This fabric below, *Trinidad*, was also designed by Althea McNish, and can be seen on display in the *Design 1900 – Now* gallery.



CUBA



SOLIDARIDAD  **تضامن**  **SOLIDARITY**  **SOLIDARITE**

Solidarity poster, 1971

This poster, which was created by Cuban artist René Portocarrero (1912 – 1985), shows a head in profile with birds and garlands adorning the hair and neck. The date, 26 July, is incorporated into the hair. Written in black across the bottom is the word 'solidarity' in Spanish, English, French, and Arabic.

The poster highlights the important work of the Organisation of Solidarity with the People of Africa, Asia and Latin America (OSPAAAL). OSPAAAL was formed following a gathering of leaders from continents across the world. The group was set up with the stated purpose of fighting globalisation, imperialism, neoliberalism, and defending human rights. Though based in Cuba, the organisation had an international outlook and readership as they promoted global solidarity.

The 26th of July is an extremely important date for Cubans who at the time rejoiced in the overthrow of the Western-backed dictatorship. This can be seen to resonate with many people, countries, and communities from the Global South who have been a part of similar revolutionary political and social movements. It also serves as a reminder that Cuba is in Latin America and is also a part of the Caribbean.

Producing posters was central to the campaign work of OSPAAAL. The organisation commissioned many different artists to design posters, which were distributed around the world via their publication *Tricontinental*.

Portocarrero grew up in an area of Cuba known for its carnival celebrations, colours which are reflected in this poster. This piece not only represents solidarity towards the people of Cuba, but also acknowledges that countries across the world need solidarity and support with their movements.

Find out more

You can find out more about this poster by going to collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1441349

Discuss

- Look closely at the poster. Can you spot a symbol that represents peace?
- What design features has the artist used to make this a striking and eye-catching image?
- Why do you think the designer has chosen to include the word solidarity in different languages across the bottom of the poster?



A young girl speaking on her parents' telephone in South London, 1973

Photographer Neil Kenlock (born 1950) moved to London from Jamaica in 1963 and became determined to document Black pride in the face of racial prejudice. Building on his background in protest photography, Kenlock brought the same sense of confidence to the colour photographs he took of people of Caribbean heritage in their homes in Britain in the 1970s.

Many families had photographs like this taken to send to their relatives in the Caribbean to show that they had settled well in Britain. The photographs allowed families to show their relatives the variety of things they owned and the modern homes they lived in.

Find out more

You can find out more about this photograph by going to collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1245563

Read more about the Staying Power photographs vam.ac.uk/articles/staying-power-photographs-of-black-british-experience

Discuss

- Look closely at the image. What objects can you see in the scene?
- What message do you think the photographer is trying to convey through this image?
- Why do you think families who had moved from the Caribbean to Britain would want to send photographs like this one to their relatives?

Explore further

The V&A has several photographs by Neil Kenlock in its collection. Explore the full set and consider how viewing them as a body of work enhances your understanding of the messages the photographer is trying to put across to the viewer.



Fashion Shoot, Brixton Market, 1973

Armet Francis (born 1945) emigrated to Britain from Jamaica at the age of ten and went on to have a varied photographic career. In a series of fashion photographs for *19* magazine, Francis showcased Black British Style against the backdrop of Brixton Market.

Brixton was one of the areas in London which had developed a large Black British community following migration, mainly from the Caribbean, in the post-war period. Francis's photographs depict the glamour of 1970s fashion in the context of multicultural communities.

Find out more

You can find out more about the Staying Power photographs
collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1273476
vam.ac.uk/articles/staying-power-photographs-of-black-british-experience

Discuss

- Look at the striking composition of this photograph. What different aspects of the image make it so dynamic?
- The model, who is wearing a 1970s outfit with flared trousers, is also holding a black umbrella. Why do you think the stylist and photographer wanted to create this juxtaposition? What message does it convey to the viewer?
- Fashion shoots are often associated with glamour and luxury. In this example, what effect do you think the photographer is trying to create by photographing the model against the backdrop of a market?



Akuaba chair, 1985

This chair bridges cultural traditions. The face-like shape of this chair's backrest is inspired by the Ghanaian fertility doll Akuaba, while the seat and legs nod to early 20th century European design.

