Teacher Resource Notes

UNRELIABLE
EVIDENCE

The National Gallery Masterpiece Tour

The Execution of Maximilian by Edouard Manet

AND OTHER HISTORIES
EDGARDO ARAGÓN, ZARINA BHIMJI
OMER FAST, RABIH MROÜÉ
SANTIAGO SIERRA, HITO STEYERL
LUC TUYMANS

Exhibition open Sat 4 Oct – Sat 6 Dec 2014
Mon – Sat: 12 noon - 9pm

FREE ENTRY
The Mead Gallery is committed to increasing understanding of, and engagement with, international contemporary art. Through our exhibition programme, we encourage young people to engage with key themes and ideas relating to the world they inhabit and offer opportunities for them to meet and work with artists.

Every exhibition is supported by a programme of artist-led talks and discussions, workshops and other events. Details are available on our website: meadgallery.co.uk

These notes are designed to support your visit to the Mead Gallery, including planning prior to your visit and suggestions for follow up discussion and activities. They are aimed at all key stages, enabling you to develop them to suit your needs and inspire discussion and practical work.

CONTENTS

2 An introduction to the exhibition
8 Historical Background to The Execution of Maximilian
11 Key Themes / Links to the curriculum for KS2 and KS3
13 Knowledge and Understanding Questions, Discussions and Activities to Explore for both KS2 and 3
21 Exploring and Developing Ideas - Follow Up Activities - KS2 and 3
26 Further Links
27 Planning a Visit to the Mead Gallery
This exhibition brings together a number of world-renowned contemporary artists with a focus on conflict and violence. Their work is a mix of painting, photography and film; but the reason they are in this exhibition is due to one painting — *The Execution of Maximilian* (c.1867–8) — by Edouard Manet. On loan from the National Gallery, this painting is important for many reasons, and allows the curator to explore a number of different themes, such as:

- how do we learn about events? including revealing the partiality of witness accounts, the unreliability of recollection and the subjectivity of the editorial process in both writing and in age making.
- how powerful can one image be? how images can capture the public imagination, the legacy of a news event and its media representation upon the people it affects directly, as well as ideas of place.

The artworks in this exhibition explore these themes in different ways. It is not an ‘easy’ show — its subject matter being conflict, there are some disturbing images to look at. But art is perhaps one of the few places by which we can talk openly about difficult subjects, and we hope that you will find it possible by using this resource pack.

**EDOUARD MANET**  
*The Execution of Maximilian* c.1867–68

This painting depicts the fatal moment when the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian was captured by Mexican forces and executed alongside two of his generals, Mejía and Miramón, on 19 June 1867. The left-hand section of the canvas showing General Mejía was probably cut off by Manet himself. After the artist's death the canvas was cut up into smaller fragments, some of which were sold separately. Edgar Degas eventually purchased all the surviving fragments and reassembled them on a single canvas. It has been part of the National Gallery Collection since 1918.

This slippage between what is real or false in images, is part of the history and myth about *The Execution of Maximilian*, of which there are five known versions. This is the second version, and shows only Maximilian’s hand, which holds that of General Miramón. We cannot see the faces of the firing squad either, which reminds us of recent images of men hiding behind hoods and masks in war zones.

Manet made the painting using bits and pieces of accounts as they became available to him, but also manipulated the scene to make the best composition he possibly could. He also changed the uniforms of the firing squad. In the first version they were wearing...
Mexican nationalist uniform – this second one shows them in a uniform resembling that of the French, allowing Manet to implicate Napoléon III in Maximilian’s death. We know all this because the court photographer of the time, François Aubert sent through photographs and sketches of the firing squad and event.

The recent beheading of a US journalist by an Islamic State militant in Syria highlights the sad fact that we still kill and execute each other according to our belief systems. It also highlights the power of the media by which we understand and see these terrible things. The actual act was posted on YouTube and then hastily removed; it is now stated that “viewing, downloading or disseminating” the video may be an offence under terrorism legislation. There was also a lot of time spent trying to find out whether the film was authentic – whether it had actually happened or not.

In an article for *The Guardian* in 2007, Chief Curator Emeritus of Painting and Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, John Elderfield, wrote:

“We must [imagine Manet] piecing together fragments of news, knowing that they did not realistically or completely describe what had happened, but offered, rather, the means of an imaginative act of rediscovery to create truly political art. Most of what is generally referred to as political art is really polemical art, simply asserting or reinforcing a belief, or often a blame. Truly political art, in contrast, does not reduce human affairs to slogans; it complicates rather than simplifies.”

