

ASHLEY JUDE JONAS

Not Knowing

Educator Handout Grades K-6

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Not Knowing features recent work by artist, educator, and independent curator [Ashley Jude Jonas](#). Comprised of installation, assemblage, photographs, drawings, and found objects, this exhibition is the most comprehensive for the artist to date. Jonas's multidisciplinary practice is informed by close looking and domestic spaces, particularly her own experiences in her unconventional childhood home in Key West, Florida. In the months following the coronavirus (COVID-19) stay-at-home orders, Jonas began to re-examine the finite nature of beauty in her surroundings. In her work, Jonas embraces the uncertainties of life by observing and documenting intimate moments that might otherwise be overlooked.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Ashley Jude Jonas's work has been exhibited at Riffe Gallery, Columbus, Ohio; Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana; Undercurrent, Brooklyn; The Clay Studio, Philadelphia; and The Neon Heater, Findlay, Ohio; among others. From 2014 to 2020, Jonas co-directed and curated at [The Blue House](#), an alternative artist-run space operated within her home. The artist has an M.F.A. from University of Colorado at Boulder and a B.F.A. from University of Florida. She lives in Dayton, Ohio, where she teaches at the University of Dayton.

subjective frame

- Choose an artwork from [Not Knowing](#) to focus on. What materials do you see in this work? Do you have any memories attached to these materials?
- How does Jonas's work make you feel? What about the work makes you feel this way?

cultural frame

- What do you know about the time and place in which these works were created based on what you see? How do the titles provide additional context?
- Do any of the objects in Jonas's work remind you of your home? Why or why not?
- What does Jonas's artwork tell you about her as a person? Which artwork in the exhibition do you think tells you the most about the artist and why?
- What themes do you find across Jonas's work? What do you see in the works that makes you say that?

structural frame

- How many different mediums and techniques can you find in Jonas's work? What are some common materials and processes used?
- How has Jonas arranged formal qualities within her works to communicate ideas and feelings?



Ashley Jude Jonas, *Yard Play V*, 2020. Photo Tex. Courtesy of the artist.

VOCABULARY

BLUEPRINT

a drawing of a design for a building

CONTEMPORARY

something that belongs to the present or current time

CONTEXT

the situation in which something happens

EXHIBITION

an art showcase

FORMAL QUALITIES

refers to elements and principles of design such as line, shape, color, balance, movement, contrast, and unity

INSTALLATION

often large-scale mixed-media works created to fit a specific space

MEDIUM

art-making material

MIXED-MEDIA

art created with a variety of materials

SUBJECT MATTER

what is being depicted in an image or artwork

SUBJECTIVE

something that is open to interpretation; up to the viewer to decide

THEME

recurring ideas, materials, or subject matter

ZINE

a small, generally homemade magazine

EVENTS

- Virtual exhibition tours are available for classes, community groups, and individuals by appointment. Contact gallery@IllinoisState.edu or (309) 438-5487 to schedule.
- [*appreciate your patience*](#), a free zine produced by the artist, will be available for the duration of the exhibition.
- A free online artist lecture will be held March 26 at 5 pm CST. Registration available via University Galleries' Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts.
- Educator resources, activities for children and youth, and art lesson videos will be available on the exhibition web page.
- An exhibition video tour will be available in April via University Galleries' [Vimeo](#).
- April 17 at 1:00 p.m. Art Around You with CDM Participants (ages 7-10) can register for this free program at childrensdiscoverymuseum.net.

You can find [University Galleries](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#), and sign up to receive email updates through the [newsletter](#). Please contact gallery@IllinoisState.edu or call (309) 438-5487 if you need to arrange an accommodation to participate in any events related to this exhibition.



ART-MAKING ACTIVITIES

- To Jonas, clay is a tool for recording touch. Engage students in exploratory play by touching and interacting with clay in a variety of ways. Try dropping, squeezing, and pressing the clay to see how forces affect the shape and texture. Have students conduct a short research project documenting the impact of different physical forces on the clay. Consider providing a worksheet for students to write about their findings. Afterwards, discuss as a class how different forces impacted the clay and how these investigative artworks could be prepared for presentation.
- [*Watching. Walking. Falling Apart*](#) is a 30-foot-long installation comprised of small mirrors and Polaroid photos that Jonas took while standing at her kitchen window. These images were taken over a series of repeat visits to the location and address how easily we can overlook subtle changes when we fail to be present. As a class, share everyday activities that can be easily overlooked, such as tying your shoes or brushing your teeth. Then engage students in photographing an activity that they do every day in school. Afterwards, ask students to share about what they documented, why they chose this activity, and if they noticed anything while documenting the activity that they usually overlook.
- Jonas thinks of her work as drawings made with objects. Lead students in analysis of [*Yard Play V*](#) and [*Yard Play IV*](#) and look for ways Jonas has manipulated and arranged objects in these works. Ask students if they would consider these photographs to be drawings, and why or why not. As a class discuss what makes something a drawing. Then, engage students in working collaboratively with classmates to create photo drawings using objects around them. For example, try holding a piece of paper behind the branches of a tree or under a pile of rubber bands and take a photograph. Encourage students to pay close attention to the placement of objects in their photographs. Then compare and contrast this experience with drawing the objects by hand.
- Introduce students to [Ashley Jude Jonas's](#) work and then look closely at artworks in [*Growth Systems*](#), a series of mixed-media collages combining various drawing materials, photography, and architectural blueprints. Ask students to describe the colors Jonas used, what these colors remind them of, and what references they see to nature as well as human-made environments in these works. Based on what they see, what do they think these artworks are about? Then invite students to consider what their neighborhood looks like. What flowers and plants grow there? What human-made objects and structures are in their neighborhood? Who lives in their neighborhood? Engage students in creating a mixed-media artwork that reflects where they live. Encourage students to incorporate references to nature as well as human-made environments in their work.