

Teacher Resource Guide

Missouri Remembers: Artists in Missouri through 1951



ABOUT THE MISSOURI REMEMBERS PROJECT

Missouri Remembers (missouriartists.org) is a freely available online research portal that documents the careers of visual artists who were active in Missouri through the year 1951. Educators, students, and researchers can use this resource to learn about the artists, exhibitions, and institutions that have defined the state's artistic culture. A collaborative project created by The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, The Kansas City Art Institute, and the St. Louis Public Library, *Missouri Remembers* draws from artist files and archival materials held at these participating institutions, along with other publicly available sources. The *Missouri Remembers* website launched with entries for over 100 artists and will continue to expand through ongoing research.



WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN MISSOURI REMEMBERS

For each artist included in the web portal, basic biographical information is provided, including:

- Birth and death dates
- Gender
- Race
- Where in Missouri they were active
- Type of art they produced (e.g. painting, sculpture, etc.)
- Institutional or educational affiliations (e.g. schools they attended, organizations they joined)

The portal also documents connections and relationships among Missouri artists. When available, images showing examples of an artist's work and their portrait are included in each entry to make these artists more accessible to a general audience. Entries also include bibliographic information to support further research.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The potential classroom uses of the *Missouri Remembers* portal are many and varied. This guide is intended to spark educators' interest in the project and offer a starting point for using the portal with students. Inside you will find discussion questions, prompts for further research, and activities that can guide students in using the portal effectively. You'll also see suggestions for how the artists featured in *Missouri Remembers* can be integrated into the study of larger historical or cultural topics.

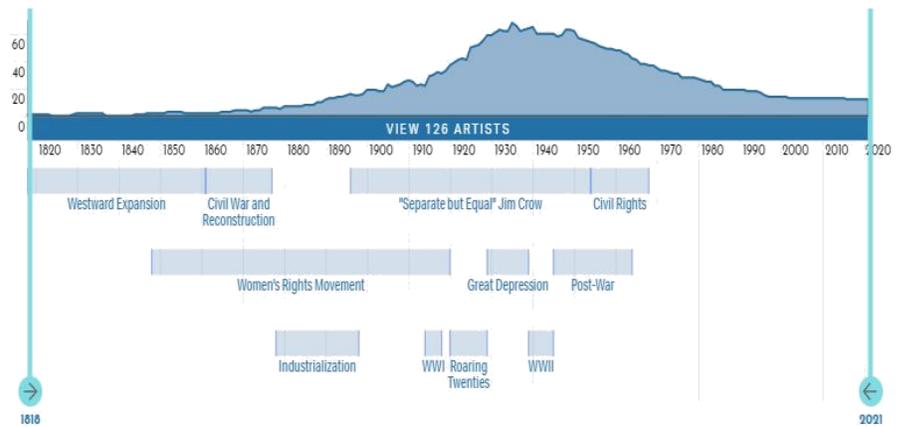
The information included in *Missouri Remembers* is best suited to middle and high school grades, with particular relevance for art and social studies classes. We invite you to adapt the suggested activities to suit your teaching goals and your students' needs and interests. Through the material presented here, educators can pursue the following objectives:

- Students will learn how to use a web-based research tool.
- Students will become familiar with a variety of Missouri artists.
- Students will examine connections between artists and their historical contexts.

MISSOURI ARTISTS IN CONTEXT

Activity: Explore an Era in History

The *Missouri Remembers* portal gives users the option to narrow their artist search to specific historical eras defined by major events in the U.S. and Missouri. For example, students can view Missouri artists who were active during the Civil War and Reconstruction or during the presidency of Harry Truman.



Have students select an era to explore, and then view the relevant entries and discuss the following questions:

- What subjects are shown in works from that time?
- What types of people are represented among the artists of the time period?
- In what kinds of institutions were artists working during that time period?
- Do you see references to historical events in the art of that time?
- What can art tell us about the time and place in which it was made? What other sources could help us deepen our understanding of a historical era?

As an extension to this activity, students could use a web tool that is not state-specific to broaden their analysis of art from a particular era. Students can use the online collections of the Nelson-Atkins (art.nelson-atkins.org/advancedsearch) to search for American artists who were active during the same time period. Revisiting the questions listed above, what similarities and differences can they find between Missouri artists and their peers from around the country?

MAKING CONNECTIONS: ART + HISTORY

Many artists featured in *Missouri Remembers* played a role in significant cultural movements or events of their time, and learning about them can help students understand that history happens on both a global and a local level.

On the following pages, three possible connections between Missouri artists and their historical contexts are provided for students to explore—what other connections can you find?



