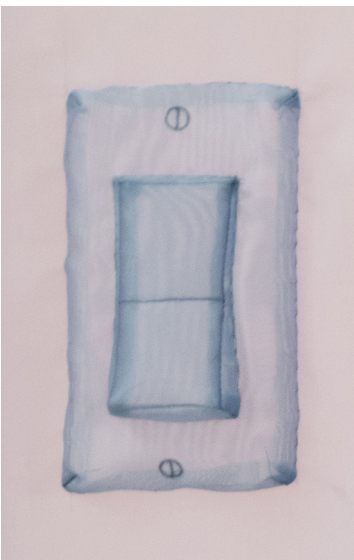


# Community



## Representing Home



Consider how artists represent the meanings and memories associated with “home”

# Lesson Overview

# Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Discuss the idea of “home,” and consider different definitions of and qualities associated with home
- Analyze Do Ho Suh’s use of material, detail, and scale to convey ideas about home and memory
- Create individual artworks inspired by memories of places they’ve called home

## Vocabulary

Home

The definition of home can be different for each person, as a home can be a physical place, a feeling, or a memory

Contemporary art

A genre of art usually made by artists who are alive and still making work in the present day

Installation

A large and immersive three-dimensional artwork

Scale

The size of an object compared to another object (a 1:1 scale means that an object is the same size as in real life; a 1:100 scale means that an object is one hundred times smaller than in real life)

## Required Materials

- Drawing paper
- Pencils
- Colored mark-making tools (such as colored pencils, markers, etc.)
- Tracing paper (optional)
- Scissors (optional)
- Glue (optional)

## Included Resources

- [Video walkthrough of \*The Perfect Home II\*](#)
- [Map of Seoul and New York City](#)

# For the Teacher

# Background Information

Do Ho Suh is a contemporary Korean artist known for his large-scale “fabric architecture” sculptures. As an immigrant and diasporic artist who divides his time, living in Europe, the United States, and South Korea, Suh has often had to leave behind places he has called home. For Suh, home is a physical space as well as an elusive memory that he memorializes through his art. By re-creating portable replicas of his former homes using translucent fabric, Suh fashions a home that he can take everywhere he goes. Visitors can walk through and experience the spaces in his large 1:1 scale re-creations. While highly personal, Suh’s art addresses common themes related to migration and identity in an age of globalization.

## Artwork Description

As a 1:1 scale reproduction of Suh’s former apartment, *The Perfect Home II* is a large installation that invites visitors to walk in and around the various rooms of the apartment. Made of blue, green, and pink translucent nylon that is hand sewn onto thin metal rods, the immersive three-dimensional space (measuring 9 × 20 × 43 ft.) is large, yet delicate. As one walks within the installation, one notices small details like the pipes on the ceiling and the intercom and light switches on the wall. Larger details such as the staircase, windows, and fireplace are also reproduced in fabric. In the bathroom, the sink and the toilet are reproduced in a three-dimensional manner with details such as the faucet or toilet lever also in place. The details enhance the realistic nature of the installation.

## About the Artwork

*The Perfect Home II* is a full-scale re-creation of the artist’s former apartment in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York City, where he lived for nineteen years. The delicate and translucent nature of the fabric, reminiscent of the colorful silk used in the Korean traditional dress known as *hanbok*, evokes the fragile nature of memories. Small details such as electrical outlets and doorknobs not only enhance the realistic nature of Suh’s large and immersive sculptures but also help bring back memories for the artist. Suh painstakingly studies these details by covering the entire original space with a thin white paper and then rubbing the surfaces to capture the various forms and textures. Suh describes the gesture of rubbing (which when written in Korean is not distinguishable from “loving”) to be itself an act of love. Through such careful attention to capturing and reproducing the details of his former homes, Suh manages to memorialize and carry with him the spaces he no longer physically inhabits.

# Lesson

# Introduction/Warm-Up

Tell students that you'll be thinking about the idea of home. Ask:

→ How would you define the word "home"?

Ask students to brainstorm other words they think of when they hear the word "home." To aid their brainstorming, you can ask them to consider feelings, objects, or activities they associate with home.

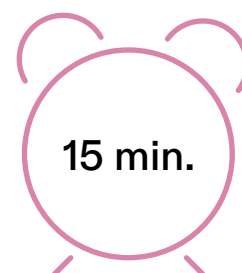
Ask students to write down their responses and then share them with the class. It may be helpful for students to group their responses into feelings, objects, and activities.

Explain that the definition of home can be different for each person, and that a home isn't necessarily a place where someone lives. A home can be a physical place, a feeling, or a memory.

Ask:

→ Can anyone think of a place that feels like home, even if you don't live there?

You may want to share some of your own connections to the idea of home, and places that feel like home, to help get the discussion started.



# Artwork Discussion

Explain to students that they will be looking at one artwork by South Korean artist Do Ho Suh. The artwork is an example of an installation, which means a large and immersive three-dimensional artwork.

