

THE NATURE OF ARP

AN ARTIST EXPLORES GROWTH, CHANCE AND HUMOR

Artist Jean (Hans) Arp was born in 1886 in Strasbourg, a city that has historically been claimed by both Germany and France. Arp's given name was Hans, but he later began using the french version of his name, "Jean," as Hitler rose to power in Germany. Arp was a pioneer in making abstract artwork. He was a founder of the Dada movement and explored Surrealism and other art movements of the early 20th century.

Living in Europe during the turbulent years leading up to World War II, Arp became frustrated with what he described as "the ugliness of man." He worked against this by creating art that related to nature. Rather than creating realistic artworks that mimicked the natural world, Arp was inspired by natural processes. He stated "we do not want to copy nature. we do not want to reproduce, we want to produce. we want to produce like a plant that produces a fruit and not to reproduce. we want to produce directly and not through representation." Some of the ways Arp achieved this was through sculptures with repeating forms, like the buds on a tree, or collages arranged by chance, like the pattern of leaves falling on the ground.

Throughout his career, Arp used chance, humor, spontaneity, and collaboration in his artistic process. He sometimes invented abstract shapes and gave them descriptive names like *Mustache Hat*, or reimagined a hollow round form as a navel or a monocle through which to see the world. Arp wrote poetry with uncapitalized words, created collaborative drawings with his wife and friends, made prints, painted, and even embroidered artworks. Arp's radical ideas and his experimental approach to art continues to influence and inspire artists even today.



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TOP LEFT: Jean (Hans) Arp with *Navel-Monocle*, c. 1926. TOP RIGHT: *Mustache Hat*, from *Merz 5: 7 Arpaden* by Hans Arp. *Second Portfolio of the Merz Publisher. Made for the fifth issue of Kurt Schwitters's journal Merz*, 1923. Lithographs, Each sheet approx. 17 11/16 x 13 3/4 in. (45 x 35 cm). Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of the Estate of Katherine S. Dreier. BOTTOM LEFT: *Jean (Hans) Arp, First Papier déchiré*, 1932. Torn-paper collage, 11 3/4 x 9 3/4 in. (30 x 23.8 cm). Fondazione Marguerite Arp, Locarno. BOTTOM RIGHT: *Jean (Hans) Arp, Awakening*, 1938. Plaster, painted green, 18 5/8 x 9 1/2 x 9 in. (47.4 x 24 x 23 cm). Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau. Gift of Marguerite Arp-Hagenbach. Artworks © 2018 Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn

INSPIRED BY ARP

Chance Collage

Arp was interested in nature, stating "I love nature but not its substitutes." He wanted to create art inspired by the sometimes unpredictable way nature works without directly imitating nature. He wanted his process to mimic: "the way a stone breaks off from a mountain, a flower blossoms..."

Cut or rip pieces of paper and drop them onto a blank page. Glue the shapes you dropped on the paper. If you don't love the placement, feel free to adjust. Arp reserved the right to adjust the paper for the best composition.

Make a Monocle

Arp was photographed wearing a "monocle" of his own creation. His playful spirit can encourage us to think about how we express our personalities when we take a photo.

Using cardboard, create your own monocle. Trace a large circle and a smaller circle in the middle of the cardboard. Then cut out the shapes. Take a photo of yourself or with a friend wearing your monocles. How does it make you look?

Poetry

i was born in nature. i was born in strasbourg. i was born in a cloud. i was born in a pump. i was born in a robe.

i have four natures. i have two things. i have five senses. sense and non-sense. nature is senseless. make way for nature. nature is a white eagle. make dada-way for dada-nature.

—Jean Arp, Excerpt from "Strasbourg Configuration" 1

This poem is an example of how Arp plays with language and his dual identities. Arp spoke two languages and spent time in France, Germany and Switzerland. Use your imagination to think about where you were born.

Create your own poem:

i was born _____
i was born _____
i was born _____
i was born _____
i was born _____



Arp Playlist

Listen to these Arp-inspired songs while you work.

"Take a Chance on Me"
— ABBA

"Just My Imagination"
— The Temptations

"Play the Game"
— Queen

"Changes"
— David Bowie

"All Shook Up"
— Elvis Presley

"Go Your Own Way"
— Fleetwood Mac

"Around the World"
— Daft Punk





MODERN LOVE

The Nashers and Torso with Buds

Have you ever felt “butterflies” in your stomach when you were excited about something? For art collectors Raymond and Patsy Nasher, this feeling was an important part of deciding what sculptures to add to their collection. Artist Jean (Hans) Arp’s *Torso with Buds* gave Patsy “butterflies” when she saw it in 1967 and decided to surprise her husband Raymond with it for his birthday. *Torso with Buds* became the first modern sculpture (sculpture made in the 20th century) to enter the Nasher Collection, and kicked off a decades-long love affair for the Nashers with modern and contemporary art.