There are seven contemporary artists featured in the exhibition. They are a mix of gender, age and nationalities. The exhibition is a mix of painting, photography, installation and film works, so it’s important to have enough time to view the films which are different lengths of time. The longest is 30 mins.

**EDGARDO ARAGÓN**

*Family Effects*, 2007-9, video, 13 chapters

This artist is based in Oaxaca, Mexico, and this work shows children from his own family re-enacting violent scenes that have taken place in his country. *Efectos de Familia (Family Effects)* is a video work, made up of 13 episodes, that shows children’s games — but which are based on very serious and disturbing themes including assassinations and punishment. The work is about the transfer of attitudes about violence and corruption from generation to generation. Each episode is an action performed by some combination of his two young cousins, nephew, and younger brother. In one, a boy is shot to death inside a pickup truck. In another, two of them endure a brick-carrying competition. In another, a boy digs his grave.
ZARINA BHIMJI


The artist went back to her homeland — Uganda — and took a series of photographs showing how damaged the land and her sense of home has become.

“It is important the work expresses beauty and tenderness. The spaces have special atmosphere and the space around it has an intense beauty. It is sad and has a subdued air about it. For me the earth was coming off its hinges.”

Many of the artist’s large-scale photographs were taken while researching and travelling for her film works. She gives them titles such as *Frightened Goats, This Unhinged Her* and *Illegal Sleep* which are the personal connections provoked in her by the images. “I’m very inspired by painters,” she says. “I love the work of Caspar David Friedrich, Constable and Richter — they’ve all been important to me, as has the influence of European cinema.”

OMER FAST

*The Casting*, (2007)

Two two-channel films are projected back to back onto suspended screens in the middle of the gallery space, allowing visitors to watch either an in-depth interview the artist carried out with an American soldier on leave, or re-enactments of the events and experiences mentioned in the interview which, although apparently film stills, are by the actors’ very slight movements revealed to be tableaux vivants. Only at the end, or beginning, of the looped interview does it become clear that it is also a re-enactment: the young man is in fact an actor auditioning for the part of the soldier.

Fast, whose presence as interviewer on one of the four screens implies a hierarchy between the two parts of the work, asks him whether he would be comfortable improvising. Yet what is presented as the improvisation of a young actor is, in fact, based on an interview with a real soldier; thus, the film depicts a ‘true story’ — or at least as true as a subjective account can ever be. The soldier recounts a tale about a girl he
once knew in Germany (where he was stationed as a US Army sergeant). They were out on a date one night when he discovered that the girl was obsessively self-harming. The car ride home became a nightmare: the girl was driving way too fast; she was out of control. The second story is about an incident in Iraq in which the soldier survives a roadside car bomb, but in the tense moments following the explosion he shoots at another car to prevent it from approaching a checkpoint, inadvertently killing an innocent man. *The Casting* poses several questions about the audio-visual representation of events, but at its core it focuses on interrogation: who speaks the truth? And to whom?

**RAHIB MROUÉ**  
*Grandfather, Father and Son, 2010*

In this installation, *Grandfather, Father, Son*, the artist presents the index cards of his grandfather’s card catalogue for his library. They have become meaningless, without categories, just markers of an obsolete system. His grandfather was a religious scholar then a Communist and the author of a book on “dialectics in Islam.” “He was assassinated when starting to work on its third volume”. Also included are manuscript pages of the never published mathematical treatise on the Fibonacci series written by his father during 1982, the year of the Israeli occupation of Lebanon and the height of the civil war. The intense abstraction of mathematical analysis in the midst of war suggests the key to why Mroué is so self aware. He understands the terror of bombs falling on his own home, and killing members of his family, but he is part of an intensely intellectual family that can see their personal disaster in a larger context, and can consciously reject or embrace pieces of that bigger picture.
SANTIAGO SIERRA
_Veterans Facing the Corner_, 2011-ongoing

Santiago Sierra is known for exploring the relationships between labour, capital, empire and oppression through poetic and frequently controversial actions. His representations of the exploitative transactions of everyday life often involve contracting people to perform useless, degrading or repetitive tasks.

