

Study Guide:

“Hometown Queen” (2010)

by Camille Turner

About the artwork: Photography documents the artist performing as *Miss Canadiana*. She’s standing in front of a steel mill in Hamilton (Dofasco Melt Shop #2). It is reminiscent of a postcard. This is part of a series of 6 photographs. *Miss Canadiana* is a fictional pageant queen dressed in gown, sash and tiara who represents her country and makes public appearances, posing for photos, handing out flags and signing autographs. *Miss Canadiana*’s first appearance was on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Canada Day 2002. With the creation of *Miss Canadiana*, Turner is addressing-and disrupting- the symbols, cliches and stereotypes associated with the country. By claiming to represent the nation, she calls attention to the absence of Blackness from the usual notions of Canadian identity.



About the artist: Camille Turner is a Jamaican- Canadian artist. Turner’s artwork is concentrated mainly in performance and media arts. Turner was born in Kingston, Jamaica and immigrated to Canada with her family at the age of 9, settling in Hamilton, Ontario. Her early art included works in textiles, multimedia and performance. She is one of Canada’s first Black performance artists.

Please preview the short film and then share it with your students. Select one or two guiding questions that reflect your curriculum and can guide student research and inquiry connected to the artwork, artists, and the socio-cultural context in which it was created.

Guiding Questions:

- Multiculturalism and inclusivity are key elements of the Canadian “brand”; but are they genuine values? Or myths?
- What myths, clichés and stereotypes about Canada are being disrupted by the artist?
- Identity is something you construct and you put on. What parts of your identity are constructions? How did you create them?
- Does it matter who controls-or creates- the narrative around a cultural or national identity?
- Blackness is historically absent-or erased- from the notions of Canadian identity. How does this artwork reflect the relationship between Canadian identities, past and present?
- What other identities are historically absent from the story of Canada and Canadian identity? How might you challenge that erasure?
- What social attitudes past and present are reflected in this artwork?
- Every *Miss Canadiana* performance challenges our ideals of both beauty and nationality. Who do we permit to represent these things? Who do we deny?

- Why do you think the artist feels that she needs to make an image like this of herself as a beauty queen?
- What power does belonging have?
- Whose perspective is being upheld in this artwork?
- How does this artwork connect to current social and political changes, such as the Black Lives Matter movement?
- In what ways does tension, juxtaposition and irony exist in this artwork?
- How do traditional dramatic techniques support Turner in communicating her concept?
- The character in the work is a beauty queen. What should a Canadian beauty queen look like? If not like Turner, why not?
- How might you compose a story, monologue, dialogue, dance, artwork, poem, or song to rewrite a moment in your own personal/family history?
- How might you respond to the theme of “*identity and belonging*” through a monologue, dialogue, dance, artwork, poem, or song?
- How might you create a character who disrupts a stereotype or myth connected to your intersecting social identities?

Supporting Links:

- [camille turner » Miss Canadiana](#)
- [Ontario's Anti-Black Racism Strategy](#)
- [Camille Turner](#) (Article)
- [Miss Canadiana \(2005\)](#)
- [Alienated Cosmopolitans](#) (Article)
- [Race Is a Four-Letter Word by Sobaz Benjamin - NFB](#)
- [Teaching African Canadian History](#)

Ontario Secondary Curriculum Connections - Overall Expectations

The Arts - Visual Arts

B1. The Critical Analysis Process: demonstrate an understanding of the critical analysis process by examining, interpreting, evaluating, and reflecting on various art works;

B2. Art, Society, and Values: demonstrate an understanding of how art works reflect the society in which they were created, and of how they can affect personal values;

C1. Terminology: demonstrate an understanding of, and use correct terminology when referring to, elements, principles, and other components related to visual arts;

C2. Conventions and Techniques: demonstrate an understanding of conventions and techniques used in the creation of visual art works;

C3. Responsible Practices: demonstrate an understanding of responsible practices related to visual arts.

The Arts - Media Arts

B1. The Critical Analysis Process: demonstrate an understanding of the critical analysis process by using it to monitor the creative process, and by examining, interpreting, assessing, and reflecting on media artworks;

B2. Identity and Values: demonstrate an understanding of how media art works reflect personal and cultural identity, and affect personal, cultural, and community values and their awareness of those values;

C2. Contexts and Influences: demonstrate an understanding of the sociocultural and historical contexts of media arts;

C3. Responsible Practices: demonstrate an understanding of responsible practices associated with producing, presenting, and experiencing media art works.

The Arts - Dance

A2. Choreography and Composition: combine the elements of dance in a variety of ways in composing individual and ensemble dance creations;

The Arts - Drama

A1. The Creative Process: use the creative process and a variety of sources and forms, both individually and collaboratively, to design and develop drama works;

B2. Drama and Society: demonstrate an understanding of how societies present and past use or have used drama, and of how creating and viewing drama can benefit individuals, groups, and communities;

The Arts - Music

A1. The Creative Process: apply the stages of the creative process when performing notated and/or improvised music and composing and/or arranging music;

History:

A1. Historical Inquiry: use the historical inquiry process and the concepts of historical thinking when investigating aspects of Canadian history, with a focus on the development of identity and culture (CHI4U)

B2. Significant Interactions: analyse the impact of significant interactions, including interactions with the environment, on the selected ethnic group's country or region of origin

B3. Culture and Identity: analyse ways in which various factors contributed to the development of culture and identity in the selected ethnic group in its country or region of origin

English:

Writing: use a variety of organizational structures and patterns to produce coherent and effective written work;

Writer's Craft:

B: Practising Writing: 1. Exploring Ideas, Forms, and Styles: generate and experiment with ideas about writing content, forms, and styles;

Communications Technology:

A1. demonstrate an understanding of the core concepts, techniques, and skills required to produce a range of communications media products and services;

C2. demonstrate an understanding of the social effects of current communications media technologies and the importance of respecting cultural and societal diversity in the production of media projects.

Communications Technology: Broadcast and Print Production

A1. demonstrate an understanding of the core concepts, techniques, and skills required to produce a range of audio, video, broadcast journalism, graphic arts, and printing and publishing products or services;

C2. demonstrate an understanding of social effects and issues arising from the use of communications media technologies and the importance of respecting cultural and societal diversity in the production of media projects.