CURRICULUM GUIDE
GRADES 6 – 12
Feb. 20 – Sept. 9, 2018

TOYIN OJIH ODUTOLA
TESTING THE NAME

FEB. 20 - SEP. 9, 2018
**SCAD: The University for Creative Careers**
The Savannah College of Art and Design is a private, nonprofit, accredited university, offering more than 100 academic degree programs in more than 40 majors across its locations in Atlanta and Savannah, Georgia; Hong Kong; Lacoste, France; and online via SCAD eLearning.

With more than 37,000 alumni worldwide, SCAD demonstrates an exceptional education and unparalleled career preparation. The diverse student body, consisting of nearly 14,000, comes from across the U.S. and more than 100 countries worldwide. Each student is nurtured and motivated by a faculty of nearly 700 professors with extraordinary academic credentials and valuable professional experience. These professors emphasize learning through individual attention in an inspiring university environment. The innovative SCAD curriculum is enhanced by advanced professional-level technology, equipment and learning resources, and has garnered acclaim from respected organizations and publications, including 3D World, American Institute of Architects, Businessweek, DesignIntelligence, U.S. News & World Report and the Los Angeles Times.

For more information, visit scad.edu.

About the Artist

SCAD Museum of Art presents *Testing the Name*, an exhibition of new drawings by Toyin Ojih Odutola that continues her episodic exploration of the merger of two fictional aristocratic Nigerian families through the marriage of two men. In her practice, the artist both critiques and embraces traditional portraiture, and its association with the representation of power within a Western art historical context. Working primarily in pastel on paper Ojih Odutola creates rich, layered surfaces that seduce and compel.

The artist’s unusual approach to the depiction of skin is a comment on the representation of blackness. Ojih Odutola’s radical black skins seemingly bend light, resisting a logical visual comprehension that speaks as complex metaphor. Her velvet, seductive surfaces claim territory within the art historical canon of portraiture, which historically favored whiteness.

Ojih Odutola places individuals and couples in opulent interiors and rich landscapes, at leisure and in social interactions. Architectural details and objects surrounding her subjects receive equal attention. Of Nigerian descent, she grew up in the American South and developed a seemingly plausible narrative incorporating themes that, in reality, might not be so straightforward.

*Testing the Name* is curated by Storm Janse van Rensburg, head curator of SCAD exhibitions.

About the Curriculum Guide

SCAD curriculum guides provide learning opportunities that fulfill the requirements of national education standards and are designed for use within the museum’s exhibition spaces and in classrooms. The guides enhance understanding of art and design through investigations that reveal relevant personal, historical and cultural connections while promoting cross-disciplinary links necessary for today’s innovative careers.

Recognizing the guides’ overall design excellence and ingenuity, the American Alliance of Museums’ Museum Publications Design Competition twice awarded SCAD curriculum guides first place in the education category, in 2015 and 2016, as well as honorable mentions for the guides accompanying *Threads of History: Two Hundred Years of Fashion* and the 2016 SCAD deFINE ART exhibitions.

This Toyin Ojih Odutola guide challenges students to question assumptions and expand their knowledge through research. The activities include opportunities to reflect, revise and refine — interdisciplinary essentials to creative, solutions-oriented approaches.

SCAD gives special thanks to the Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED, Inc. for its generous support of SCAD’s award-winning curriculum guides.

Educational standards are listed on page 6. Highlighted glossary terms are found on page 7. Additional learning resources are located in the Curriculum Connections section on page 7.
Toyin Ojih Odutola, born in Nigeria and raised in Alabama, developed her signature style in a quest to move beyond broad assumptions based on skin color. She transforms skin into complexly shaded strands, describing the effect as a way of “questioning that surface and seeing the ways I could expand on it.”

Choose a work by Ojih Odutola and write an interpretive statement about it. Consider how subject matter, setting and mood contribute to its message.

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“There is a brilliant James Baldwin quote I always keep in mind on what is at the heart of any creative endeavor: ‘to expose the question the answer hides.’”

Toyin Ojih Odutola

Baldwin’s words suggest that answers are limiting, while questions challenge norms and speak to possibilities.

Use a questioning technique to expand your way of seeing. Carefully question your response on the facing page — challenge assumptions and seek out alternative possibilities. Asking friends for their perspectives will be helpful. Describe what you discover below. What was your previous answer hiding? What did your questions expose?

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James Baldwin (1924-1987), novelist, essayist, playwright, poet and social critic, was known for his wisdom and eloquence. Explore excerpts from his writings here: www.brainpickings.org/2017/05/24/james-baldwin-life-magazine-1963/
2 Research and release

Art research is a consuming part of Toyin Ojih Odutola’s process. Her Instagram account (@toyinojihodutola) combines images of her work with a discerning, wide-ranging selection of artworks from the past and present, each one tagged #Research. She believes that creating original work requires a knowledge of art history, plus the ability to fuse elements from different times and cultures in new ways.