These photographs show veterans — soldiers who have served on behalf of their country — turned to face the corner of the wall. It is a metaphor of uselessness — of not being required any more. Like children who have been naughty, we can’t see their faces, and so they become just anyone. It can be seen as a punishment given by another soldier; or it could be a silent act of protest. The veterans are paid for their participation in the performance as they have been paid for their service in war.

HITO STEYERL

Hito Steyerl is an artist and an author whose background lies in documentary film-making. She cites many directors as inspirations, but it is the French Jean-Luc Godard, master of New Wave, who stands out. There is a particular reason for this: the death of her childhood friend Andrea Wolf, a member of the banned Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), who was murdered in Turkey in 1998. Her body has never been found.

"In the ‘70s, Godard decided that he would insert some references to the war in Vietnam into all of his films … I suppose this is what I am unconsciously doing now. Bringing up the issue over and over again, especially in contexts where you would never suspect it, and where it even seems completely displaced."

In Steyerl’s first film about Andrea Wolf, the artist combined home movies shot while they were teenagers with recent documentary footage that charted her friend’s transition from naive idealist to political
activist. She called the film *November* — the month following the 1917 Russian Revolution and a period categorised by disillusionment after the great struggle.

In the film *Lovely Andrea*, the references to Wolf are more ambiguous. The work follows the artist as she returns to Japan — where she worked in the ‘80s as a bondage model under the assumed name Andrea — to search for a photograph of herself. Steyerl interweaves the narrative with film clips that include superheroes like Spider-Man and Wonder Woman with atrocities meted out to Guantanamo inmates — an installation played out like a psychological thriller in which Steyerl is both detective and missing subject.

In *Abstract*, the artist travels to Kurdistan to try to find out more about her friend’s murder.

**LUC TUYMANS**

*Mwana Kitoko – Beautiful White Man, 2000*

In 2001 Tuymans represented Belgium at the Venice Biennale, producing a new body of work called *Mwana Kitoko – Beautiful White Man* which addressed the legacy of Belgian imperial rule in the Congo and the murder of Patrice Lumumba.

Lumumba was the first democratically elected Prime Minister of the independent Republic of Congo. He later became caught in the struggle between East and West for African domination during the Cold War, and his brutal murder in 1961 has been linked to the CIA and the Belgian Government.
Imperial ambitions had driven Napoléon III of France to intervene in Mexico, a country shaken by internal rivalries and frequently changing regimes. Encouraged by the French sovereign, an assembly of notables from Mexico City offered the imperial crown to the Austrian Archduke Maximilian who accepted on two conditions: it ought to be offered by the Mexican people and he demanded that his position be guaranteed by the protection of the French army.

Soon after Maximilian and his wife Charlotte, daughter of the Belgian king Leopold I, had arrived in Mexico in 1864, French control of the Mexican provinces started to erode. In 1866 Napoléon III decided to withdraw his troops. Carlotta, as she was now known, went to Europe to plead with him not to abandon her husband. Rejected by Napoléon III and his allies she slowly but steadily lost her mind.

Left with a malfunctioning Mexican army, Maximilian continued to fight forces loyal to the legitimate republican president Juárez. Maximilian was supported by his faithful generals Tomás Mejía and Miguel Miramón until their ultimate defeat. They were taken prisoner, brought to trial and sentenced to death for treason. The first full, though unverified, reports of the execution reached Paris at the beginning of July 1867.

Edouard Manet (1832 –1883) was a French painter and is known for being one of the first 19th-century artists to paint modern life. Two early works, The Luncheon on the Grass (Le déjeuner sur l’herbe, 1863) and Olympia (1863) were seen as shocking and caused a lot of controversy – they are now seen as key to the shift towards Modernism. Known as the painter of modern life, Manet also engaged with contemporary historical events such as the American Civil War and the violent end of the Paris Commune in May 1871. A follower of republican ideas, he disapproved of Napoléon III's
actions including the controversial French intervention in Mexico.

It seems Manet started work on the depiction of Maximilian's execution soon after the first reports of it had reached Paris at the beginning of July 1867. His engagement with the subject resulted in three large paintings (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The National Gallery, London; Städtische Kunsthalle, Mannheim), a lithograph (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) and an oil sketch (Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen). Major changes from one version to the next altered the position of the three victims and the two officers, the soldiers' uniforms as well as the setting of the event. Gradual disclosure of further evidence published in French and Belgian papers informed the composition's genesis.

