

The background is a dark, abstract composition. It features numerous splatters of red, orange, and yellow paint, creating a sense of movement and energy. Faint, white, hand-drawn orbits or paths are visible, some resembling atomic models. The overall effect is one of a dynamic, perhaps scientific or artistic, exploration.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS FUTURA 2000: BREAKING OUT

THE BRONX MUSEUM

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Welcome to The Bronx Museum!

The Bronx Museum of the Arts is a free contemporary art museum founded in 1971 to bring visual art to the community. In its first decade, The Bronx Museum was housed in the Bronx County Courthouse on Grand Concourse and 161st Street. In 1982, it moved five blocks north on the Concourse to 165th Street. The Museum is currently undergoing a major renovation to be completed in 2026, but remains open during construction. Admission to The Museum and participation in its programs are free of charge and open to all.

The Bronx Museum's Education Department focuses on arts programs which empower students to express themselves, develop skills, and see themselves as agents of change in their immediate communities and the world. We envision and work toward The Museum as a more equitable space where marginalized voices, particularly those of youth, can be heard.

Current education programs include guided tours, family programs, paid teen programs, older adult programs, and fellowship and public programs for emerging artists. These programs are designed to “speak to each other” and enable learners to expand their involvement from one program to another. This allows us to cultivate a creative community that feels at home at The Museum and includes a wide range of participants of different ages and experience levels, from young children to older adults.



Location:

The Bronx Museum
1040 Grand Concourse
Bronx, NY 10456

bronxmuseum.org
718-681-6000

@bronxmuseum

Accessible by 4, B, and D trains

School Partnerships

Our School Partnerships program offers NYC public schools the opportunity to connect closely with The Bronx Museum and its current exhibitions. Partners are provided with multi-session art curricula that partner teachers can use in their classrooms, as well as the opportunity for museum visits.

Each curriculum begins with a visit to The Bronx Museum. If you are interested, book your visit by following [THIS LINK](#), emailing education@bronxmuseum.org, or calling 718-681-6000 x 123.

We are excited to partner with you!



About ***FUTURA 2000: Breaking Out***

FUTURA 2000: BREAKING OUT

September 8, 2024–March 30, 2025

FUTURA 2000: BREAKING OUT presents the work of *FUTURA 2000* (an artist's name used by Leonard Hilton McGurr) and its evolution from early graffiti art styles to his current contemporary abstract works. This retrospective is the most comprehensive examination of the artist's five-decade career ever presented in his hometown of New York City. *BREAKING OUT* showcases his sculptures, drawings, prints, studies, collaborations, and archival belongings dating from the 1970s to the present, as well as new site-specific temporary installations.

FUTURA 2000's artwork continues to show his fascination with the aesthetics of science fiction and the space age. These interests led to his early adoption of sophisticated computer technology and video gaming. Utilizing spray paint with extreme precision, he creates abstract cosmic compositions on canvas. Refined lines are contrasted by mists of vibrant colors and gestural brush marks while large areas are left empty—allowing forms to float freely across the surface, suggesting the expansiveness of outer space. His recurring motifs include the atom shape, symbolizing perpetual motion; a crane or linear mark, indicating a moment of rupture; and the enigmatic Pointman, reminiscent of an alien presence.

