

Discussion Questions

Before Viewing:

Students will watch a segment about Tlingit and Unangax̂ multidisciplinary artist Nicholas Galanin, who discuss his inspiration and processes for creating works of art that bring to light conversations about native objects, traditions and culture.

As they watch the video, have students consider the following:

- What inspired the artist's works of art (how the artist came up with his ideas for his artwork)?
- What kinds of cultural meanings and symbolism does the artist include in his artwork?

After Viewing:

1. Who is Nicholas Galanin and what does he do? Describe some of his artworks featured in the video.
2. Where and when have you seen artworks like those he creates?
3. Have you made artworks similar to Galanin's artworks? If so, how did that come about? What prompted you to make artworks such as these?
4. What personal connections did you make with Galanin's artworks? Describe one artwork that resonates with you. What makes it special to you?
5. The artist says that all of his artworks deal with cultural language. What do you think he means by this? Can a visual artwork be part of a cultural language? How?
6. In what ways is Nicholas Galanin a storyteller?

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7. In what ways is the artist continuing the traditions of his Tlingit culture? Why do you think he does?

8. In what ways does he break with tradition? Why do you think he breaks with tradition? What message do you think he wants to send to those who encounter his artworks?

9. The artist mentions the slogan, "Kill the Indian, Save the Man." What could this slogan possibly mean? You may wish to find out more about this slogan and its origins in United States history.

10. Galanin talks about being considered only authentic if he visually fits the image, as well as the process, materials, and tools. What does he mean by this? How are Galanin's process, tools, and materials authentic to native Alaskans?

11. How does Galanin collaborate in creating some of his artworks?

12. According to Galanin the foundation of his work is about understanding tools, how to make tools and how to maintain tools. How/why are tools so important in his artistic process?

13. Do you think Galanin was successful in his intentions to make you "see" and "feel" what he "sees" and "feels" about his artwork? In other words, do you want others to get what you're saying with your art?

14. Do you believe Galanin's artworks will make the world more aware of native culture and traditions, objects and people? Please explain why/why not.

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15. What do Galanin's artworks mean to native Alaskan people? What do they mean to non-native Alaskan people?

16. How do Galanin's artworks reflect Storytelling? How do his artworks contribute to Storytelling?

17. If you could ask Nicholas Galanin a question, what would you ask him?