Abandoning the much-reworked Boston canvas, in the London picture Manet simplified the composition and set the scene in a bare, open landscape. The lithograph and the Copenhagen oil sketch prepared the way for the final version, which features a wall scaled by onlookers as a backdrop to the execution.


INSPIRED AND INSPIRING

Reports of the execution of Maximilian triggered Manet's interest in the controversial subject matter. He made use of photographs to capture the victims' likenesses and had soldiers from the local barracks pose for the firing squad. In addition to documentary sources and life models, his composition was also inspired by works of his predecessors. Unlike other realist painters, Manet actively and explicitly engaged with the great artists of the past and saw himself as their successor. In Madrid in 1865 the art of Velázquez came as a revelation to Manet. Art historians have long pointed to the analogies between The Execution of Maximilian and Goya’s impressive painting of the executions on The Third of May 1808 exhibited at the Prado at the time of Manet's visit.

Etchings of Goya's bullfight and war series inspired elements of Manet's composition including the victims' poses, the off-centred composition, the bareness of the landscape setting and the crowd looking over the wall in the Mannheim version. These are the most obvious sources of inspiration, but compositions by the neoclassical painter David also had an impact on Manet.
PAINTING CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

The May 1868 issue of the French journal *L’Artiste* announced that Manet's *Death of Maximilian* would be shown at the Paris Salon, the most important annual exhibition in France. Yet none of the three compositions ever made an appearance at a Salon during the artist's lifetime. Furthermore, authorities refused permission to publish prints from the lithographic plate Manet had created after having abandoned the London canvas. This incident prompted a debate on censorship in the press initiated by the writer Emile Zola.

By 1869 many pamphlets and books had commented on the French intervention in Mexico and its disastrous consequences, often openly condemning Napoléon III for his fatal policies. The political delicacy of the event, as well as Manet's modern treatment of it, was responsible for the banishment of his *Execution of Maximilian* from public display in 19th-century France.

Following the examples of painters Courbet and Delacroix, Manet presented contemporary subject matter on a large scale executed with vivid brushstrokes. Such monumental canvases had previously been reserved for academic history painting representing important events from the past as examples of heroism and morality. Artists working in this tradition directed the viewer’s opinion by way of an unambiguous focus, legible detail and meaningful facial expressions and gestures. Manet's simplifying compositions, flattened backgrounds and roughly painted features were too modern to be appreciated by the broader public accustomed to the work of neoclassical painters such as Ingres.
KEY THEMES

Images of Conflict

Place and Home

Media and the Truth
LINKS TO THE CURRICULUM FOR KS2 AND KS3

The activities in this pack will enable children to explore and develop key areas of the current National Curriculum with a focus on Art & Design, History and English. There are activities that allow them to work on their own and to collaborate with others in small groups.

In the Art and Design curriculum they will support pupils to:

- produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences.
- evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design.
- know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.
- create sketchbooks, journals and other media to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas.

and specifically for Key Stage 3:

- analyse and evaluate their own work, and that of others, in order to strengthen the visual impact or applications of their work.
- know about the history of art, craft, design and architecture, including periods, styles and major movements from ancient times up to the present day.

In the History curriculum they will support pupils to:

- know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people’s lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world.
- gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.
- gain understanding of how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources, and different versions of past events may exist.

In the English curriculum the activities will support pupils in strengthening skills to:

- develop ideas thoughtfully, describing events and conveying their opinions clearly.
- acquire a wide vocabulary, and begin to vary their expression and vocabulary.
- ask relevant questions to clarify, extend and follow up ideas.
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
- elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- talk and listen with confidence in an increasing range of contexts.
1. In class begin a discussion about war and what it means to the pupils. What is the colour of war? What are the words that come up again and again? Why do wars start?

Collect images from newspapers over a two week period – different papers i.e. The Guardian, The Daily Mail, The Sun etc, and use them as a basis to begin a large collage with the class which sums up what they think war is all about. Look at artist Barbara Kruger or Martha Rosler for more inspiration about using collage with image and text together.


2. There is a lot of information around about World War I at the moment. Use the recent installation by artist Paul Cummins at the Tower of London — made up of 888,246 ceramic poppies to represent lives lost in the war — as a starting point to talk about World War I, and how people mark what happened, through making art, writing poems or music.

http://www.everymanremembered.org

Invite the pupils to make their own poppy; if possible from clay, or from paper.