For years, *Torso with Buds* occupied a place of honor in the Nasher home, framed by a window right next to the front door. The sculpture welcomed visitors and held a symbolic spot as the first thing they would see as they entered. Today, the sculpture has a permanent home at the Nasher Sculpture Center.

When Arp made *Torso with Buds* in 1961, he combined fluid, organic forms into a sculpture that resembles both a growing plant and a standing human body. For the Nashers, the sculpture was a symbol of both their love of art and their love for each other. When you view *Torso with Buds*, you can think about what it meant to its creator and its owners, then add your own interpretation and reaction.

NASHER 15th ANNIVERSARY
Celebrate 15 years of the Nasher Sculpture Center with us!
Saturday, October 20 / FREE Admission



Living room of Nasher residence, 2002, with Jean Arp’s *Torso with Buds* at the entrance. Photo: Tom Jenkins.



Raymond and Patsy Nasher (left) in 1967. As part of their collecting process, the Nashers often met with artists. In this photo, they are visiting the studio of artist Henry Moore (right).

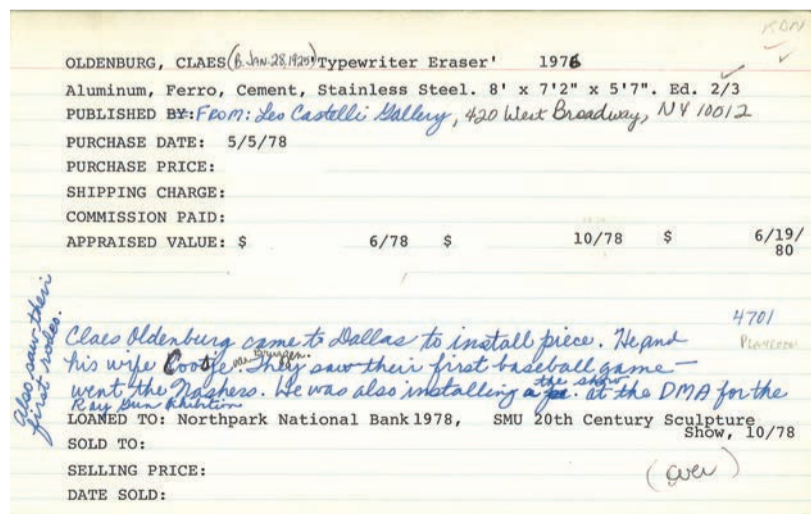
LEFT: Jean (Hans) Arp, *Torso with Buds*, 1961. Bronze, 73 7/8 x 15 1/2 x 15 in. (187.6 x 39.4 x 38.1 cm). © 2018 Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

Collecting Then and Now

If you have ever had a collection, you know what fun it can be to look for new items to add to it and to think about how to arrange and display the things you have. A museum collection is a lot like your collection at home, just on a larger scale. Curators will acquire new works of art for a museum based on how those artworks might fit in with or expand the museum’s collection. Raymond and Patsy Nasher were the first curators of the Nasher Collection. Patsy researched artists and galleries to find artworks that she and Raymond would love, and Raymond considered what artists would add to the story of modern sculpture they were telling with their collection.

Now, curators at the Nasher Sculpture Center add new artworks to the collection each year. Some new acquisitions are contemporary (21st-century) sculptures, while others have focused on the work of women and artists of color to help create a more complete picture of how artists are approaching the medium of sculpture.

A good collection can become a great collection with a little thought and planning. If you start out with a simple collection of things you like (rocks, coins, books, stuffed animals), you can make it more meaningful by keeping notes about what makes each object special and by thinking about how you could display them to show off their size, color or other unique features.



LEFT: Patsy Nasher’s notes on the sculpture *Typewriter Eraser* by artist **Claes Oldenburg**. Patsy kept track of the physical dimensions and condition of the sculpture and also recorded the story of the artist and his wife coming to Dallas, where the Nashers took them to their first baseball game and rodeo. RIGHT: A recent addition to the Nasher Collection made possible by a special fund for women artists. **Ana Mendieta, Untitled, 1985**. Wood and gunpowder, 80 x 11 x 2 inches (204.5 x 28.6 x 3.8 cm). Nasher Sculpture Center, Acquired through the Kaleta A. Doolin Fund for Women Artists.



So You Want to Be a Game Designer



Jordan Groves, Senior Level Designer at The Coalition (Microsoft Game Studios), interviewed by James Harris, Senior, Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts



JAMES HARRIS: So in reading a little about you on your website, you loved the side of performing arts. What about games drew your attention?

