

Family Activity Guide



CLEMENTE

Combining World Cultures, Histories, and Belief Systems

Welcome to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum! This activity guide is for kids and grown-ups to use together as they explore the exhibition *Clemente*.

During your visit, please remember:

- touch the art only with your eyes, never with your hands
- walk in the museum, do not run
- use a quiet voice when sharing your ideas
- write and draw with pencils only, not pens

WHAT WILL YOU SEE TODAY?

Today you will see works of art by Francesco Clemente, who uses many different mediums and incorporates many influences into his artworks. Many of these influences come from Italy, India, and the United States, places where Clemente spends a part of each year. You will be able to follow themes that Clemente often explores, including the connection between the mind and the body, and the relationship of art and writing. Clemente is known for using various styles and techniques. Have fun exploring all of the different ways he has made art!

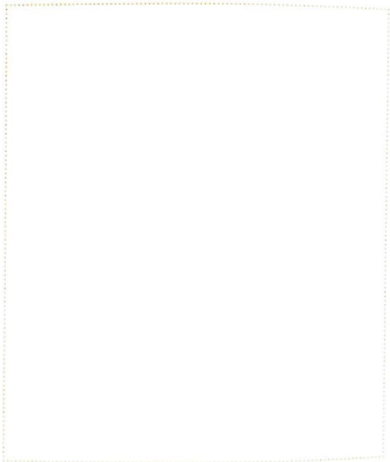
Clemente was born in Naples, Italy in 1952. As an adult, he lived for long periods of time in Italy and in India, but his permanent art studio is located in New York City. His art draws many influences from these three places.

Find Clemente's artwork *The Four Corners* (pictured on the cover). What countries can you find on the map? What else do you see in this painting? How are these things arranged in unusual ways?

What are two different places that are important to you? (For example, home and school, New York and another city, the United States and another country.) Write the names of these two places here:

_____ and _____

In the box below, trace an outline of your hand. Look at your drawing and decide where on the hand you want to put the two places you listed above. Then, inside the hand, draw a map that features both these places.



Mediums, Formats, and Techniques

Artists can work with many different **mediums**, or materials. Some mediums that you can see in this exhibition include watercolor, oil paint, metal, cotton, paper, ink, and pastel. Look at the different artworks. Can you recognize any of the mediums Clemente used?

Clemente often uses techniques and mediums that are found in artwork from Italy or India, two cultures that have had a great effect on Clemente's art. In India, one traditional art form is **miniatures**. Indian miniatures are often small, carefully painted images of people, animals, and places. They frequently have intricately patterned backgrounds or borders, which are part of the overall design.

Find Clemente's series *Story of My Country I*. How many different paintings are part of this work? Explain to a grown-up how several paintings grouped together can tell a story.

Think of a pattern made of repeating shapes like those used in miniatures. You might use circles, squiggles, leaves, flowers, or other shapes. Below, draw your pattern all the way around the border. Make sure to keep the pattern very small, and include as much detail as possible. Then, inside the border, draw a picture that represents your culture!



The Self and the Outside World

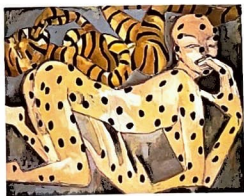
Clemente is very interested in exploring the idea of the **self** in his work. Some people believe that our self, or our idea of who we are, can be shaped by different influences, including parents, friends, and teachers, as well as by television, religions, or social customs.

One way Clemente explores his self in his art is by creating **self-portraits**. Throughout the exhibition you can see many different self-portraits. Do you think Clemente sees himself the same way in all these works?

Another way that Clemente explores the idea of the self is by examining the relationship between people and animals. For Clemente, the differences between people and animals are not as clear as we might think.

Find Clemente's painting *Skin*. Why do you think that one person has been painted with spotted animal skin, and another with stripes?

At home, create your own self-portrait, in which you are dressed like an animal. For example, you might dress yourself up as a lion, a bird, or a fish. Why did you choose the animal you chose? What might this image tell others about you?



Poetry, Writing, and Literary Influences

Throughout his life, Clemente has worked with poets to combine his drawing and painting with their writing. One artwork that Clemente worked on with the poet Allen Ginsberg is called *Images from Mind and Space*. After Ginsberg wrote the poem "Images from Mind and Space," Clemente looked at the poem and thought about how it made him feel. Then, he created his paintings.



Look at *Images from Mind and Space*, which is a book of watercolors incorporating Ginsberg's poem as a border. Notice the eyes in the painting, and the way the hands are placed to make the eyes stand out.

In the box below, create a drawing that starts with a large pair of eyes. After you draw the eyes, fill in the rest of the drawing. Then, around the edges of your drawing, write a short poem about the eyes featured in your picture.



Vocabulary

Medium: the material with which an artist creates an artwork. Pencil, paint, paper, clay, stone, straw, film, and video are all examples of artistic mediums.

Miniatures: small images of people, places, and animals painted onto paper with intricate patterns.

Self: who we are. Some people believe that the self can be shaped by many influences, including parents, friends, television, teachers, religions, or social customs.

Self-portrait: an artwork that an artist creates representing him or herself.

The Four Corners (detail), 1985. Gouache on 12 sheets of handmade Pondicherry paper, joined with handwoven cotton strips. 244 x 240 cm. Private collection

Story of My Country I, 1990. India ink and gouache on Tamarind vellum, 18 sheets, approximately 22.9 x 45.7 cm each. Courtesy Anthony d'Offay Gallery, London

Skin, 1996. Oil on canvas, 121.9 x 152.4 cm. Private collection

Double-page spread from *Images from Mind and Space*, with handwritten text by Allen Ginsberg and illustrations by Francesco Clemente, 1983. Watercolor on paper, 14.3 x 39.7 cm. Collection of Francesco and Alba Clemente, New York

Clemente
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