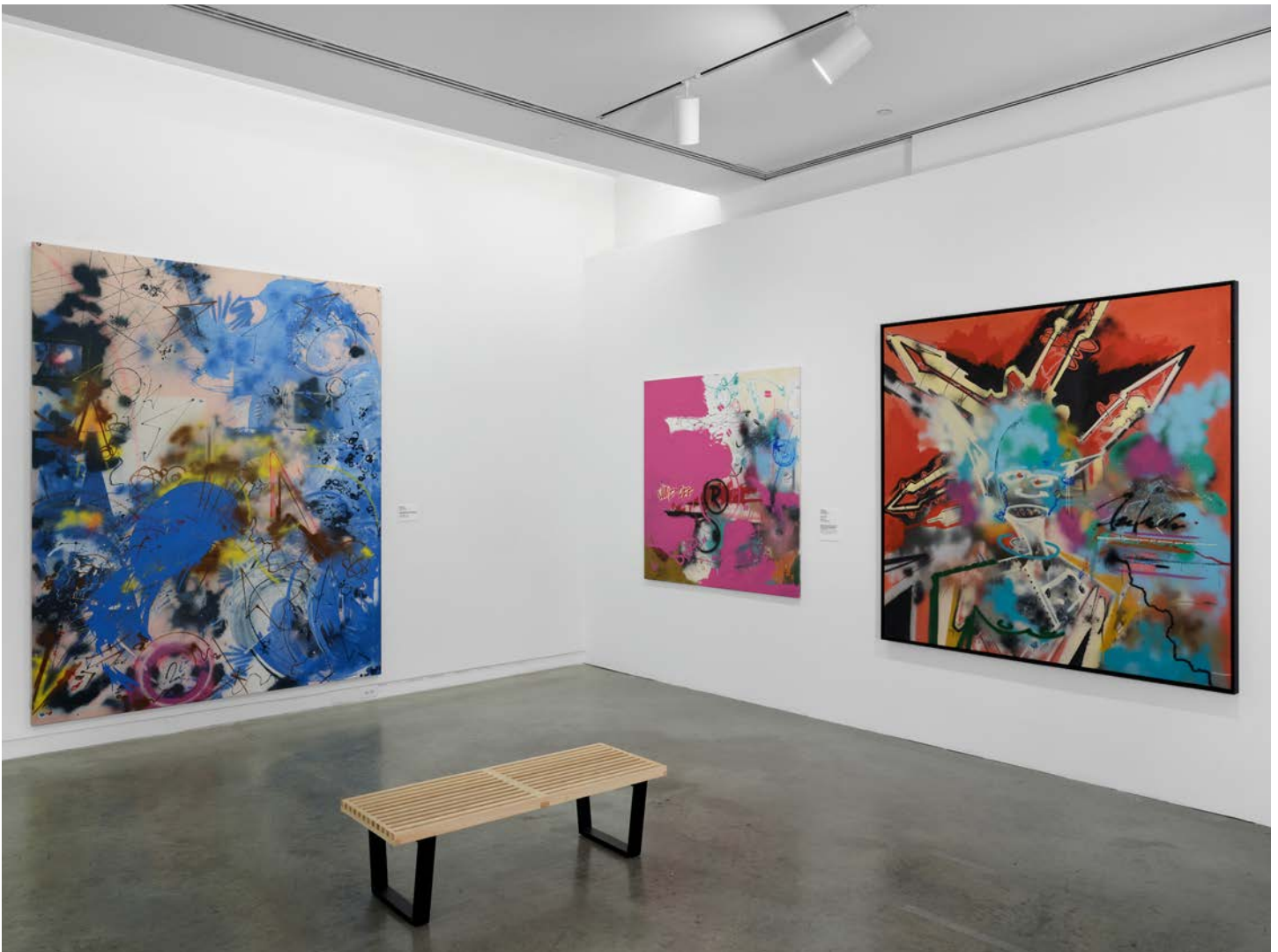
FUTURA 2000 began exploring his creative expression as an artist through street art in the early 1970s—a time of significant social and political upheaval in New York City, especially in The Bronx. The Bronx Museum was founded during this same era in 1971, serving as a haven of art, creativity, and community in the South Bronx, one of the neighborhoods most affected by the City's severe cuts to and neglect of municipal and social services. In this climate, FUTURA 2000 strove to make a name and identity for himself by painting what was accessible to him, including subway cars. As his aesthetic evolved, he continued using materials and techniques like spray paint, aerosol, and stencils to create abstract compositions.