Jamaican-born Huren Marsh (born 1951) designed the chair while studying furniture and product design at Kingston Polytechnic, in South West London. Influenced by African artefacts he saw in the Museum of Mankind in London (later merged with the British Museum), Marsh wanted to create furniture that went beyond the contemporary European style he was being taught about at university.

Find out more

You can find out more about this chair by going to collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1529429

Discuss

- Look closely at the design. Can you identify which features might link to African heritage and which to European heritage?
- The designer was inspired by African objects he saw on display in museums. Why do you think it is important for the designer to represent his African heritage within his designs?
- What is the significance of the designer being inspired by African objects that he saw on display in museums in Britain? Consider how African objects may end up in museums in Britain. What does this tell us about our colonial history?



Jab Jab, 1988

In this screenprint, poet and painter John Lyons evokes the heat and colour of Trinidadian carnival as three masqueraders energetically perform. The central figure is *Jab Jab* (from the French word 'diable') the devil disguised as a clown. His debauched character is evoked in the hot reds and fleshy pinks of Lyons' print.

The Jab Jab is usually a devil-like character often carrying a whip that features in Mas or Carnival in many Caribbean communities (notably Grenadian and Trinidadian).

Some choose to dress up like the Jab Jab during celebrations as it serves as a visual representation of emancipation from enslavement and celebrates freedom. Whilst others dress as the Jab Jab in homage to ancient African spiritual traditions. It is an iconic symbol of Trinidadian folklore and culture.

Mas (short for masquerade) or Carnival is believed to originate from Trinidad and Tobago in the 18th century. Carnival typically involves public celebrations, including events such as parades, public street parties and other entertainment. It is traditionally celebrated before the start of Lent.

Lyons was one of fifty artists commissioned by John Phillips of the Paddington Printshop in 1988 to form a set of screenprints entitled *Jouvert* (Trinidadian patois for 'daybreak' or 'beginning').

Find out more

You can find out more about this print by going to
collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O134238
youtu.be/OgKvT9ra_J8

Discuss

- The artist who created this screenprint is also a poet. Look at the image carefully and write down a series of descriptive words that capture the essence and feeling of the scene.
- How has the artist used colour and line to create a sense of energy and movement?
- Imagine how you might make the costumes in the image in 3D. What types of material could you use and how would you embellish them to create an eye-catching design?

Explore further

Research more about the origins of Mas or Carnival and the reasons for including specific characters within the parades.



Spirit of the Carnival, 1988

This artwork offers a political commentary on the ever-increasing police presence at the Notting Hill Carnival. A solo masquerader in a masked raffia costume performs at the centre of the scene. On every side he is penned in by an advancing line of police officers in identikit uniform. A wall of riot shields forms a circle around him, through which a snarling dog has broken through. However, rather than being intimidated, the masquerader continues his energetic dance. The dazzling colours of his costume and his outstretched hands seem to suggest a form of resistance.

Note for teachers: This object contains difficult subject matter including racial discrimination, intimidation and violence. Please ensure that you read the content fully in advance of sharing with students. If there are any African Caribbean students in your group, we would recommend letting them know in advance that some of the discussion may focus on racial discrimination and allow them to decide whether they would like to participate. Students should not feel pressurised to contribute if it makes them uncomfortable. Acknowledging the lived experiences of African Caribbean people is vital.

Carnival typically involves public celebrations, including events such as parades, public street parties and other entertainment. It is traditionally celebrated before the start of Lent.

The Notting Hill Carnival, which takes place annually in London, was founded by Trinidad and Tobago-born journalist and activist Claudia Jones as a community response to the Notting Hill race riots in 1959.

After the Second World War, the British Government encouraged people from the Caribbean to come to Britain to help with the labour shortage and to rebuild the country (Caribbeans were British citizens since the islands were still under colonial rule). Many people settled in North Kensington and Notting Hill but suffered racial abuse and discrimination. At the time, these areas of London were known for their significant levels of poverty and competition for affordable housing, which led to clashes between white and Black working-class communities and resulted in violent confrontations throughout the summer of 1958.

Racial tensions between white and Black communities continued to grow during this period resulting in further riots in 1976. This led to increased police presence at the Notting Hill Carnival each year.

Find out more

You can find out more about this object by going to collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O136603

Discuss

- Look carefully at the artwork. How does it make you feel and why?
- Think about the title of this artwork, *Spirit of the Carnival*. Why do you think the artist has chosen this as the title?
- How has the artist used colour and composition to emphasise the message of the work?



