LARSON SHINDELMAN: GEOLOCATION
About this Teaching Resource:

This packet features artwork from the exhibition *Larson Shindelman: Geolocation* at the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art at the College of Charleston. It is intended as a tool to help you look at art with your children/students. You can prepare for your inquiry-based discussions by reviewing the background information provided. Then use the Questions for Viewing below and artwork reproductions to look closely, think critically, and respond to the art together. Extend your investigations with one or more of the suggested activity ideas. In general, questions for younger audiences are listed first followed by progressively more complex ideas. Feel free to adapt the suggested activities according to the age group you are working with. We encourage you to check out the Halsey Institute's blog for articles and activities related to the show, as well as interviews with some of the artists.

*Share your teaching stories with us! If you use these materials, let us know by email at halsey@cofc.edu*
About the Exhibition:

The Halsey Institute presents *Geolocation* by the artist duo of Nate Larson and Marni Shindelman, on view from January 15-March 5, 2021. Using publicly-accessible geographic data from tweets, Larson Shindelman track down specific locations where Twitter users were when they posted on social media. Once there, the artists make a photograph from the location, connecting the tweet—stored on a remote server and readable around the globe—and the physical world. This body of work explores the connection between text and images, digital and analog, and private versus public.

Recently, Larson Shindelman have continued their *Geolocation* methods while using tweets that contain specific hashtags that reference ongoing struggles around social and racial justice. In a series called *Mobilize*, the photographers seek out tweets with hashtags such as #blacklivesmatter, #sayhername, #takeaknee, and #metoo. Such hashtags have defined spaces within Twitter where activists can make their voices heard. Larson Shindelman’s *Mobilize* series helps to conflate ideas of online versus offline activism. In many of the images presented in *Mobilize*, the locations are often quiet neighborhood streets and rural grassy fields—in contrast to scenes of protests on city streets commonly shared by the media. The resulting effect shows the breadth of activism occurring outside the protests that gain notoriety in the news media. Using specific hashtags, users can connect themselves to various protest movements no matter where they are. People browsing these hashtags can access streams of tweets connected to given issues—tweets from people located all around the world, all collected in one place. Such is one of the utopian promises of the internet—the idea of a highly connected society where all are equal. The works in the *Mobilize* series reinforce this idea, showing that people from all over can join in with specific protests. They, along with the *Geolocation* series, show that our online lives may not be so distinct from our offline lives after all.
Artist statement from Larson Shindelman:

“We use publicly available embedded GPS information in Twitter updates to track the locations of user posts and make photographs to mark the location in the real world. Each of these photographs is taken on the site of the update and paired with the originating text. Our act of making a photograph anchors and memorializes the ephemeral online data in the real world and also probes the expectations of privacy surrounding social networks.

Twitter estimates there are over 550 million tweets daily, creating a new level of digital noise. Clive Thompson uses the term ambient awareness to describe this incessant online contact in the New York Times Magazine article, “Brave New World of Digital Intimacy.” According to Thompson, “It is...very much like being physically near someone and picking up on his mood through the little things he does—body language, sighs, stray comments—out of the corner of your eye.” Our collaborative work is a means for situating this virtual communication in the physical realm. We imagine ourselves as virtual flâneurs, ethnographers of the Internet, exploring cities 140 characters at a time through the lives of others.”
Questions For Viewing:

Look at *I Know You Are Scared* and read the tweet.
How do you think this person is feeling? What might this person be thinking? What do you see that makes you say that?

Look at *Worth the Wait*.
Does the photograph give you a sense of time (day or night, long exposure or short exposure)? What clues give you that information?

Look at *Creeper* and read the accompanying tweet.
Did the photograph have an emotional impact on you when you first saw it? What emotions did the photograph trigger in you? What about the tweet?

Look at *Banning Guns* and read the accompanying tweet.
Do you think the photographer was successful in translating these thoughts into a visual form? What aspects of the photograph lead you to this conclusion?

Look at *New Year’s Resolution*.
What changes would you make if you could have made the photograph yourself?