The exhibition's title, *BREAKING OUT*, refers to FUTURA 2000's boundary-breaking creative practice and his famous 1980 piece, *Break*, where the artist painted the full exterior of an NYC subway car with vibrant color and no lettering—a first for the graffiti art movement. At the time, he would “bench” in the South Bronx to watch his *Break* train pass by on elevated tracks.

About *FUTURA 2000: Breaking Out*

The artist's unique visual language bridges multiple disciplines—fine art, street art, music, and fashion. In the 1980s, he created album art for The Clash and was invited on the band's 1981 Combat Rock European tour, where he painted large-scale backdrops as the band performed live. FUTURA 2000 also forges collaborations with global artists, innovators, and designers.

FUTURA 2000: BREAKING OUT is curated by University at Buffalo Art Galleries Director Robert Scalise and Zack Boehler, Public Art Project Coordinator at the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, and this iteration is organized in collaboration with Eileen Jeng Lynch, Director of Curatorial Programs at The Bronx Museum. The exhibition is in partnership with the creative and artist management agency ICNCLST with founding support from Eric Firestone Gallery.



Installation photo by Argenis Apolinario

FUTURA 2000: BREAKING OUT

8 Session Curriculum

Summary: Inspired by the artwork featured in *FUTURA 2000: Breaking Out* and the inventive and creative spirit of graffiti writing, students will explore abstract artmaking as a mode of self-expression. Throughout each session, students will develop their artistic intuition through process-based art activities that challenge them to experiment with unconventional materials and methods. As part of the final project, students will create their own art tool, using everyday found objects to make art utensils that they will then use to create an abstract painting.

Connection to Exhibition: This curriculum is directly inspired by FUTURA 2000's use of abstraction and the spontaneity by which he approaches his work.

Skills and Concepts	Opportunities
Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply their understanding of abstraction to their creative process• Understand and trust their own sense of artistic intuition• Learn how common materials can be refashioned to achieve interesting and unexpected effects in art	Students will have the opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore unusual art materials and methods• Make mistakes and experiment through the process of repetition• Use what they have learned to inform the creation of their final paintings

Activities by Week

This program spans 8 sessions, beginning with a museum visit and ending with a project presentation. Sessions 5, 6, and 7 all involve working on the final project and may be condensed or expanded.

1. Museum visit
2. Visit discussion + abstraction exercises
3. Experimenting with different tools
4. Work on art tool
- 5-7. Work on final project
8. Final day - Presentation of projects + debrief of program takeaways

LESSON 1: Museum Visit

This curriculum begins with a museum tour of *FUTURA 2000: Breaking Out*. We encourage you to book a guided tour with museum staff. See page 3 to book a tour during regular tour hours or email education@bronxmuseum.org if you have other needs. You can use the below lesson should you decide to do a self-guided tour.

Skills and Concepts

Students will be able to:

- Begin to learn how to look at and talk about abstract art

Opportunities

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Visit The Bronx Museum and view *FUTURA 2000: Breaking Out*
- Work together to discuss Futura's artwork

Materials

- Clipboards
- Pencils

Preparation

- Worksheet (see page 23)

Description

- Students walk over to museum
- Guided tour with one of our museum educators
- Introductions + hand out worksheet
- Students talk amongst themselves and complete worksheets
- Students walk back to school

Assessment

Students will record their observations about FUTURA 2000's artwork on provided worksheet. Ask them to write down any words they think of when they look at FUTURA 2000's artwork. These words can reference the mood of the work, the colors and any associations they might have with what they see. Students' takeaways will be discussed in the next session.

LESSON 2: Visit discussion + abstraction exercises

This lesson will start with a recap of the students' observations of FUTURA 2000's artwork from the day before. This will lead into a brief conversation about abstract art and why artists might use abstraction in their practice. Then, the students will be guided through a series of short abstract artmaking exercises.