Souvenir 4 (Princess Alexandra), 2019

British sculptor Hew Locke (born in Edinburgh, Scotland, 1959) spent his formative years in Guyana (1966 – 80) before returning to the UK. He lives and works in Brixton, London.

This artwork is part of a series called *Souvenirs* and explores the legacy of empire. The materials and symbols used by Locke comment on a variety of topics including the British monarchy, imperialism, African Caribbean masquerade and dress.

The artist has juxtaposed an antique bust of Princess Alexandra with a range of mixed media including clay skulls and a metal mask, textile lace, beads, and replica military badges and medals. The adornments unlock the subversive nature of the *Souvenirs* series. The mask used on the headpiece is very significant – it is a rendition of the ivory portraits of Idia, the Queen Mother of Benin, which were looted by the British in 1897, and is now a very potent symbol of African identity.

Princess Alexandra of Denmark (1844 – 1925) married Albert Edward, heir to the British throne, in 1863. She became Queen consort when Albert ascended to the throne in 1901 as Edward VII, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the British dominions beyond the seas, and Emperor of India.

Find out more

You can find out more about this object by going to collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1713228

Discuss

- Is there anything unusual or striking about this artwork and why?
- Why do you think the artist has chosen to adorn the bust of Princess Alexandra in this way?
- Consider this quote by the artist about the *Souvenirs* series. How does this statement enhance your understanding of the work?

'They [the busts] are weighed down by the literal burden of history and this goes back to my idea of how a nation creates itself, what stories it sells to itself and how this relates to ideas of Britain and its history that are weighing down the minds of people today...' (from the artist's website)



Black history Tube map, 2021

A printed poster of a London Tube map, reinterpreted to include names of Black historic individuals and organisations from all over the UK, and across time periods and social classes.

Rather than necessarily having figures relate to their particular tube station, the lines are renamed to link them by common themes: Firsts and Trailblazers; Georgians; Sports; Arts; LGBTQ+; Physicians; Performers; Literary World and Community Organisers.

Co-creator and Managing Director of Black Cultural Archives, Arike Oke, said '*London's Black history is deeply embedded in its streets and neighbourhoods. We hope that the map will be an invitation to find out more and to explore.*'

Find out more

You can find out more about the Black history Tube map by going to collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1705222

londonblog.tfl.gov.uk/2021/10/12/black-history-tube-map

Discuss

- Why do you think the creators of this poster chose to use the map of the London Underground in this way?
- One of the designers featured in this resource, Althea McNish, is mentioned on this map. Which Underground line is she on?
- Although maps are practical objects which help us get from A to B, they also are inextricably linked to the history and politics of a place. With this in mind, how does it make you view the map differently?

Explore further

- Use the link on the left from the Transport for London website to research some of the individuals or organisations represented on the map. Can you find names on the map of people of African Caribbean heritage? Research one of the individuals and share what you have learnt about them with your peers.
- Research your local area. Are there any underrepresented groups or members of the community who you feel should be given more recognition? How could you represent this visually?



Sketch & notes

Skirt suit and overcoat, early 1950s (made)

Nat Gaynes, a local dressmaker in Guyana, designed this skirt suit for Dr Beryl Gilroy. Dr Gilroy first wore it in Guyana and later in England, where she moved in 1951. In 1968 Dr Gilroy became London's first Black headteacher.

This bright pink suit is characteristic of the style of dress worn by Caribbean women in Britain in the early 1950s.

The fabric used to make the suit skirt would have been considerably lighter than the material used for similar suits made in Britain owing to a much warmer climate in Guyana. The overcoat was bought by Dr Gilroy on arrival in Britain because of the colder weather.

Discuss

- How would you describe the style of the skirt suit?
- How does the colour of the jacket and skirt contrast with that of the overcoat? Why do you think the bright colour of the skirt suit was significant for the person who wore it, Dr Beryl Gilroy?

- Consider the statements below by V&A Curator, Fashion Historian and Designer, Dr Christine Checinska, from her Tedx talk *Disobedient Dress: Fashion as Everyday Activism*:

'Being well-dressed is a way of showing respect for ourselves and to others.'
'As a migrant...the only way to dress is up, it's about dignity and personhood.'

How do these statements make you view the skirt suit worn by Beryl Gilroy differently? How might they help develop your understanding of Gilroy's experience of moving from the Caribbean to Britain?