Reproductions of the artworks in this section have been included at the end of the packet. You can also view the pieces online by clicking [here](#)!
Suggested Activities:

Coffee Filter Maps
Making maps allows children to explore blending techniques and primary colors. For this activity, place coffee filters onto a piece of paper using water. Using yellow and blue semi moist tempera, paint on top of the coffee filters creating several variations of green. Paint any white paper left with blue paint. Once dry, remove the coffee filters. Add objects such as buildings, roads, trees, and mountains with a pencil. Then outline the pencil marks with a black permanent marker and color the rest of the page with drawing tools. Encourage children to share their map with others and discuss their choice of landmarks.

Geography Project
For this project, you will need construction paper of different colors, crayons or markers, scissors, and glue. First, trace different mixing bowls or paper plates to create different sized, concentric circles. As the circles get bigger, their pictures will show bigger geographic areas. Label the circles with the following titles: my house, my city, my state, my country, my continent, and my planet. Then, decorate with a representative image. Finally, use a hole puncher to punch holes in the top of each circle and used binder rings, string, or yarn to assemble the project. Ask children to present their projects by reading the titles, and explaining the details.

Caption Writing
Larson Shindelman create photographs based off of tweets (short captions). For this activity, refer to the photographs in this packet and write your own tweets in 280 characters or less to accompany each. You can also create your own hashtags to accompany the caption and photo.

Pen Pal Activity
The work in Geolocation explores the theme of connection over distance. Think of a person that lives far away from you. It could be a relative, friend, your favorite author, or a celebrity you admire. Write them a friendly letter and ask if they would like to be pen pals. Decorate your letter and/or envelope in any way you choose before sending it.
Time Capsule
A time capsule is a collection of objects put together to preserve the memory of a place, experience, or group of people at one point in time. People often make time capsules for special public occasions, and for others to open many years in the future. You can make one to celebrate a family event, to remind you of a special experience, or to remember friends, family, or school – or something else important to you. For this activity, you will need:
- Coffee can, tennis ball can, or a large jar
- Paint, markers, felt, paper
- Glue
- Duct tape
- Stuff to put in the capsule

Instructions:
1. Decorate the outside of an empty can or jar with paint, markers, felt, and paper.
2. Write your name and today’s date on the capsule’s lid.
3. Try to find items that you can livewithout, but things that will be interesting to future generations. Fill your capsule with these items. Some ideas include: a personal “letter to the future,” current magazine or newspaper clippings, photographs of you and your family, or your predictions of life in the future.
4. Securely tape the lid on the capsule.
5. Write instructions on the outside of the capsule, explaining when the capsule should be opened.
6. Now, all you have to do is find a good place to hide your capsule. You can bury it outside or hide it in your home!

Hashtag Project
Select a hashtag with an important societal message that resonates with you. Examples include #BLM, #loveislove, or #metoo. Go out into your community and take photographs based on your hashtag of choice. Choose at least 3-5 of your best images. Write captions for each photo. You can choose to print and display your series, post onto your social media, or both.

Social Media Campaign
The internet and social media are important tools Larson Shindelman use to create new works of art, raise awareness of issues, and share their projects with people around the world. Create a social media campaign for an issue that you care about. Research the issue. How can you help? Develop a list of goals for your campaign: Are you going to raise a specific amount of money? Recommend important changes? Go to www.twitter.com and create a Twitter handle for your campaign. Compose tweets that provide information about your issue and develop a hashtag so you can connect with peers and others can join the conversation. What can your campaign accomplish? How can social media help you to achieve your goals?
Related Readings available through Charleston County Public Library:

*Posted* by John David Anderson / Reading level: 8-12 years old

*The Bluest of Blues: Anna Atkins and the First Book of Photographs* by Fiona Robinson / Reading level: 6-9 years old

*Me, Myselfie, & I: A Cautionary Tale* by Jamie Lee Curtis / Reading level: 4-8 years old

