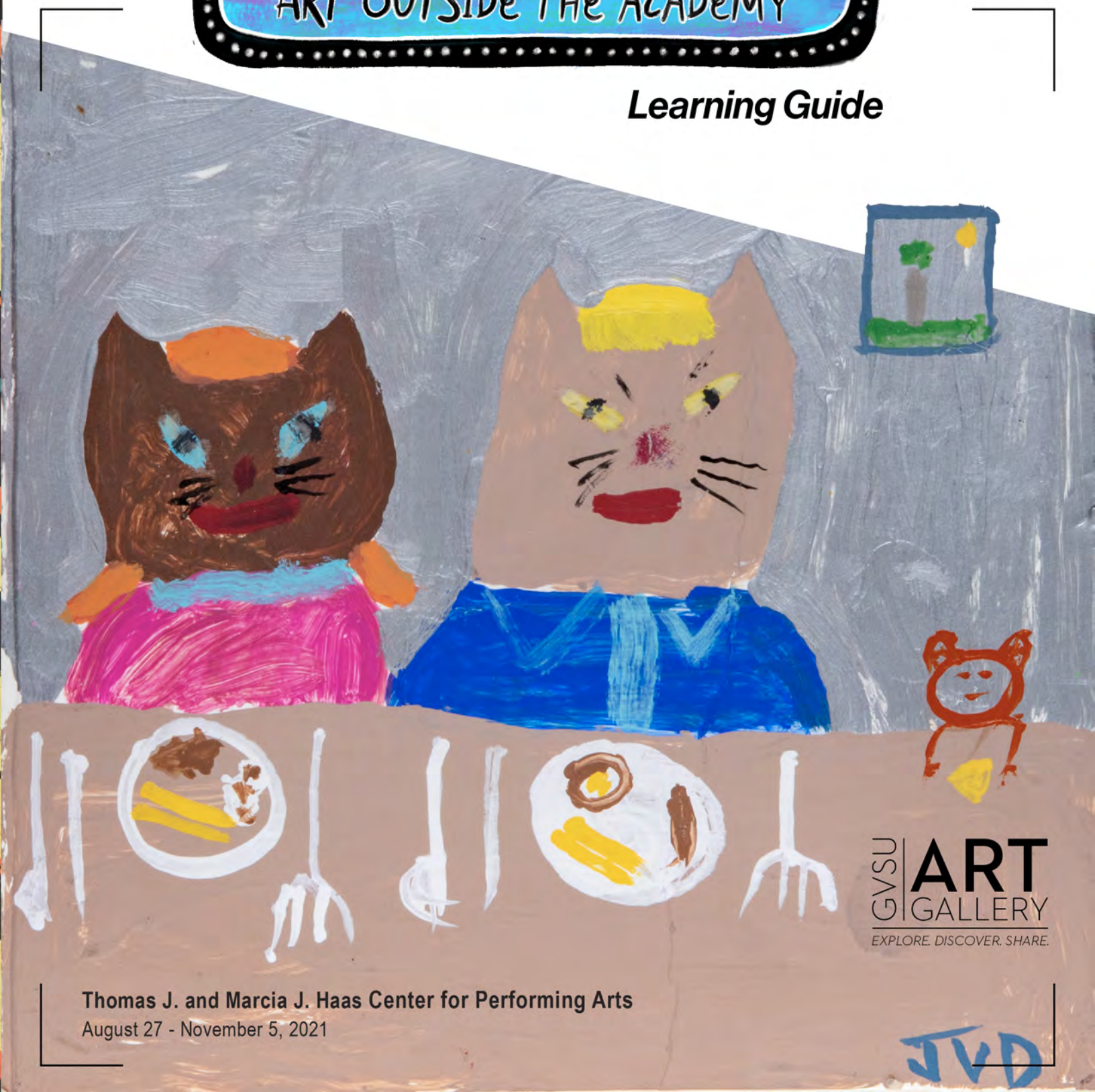


HONEST AND UNREFINED

ART OUTSIDE THE ACADEMY

Learning Guide



GVSU
ART
GALLERY
EXPLORE. DISCOVER. SHARE.

Thomas J. and Marcia J. Haas Center for Performing Arts
August 27 - November 5, 2021

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About this Guide

The information below can be used as a launch pad into learning about the themes of the exhibition. The questions and prompts can be used to start a deep-dive discussion about the artwork on view.



POWER

Artists that live on the margins and reject the constraints of the art world have always been difficult to categorize. Terms like 'outsider,' 'raw,' 'intuitive,' and 'self-taught' have been used by institutions of power (museums, art fairs, and art schools) to differentiate between the experiences and work of these artists from those in the 'mainstream.'

By nature, these terms are exclusionary and are used to predetermine the value and meaning of 'outsider' art. Consider how arts institutions and prevailing systems control the perception and value of art by asking;

- **When you see artwork in a museum or gallery setting, how is your perception of its value effected?**



HEALING

Often 'outsider artists' are driven by their desire to create or communicate a deeply personal and sometimes provocative message. 'Missionary' Mary Proctor, was called to make art after the heartbreaking experience of losing her beloved grandmother in a house fire. Her work honors, celebrates, and pass on the wisdom of her grandmother's life on a path toward healing. Discuss the role of art in our capacity to process trauma and forge a path toward healing by asking these questions;

- **What do you imagine it feels like to express your thoughts and feelings in a picture?**
- **What can we learn from a picture that we can't learn from language?**



MATERIALS

Scraps of wood and paper, house paint, discarded objects—these are all items found in 'outsider art.' The high cost of art materials can be prohibitive to many artists and as a result they sometimes choose to work with whatever materials are available. Alternatively, some artists choose to use found materials because those materials free them from the constraints of convention.

- **Observe the artwork in the gallery and consider how the narrative or meaning of the work is affected by the artist's choice of materials.**

For additional learning resources visit www.gvsu.edu/artgallery/hau or contact:

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