

# DENISE TREIZMAN

## *In Between Living*

Educator Handout: Grades 7-12

### ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Through a practice of searching, gleaning, and repurposing, Miami-based Chilean-Israeli artist [Denise Treizman](#) critically examines hyper-consumerism while also carefully participating in it and relying on commercial goods. Having lived in many densely populated cities over the years—London, San Francisco, New York City, Haifa, and now Miami—Treizman’s practice has benefited from throwaway culture. She states, “Working both on the street and in the studio, I examine how worthless fragments can be transformed into unexpected art experiences.” The exhibition title, *In Between Living*, relates to Treizman’s history of salvaging discarded materials from the street—a repeated practice as she moved from one place to the next. The production and waste of excess goods, “invented necessities” as she likes to call them, has been at the foundation of her work since 2010, when she spent her first summer in New York City. Although she questions who needs vibrantly patterned single-use materials, like pink flamingo-printed duct tape or violet bubble wrap, she finds these playful materials irresistible. By incorporating them into her found-object installations and unconventional weavings, she prompts viewers to reflect on the mass-produced society in which we live.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Denise Treizman’s work has been exhibited at PROTO GOMEZ Gallery, New York, New York; Wave Hill, Bronx, New York; Hybrid Art Festival, Madrid, Spain; Penn State University, Pennsylvania; Latino Arts, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Woman Made Gallery, Chicago, Illinois; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, New York; and Cuchifritos Gallery/Artist’s Alliance, New York, New York, among others. Treizman has completed residences at Mass MOCA, North Adams, Massachusetts, and NARS Foundation International Artists Residency, Brooklyn, New York, among others. She earned an MFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York, and is currently a studio resident at Laundromat Art Space in Miami, Florida.

### VOCABULARY

- **Context:** the situation in which something occurs
- **Fibers:** artwork made with natural or synthetic fibers such as fabric, yarn, or thread, and techniques such as weaving, felting, sewing, or knitting
- **Found object:** a natural or man-made object, or fragment of an object, that is found (or sometimes bought) and used by an artist because it interests them<sup>1</sup>
- **Installation:** often large-scale mixed-media works created in response to and within a specific space
- **Interdisciplinary art:** artwork created using techniques and processes from multiple disciplines, as seen in Treizman’s combination of fibers, sculpture, and installation
- **Mediums:** resources used to create artwork—such as spray paint, duct tape, LED lights, glitter, yarn, or fabric
- **Salvage:** to make use of a previously discarded item

<sup>1</sup> Tate. (n.d). *Found Object*. <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/f/found-object>



Denise Treizman, *Untitled (Blue Altar)*, 2022. Handwoven textile, hula hoop, vinyl, spray paint, glitter, fitness ball, and LED light. Courtesy of the artist

# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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## CONNECT: Cn11

After moving to New York and witnessing the common abandonment of unwanted belongings on sidewalks and street corners, Treizman was influenced to incorporate **salvaged** items in her work. In an interview with [Sidney Mullis](#), Treizman shares that she tends to avoid collecting materials that evidence a past narrative or a direct connection with a specific person. She is most interested in generic materials—how they were produced, acquired, engaged with, and eventually discarded, as well as the interactions she experiences while journeying with them to her studio.

## RESPOND: Re7

As a class, analyze the [exhibition](#) using the following prompts.

- List and describe the materials you see in Treizman's work.
- Where and how do you think Treizman might have acquired these materials? What evidence can you find to support your conjectures?
- What does Treizman's work suggest about people's relationships with these materials?

## CREATE: Cr1.1

Invite students to find an object of interest and individually or collaboratively document their journey from the point of encounter back to the classroom.

- Suggest a variety of recording methods such as voice memos, mapping, or photo journaling.

## PRESENT: Pr5

Collaboratively plan an exhibition of students' **found objects** and documented journeys.

- Discuss what materials and technologies will be needed for the presentation of each project.
- Brainstorm a variety of solutions for displaying artworks based on the properties of students' work.

Help students prepare supplementary materials such as written or recorded artist statements to accompany their work.

2

## CONNECT: Cn11

To create her dynamic **installations** and [hand-woven tapestries](#), Treizman incorporates purchased commodities with **found objects** and **salvaged** items. Some examples include glitter, duct tape, pool noodles, hula hoops, sneakers, and LED lights. By combining these materials, Treizman's work incites viewers to consider: what makes something valuable? Engage students in a discussion about ways they measure value.

- Consider how value can be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. Examine how supply and demand, labor input, resources, sentimental connections, and historical context can impact an item's perceived worth.
- Reference contemporary art examples that question notions of value such as Maurizio Cattelan's [Comedian](#), a banana taped to the wall, and Banksy's [Love is in the Bin](#), a shredded painting.

## RESPOND: Re9

In small groups, select and analyze an artwork in the [exhibition](#) using the following prompts.

- List the items, materials, and **mediums** you see in the artwork.
- Discuss how you perceive the value of these items and materials. How does the **context** impact your perception? For example, how do you discern the value of a pool noodle? Does it change when it is part of an artwork?
- What themes do you notice?

Encourage students from each group to share about their analyses. How were their criteria for evaluating items similar to or different from their classmates?

- Educator resources are available on the exhibition [webpage](#).

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