Sketch & notes



Felt hat, 1950s

The hat was made in Jamaica and is one of the most representative items of fashion worn by men from the Caribbean in the 1940s and 1950s. This style would continue to be worn when communities of Caribbean people settled across the UK.

Felt hats such as this one, also known as a trilby hat, had been imported from England into the Caribbean in earlier years. It was said to be one of the most packed items by men of the 'Windrush Generation' as they only brought essential items with them to start their new life.

Discuss

- How would you describe the style of this hat?
- Why do you think it would have been a popular accessory for men coming over from the Caribbean to settle in Britain?
- Do you have an outfit or accessory that you wear for specific occasions or in certain places? How does it make you feel when you wear it?
- How can clothing be used to present yourself in a certain way?

Sketch & notes



Golden Harvest fabric, 1960s

This textile was designed by Althea McNish, a designer originally from Trinidad who came to live in Britain in 1951. The textile depicts an abstract image of wheat growing in a field. When McNish encountered a wheat field in the English countryside for the first time it reminded her of sugar cane plantations in Trinidad.

Discuss

- Look closely at the Golden Harvest textile design. How would you describe the style of the design?
- What aspects of the textile design do you feel convey the designer's Caribbean heritage and adopted home in Britain?
- Althea McNish said that the wheat field reminded her of the sugar cane plantations of her native Trinidad. What do you think is the significance of this reference?

Sketch & notes



Solidarity poster, 1971

This poster, which was created by Cuban artist René Portocarrero and published by the Organisation of Solidarity with the people of Africa, Asia and Latin America (OSPAAAL) in Cuba, 1971. It shows a head in profile with birds and garlands adorning the hair and neck. This piece not only represents solidarity towards the people of Cuba but also acknowledges the shared experience of people of colour across the Globe.

Discuss

- Look closely at the poster. Can you spot a symbol that represents peace?
- What design features has the artist used to make this a striking and eye-catching image?
- Why do you think the designer has chosen to include the word solidarity in different languages across the bottom of the poster?

Sketch & notes



A young girl speaking on her parents' telephone in South London, 1973

Photographer Neil Kenlock moved to London from Jamaica in 1963 and became determined to document black pride in the face of racial prejudice.

Many families had photographs like this taken to send to their relatives in the Caribbean to show that they had settled well in Britain. The photographs allowed families to show their relatives the variety of things they owned and the modern homes they lived in.

Discuss

- Look closely at the image. What objects can you see in the scene?
- What message do you think the photographer is trying to convey through this image?
- Why do you think families who had moved from the Caribbean to Britain would want to send photographs like this one to their relatives?



Sketch & notes

Fashion Shoot, Brixton Market, 1973

In a series of fashion photographs for *19* magazine, photographer Armet Francis showcased black British style against the backdrop of Brixton market.

Brixton was one of the areas in London which had developed a large Black British community following migration, mainly from the Caribbean, in the post-war period. Francis' photographs depict the glamour of 1970s fashion in the context of multicultural communities.

Discuss

- Look at the striking composition of this photograph. What different aspects of the image make it so dynamic?
- The model, who is wearing a 1970s outfit with flared trousers, is also holding a black umbrella. Why do you think the stylist and photographer wanted to create this juxtaposition? What message does it convey to the viewer?
- Fashion shoots are often associated with glamour and luxury. In this example, what effect do you think the photographer is trying to create by photographing the model against the backdrop of a market?



Sketch & notes

Akuaba chair, 1985

This chair bridges cultural traditions. The face-like shape of this chair's backrest is inspired by the Ghanaian fertility doll Akuaba, while the seat and legs reference early 20th century European design.

Jamaican-born Huren Marsh designed the chair while studying furniture and product design at Kingston Polytechnic, in South West London. Influenced by African artefacts he saw in the Museum of Mankind in London (later merged with the British Museum), Marsh wanted to create furniture that went beyond the contemporary European style he was being taught at university.

Discuss

- Look closely at the design. Can you identify which features might link to African heritage and which to European heritage?
- The designer was inspired by African objects he saw on display in museums. Why do you think it is important for the designer to represent his African heritage within his designs?
- What is the significance of the designer being inspired by African objects that he saw on display in museums in Britain? Consider how African objects may end up in museums in Britain. What does this tell us about our colonial history?



