

Jean Arp

Torso with Buds

Pronounced: zhan arp

Teacher's Introduction

About this Resource

This classroom resource is designed to connect Art 1 level students with primary source texts that offer opportunities for critical thinking and interdisciplinary connections with works in the Nasher collection. We suggest you invite students to first read the text and then discuss what they read in pairs or small groups before completing the interactive component. **The information on this page is provided to offer teachers a broader context to guide student discussion. The following pages may be printed and given directly to students.**



Jean Arp, *Torso with Buds (Nu aux bourgeons)*, 1961
Bronze, 73 7/8 x 15 1/2 x 15 in. (187.6 x 39.4 x 38.1 cm)
Other (Base): 2 1/2 x 16 x 16 in., ~125lb. (6.4 x 40.6 x 40.6 cm, ~56.7kg). Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, Texas

Torso with Buds

Torso with Buds is one of a large series of works by Arp that combines figurative and botanical shapes to produce a strange and surrealistic form that is infused with imagery alluding to the themes of growth, fertility and the natural world. The lively posture of *Torso with Buds* expresses the poetic wonder and joyful celebration of life that are often found in Arp's sculpture.

Torso with Buds was the first major modern sculpture to enter the Nasher collection. As a result, the work held great significance for the Nasher family. In 1967 Patsy surprised her husband Raymond with this sculpture as a gift for his birthday after secretly acquiring it in New York. From then on, the sculpture enjoyed a special place in the entryway of their home, where it greeted visitors and could be appreciated in relation to the natural world glimpsed through the entrance window.

Additional Resources

Arp, Jean. *Jours effeuillés: Poèmes, essais, souvenirs 1920-1965*. Paris: Gallimard, 1966.

Jean Arp Biography <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/jean-arp-hans-arp-667>

Video: Jean Arp's Collages <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fngVJ-v5QA>

Suggested Curriculum Connections (TEKS)

Fine Arts: Historical and Cultural Heritage, Critical Evaluation | §117.302. Art, Level I (c) (3) and (4)

Social Studies: Culture | §113.42. World History Studies, (c) (26)

English: Reading Comprehension of Literary Nonfiction | §110.31. English I (b) (6)

Learn More at the Nasher

You can learn more about *Torso with Buds* and see what's currently on view by visiting the "Art" section of the Nasher website. Discover more resources and lessons in the "Learn" section, or book a guided or self-guided tour in the "Visit" section. www.nashersculpturecenter.org

Jean Arp, *Torso with Buds*

Read

The following statements by Jean Arp reveal his ideas about process, chance and abstraction.

“We do not wish to copy nature. We do not want to reproduce, we want to produce. We want to produce as a plant produces a fruit and does not itself reproduce. We want to produce directly and without meditation. As there is not the least trace of abstraction in this art, we will call it concrete art.”

“I allow myself to be guided by the work which is in the process of being born, I have confidence in it. I do not think about it. The forms arrive pleasant, or strange, hostile, inexplicable, mute, or drowsy. They are born from themselves. It seems to me as if all I do is my hands move.”

“Each one of these bodies (artworks) certainly signifies something, but it is only once there is nothing left for me to change that I begin to look for its meaning, that I give it a name.”

Jean Arp, Jours effeuillés: Poèmes, essais, souvenirs



Jean Arp in his studio

Nasher Sculpture Center

Jean Arp, *Torso with Buds*

Discuss

Does Arp aim to copy the visible world in his artworks? Support your answer.

Based on the reading, how would you describe Jean Arp's creative process? What is important to him in his process of making?

What does *Torso with Buds* spark in your imagination? Does its shape, surface and posture remind you of anything? If you could rename Arp's sculpture, what would its new title be?

Draw

On the next page, you will create an automatic drawing in the style of Jean Arp. It is called "automatic" because the drawn lines and shapes are not preconceived, but are determined through a playful process. The drawings almost make themselves!

Before starting this activity, take a few minutes as a class to review images of Arp's drawings, collages and constructions (*see Further Research: Video Collage*).