JORDAN GROVES: Honestly, games have always drawn my interest, but I didn't know whether or not I would have the skills necessary to pursue it as a career. While I was in college, I managed to get an internship with a studio in Austin that is now defunct as a designer, and I discovered a love of interactivity. There's something interesting about trying to figure out how you want the audience to engage in a story or finding the cause of a bug by deconstructing what actions led to it. It also proved that I could pick up on the technical aspects over time if I worked at it.

At the time, I was studying lighting design for the stage, and I found myself incorporating interaction into my work by relying on fewer distinct cues giving actors more options in a single scene to use light as emphasis of a character moment or add a reason to move through the set. That led me to explore other forms of entertainment design, particularly theme park lighting as it is about creating an experience for people to walk through and interact with in a slight way. Eventually, it led me back to the video game industry, because there's a lot more potential in the stories you can tell and the worlds you can create.

JH: Did you have any skills prior, specifically in drawing and 3D design?

JG: A little bit of the ones you would expect. In college, I had taken drafting and AutoCAD classes, as well as a drawing class or two.

I was pretty good at the former two, but I have never been able to get a handle on drawing. I'd also taken a few computer science courses and had a basic understanding of the Java and Objective C. When I was a kid, I had also taught myself basic scripting by looking at my favorite Star-Craft custom maps and building my own versions.

While going into programming fields definitely requires knowledge of logic and languages, game design itself is a bit more flexible. Some of the most important skills that I learned aren't specifically tied to technical ability or a computer program. Being able to think critically, work in a collaborative environment, creatively solve problems, give and receive criticism, find a core concept to start your work from, and rally others around are all much more important to me than the fact that you've worked thousands of hours in Maya. I think what helped me in beginning was that showing my work—even though I was still using my theatre portfolio—to developers I met at conferences or through friends would get them intrigued enough to give advice or an interview. Through all that, I found where I could focus my efforts based on my interests to help show how my talents translated into a new industry.

JH: What advice do you have for people who might come from no artistic background? Do you believe that it would be impossible for them to enter the game developing world?

JG: I don't have "traditional" artistic skills, so I do believe it's possible. It just depends on what part of development attracts you. Every department has its overlaps as well. There are people in the art department who are programmers, but having knowledge of all the arts' tools, techniques, pipelines, etc. allows them to improve workflows and the quality of the art for the whole game. There are designers that mostly adjust numbers and write documents detailing how a mechanic will work. And, of course, there are also roles in the industry that are about managing the budgets and timeline of development or recruiting people to work at the studio. There are also the roles that a typical office would have.

My advice would be to find the department that calls to you and hone the skills that are necessary for it. Also, find a meetup of developers or go to a conference to start making connections. It's easier to get a foot in the door if you don't apply to the general recruitment email address on a studio's website. Even if it doesn't lead to an interview, you can always learn a bit more about what you can do better.

Learn more about careers in the arts at nashersculpturecenter.org/learn/resources

Ask Anna

**Anna Smith, Curator of Education
answers your questions about museums**



Dear Anna,

I would like to know a little more about what the Education Department does behind the scenes!

--Jovenne Kybett, Teacher, Brandenburg Middle School

Dear Jovenne,

Museum Education is a field that I wasn't even aware of when I was a student, and the work that we do can vary pretty widely day by day. We are responsible for creating opportunities for learners of all ages to connect with exhibitions and artworks in our collection. This includes tours for student and adult groups, interactive workshops for children, teens and adults, lectures and presentations for the general public, and access programs adapted for learners with special needs. For each program, we have to think about practical needs (ordering supplies, reserving and setting up spaces in the museum, publicizing the program to its intended audience) and content (researching artworks and artists and determining the best way to make this information interesting and meaningful for the group). So on a given day, you could be making sculptures with 6-year-olds in the morning, emailing an international artist over lunch and receiving boxes of art supplies in the afternoon. For students who are interested in a career in museum education, I'd recommend studying art history or studio art along with education. If you love art and enjoy working with all sorts of people, this might be the field for you!

Do you have question for Anna? Send an email with the subject line "Ask Anna" to asmith@nashersculpturecenter.org

A Day in the Life: College Edition

**Text and drawings by Logan Larsen,
Studio Art / Art History Major at the University of Texas at Austin**

What does a typical day look like?

8 a.m. : Breakfast (+ coffee)

9 a.m. : Risograph shift

I assist with a student-run Risograph in the Printmaking dept. at UT. A Risograph is like a Xerox copy machine, only instead of printing in black and white it prints in spot colors.



11 a.m. : Advanced Printmaking

2 p.m. : German

3 p.m. : Work at the Blanton Museum

Last year I was a Development Intern and assisted with the events and funding to support Ellsworth Kelly's *Austin*, the artist's only freestanding building, which is at UT.