“...what my work brings for me is the freedom to investigate ideas and express that in my drawings.”

Toyin Ojih Odutola

Add research to your creative process. Begin by carefully considering Ojih Odutola’s work and that of the wide variety of artists featured in SCAD deFINE ART 2018. Which ones would you tag #Research? Identify three pieces and examine them closely. Record your impressions by making thumbnail sketches and writing notes about the subjects and techniques that appeal to you most.

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Review your research for ideas that inspire you to try a new art-making approach. In the space below, as Ojih Odutola advises, “go for it.”

“...When I first start, I have no idea what’s going to happen ... then I see something ... It just kind of builds from there.”

Toyin Ojih Odutola

Check in with your classmates as you work. Research, plus critiques, revisions and refinements, are all part of the creative process.

Represent
Lee Daniels, co-creator of the hit series Empire, speaks about the importance of the show’s representation of black artists, among them Ojih Odutola and SCAD alumnus Jon Moody (M.A., painting, 2015; B.F.A., visual effects, 2014).
www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgV7gyX7X9Y
EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

National Core Arts Standards

Activity 1 – Sixth through Eighth Grade

Responding 8.1

Anchor: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

6: Interpret art by distinguishing between relevant and non-relevant contextual information and analyzing subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.

7: Interpret art by analyzing art-making approaches, the characteristics of form and structure, relevant contextual information, subject matter, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.

8: Interpret art by analyzing how the interaction of subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, use of media, art-making approaches and relevant contextual information contributes to understanding messages or ideas and mood conveyed.

Activity 2 – High School

Creating 3.1

Anchor: Refine and complete artistic work.

HSI: Apply relevant criteria from traditional and contemporary cultural contexts to examine, reflect on and plan revisions for works of art and design in progress.

HSII: Engage in constructive critique with peers, then reflect on, re-engage, revise and refine works of art and design in response to personal artistic vision.

HSIII: Reflect on, re-engage, revise and refine works of art or design considering relevant traditional and contemporary criteria as well as personal artistic vision.

Common Core English Language Arts Standards

Activity 1 – Sixth through Eighth Grade

Production and Distribution of Writing: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach.

Production and Distribution of Writing: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
GLOSSARY

**consuming adj.** Overwhelming, intense

**critique n.** A careful analysis or judgement of something

**discerning adj.** Having keen insight and judgment

**interpretive adj.** Something that explains one form of communication in another form; for instance, using words to explain an image

**signature adj.** Having a distinctively personal quality

**thumbnail sketch n.** A small initial sketch used to record impressions or develop a concept

**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

**Additional Resources**

**Article** Interviewer Kilo Kish created a hand-drawn interview worksheet that Ojih Odutola then completed with earnest, candid responses. creators.vice.com/en_us/article/vvyxz4/toyin-kilo-kish

**Video** Ojih Odutola and Solange Knowles, mutual admirers of each other’s work, talk about art, inspiration and collaboration. www.nowness.com/series/on-collaboration/on-collaboration-solange-knowles-x-toyin-odutola

**Citations**


SAVANNAH EXHIBITIONS

SCAD Museum of Art // 601 Turner Blvd.

No Access • Tom Burr
Dec. 14, 2017 – Sept. 17, 2018

Fade Into Black • Pia Camil
Jan. 25 – July 15, 2018

You Have Nothing to Worry About • Melissa Spitz
Jan. 30 – April 29, 2018

LIVESTRONG Savannah • Christopher Chiappa
Feb. 1 – July 1, 2018

Two Works • Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller
Feb. 13 – July 18, 2018

Sedimental • Tom Burr
Feb. 15 – Aug. 26, 2018

Moving Mountains • Yang Fudong
Feb. 20 – July 8, 2018

To-Day, February 20th • Mariana Castillo Deball
Feb. 20 – Aug. 5, 2018

Huh • Lily van der Stokker
Feb. 20 – Aug. 19, 2018

I did it again • Paola Pivi
Feb. 20 – Aug. 19, 2018

SAVANNAH GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

This Land Is Your Land • Group Exhibition
Jan. 19 – Feb. 25, 2018
Alexander Hall Gallery // 668 Indian St.

Alter Ego • Group Exhibition
Jan. 25 – March 31, 2018
Gutstein Gallery // 201 E. Broughton St.

ATLANTA EXHIBITIONS

SCAD Atlanta // 1600 Peachtree St. NW

Carry the Ocean • Shine Huang
Feb. 9 – March 2, 2018
Trois Gallery

Loves • Wendy White
Feb. 20 – June 8, 2018
Gallery 1600
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