

KITTY DAVIES

Educator Handout for Grades 9-12

2024 Marshall Dulaney Pitcher Award Winner

The Wonsook Kim School of Art is pleased to present the 2024 Marshall Dulaney Pitcher Award to MFA student Kitty Davies. This award honors outstanding students in the visual arts who demonstrate exceptional artistic talent, dedicated studio practice, and academic excellence.

About the Artist

Kitty F. Davies (they/them) is an artist from California, currently pursuing their MFA at Illinois State University. Having obtained a BA in Film at California State University, Los Angeles, their work and writing are informed by rigorous media analysis. Through drawing, performance, and conceptual work, Davies examines the operation of power in relationships, how queer and other marginalized bodies are represented, and climate change. They are interested in the spaces where order and the unallowable (or taboo) are negotiated. Davies considers it their responsibility to create work that inspires (perhaps even requires) these negotiations.



Kitty Davies, installation view of *Portal Drawings*, 2024. Spit and powdered graphite on Bristol. Photo credit: Jade (Minh Hà) Nguyễn.

The following activities are aligned with National Visual Arts Standards

RESPONDING - Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

1. Introduce students to Davies' [Portal Drawings](#). Share that Davies created these works by spitting from the top of a tall scaffold onto the surface of paper coated in powdered graphite. This performance is titled [Telling the Future Through a Portal](#). During the performance, Davies was thinking of their spit as a conduit for solastalgia (climate change grief).
2. Engage students in discussion about Davies' work using the following prompts:
 - Would you consider [Portal Drawings](#) to be drawings? Why or why not?
 - What makes a drawing a drawing? What rules apply? (Record students' responses on the board).
 - Can a drawing be something other than what these rules suggest?

CONNECTING - Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Share the following with students:

Davies' work is influenced, in part, by [performance drawings](#) by Andy Goldsworthy ([Rain Shadows](#)) and Ana Mendieta ([Siluetas](#)). [Performance drawing](#) is a drawing method that records actions made by an artist. This method often expands beyond the boundaries of traditional drawing techniques.

CREATING - Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

1. In their work, Davies' explores/defies imposed drawing rules through unconventional mark-making. Inspired by this, engage students in brainstorming ideas for a series of performance drawings that "break" their list of drawing rules.
 - Reference examples from Davies', Goldsworthy's, and Mendieta's work to get students started.
 - Record students' ideas on the board or in another location that they can access.
2. Guide students in creating their own [performance drawings](#) based on a [theme](#) or [concept](#) of their choice.
 - Encourage students to use a combination of traditional and non-traditional drawing [mediums](#) and methods.
 - Prompt students to consider how they will document their performance drawing. Examples could include photography, time-lapse video, written description, or audio recording.

VOCABULARY

- **Concept:** idea(s) behind an artwork.
- **Medium:** refers to the type of art (such as drawing, performance, or video), as well as the materials an artwork is made from (such as graphite, Bristol, or a digital file).¹
- **Performance drawing:** a drawing method that records actions made by an artist. This method often expands beyond the boundaries of [traditional drawing techniques](#).
- **Theme:** recurring ideas, materials, or subject matter.
- **Traditional drawing techniques:** includes a variety of [mediums](#) and methods such as pencil sketching, charcoal rendering, and pen-and-ink perspective drawing, and is generally based on observation.

¹Tate (n.d.). *Art Term: Medium*. <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/m/medium>.