6 p.m. : Skyspace Shift

As part of the Landmarks Public Art Program, I help monitor the James Turrell Skyspace, an artwork on campus that has a light show every night.



9 p.m. : Dinner + Homework

11 p.m. : Sleep (?)

What didn't you expect about getting an art history degree?

How much Marina Abramović's *The Artist is Present* and Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece* would come up during class.



Both performances seem to be referenced endlessly.

A LIBRARY WITHOUT BOOKS IS NOT A LIBRARY

What has been most impactful?

Campaigning to save our Fine Arts Library at UT. After spending a whole semester making posters and zines we were able to stop the potential destruction of our library. It was the first time I've really experienced the power that print can have and the importance of accessible libraries.

What's your favorite piece in the Nasher Collection?

I can't get over Picasso's *Head of a Woman (Fernande)* and Rodin's *The Age of Bronze*. Those works have been my favorites since the first time I came to the Nasher in middle school.



What didn't you expect about college?

I didn't expect the various ways my sleep schedule would change, how attached to upperclassmen I would become, and how bad I would be at remembering names.

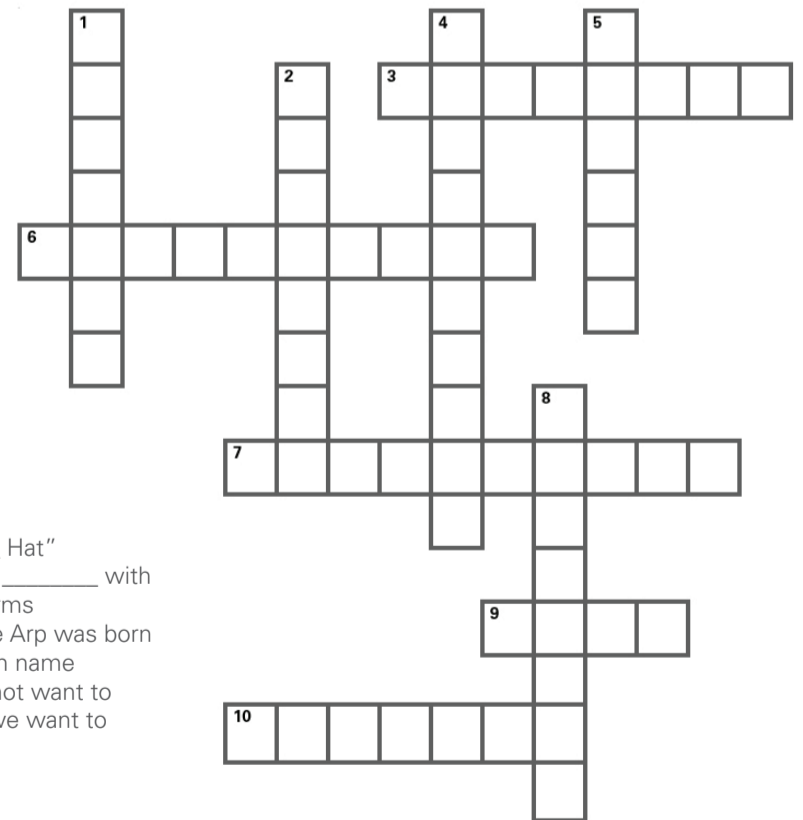
FIVE WAYS To Enhance Your School Visit

- **Visit our website** to determine the best time to bring your school group. Our exhibitions are changing every few months! Then request your guided or self-guided tour three or more weeks in advance, using our online form.
- Check our website's **teaching resources** to find additional information and activities to prepare your students.
- **Arrive on time** to maximize your time in the galleries and garden and to enjoy time for discussion and reflection.
- Download our **Nasher App** to enjoy an interactive experience onsite during self-guided tour times. Available for iOS or as a web app at nashersculpturecenter.org/nasher-app
- Apply for one of our **transportation scholarships** if travel costs might prevent your school's trip. If the distance is too great or time is a factor, consider booking one of our **virtual tours** by contacting Lynda Wilbur at lwilbur@nashersculpturecenter.org



CROSSWORD

Read "The Nature of Arp" on page 1 to solve the clues in this puzzle



ACROSS

- 3. "_____ Hat"
- 6. Arp made _____ with repeating forms
- 7. City where Arp was born
- 9. Arp's given name
- 10. "we do not want to reproduce, we want to _____"

DOWN

- 1. A round shape that Arp also called a "navel."
- 2. Arp was a pioneer in _____ artwork.
- 4. Arp founded Dada and explored _____.
- 5. Arp created art that related to _____.
- 8. Arp made _____ arranged by chance.

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