*Mapping My Day* by Julie Dillemuth / Reading level: 4-8 years old

*Antsy Ansel: Ansel Adams, a Life in Nature* by Cindy Jenson-Elliott / Reading level: 5-9 years old

*The Couch Potato* by John Jory / Reading level: 4-8 years old

*It’s a Snap!: George Eastman's First Photo (Great Idea Series)* by Monica Kulling / Reading level: 5-8 years old

*My Heart Is a Compass* by Deborah Marcero / Reading level: 4-8 years old

*Nerdy Birdy Tweets* by Aaron Reynolds / Reading level: 4-8 years old

*Dorothea's Eyes: Dorothea Lange Photographs the Truth* by Barb Rosenstock / Reading level: 8-12 years old

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Related Readings available through the Hoopla Applications (browser and smartphone) with Charleston County Public Library:

*Posted* by John David Anderson / Reading level: 8-12 years old

*Map My Neighborhood* by Jennifer Boothroyd / Reading level: 5-8 years

*This Is My Town* by Lisa Bullard / Reading level: 5-8 years

*Me, Myselfie, & I: A Cautionary Tale* by Jamie Lee Curtis / Reading level: 4-8 years old

*The Little Man In the Map* by E. Andrew Martonyi / Reading level: 5 and up
Artwork Images:

Reproduced below are images of the artworks included in this exhibition. To see full-size images, visit the exhibition page on our website.

*Money Pigs*, 2011
Archival Pigment Print

*Creeper*, 2012
Archival Pigment Print
Sneaking Suspicion, 2009
Archival Pigment Print

Reconnaissance, 2011
Archival Pigment Print

Well. I just got laid off. Despite the raise, I had a sneaking suspicion there was no money.
And yes. I was right. I knew something was off.
This Is Horrible, 2011
Archival Pigment Print

'I know you are scared,' says everybody that works in politics

I Know You Are Scared, 2011
Archival Pigment Print
Lost My Dad, 2011
Archival Pigment Print

Pretty sure I just heard a gun shot lol

Gun Shot, 2011
Archival Pigment Print

Two years ago today I lost my Dad...time sure flies! I miss you Dad. #RIP
More Profound, 2012
Archival Pigment Print

I am doing really good! I have not chickened out on no ride! I know somebody who would be so proud of me!

So Proud of Me, 2012
Archival Pigment Print

One thing I've come to recognize is you can't assume your feelings are more profound than that of others. Everyone feels differently.
Jesus Whispers, 2011
Archival Pigment Print

Gue Yakin Bisa, 2011
Archival Pigment Print
*Burn Baby Burn*, 2011
Archival Pigment Print

 Tell me I'm not making a mistake. Tell me you're worth the wait. #fb

*Worth the Wait*, 2011
Archival Pigment Print

Burn baby burn.. First work out of 2011.. #geefit :)

Burn baby burn.. First work out of 2011.. #geefit :)

Tell me I'm not making a mistake. Tell me you're worth the wait. #fb

Tell me I'm not making a mistake. Tell me you're worth the wait. #fb
New Years Resolution, 2013
Archival Pigment Print

Amy is Dying, 2010
Archival Pigment Print

Amy is Dying @HighlandHospital
Make Sure I'm Happy, 2012
Archival Pigment Print

Banning Guns, 2015
Archival Pigment Print
Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red & yellow, black & white, all are precious in His sight. #Charlottesville

I've got it. Moderation is the real opiate of the masses. #Ferguson #race #IfTheyGunnedMeDown
Silence from the NRA, 2018
Archival Pigment Print

Protesting My Heart Out, 2018
Archival Pigment Print

I genuinely wish I was in Times Square protesting my heart out today #BlackLivesMatter

Silence from the @NRA. Guess #2A is just for white folk. #philandocastle #blacklivesmatter
Started Kneeling, 2018
Archival Pigment Print

Danger All the Time, 2018
Archival Pigment Print
One of Those Nice People, 2018
Archival Pigment Print

Haunting Shadow, 2018
Archival Pigment Print