Skills and Concepts

Students will be able to:

- Define abstract art
- Consider why artists might use abstraction and how they could use it themselves
- Practice creating art based on their own intuition

Opportunities

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Share and discuss their observations about FUTURA 2000's as a class
- Create abstract art in a pressure-free, fast-paced environment

Materials

- Large sheets of multimedia paper
- Tempera sticks
- Color sticks
- Colored pencils
- Sharpie markers

Preparation

- Prepare poster board to define abstract art
- Print-outs of FUTURA 2000's artwork

Description

Intros + Discussion

- Place printouts of FUTURA 2000's artwork on tables for students to reference
- Go around and ask students for one takeaway from yesterday's museum visit
 - Using what we know about FUTURA 2000's artwork, let's define what abstract art is together. What is abstract art?
 - What words come to mind when you think of abstract art?
 - How do you think artists like FUTURA 2000 make abstract art? Is it something they were taught? Or something else?
 - Why do you think artists create abstract art?

Description (continued)

Encourage students to:

- Focus more on exploring materials, forms, colors, shapes, etc. than what it looks like
- Not think too hard - go with how you feel rather than how you think
- Go big!
- Fill the entire page

Abstract Challenge!

- Prompt students to draw eleven dots on the page with Sharpies. Use Tempera sticks to connect all of the dots. Add color, texture, pattern, shape, etc without creating any kind of representational images

LESSON 3: Experimenting with different tools

This lesson is a hands-on exploration of potential artmaking materials. After determining themes by referencing any words they thought of when looking at FUTURA 2000's artwork, students will consider the various materials provided to create a small expression of the theme using paint and paper. Students will be encouraged to make marks through experimentation, repetition, and layering with everyday objects that aren't traditionally used for making art.

Skills and Concepts

Students will be able to:

- Understand how the materials used to make artwork can create meaning and help artists express their ideas

Opportunities

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Experiment with different materials and the many effects they can produce

Materials

- Painting materials: Large sheet of multimedia/watercolor paper, acrylic paint, wooden sticks, pom poms, yarn, popsicle sticks, tape, glue guns, cardboard, foam, rubber bands, cotton swabs, plastic forks, knives, spoons, sponges, baby wipes, t-shirt smocks

Preparation

- Hang abstract poster, arrange materials table, distribute paint on palette paper, smocks at each chair
- Stations: Materials table, Paint cart

Description

- Recap of definition of ABSTRACT from last class
- Reminder of guidelines:
 - Focus more on exploring materials, forms, colors, shapes, etc. than what it looks like
 - Do not think too hard - go with how you feel rather than how you think
 - Go big! Fill the entire page by the end of class
 - Gather materials (each student gets a bag to fill with materials they choose)
- Unusual tools rotations:
 - Students each choose a word from LESSON 1
 - Students choose materials and work to embody the word physically (30 secs) then paint (5 minutes) [about 4-5 rounds using other words]

LESSON 4: Work on Art Tool

Using what they learned in the previous lesson, students will choose materials to create their own art tools to be used for their final project.

Skills and Concepts Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply what they observed from the previous lesson to pick materials and build their own art tool	Opportunities Students will have the opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create their own one-of-a-kind art tool
Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none">• acrylic paint, wooden sticks, pom poms, yarn, popsicle sticks, tape, glue guns, cardboard, rubber bands, cotton swabs, plastic forks, knives, spoons, sponges	Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Materials station• Paint cart• Glue gun station (monitored by adult)

Description

- Debrief from yesterday
 - What were some of the materials you used yesterday? Which ones did you like? Which ones did you not like? If you were to improve on one of the materials, how would you fix it to make it function for you?
- Studio time
 - Students will create their own art tools with materials provided

LESSONS 5-7: Work on Final Project

These lessons are reserved for studio time for the final project. Students will use the art tools they made to express themselves through an acrylic painting on canvas.

