

LESSON

Found Object Assemblages

NE10 Artist: Lillian Blades

Grades 4-6

National Art Gallery of The Bahamas



THINK

What does it mean to assemble something?

THINK

**What kind of artwork do you imagine
when you hear the word assemblage?**

VOCABULARY

Assemblage is art that is made by joining different kinds of materials (found or human-made) together. Assemblages are usually three-dimensional because they have depth, which means they are not flat.

VOCABULARY

Artists use a wide range of materials to create assemblages—paper, metal, wood, cardboard, glass, trash and even natural materials like leaves or branches.



Clockwise: Lillian Blades (mixed media), Chakaia Booker (rubber tires), Wallen Mapondera (cardboard)

MEET THE ARTIST

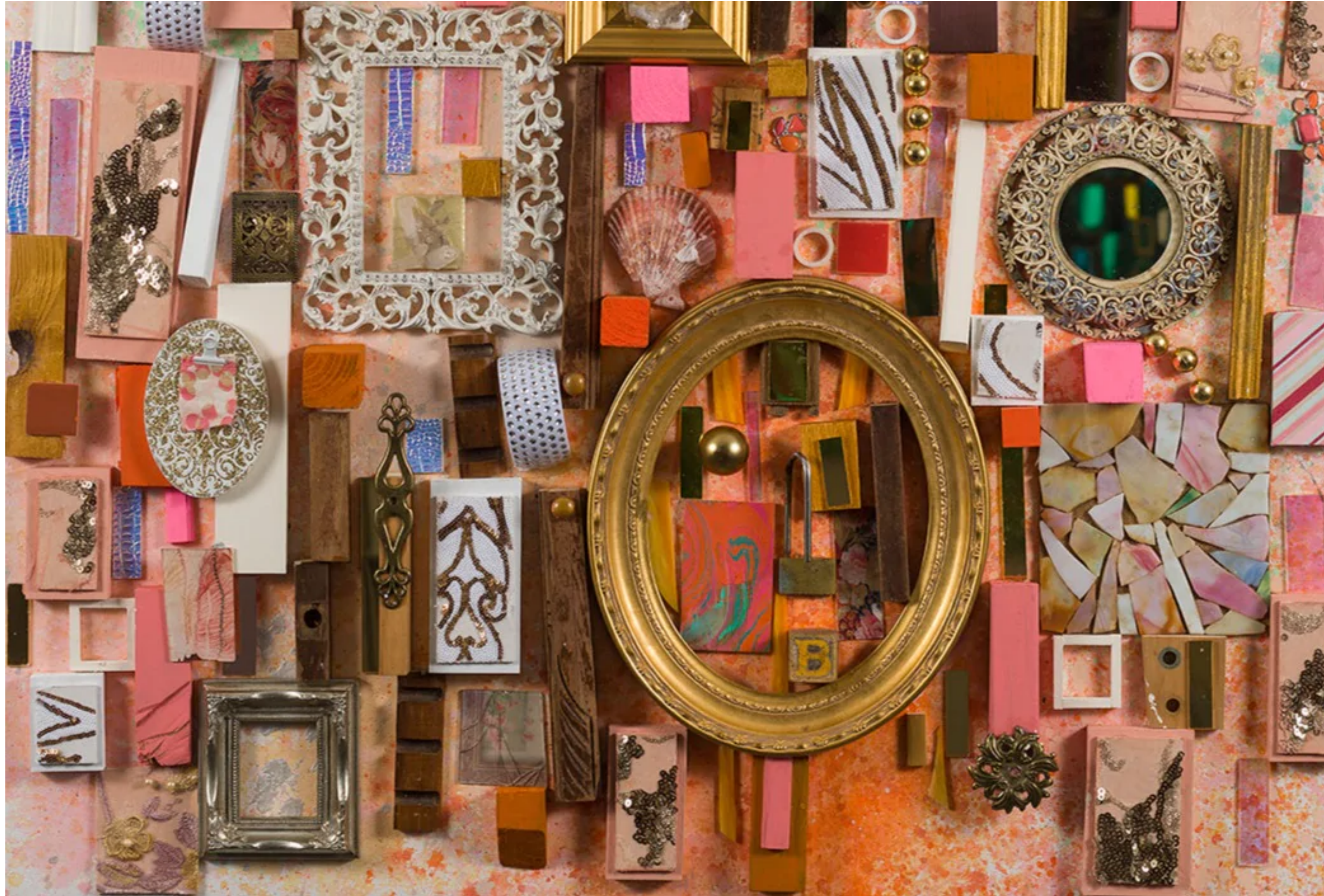
Lillian Blades was born in Nassau, The Bahamas in 1973. She now lives and works in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.