Instructions

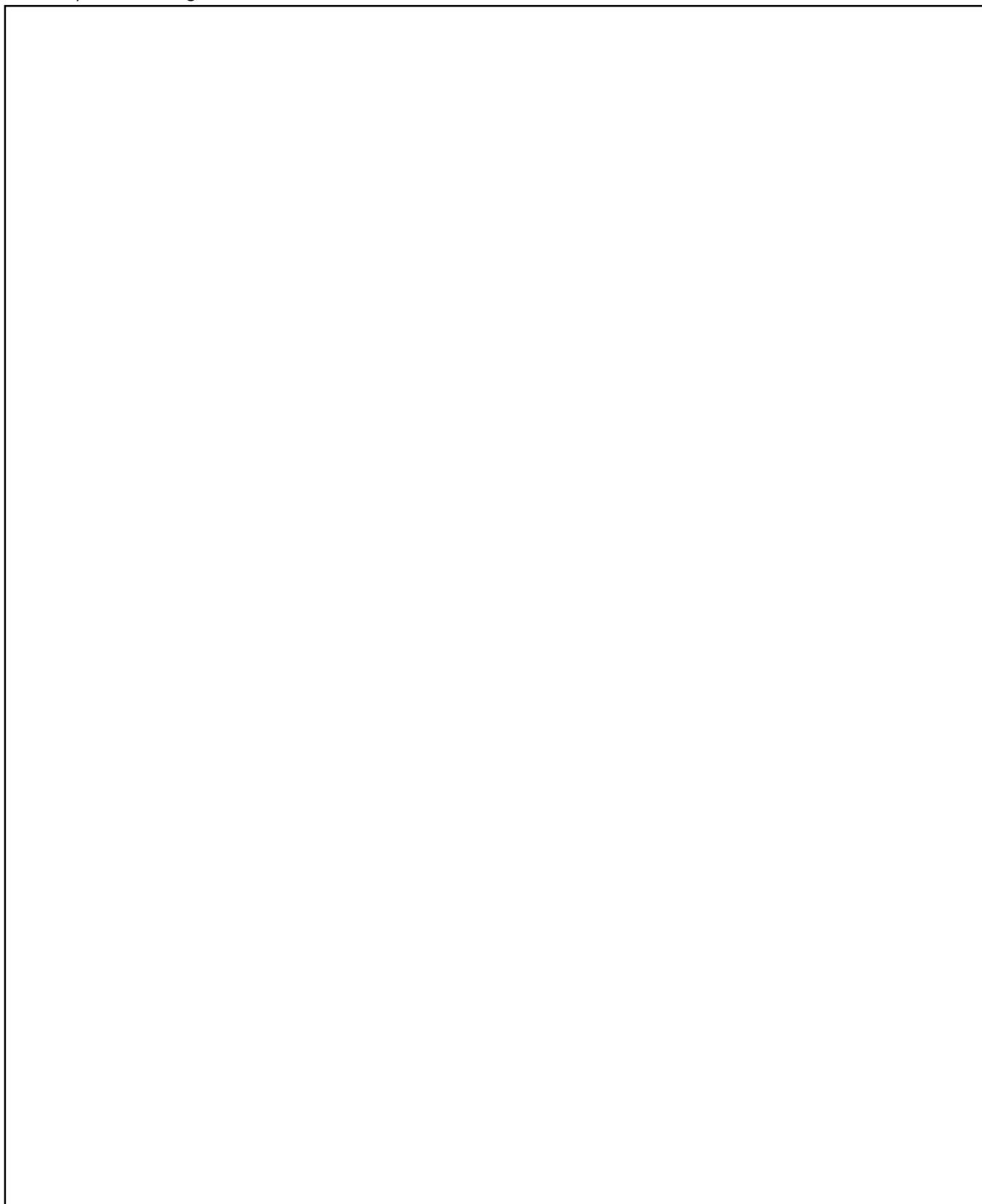
1. Divide into small groups of 4 to 5 students. Each of you will need a pencil and a copy of this resource.
2. Draw a large, curvy shape on your copy of the next page.
3. Pass your paper to the group member on your right. Everyone in the group should now have someone else's paper.
4. On the paper now in front of you, add a curving line or shape to the drawing that connects to the central shape.
5. Pass the paper to your right and repeat step 4.
6. Continue to pass and draw until each person has his or her original paper back.
7. Complete your own drawing by adding a variety of tones or colors to the existing shapes.
How does the finished product differ from a drawing you would have made all on your own?



Jean Arp, *Torso with Buds*
(*Nu aux bourgeons*), 1961
Bronze, 73 7/8 x 15 1/2 x
15 in.

Jean Arp, *Torso with Buds*

Create your drawing here.



Name: _____

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