Skills and Concepts

Students will be able to:

- Use the art tool they made to create artwork

Opportunities

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Express themselves through an abstract painting
- Further experiment and problem solve by trying new ideas throughout the process

Materials

- Smocks
- Canvas
- Acrylic paint
- Palette paper
- Art tools + extra materials
- Glue guns
- Easels

Preparation

- Set up Powerpoint
- Smocks, easel, canvas at each table
- Prep paint palettes
- Set up materials table

Description

- Play video of FUTURA 2000 making work: <http://tiny.cc/FuturaExample>
- Main activity: Students use their art tools to work on their final pieces
- Wrap up: Spend a few minutes asking students to share their works in progress, reflect, and note what they want to add next time.

LESSON 8: Final day - Presentation of projects + debrief of program takeaways

On the final day of the program, students will have the chance to share about the art tool and artwork they created and reflect on their takeaways from the project.

Skills and Concepts Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain their own artwork and look at the artwork of their peers	Opportunities Students will have the opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflect on all that they've learned throughout the program
Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed artwork	Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Display completed artwork

Description

- Reflection
 - What is the art tool that you created? Describe the materials you used and how you made it.
 - What made you choose the materials you did? What kinds of effects were you hoping to achieve?
 - What changes or adaptations did you make during the process of creating your painting?
 - Describe the painting you made. How did it feel to paint it? How does it feel to look at it now?
 - What title will you give your abstract painting?
- Final Share
 - Each student shares their art tool and how they used it to create their painting (~1 minute per student)

We'd love to hear from you about the program! Email education@bronxmuseum.org, or call 718-681-6000 x 123.

FUTURA 2000: BREAKING OUT

Selected Exhibition Images

Courtesy of the artist and The Bronx Museum.

Photos by Argenis Apolinario, 2024



Bill, 2020

Spray paint, acrylic and varnish on canvas
96 x 72 inches



Angie, 1995
Aerosol on canvas
95.67 x 72.05 inches



Sports in Space with Air Force Blue, 1984
Aerosol on canvas
105.51 x 82.28 inches