See the video on this site for more info:

http://makeandcraft.com/ceramic-poppies/

Images by, above left: Barbara Kruger; below left: Martha Rosler. Image above and next page by: Paul Cummins.
The installation is named *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* and takes its title from an unknown soldier’s poem, right.

Ask the pupils to make a drawing of their own to illustrate this poem.

The blood swept lands and seas of red,
Where angels dare to tread.
As God cried a tear of pain as the angels fell,
Again and again.
As the tears of mine fell to the ground
To sleep with the flowers of red
As any be dead
My children see and work through fields of my
Own with corn and wheat,
Blessed by love so far from pain of my resting
Fields so far from my love.
It be time to put my hand up and end this pain
Of living hell. To see the people around me
Fall someone angel as the mist falls around
And the rain so thick with black thunder I hear
Over the clouds, to sleep forever and kiss
The flower of my people gone before time
To sleep and cry no more
I put my hand up and see the land of red,
This is my time to go over,
I may not come back
So sleep, kiss the boys for me.
Yoko Ono is an artist who has focused on peace within her work for many years now. Ask the pupils to research her on the Internet and find out what she is famous for.

http://imaginepeace.com

One of her recent works uses the words Earth Peace 2014 and this appears in many different ways — as posters in shops and houses, on billboards, as stickers, postcards and badges, as a flag, an inscribed stone, and as a Morse code message beamed out by a light over the Channel.

Have a discussion about peace — What does Peace mean to you? What does it look/feel like? How do you think we can achieve world peace — what needs to be put in place in order to do so? Invite pupils to make their own ‘peace’ message and make it into a flag. Find a place in the school where this flag might go.

Below right is the classic peace symbol. Invite the pupils to fill in the four sections with what is needed to achieve peace (i.e. less bullying)

Michael Morpurgo has written a number of books about war, his most famous being War Horse. Others include Private Peaceful, The Kites Are Flying, Why the Whale Came and A Medal for Leroy. He often focuses on the friendships between two people or a child and an animal as a way of telling his stories. Ask the pupils to research works by him and explore how he tackles these challenging issues of war so successfully for young readers.

You can also find teachers resources for Morpurgo’s work here:

http://michaelmorpurgo.com/resources/worksheets
AT THE EXHIBITION

You will need sketchbooks or paper; pencils, pens, and, if possible, a camera and/or iPad.

1. Find and draw two of these things in your sketchbooks.

* A soldier’s uniform
* Something else to do with war
* Something that reminds you of home

2. In your sketchbook, do a close up drawing — a detail of something you like in the exhibition. Tell a friend why you like it.

3. In Santiago Sierra’s photographs of veterans, you can only see the back of them, as they are facing the wall. Try to imagine what their faces look like, and draw two of them. What questions would you like to ask them?

4. In one of Edgardo Aragón’s film chapters, two boys are filmed from behind lifting bricks. Can you create a storyboard or comic strip where you imagine what was happening before and after the film was made?

5. In the film by Edgardo Aragón, his family, including his young nephews, are acting out scenes of violence. How do you think it makes them feel, to do this? Can you talk with a friend about what you think is happening in the video?

6. Most of the artists’ work in the exhibition involves people but Zarina Bhimji’s photographs show only empty, often derelict spaces. Imagine you had visited some of these places when you were younger and they were filled with people living and working in them. Write a diary entry for each photograph describing how it feels to come back and see the place as it appears in the photograph now.

7. Look closely at the Manet painting. The left hand side shows General Miramón about to be shot. The story is that Emperor Maximilian I of Mexico and two of his Generals were shot together. We can see the hand of Maximilian and that is all. General Mejía is completely missing. Can you begin to draw in the two missing men?


QUESTIONS, DISCUSSIONS & ACTIVITIES 
TO EXPLORE — KS3

BEFORE YOUR VISIT

1. Have an initial discussion about why wars start. Then working in groups of four, research a part of the world — Africa, USA, Russia etc. — and find out as much as you can about a particular conflict or war — why did it start? How did it end or is it still continuing? Create a storyboard outlining this timeline and some of its effects on the people living there.

2. There is a long history of artists working to create a visual account of wars. Some were commissioned to produce specific works during the First World War, the Second World War and select military actions in the post-war period. Research a range of war artists, and focus on two from different eras i.e. World War I and Afghanistan. What are the differences between what was produced?