MEET THE ARTIST

Lillian Blades creates mixed-media assemblages using found objects and human-made objects. Blades calls herself a “collector of objects, images and patterns.” She uses frames, buttons, mirrors, paint, fabric and many other materials in her work. She usually works on wooden panels that are then displayed on a wall.

VIEW & DISCUSS



SHARE

Lillian Blades’s “childhood home of [The] Bahamas, ancestral background of West Africa, and her late mother, who was a seamstress, influences her art. These influences appear through use of her color palette and objects that evoke memory and history.”

SHARE

“Quilt-like collage has become my artistic method of choice. There is a defined Bahamian aspect to my work too. My work has a Junkanoo-like feel to it. Much like the details of Junkanoo costumes, my work often features embellished fringes or adornments.”

—Lillian Blades

THINK

**Let's take a look at some of Lillian
Blades's assemblages. How is the
artwork similar to Junkanoo?**

VIEW & DISCUSS



THINK

What objects can you identify in the artist's assemblages? Do they remind you of anything?

VIEW & DISCUSS



CONNECTIONS

Assemblage art is also a good way to upcycle or reuse items that would have just been thrown away. Assemblage artists contribute to the health of the environment by finding new uses for old materials.

CONNECTIONS

By upcycling, artists can limit their use of natural resources and raw materials and reduce their contribution to waste. This can be a small way of doing your part to help the environment while making something creative and valuable in the process!

VIEW & DISCUSS



VIEW & DISCUSS



THINK

- **Where do you see repetition in this artwork?**
- **What do you notice about these assemblages?**
- **Do the assemblages remind you of anything?**
- **How does the use of color add to the assemblages?**
- **How do these materials connect with each other?**

VISIT THE MUSEUM

Lillian Blades's assemblages are on display at the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas. Her work is a part of the tenth National Exhibition called "***Mercy.***" The exhibition features the work of 51 Bahamian artists and creators.



ART PROJECT

Using found objects, create an assemblage that is a representation of your favorite place—real or imaginary.

PROCEDURE

- 1. Collect your materials from home, outside, your classroom etc.**
- 2. Sketch an idea or two for your project. Think about a color scheme as well—e.g. monochromatic, complementary, analogous.**
- 3. Paint your background surface—e.g. paper, cardboard, wood.**
- 4. If you are painting some or all of your objects, do this now.**
- 5. Begin to assemble your items on the surface. You may need glue or another material to secure the objects to the surface.**

REFLECTION

- **What did you enjoy about this project?**
- **What did you learn about Lillian Blades's work in the process?**
- **What did you learn about yourself during this project?**
- **How do you feel about your final artwork?**
- **If you could do this project again, would you do anything differently?**

CONNECT WITH US

Please share your work with us! You can share by:

- **Tagging us on Instagram @nagb242 or using the hashtag #NAGB**
- **Submitting your work at the link here for a chance to be featured**

Please visit our website for more information on exhibitions, workshops, and other educational activities. Contact the education team at education@nagb.org.bs for any additional questions you may have about this teaching resource.

SOURCES

- [Lillian Blades's website](#)
- [ArtistADay](#)
- [Lillian Blades at the Current Baha Mar](#)
- [The Art Story](#)
- [FutureLearn](#)
- [Tate](#)