Connection: The Harlem Renaissance



Aaron Douglas (1899 – 1979) was active in Missouri from 1923 to 1925, when he worked as an art teacher at Kansas City’s Lincoln High School. Douglas went on to become a major figure of the Harlem Renaissance. Students can learn more about Douglas by reading his entry in *Missouri Remembers*. To understand the importance of the Harlem Renaissance and Douglas’ role in it, explore the following sources:

Google Arts & Culture

The Harlem Renaissance: Origins, Influences, and Currents

Virtual exhibit organized by The Wolfsonian–Florida International University and The Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab

[g.co/arts/h5d9fnoUcHATdu1s5](https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/exhibitions/the-harlem-renaissance-origins-influences-and-currents)

Library of Congress

Primary Source Set: The Harlem Renaissance

Documents related to the people and ideas of the Harlem Renaissance

[loc.gov/classroom-materials/harlem-renaissance](https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/harlem-renaissance)

National Museum of African American History and Culture

A New African American Identity: The Harlem Renaissance

Blog post describing the causes and impact of the Harlem Renaissance

nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/new-african-american-identity-harlem-renaissance

Connection: Jewish Refugees Fleeing Nazism



In 1936, Jewish artist **Paula Neufeld** (1884 – 1967) fled her home in Berlin, Germany to escape Nazi persecution. Settling in Missouri, she would go on to run her own studio where she painted and taught art classes. Encourage students to learn about the immigration process for people escaping Nazism and read personal accounts of other Jewish refugees. Based on what they learn, what might Paula Neufeld’s experience of coming to Missouri from Germany have been like?

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Holocaust Encyclopedia: Immigration to the United States 1933–41

Illustrated encyclopedia entry describing the immigration process for refugees attempting to enter the United States to escape Nazi rule

encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/immigration-to-the-united-states-1933-41

Midwest Center for Holocaust Education

Survivor Testimonies

Written, audio, and video accounts of individuals who fled Nazi persecution

mchekc.org/survivors

Connection: Thomas Hart Benton's Impact on the Art World

Missouri artist **Thomas Hart Benton** (1889 – 1975) had a lasting impact on 20th-century American art. One of his students, **Jackson Pollock**, founded the Abstract Expressionist movement and became a vanguard of American modernism. While less famous than Pollock, Benton's students at the Kansas City Art Institute carried his ideas and influences into their own careers.

Students can see Benton's work in the online collections of the Nelson-Atkins (art.nelson-atkins.org/advancedsearch), and they can use *Missouri Remembers* to view art created by some of Benton's students. What evidence can they find of Benton's style in his students' work? In what ways do they break from their teacher's example?

Some of Benton's students:

- Eric James Bransby
- Mary Ann Bransby
- Dorothy Ruth Browdy
- William Wind McKim
- Margot Peet
- Leonard Pryor
- Janet Elizabeth Turner



EXTENDING STUDENT LEARNING

Other Ideas for Teaching with *Missouri Remembers*

The activities suggested so far only scratch the surface of how teachers and students might use the *Missouri Remembers* online portal. A few additional ideas are listed below, but you're sure to discover even more!

- If you're planning a field trip to the Nelson-Atkins, use the portal to identify artists who have a connection to the museum prior to your visit.
- If your school is located in Missouri, search the portal to find artists from your part of the state. Can you find examples of their work in your community today?
- *Missouri Remembers* is designed to grow and expand as researchers find new information. See if your class can identify and research a Missouri artist who you think should be added to the portal.
- Play a game of "6 Degrees of Separation"—what's the largest timespan you can bridge based on relationships between artists?
- Delve deeper into one artist's life by exploring the "Learn More" section of their entry page. Try to access as many of those resources as possible. What questions do you still have? Where could you go to look for that information?
- Ask students to identify what records they would collect in a file to help future generations understand a current artist, cultural movement, or event.



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

The activities described in this guide can engage students with the following learning standards:

Visual Arts

- Visual Arts Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding

Social Studies Grade Level Expectations (MO)

- 6-8 / 9-12.AH.1.CC.D: Using an inquiry lens, develop compelling questions about American/United States history to determine helpful resources and consider multiple points of views represented in the resources
- 6-8 / 9-12.AH.1.PC.A: Using an American/United States history lens, describe how peoples' perspectives shaped the sources/artifacts they created

EDUCATOR RESOURCE CENTER

This guide was produced by the Educator Resource Center at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. The ERC is available to support educators through a variety of programs and resources. If you are interested in learning more about ways to link museum works with classroom learning, we invite you to connect with the ERC to access:

- Curriculum consultations
- Circulating resources
- Professional development workshops

Visit nelson-atkins.org/educators for info.



The *Missouri Remembers* website was created as a collaboration among three Missouri institutions:

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