3. Don McCullin is a photographer, who has spent his life in war zones. Research his work and select two photographs that seem to you to sum up what war is. Then, write down the answers to these questions:

   * Describe what is going on in the two photographs.
   * Why did you choose them?
   * Do you think it is right for photographers to take images of dying people (as opposed to trying to save them)?
   * Why do you think he has taken the images?

4. Look at Picasso’s Guernica. [http://www.pablopicasso.org/guernica.jsp](http://www.pablopicasso.org/guernica.jsp). Picasso’s motivation for this famous painting came from seeing the dramatic photographs published in various newspapers following the Nazi bombing of the Basque town of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. In contrast to Manet’s transformation of *The Execution of Maximilian*, Picasso’s work does not contain one single reference to a specific event but is a symbolic image about the general destruction and terror of war, with the muted colours intensifying the drama of the painting. Using a mixture of imagery from newspaper and magazines and working individually or in a small group create your own collage representing world conflict today.

5. Many contemporary artists attempt to engage with issues of war, traces and loss in their work. Some examples include video and installation artist Mona Hatoum, sculptor, photographer, painter and filmmaker Christian Boltanski and photographer Frauke Eigen. Research all three artists’ work and look for similarities and differences in the way they choose to represent conflict, memory and personal history.

6. We tend to associate war and the depiction of war with men. However the famous woman painter Dame Laura Knight produced a body of work depicting female members of the auxiliary air force during World War II. Research her work and develop a group project producing a series of images — these could be drawings, paintings or photographs — depicting women at work today in roles that they might not normally be associated with.
Dame Laura Knight, *Corporal J. M. Robins*, 1941.
AT THE EXHIBITION

You will need sketchbooks or paper; pencils, pens, and, if possible, a camera and/or iPad.

1. Use your camera or sketchbook to gather a collection of images from the exhibition that mean something to you (ideally 6 – 12). Use these to begin to show the impact of war.

2. A number of the artworks show conflict in different cultures and countries. Choose one of the works to watch or look at carefully, and list all the things that seem very different to your own experiences.

3. Look carefully at the installation by Rabih Mroué. Write down what you see, and ask yourself these questions:

   * Why did the artist make this work?
   * What is the importance of the title?
   * What emotion(s) does this work set up in you?

4. Look at the titles of the photographs by Zarina Bhimji. Working in pairs, choose one each to talk about, using the title as the heading for your discussion. For example, one of the images of a deserted building is called Your Sadness is Drunk. Link the title and the image together in the most creative way possible, and create a script for a screenplay that talks about ‘what happened next?’

5. In Omer Fast’s video work The Casting he represents multiple viewpoints but only allows us, as the viewer, to see two projections at any one time. Through editing techniques he mixes a soldier’s stories together and then reveals that the ‘soldier’ is in fact an actor, making us aware of the way in which the media can construct and manipulate news stories. Look at Luc Tuymans’ paintings and create a news story from them. Compare your story to a friend’s to see how images can be ordered and interpreted in different ways to tell different versions of a story.

6. In Santiago Sierra’s photographs figures face the corner evoking acts of silent protest and reminding us of children told to stand in the corner when they have been naughty. Imagine what each figure might be thinking, write this as a thought bubble and stick it by the photograph on the gallery wall.
ACTIVITY

1. There are many war memorials, made by artists and designers, which are there for us to remember those that died.

http://www.ukniwm.org.uk

The Ghetto Heroes Monument (above) is in Warsaw, Poland and commemorates the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943. The completed monument was formally unveiled in April 1948.

On the following page can be seen two more monuments that commemorate those involved in World War II. Invite pupils to design their own war memorial.
This is called the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, also known as the Holocaust Memorial. It is in Berlin and is a memorial to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. It is made up of 2,711 concrete slabs and they are of different heights. They can resemble people of different ages and heights and it feels confusing to walk amongst them. It also looks like a cemetery. It opened to the public in 2005.

