



21st Century Heirlooms

Big Ideas: Care and Memory. Heirlooms are a way of enacting care and memory as these items are often passed down to family and friends. They represent connections between people, memories of places and personal journeys, and ideas that are important to revisit over time.

Essential Questions:

- How do we decide what objects to care for? How do we decide what to give or throw away?
- What can we learn about people's values and culture through treasured objects?
- How do objects help us pass on stories about people, places, and ideas we care about?
- Why should we care about understanding what each other values?

Artist and Cultural References:

http://www.ramart.org/sites/default/files/userfiles/exhibitions/2013/Heirlooms/RAM_Heirlooms_Guide.pdf



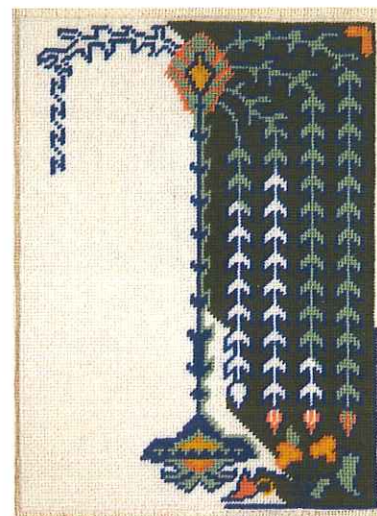
MELANIE BILENKER, TEA KETTLE

Brooch (2004)

1 3/4" x 1 1/2" x 3/8"

Gold, sterling silver, ivory piano key laminate, epoxy resin, hair

Bilenker creates resin coated jewelry pieces that contain contour drawings using her own hair to memorialize everyday events. Check out Victorian mourning brooches as a historical reference for this work.



MARY SMULL, WILLOW

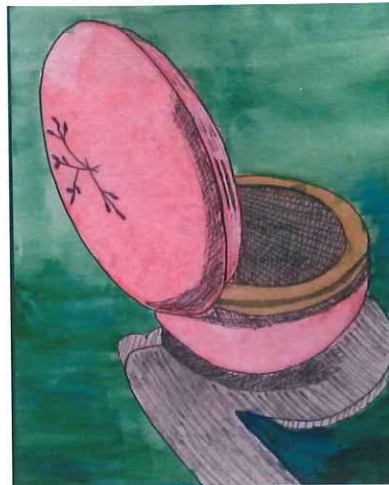
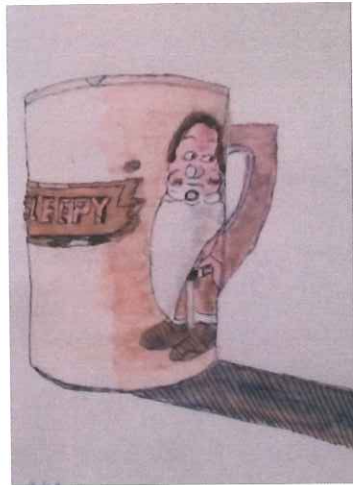
Found needlepoint and yarn (2011)

10 1/2 x 14 inches

Smull's 'Society for the Prevention of Unfinished Needlepoint' rescues discarded and incomplete needlepoint projects from rummage sales and thrift stores. She then finishes them with white thread, to distinguish her handiwork from the original.

Expressive Intent: In this lesson, students will tell a story about a person, place, or idea they care about through an artwork inspired by an object they choose as a 21st century heirloom and corresponding artist statement.

Example 1:



Form: contour line drawing

Media: permanent marker and watercolors

Technique: value through patterns

Example 2:



Form: collage

Media: mixed

Technique: meaningful choices of materials, opaque and transparent layers