Sketch & notes

Jab Jab, 1988

In this screenprint poet and painter, John Lyons, evokes the heat and colour of Trinidadian carnival as three masqueraders energetically perform.

The Jab Jab is usually a devil-like character often carrying a whip that features in Mas or Carnival in many Caribbean communities (notably Grenadian and Trinidadian).

Mas (short for masquerade) or Carnival is believed to originate from Trinidad and Tobago in the 18th century. Carnival typically involves public celebrations, including events such as parades, public street parties and other entertainment. It is traditionally celebrated before the start of Lent.

Discuss

- The artist who created this screenprint is also a poet. Look at the image carefully and now write down a series of descriptive words that capture the essence and feeling of the scene.
- How has the artist used colour and line to create a sense of energy and movement?
- Imagine how you might make the costumes in the image in 3D. What types of material could you use and how would you embellish them to create an eye-catching design?



Note for teachers: This object contains difficult subject matter including racial discrimination, intimidation and violence. Please ensure that you read the content fully in advance of sharing with students. If there are any African Caribbean students in your group, we would recommend letting them know in advance that some of the discussion may focus on racial discrimination and allow them to decide whether they would like to participate. Students should not feel pressurised to contribute if it makes them uncomfortable. Acknowledging the lived experiences of African Caribbean people is vital.'

Sketch & notes

Spirit of the Carnival, 1988

Mas (short for masquerade) or Carnival is celebrated today in many countries around the world. The Notting Hill Carnival, which takes place annually in London, was founded by Trinidad and Tobago-born journalist and activist, Claudia Jones, as a community response to the Notting Hill race riots in 1959.

The Notting Hill race riots occurred due to increasing numbers of racially motivated attacks against Black people living in that area. For example, racial abuse, intimidation, attacks on Black residents and police discrimination, all leading to further racial tension.

This artwork *Spirit of the Carnival* offers a political commentary on the ever-increasing police presence at the Notting Hill Carnival. In the scene a wall of police with riot shields forms a circle around the carnival performer, through which a snarling dog has broken through.

Discuss

- Look carefully at the artwork. How does it make you feel and why?
- Think about the title of this artwork, *Spirit of the Carnival*. Why do you think the artist has chosen this as the title?
- How has the artist used colour and composition to emphasise the message of the work?



Sketch & notes

Souvenir 4 (Princess Alexandra), 2019

This artwork is part of a series called *Souvenirs*. The series highlights the story of empire. The materials and symbols used by artist, Hew Locke comment on a variety of topics including the British monarchy, imperialism, African Caribbean costume, and dress.

The artist has combined a bust of Princess Alexandra with a variety of mixed media including clay skulls and a metal mask, textile lace, beads, and replica military badges and medals.

Princess Alexandra of Denmark (1844 – 1925) married Albert Edward, heir to the British throne in 1863. She became Queen consort when Albert ascended to the throne in 1901 as Edward VII, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the British dominions beyond the seas, and Emperor of India.

Discuss

- Is there anything unusual or striking about this artwork and why?
- Why do you think the artist has chosen to adorn the bust of Princess Alexandra in this way?
- Consider this quote by the artist about the *Souvenirs* series. How does this statement enhance your understanding of the work?

'They [the busts] are weighed down by the literal burden of history and this goes back to my idea of how a nation creates itself, what stories it sells to itself and how this relates to ideas of Britain and its history that are weighing down the minds of people today...' (from the artist's website)

Sketch & notes



Black history Tube map, 2021

A printed poster of a London Tube map, reinterpreted to include names of Black historic individuals and organisations from all over the UK, and across time periods and social classes.

Rather than necessarily having figures relate to their particular tube station, the lines are renamed to link them by common themes: Firsts and Trailblazers; Georgians; Sports; Arts; LGBTQ+; Physicians; Performers; Literary World and Community Organisers.

Co-creator and Managing Director of Black Cultural Archives, Arike Oke, said: *"London's Black history is deeply embedded in its streets and neighbourhoods. We hope that the map will be an invitation to find out more and to explore."*

Discuss

- Why do you think the creators of this poster chose to use the map of the London Underground in this way?
- One of the designers featured in this resource, Althea McNish, is mentioned on this map. Which Underground line is she on? (Please refer to the larger image of the Tube map on the Object Discussion Card.)
- Although maps are practical objects which help us get from A to B, they also are inextricably linked to the history and politics of a place. With this in mind, how does it make you view the map differently?