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## MASQUERADING

Artist Wynne Greenwood is known for exploring queer, feminist identity by taking on different personae (personalities) and touring the country as all three members of the band, Tracy + The Plastics, performing live as vocalist Tracy, accompanied by videos of herself as backup singers Nikki and Cola. In her 2015 New Museum exhibition, "Kelly," Greenwood debuted videos in which she re-performed an archive of Tracy + The Plastics performances next to "More Heads" sculptures, found-object "heads" which allow Greenwood to further experiment with imagining new versions of herself. Greenwood creates More Heads from found materials, including fabric, clay, cardboard and children's toys. She also records each finished sculpture with a handheld video camera, while performing a soundtrack of scripted and improvised dialogue. See a video excerpt [here](#).

"I'm thinking about mediation, misperception and perspective...Compromise, ownership, truth and care. Negotiating the impulse to share and the impulse for privacy and understanding..."

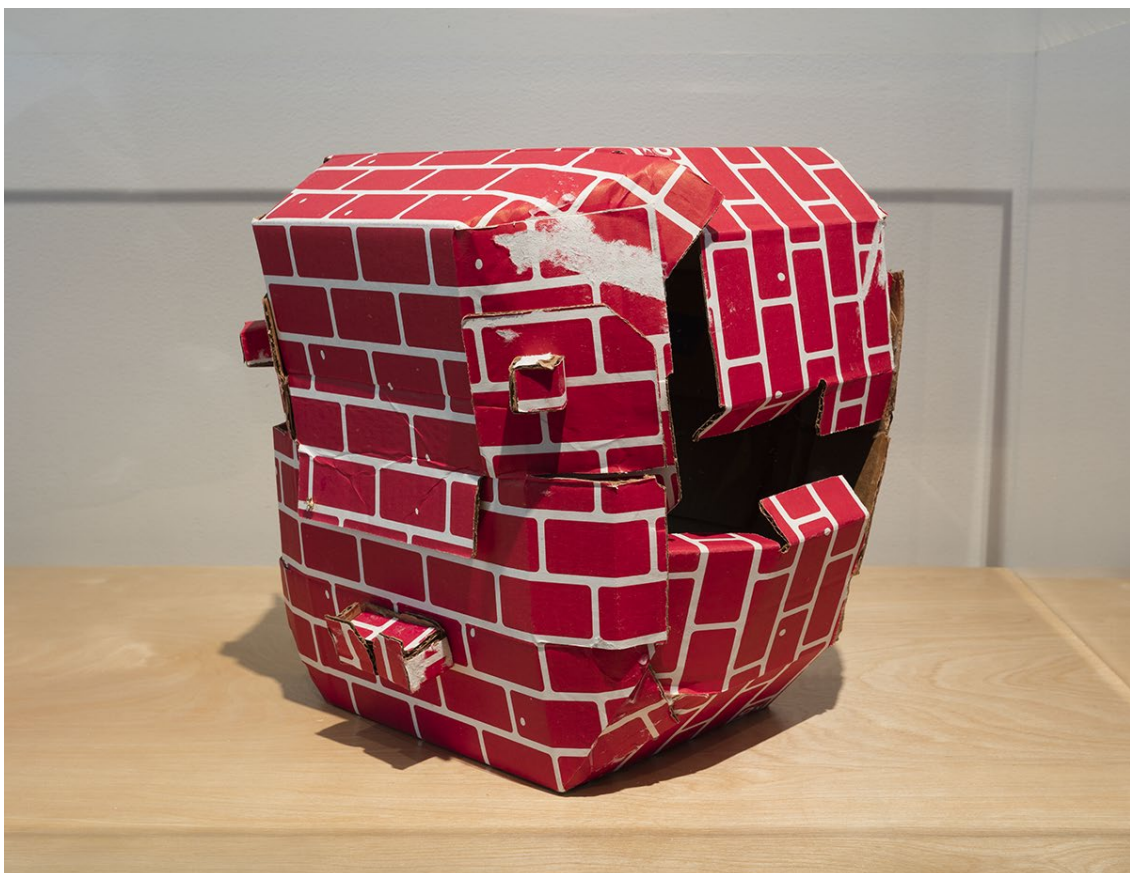
– Wynne Greenwood in "Kelly" exhibition publication on *More Heads* (2015)

To learn more about Greenwood's personae, you can watch a [video](#), [listen](#) to Tracy + The Plastics, and visit the New Museum [website](#).

### KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

- **Identity:** how we describe, think of and define ourselves, including personality, beliefs, looks and expressions
- **Persona:** a personality, role or character one adopts or tries on, with different traits, behaviors and looks
- **Three-dimensional:** having length, breadth and depth; an object that we can walk around and view from different sides and angles

### START WITH ART: WYNNE GREENWOOD



- What types of **three-dimensional** objects do you see in this picture? What kinds of flat or projected images do you see?
- What found materials do you see? Greenwood found the cardboard with the brick wall pattern in the studio space while working at the New Museum and she found the costume butterfly wings at a dollar store on

nearby Grand Street.

- How might these sculptures relate to Greenwood's exploration of **persona** and **identity**?

## LOOK AROUND

- Do you ever play dress up, or wear different masks, or costumes to perform a character, or persona?
- When do you wear masks for protection and why? What do you think people care about when you see them wearing protective masks?
- Do you feel different when you put on a mask? Do you feel like you are hiding, expressing part of yourself, or the same?
- What parts of the face do protective masks cover? Do you find it harder or easier to know what personality or feelings someone is expressing when they wear a mask?
- Do people communicate differently when they are wearing masks? Do their voices change? Do you notice their eyes and eyebrows communicating when you can't see their mouth and nose?

Wynne Greenwood shared her thinking about the process of making "More Heads" while she was an Artist in Residence in Belgrade, 2013:

"I decided to turn to using found and donated materials, to help me connect to the place. But after realizing that the city's very marginalized Roma population had taken up recycling as an unofficial job, my white American art-making dumpster-diving felt inappropriate, or more complicated than I could comprehend at the time. So I started using my own recycling—lots of cereal boxes—and whatever I could find around the studio space to make "Earth Head" and "Plastic Head." Thinking about belonging to a place and performing that belonging, also the crumbling state... I started to see peace as something that needs to be performed and maintained, not as a natural state of being that we will reach or evolve into."

– Wynne Greenwood in "Kelly" exhibition publication on *More Heads* (2015)

How might we use recycled materials like Wynne Greenwood to make a new persona for ourselves in the form of a sculptural head or mask?

## MAKE ART

Let's create our own sculpture or mask to highlight aspects of our **identity** or create a new **persona**, using recycled materials and objects we find at home.

### Materials

- Scrap cardboard, including packaging and cereal boxes
- Scissors
- Scrap or recycled paper, including magazines and newspapers
- Colored pencils, markers, crayons or paint

- Wet glue and/or glue sticks
- Assorted found and craft materials, such as fabric scraps, yarn, pipe cleaners, buttons, beads, and/or plastic bottlecaps

## **Making**

1. Start by gathering your materials, and finding ideas in the colors, textures and images on fabrics and in magazines and newspapers.
2. Think about whether you want to emphasize an existing part of your personality, maybe something you don't always share or show people outside your close friends and family, or whether you prefer to create a new persona or personality.
3. Write or discuss a list of personality traits and things you like to do, or traits you imagine for your new persona.
4. Begin arranging your materials to share your vision of your identity or new persona.
5. Use your scissors to cut and form cardboard into the shape of a face or head, or ask an adult to help you cut.
6. Alternately, use fabric and paper, rolling, folding, tying and gluing parts and pieces together.
7. If you plan to wear your sculpture like a mask, consider using yarn to tie it behind your head.
8. You can also cut pieces of yarn and glue them on top of the mask or sculpture's surface as hair, eyebrows and other features, or twist pipe cleaners into hair and other features.
9. You can glue beads and buttons as eyes, or use them to add color, texture and personality.
10. Put on your mask or lift up your sculpture and talk to or through it, performing as your new persona or emphasizing your identity.

## **REFLECTION**

- How did it feel to wear or speak through the new face you created?
- What does your mask or sculpture express and how? Did you make choices in colors, or how you created features such as mouth and eyes? Is your face smiling, serious, sleepy, surprised, sad, or expressing other moods or emotions?
- Did you discover anything new about yourself through the process of making the sculpture, including listing your personas, or your own personality traits?
- Greenwood records her sculptures, including making a soundtrack with her voice that is both scripted and improvised. What kind of soundtrack or video can you make with your sculpture or mask?

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"Wynne Greenwood: 'Kelly,'" 2015. Exhibition Views: New Museum. Photo: Joerg Lohse.

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