Show students the walkthrough video. Before starting the video, explain that the artwork is life-size—the walls are over 9 feet tall!—and is meant to be walked through. Ask students to pay attention to any details that stand out to them while they're watching.

Ask students:

- What did you notice about the artwork?
- What words would you use to describe this artwork? Why?
- What do you notice about the material this artwork is made of?
- How do you think it would feel to walk through this installation? Why?

Show students a map showing the location of Seoul and New York City and explain that Suh moved from South Korea to the United States when he was 29 years old. In 1997, he moved to an apartment in Chelsea, a neighborhood in New York City, where he lived for almost twenty years. This artwork is a replica, or copy, of that apartment, made from nylon, a type of translucent fabric. Show detailed images from the artwork and explain that Suh even included tiny details, like light switches and faucets.

Project a still image of the artwork and tell students that Suh titled this artwork *The Perfect Home II*.

Ask:

- What do you think the title means?
- What do you think makes this home perfect?

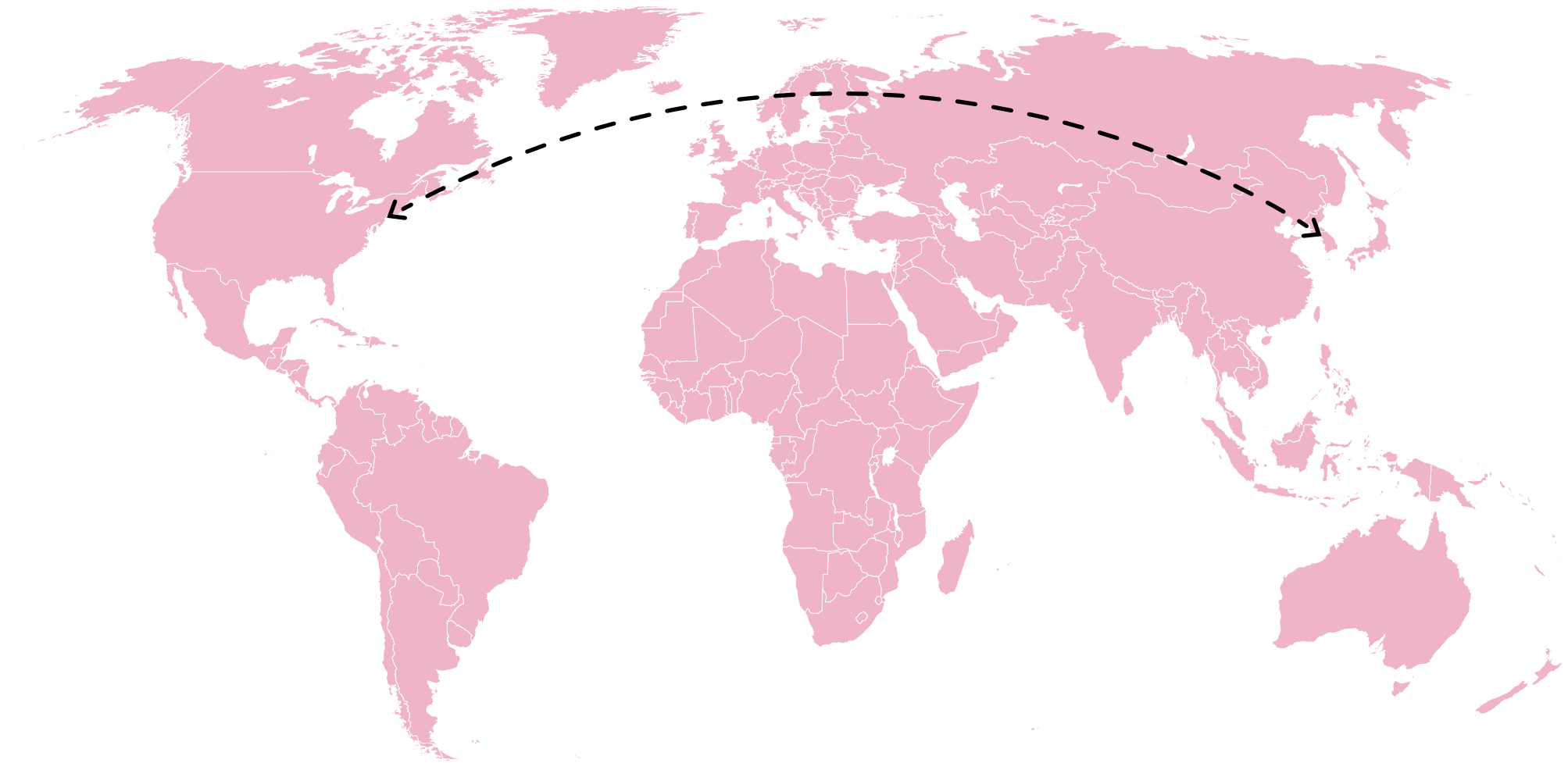
Share the following quote from Do Ho Suh: “At some point in life, you have to leave your home. When you go back, it’s not the same home anymore. Home is something you carry along with your life . . . I had to make something that’s light and transportable, something that you can fold and put in a suitcase and bring with you all the time.”

