



Using the works of Stacy Kirby to illustrate how performance art can comment on issues and change minds. Note: This lesson plan is intended to be a theoretical framework and can be adapted/changed by Stacey Kirby as needed. Created by Austin Craver, UNCG MLIS Graduate Student. Spring 2021. Dr. Colin Post.

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## Intended Age Groups

College aged students (age 17-25+).

## Subject Areas

Drama (primary), Political Science, English, History, Sociology

## Essential Questions

How can performance art advocate for social change? How can performances serve as teaching tools?

# Pre-Lesson Reading

## Article 1.

*Welcome to the Bureau: Stacey Kirby, ArtPrize 8 juried grand prize winning artist, takes charged conversations about identity, civil rights, and belonging—and gets us to listen to each other.*

Link: <https://medium.com/cultured-gr/welcome-to-the-bureau-209437ea9b74>

## Article 2.

*Performance and Development: Theatre for Social Change*

Link:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320758574\\_Performance\\_and\\_Development\\_Theat](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320758574_Performance_and_Development_Theat)

## Introductory Activity

Ask students to think about one of their favorite stories from books, plays, movies, TV shows, anything. In two or three short sentences, ask them to quickly tell the story from beginning to end, asking them to pick out any social, societal, or moral messages the story might be trying to convey. The instructor can pick their own example first to get their minds moving. The purpose of this activity is to get students to make the connection that art can be used as a way to comment on society and inspire audiences to think about the real world problems.

## Reflection on the Readings

Ask the students what they thought of Stacey Kirby's art project. Did any of it resonate with them?

The Wong and Clammer article talks about "playback" theater where the audience is actively involved in the art. How does Stacey do this? Why might this be effective when trying to address a particular issue?

## Watch The Following Video



## Stacey Kirby: Performance and Installation Artist.

from Alex Maness



## Stacey Kirby: Performance and Installation Artist.

 Vimeo

In this short film, performance and installation artist Stacey L. Kirby shares insight into subjects that fuel her artistic 'performative fire' and inspire...

This video shows artist Stacey Kirby performing her projects "The Validation Project" and "VALIDnation."

As you watch the video, think about the following questions in addition to other things you might observe.

- How does her character act? (Speech, mannerisms, etc.)
- What feeling is the set trying to convey? (Lighting, props, design, etc.)
- Stacey is an artist/actor interacting with non actors. How might this change how she will perform?
- What do you think of her using a facsimile of an office environment to talk about "community and belonging"?
- How well do you think these projects her intended message?

## Assignment

Break into groups of three to four (assigned by the instructor). Choose a social, political, economic, environmental, etc. (ie. a real-world issue) and design a theoretical performance art project that you would perform. Like Stacey Kirby's installation, it must involve audience participation in some way.

Think of what kind of characters or scenes you would need in this performance. How long will it be? What kind of sets, effects, and props would enhance the performance?

How will information about your issue be presented? How will you attempt to educate participants interactively without being "preachy" or performing "at them." Remember, Stacey actively involved her participants in the process.