This is also a recent memorial (2005) by a contemporary artist, Rachel Whiteread. It is a closed, windowless single story building, and sits on a low plinth at one end of Judenplatz in Vienna. The walls are covered from top to bottom in row upon row of books. But it is as though they have been turned to face the wall. A pair of doors at one end of the building are sealed shut. It looks like a military bunker, and is dedicated to the Jewish Austrian dead.
Edouard Manet was one of the first nineteenth century artists to paint modern-life subjects, and some of his early and most famous works are thought to mark the beginning of modern art. Another famous artist working in the World War I was Paul Nash, who often chose to paint the destruction war caused to the landscape. Look at his painting above along with Manet’s *The Execution of Maximilian*. Think about how each painting makes you feel, how the artists have used colour, shadow and light. Now plan your own painting exploring an important event in your own history.

When Manet painted *The Execution of Maximilian* he made a number of different versions. Look at the two paintings (below left and below) and see how many differences you can spot between them. What words can you use to describe these differences? How does each painting make you feel?

The artists in the exhibition use a range of materials to share their thoughts and ideas including painting, drawing, photography, video, installation and performance. Choose a story from the newspaper and, as a class, see how many different creative ways you can tell that story by using different art materials and mediums.


FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES – KS3

ACTIVITY

1. Many poets have responded to war. Research the following: Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Thomas Hardy. Then find some contemporary poets who have written about war and choose one poet whose work you respond to. Do any of the images from the exhibition have the same impact?

2. Edgardo Aragón used his family to re-enact recent violent events to have taken place in his home region. Working in groups of four, put yourself into these different roles — sister, soldier, survivor, observer — and act out a scenario of your choosing ie soldier going off to war, or a survivor returning.

3. You have 140 characters to write to someone telling them something about the exhibition.

4. Write a review of the exhibition in the form of a blog, if you are using an iPad or computer.

5. Above is an image related to the Veterans photographs by artist Santiago Sierra. Imagine who this man is. Write about his life. And try to say how he feels now.
When seven o'clock struck, we heard the music of the procession, and Captain Gonzales entered the chapel with his blindfolds. . . .

At this moment the Franciscans passed by: the first two carried the cross and the holy water, the others held candles. Each of the three coffins was carried by a group of four Indians: the three black execution crosses with the benches followed behind. . . .

When we were at the top of the hill, Maximilian looked fixedly at the rising sun . . .

We had arrived near the large outer fortification wall of the cemetery: the bells slowly rang the death knell. Only the individuals in the retinue were present, because the crowd had been barred to keep them from scaling the walls. The three benches with the plank crosses were placed against the wall, three firing squads, composed of five men, each with two non-commissioned officers, for the coup de grâce, stood three paces away from the condemned men.

When the rifles moved, the emperor thought they were going to shoot, and quickly approached his two companions and embraced them with a touching effusiveness. Miramón, surprised, almost collapsed on the bench, where he remained; the Franciscans crossed his arms. Mejía returned Maximilian's embrace with broken words that no one heard; then, he crossed his arms over his chest, without sitting down.

The bishop, moving forward, said to Maximilian: "Sire, give all of Mexico, as personified by me, the kiss of reconciliation; may Your Majesty pardon everything at the supreme hour."

The emperor, internally agitated with visible emotion, silently allowed himself to be kissed. Then, raising his voice with force, cried out: "Tell López that I forgive him for his betrayal; tell all of Mexico that I forgive it for its crime!"

Then, His Majesty shook the hand of the abbot Fischer, who, unable to speak, fell to the emperor's knees, kissing both his hands and covering them with tears. Many people cried abundantly; Maximilian gently disengaged his hands, and, taking a step forward, said ironically with a sad smile to the officer who was in charge of the execution:

"A la disposicion de usted." ["At your disposition."] At the signal of the sword, when the rifles fired at his chest, he murmured a few words in German and detonations enveloped the spectators. Miramón rolled over, struck. Mejía remained standing, his arms flailing in the air; a bullet in the ear at point-blank, ultimately finished him off.

