



INTENTION

Why do oppressed people make their own means of communication through code switching?

PREPARATION

PHASE 01 = Play this video. Jamila Lyiscoot talk about code switching and performs it.

PHASE 02 = Meditate or journal on the ways in which you yourself code-switch in your life. Alternatively, find objects in your immediate environment that represent different codes, sides of you, or your life. Journal on these coded objects.

PHASE 03 = Brainstorm, research or share examples of different made up codes. Think about languages, but also people oppressed or in hiding. (Tolkien for Lord of the Rings, Klingon from Star Trek, Morse code, Navajo code breakers in WWII, Pig Latin, images in quilts for the underground railroad, BLOODS VS CRIPS, prehistoric drawings on cave walls, “hobo code” in the Great Depression, Hilma Af Klimt’s paintings, etc.)

EVENT

PHASE 01 = Create visual or sensory codes with a small group + present to the class. Use things from your preparation phase: journaling or objects from your environment as a starting place. Think about how different symbols interact, and try to represent that.

PHASE 02 = Share and respond to one another’s descriptions. Try to interpret other’s codes.

CURRICULUM BY THE MYSTERIOUS MAD TWISTERS FOR

(LEFT)
Hal Fischer, American, b. 1950
Street Fashion: Jock, from the series Gay Semiotics, 1977/2016
Carbon pigment prints on Canson Photo Gloss Premium RC paper in handmade case with denim covering
Collection Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, gift of Albert A. Robin by exchange, 2015.12.2

(RIGHT)
Robert Rauschenberg, American, 1925–2008
Retroactive II, 1963
Oil, silkscreen, and ink on canvas
80 × 60 in. (203.2 × 152.4 cm)
Collection Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Partial gift of Stefan T. Edlis and H. Gael Neeson, 1998.49
Photo: Nathan Keay, © MCA Chicago