Ask:

- What stood out to you from that quote?
- Why would someone want a home that they can “fold and put in a suitcase and bring with [them] all the time”?

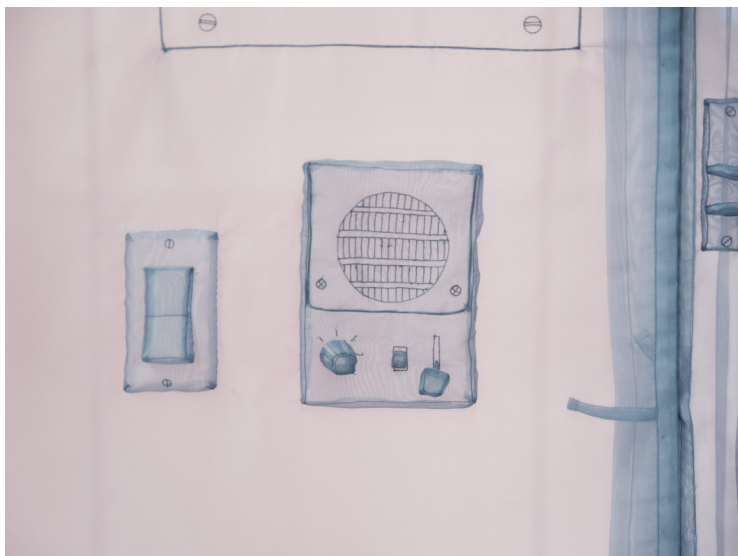








Do Ho Suh (Korean, born 1962). *The Perfect Home II*, 2003. Translucent nylon. Brooklyn Museum; Gift of Lawrence B. Benenson, 2017.46. © Do Ho Suh. (Photo: Brooklyn Museum)



Do Ho Suh (Korean, born 1962). *The Perfect Home II* (details), 2003. Translucent nylon. Brooklyn Museum; Gift of Lawrence B. Benenson, 2017.46. © Do Ho Suh. (Photo: Brooklyn Museum)

# Activity

*Note: Materials for this activity are flexible depending on what you have available and how much time you have. You can provide students with several sheets of tracing paper so they can experiment with layering and transparency, or with regular drawing paper to just sketch their ideas. You can also provide scissors and glue to let students move elements of their drawings around and create a layered artwork, or they can work on one sheet of paper.*

*Before this lesson, consider where in the classroom students will display their artworks. If students have cubbies or assigned seats, their artworks can be placed there throughout the year, or they can be displayed as a gallery on a wall in the classroom.*

Tell students that they are going to make their own work of art inspired by Suh and the idea of carrying home with you wherever you go.

Ask students to imagine a place that they have called home, or a place that has felt like a home. Remind them that the definition of home can be different for each person and that a home isn't necessarily a place where someone lives. Have them brainstorm some things they associate with the place they choose; they can consider objects, feelings, and memories.

After a few minutes, pass out materials and ask students to create a drawing that will remind them of the place they chose. While they work, ask them to consider:

- Do you want to focus on one particular object or memory, or more than one?
- What color, or colors, do you associate with the place you chose?
- How can you use them in your artwork?
- Suh included tiny details, like light switches. What details can you include?

*If using tracing paper:* Experiment with layering your drawings in different ways.

- What happens when you layer different colors and images?

*If using scissors and glue:* After ten minutes, ask students to decide on a final composition and then glue together their final artwork.

When students are finished, help them to install their artworks. If time allows, have students walk around and look at each other's work. Ask one or two students to share what they chose to draw.



# Extension Activities

# Math Connection—Shifting Scale

Show students images of Do Ho Suh's installation and remind them that it's an exact copy of his former apartment. Explain that he took precise measurements of everything in his apartment, including little details like the size of a light switch, then made the artwork at the same size. Introduce the term "scale," and explain that since his artwork is the same size as his apartment, it's made at a 1:1 scale. Practice the concept by taking measurements of something in your classroom and then drawing it at different scales, for side-by-side comparison, such as 1:2 (half-sized), 1:10 (1/10 the size), etc.

## Arts Connection— Gathering Information

Show students the video [Do Ho Suh: "Rubbing/Loving"](#) and ask them to pay attention to the techniques Do Ho Suh uses to gather information about his home.

After the video, ask:

- How did Suh gather information about the space he was re-creating?
- What other ways could you gather information about a space?

Together, practice gathering information about your classroom using different techniques, such as the rubbing technique shown in the video or using tracing paper over a photo to copy details.

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Cover:

Do Ho Suh (Korean, born 1962). *The Perfect Home II* (details), 2003. Translucent nylon. Brooklyn Museum; Gift of Lawrence B. Benenson, 2017.46.  
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