The emperor collapsed on the cross that was supporting his body. He was taken down immediately and placed in the coffin with the two generals. The burial of their remains took place immediately in the cemetery.
ABOUT THE EXECUTION OF MAXIMILIAN

http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/edouard-manet-the-execution-of-maximilian
http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2006/Manet/
http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2007/jan/06/art.art

ABOUT THE SEVEN EXHIBITING ARTISTS

Edgardo Aragón
http://www.kadist.org/en/programs/all/1801

Zarina Bhimji
http://www.zarinabhimji.com
http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/blog/the-archaeology-of-place-zarina-bhimji-whitechapel-gallery-london/

Omer Fast
http://www.zabludowiczcollection.com/collection/artists/omer-fast
http://youtu.be/TYfIxEfywKM

Rabih Mroué
http://www.sfeir-semler.com/gallery-artists/rabih-mroue/
http://premierartscene.com/magazine/rabih-mroue_interview/

Santiago Sierra
http://www.santiago-sierra.com/index_1024.php
http://www.ephemerajournal.org/contribution/locating-work-santiago-sierra’s-artistic-practice
http://artpulsemagazine.com/interview-with-santiago-sierra

Hito Steyerl
http://youtu.be/JRQ8_t1s8yk

Luc Tuymans
http://www.saatchigallery.com/artists/luc_tuymans.htm

ABOUT WAR ARTISTS

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/theartofwar/artists/
http://www.iwm.org.uk/history/war-art-schemes-of-the-first-world-war
http://www.pablopicasso.org/guernica.jsp
http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2012/dec/22/don-mccullin-photojournalism-celebrity-interview
http://www.christian-boltanski.com
www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/mona-hatoum-2365
http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/artists/laura-knight

FURTHER LINKS
PLANNING YOUR VISIT TO THE MEAD GALLERY

CONTACT DETAILS
AND OPENING HOURS
Mead Gallery
Warwick Arts Centre
University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 7AL
Box Office: 024 7652 4524
Open Monday – Saturday
12 noon – 9pm. Free Entry.
For group visits, it is advisable to book in advance. The Mead Gallery is exclusively available for school group bookings Monday – Friday, 9am – 12noon by prior arrangement. Staff and resources are available to support these visits.

PARKING AT WARWICK ARTS CENTRE
Daytime parking on campus can be difficult so please allow plenty of time. For directions to Warwick Arts Centre, go to http://www.warwickartscentre.co.uk/your-visit/getting-here/ For a map of the campus, go to http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/about/visiting/maps/campusmap/

COACHES
Coaches can drop off and pick up on Library Road. Please follow the signs for the short walk to the Arts Centre. Please inform our Box Office if you are arriving by coach so that effective and safe arrangements can be made with campus security.

CARS
Charges apply for all University of Warwick car parks during the day. The nearest to Warwick Arts Centre is CP7 (free if arriving after 6pm). CP7 has no lift.

MINIBUSES
CP4 and CP5 (1hr max stay) are not height-restricted. Charges apply. After 6pm, please use CP4 or CP5, which are both free.

LUNCH
If necessary, rooms are available where pupils can eat their packed lunches. Let us know in advance if you want us to book one.

TOILETS
Public toilets are available in the Arts Centre.

RISK ASSESSMENTS
Risk Assessments are available from the Arts Centre’s Education Team. Contact Brian Bishop on 02476 524252.

BEFORE YOUR VISIT
We recommend a preliminary planning visit and are happy to discuss your requirements with you. Some works in the exhibition explore subject matter and contain imagery that may be found disturbing. Your visit will confirm which works which are most suitable for your group.

Adult supervision of students under 16 is required at all times. An adult student ratio of 1:5 for under 5s, 1:10 for 5-11 year olds, 1:15 for 11-16 year olds and 1:20 for 16-18 year olds is required.

DURING YOUR VISIT
Teachers/group leaders and accompanying adults are responsible for their group’s behaviour whilst at Warwick Arts Centre.

Many artworks are fragile and damage easily. Unless you are told otherwise, please take extra care to ensure that your group follows the Gallery guidelines at all times:

No running
No touching
No leaning against walls or plinths
No photography

DRAWING
The Mead Gallery has some drawing materials available and can supply a certain amount of clipboards. Please contact Gallery staff on 024 7657 3732 to discuss your needs. We regret that we cannot supply drawing materials with little or no notice.
lightsgoingon® exists to make contemporary art accessible, run by Gill Nicol who has over twenty five years experience of working with contemporary art and audiences.

This pack has been written by Gill Nicol, with support from Kamina Walton. It has been commissioned and designed by the Mead Gallery.

lightsgoingon.com
September 2014

Santiago Sierra, Veteran of the War of Afghanistan Facing the Corner (Art Point Donetsk, Donetsk, Ukraine, December 2011), 2013. Digital lambda print. 206 x 106 cm. Courtesy the Artist and Team (gallery, inc.), New York.