The I-71 Project unites two major art institutions across Ohio—the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati and Columbus Museum of Art—to present art on billboards (and other road signage) that both mimics and critiques the theater of red-versus-blue politics during the U.S. presidential campaign. I-71 extends from artist Anne Thompson’s celebrated Missouri-based I-70 Sign Show, which was recognized nationally for presenting billboard-based works by internationally acclaimed artists.

This project embraces the interstate as a potent display opportunity for contemporary art and cultural commentary. Artworks enter roadside dialogue addressing themes such as religion, politics, guns, race, labor, beauty and consumption. Students will integrate this exhibition with their studies by discussing how art can reflect and inform the public about political issues and demonstrating how time, place, and cultural issues affect the way we look at these images.

**VOCABULARY**

- Propaganda
- Cultural Commentary
- Mimic
- Critique

**MATERIALS**

- Projector and Screen to show video political ads
- Computers for each group of students
- Photoshop

**Alternate Materials**

- Projector and Screen to show video political ads
- Paper
- Pencils
- Color Pencils
- Paint
- Brushes
BEFOREHAND

Tour the *The I-70 Sign Show: photographs and video* at the CAC

PROCEDURE

Classwork

- Consider sharing several examples of political videos with the class—modeling how to present the time period and issue being address.
- Have the students work in groups and assign each group a video to work on for this lesson.
- Students should have taken notes on each video to reference back to for their group projects. They should also draw on inspiration taken from visiting the exhibit.
- Have each student or group create a print ad using computers or art making materials based on the video assigned to their group.
- Have each group share their assigned video with the class presenting the time period and issue addressed.
- Have the group or each individual present their print advertisement and discuss.

EVALUATION

- Students will be evaluated on their participation in the class discussion.
- Students will be evaluated on their teamwork if working in teams for project.
- Students will be evaluated on their final image from completion to concept.

TEACHER RESOURCES