Jump Off, 1988
Aerosol on canvas
62.99 x 62.990 inches



Aerosol Aesthetic, 2024
Aerosol on wall
Site-specific installation

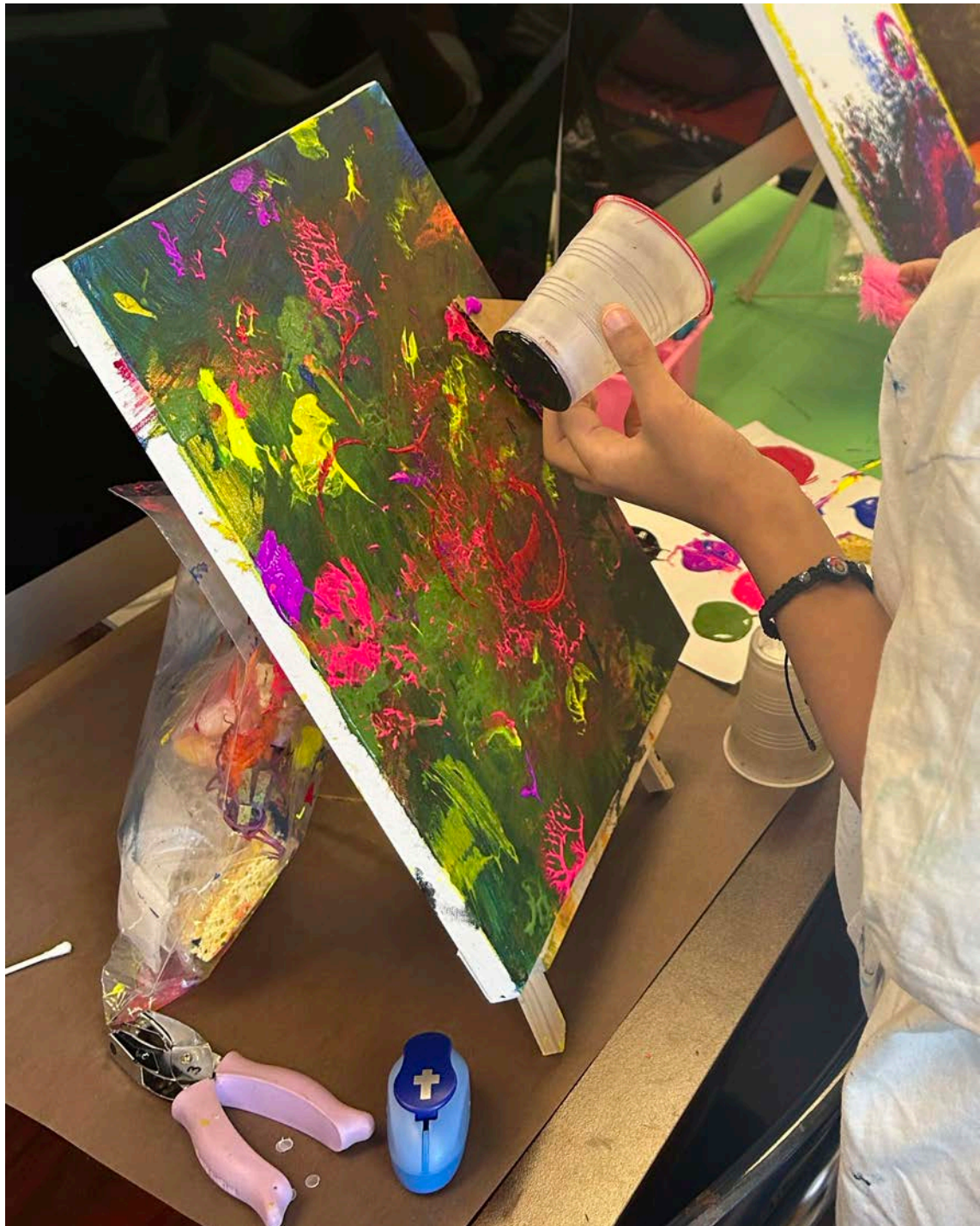
FUTURA 2000: BREAKING OUT

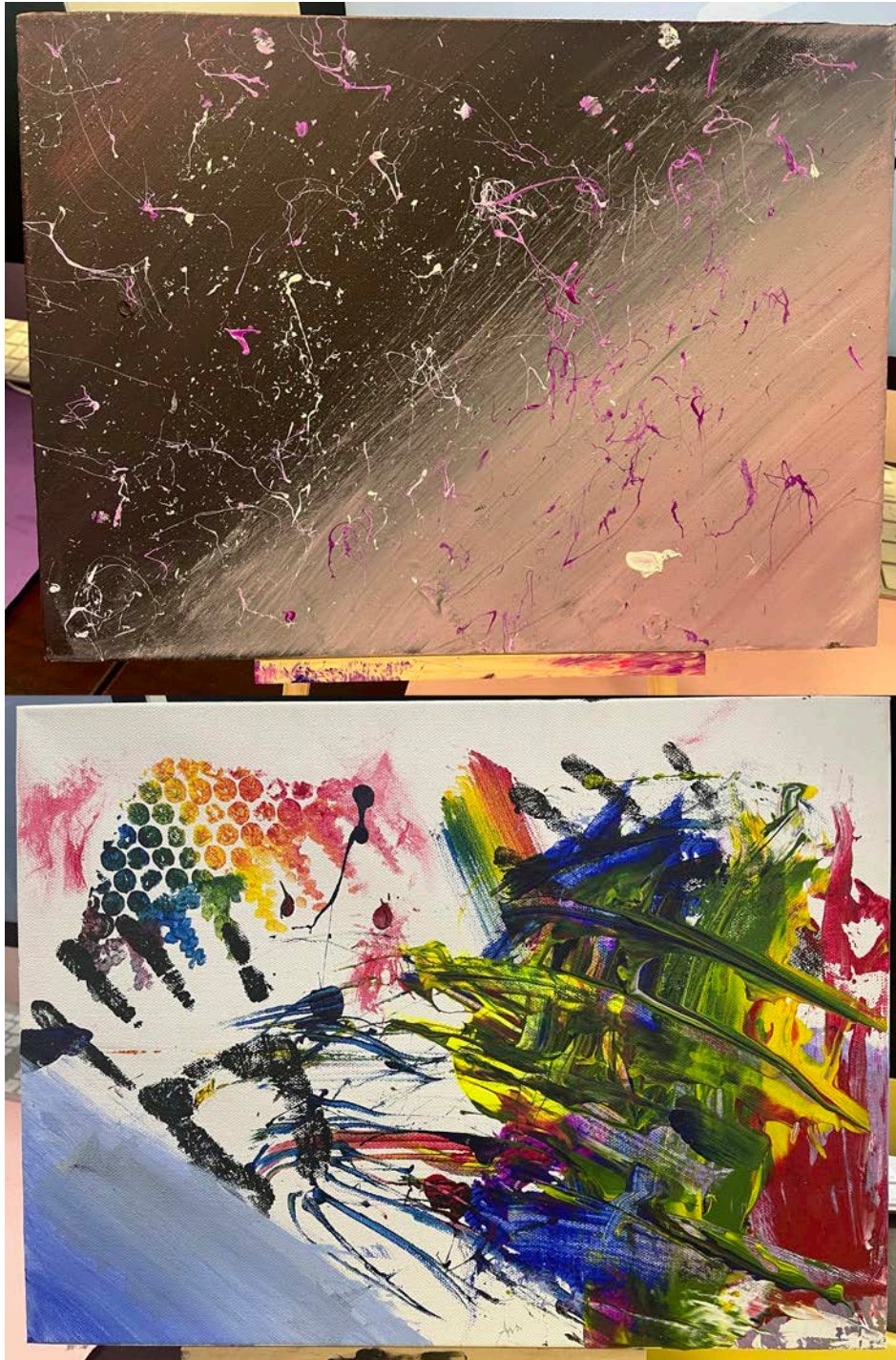
Selected Student Artwork Examples

PS/IS 218 The Rafael Hernández Dual Language School

Photos by Jinette Jimenez









Additional Resources

Artforum Review:

<https://www.artforum.com/events/max-lakin-futura-2000-bronx-museum-1234724059/>

Financial Times Review:

<https://www.ft.com/content/c32d161c-9e91-406e-b41b-cab835f9a134>

Interview Magazine:

<https://www.interviewmagazine.com/art/futura-2000-and-marc-jacobs-graffiti-gen-z-and-old-school-new-york>

WNYC Interview:

<https://www.wnyc.org/story/futura2000s-homecoming-retrospective-at-the-bronx-museum/>

HUBE Review:

<https://hubemag.com/breaking-out>

News12 Feature:

<https://longisland.news12.com/nyc-graffiti-artist-futura-2000-featured-in-new-exhibit-at-the-bronx-museum>

The Brooklyn Rail Review:

<https://brooklynrail.org/2024/10/artseen/futura-2000-breaking-out/>

Animal NYC Review:

<https://animalnewyork.com/2024/11/04/futuras-breaking-out-for-first-solo-museum-show-in-nyc/>

Welcome to THE BRONX MUSEUM

As you explore the exhibition, take note of:

