

Aspen Art Museum
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Educator Notes

Gary Hume

October 14, 2016–May 21, 2017



Gary Hume, *Front of a Snowman*, 2015. Enamel on bronze, 144 x 88 in (365.76 x 223.52 cm). © Gary Hume. Courtesy the artist and Matthew Marks Gallery

About the artist

Gary Hume was born in Kent, England, in 1962, and currently lives and works in London and Accord, New York. In 1988, he received his BFA from Goldsmiths College, London. He is known for figurative and abstract paintings and sculptures that often incorporate familiar images or objects.

About the exhibition

Standing upwards of ten feet tall, Gary Hume's larger-than-life sculpture of a snowman, *Front of a Snowman*, is installed outdoors on the AAM Commons throughout three seasons (fall, winter, and spring). Hume's snowman—a recurrent and iconic subject in the artist's work—straddles the line between representation and abstraction. In this playful, humorous exploration of form and color, the artist has rendered the familiar shape of a snowman in light blue. As a twist on the title, there is no perceptible front or back, nor any other features to this snowman other than the three spheres that make up its body. Captured at a slight angle, this sculpture conveys movement and playfulness on the sidewalk in front of the AAM.

Questions for discussion

- I Why do you think the artist named this artwork *Front of a Snowman*?
- I How is this similar to a snowman you have seen before? How is it different?
- I Discuss the artist's choice of scale, color, and material. How do these choices affect your experience?
- I If you could place *Front of a Snowman* anywhere in the world, where would you like to see it?

Suggested activities

Miniature snowman

Gather different colors of acrylic paint or water-based latex house paint, clear acrylic paint, brushes, paint trays and water cups, glue guns, glue sticks, large white paper, pencils, colored pencils, and markers. Cover your working space with newspaper or a drop cloth.

Take your class outdoors for each student to collect a small, medium, and large rock. Return to the workspace and attach the rocks together using hot glue in the formation of a snowman.

Ask students to choose one color from the paints provided and to cover the rocks entirely. After the paint dries, have students brush a coat of clear acrylic paint over the snowman to make the paint look glossy.

As a class, brainstorm a list of humorous environments for the miniature snowmen. Using the paper and drawing materials provided, invite each student to create a different background. When the drawings are finished, encourage students to mix and match snowmen with the backgrounds. Ask students to notice the reactions of their fellow classmates as they experiment with the mix and match. What is the overall mood in the room?

As a further activity, students can write a story from the snowman's perspective, describing the environment, mood, and activities their snowman would experience.

For more information, please contact the Education Department at 970.925.8050 ext. 133 or email education@aspennartmuseum.org

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