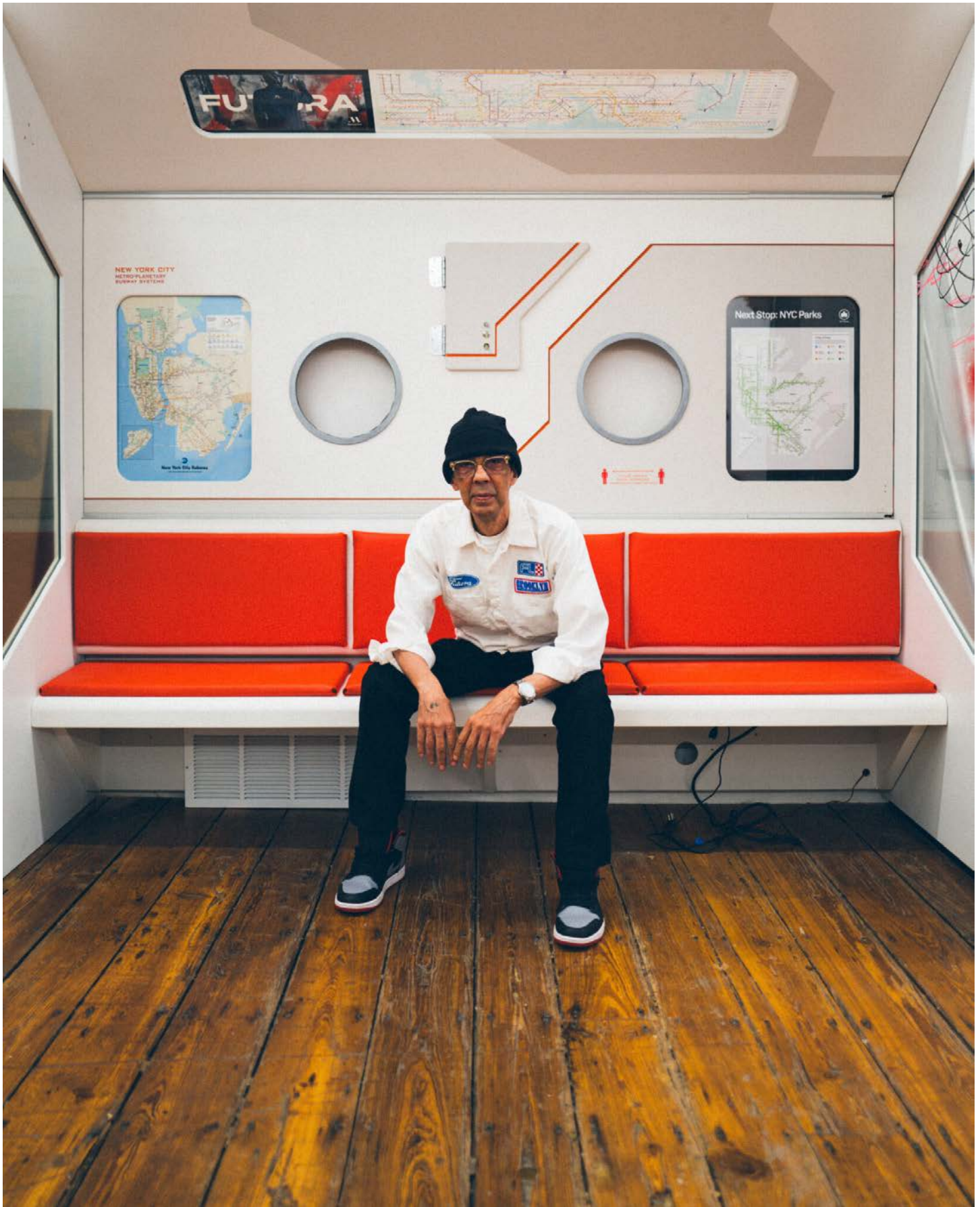
What forms, figures, shapes, colors do you see?

What materials do you think the artist uses?

How do you feel when you look at the artwork?

Which artworks stand out most to you? Why?

If you were to describe this artwork to someone who has never seen it, what would you say?



FUTURA 2000 Portrait, Photo by 13thWitness

Acknowledgements

This curriculum is based on one created by Museum Educator Jinette Jimenez in the fall of 2024 for use at a partner school.

All Bronx Museum education programs are created through collaboration between department staff: Patrick Rowe, Director of Education and Public Engagement; Nell Klugman, Associate Director of Education and Public Engagement; Alex Montané, Education Programs Coordinator; Hayley Mackenzie Bain, Museum Educator; Wildriana Paulino, Museum Educator; and Jinette Jimenez, Museum Educator.



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