Education Guide
January 27 - April 22, 2018

The word “baggage” has both physical and emotional connotations. Physically, it is something akin to a suitcase, packed for travel; in the emotional realm it suggests the thoughts, memories, and experiences we carry with us as we move through life. Our “baggage,” whether physical or emotional, positive or painful, accumulates as we grow, becoming part and parcel of who we are.

The artists in Baggage Claims come from many different parts of the world, yet they use materials and the language of art to communicate across nationalities and borders. They invite us all to plumb our own well of memories and associations. For instance, Palestinian artist Taysir Batniji’s work is a suitcase filled with sand. Sand is always shifting, unstable, and often located at the edge of the known world. A childhood song tells us that “the foolish man builds his house upon the sand as the wise man builds his house upon the rock.” Batniji’s sculpture suggests that for him, home and his own memories are suffused with the very qualities we associate with sand.

Walead Beshty, in his FedEx series, presents fragile laminated glass cubes that have been packed into ready-to-ship FedEx boxes. The condition in which these boxes, both glass and cardboard, reach their destinations serves as a metaphor for the very physical travails of the refugee.

The sculptor Subodh Gupta, uses cast aluminum to create an image of a common bundle. His choice of materials seems to elevate the precious quality that one’s dearest possessions hold, particularly at times of great upheaval. Gupta’s bundle sculptures relate closely to the artist’s thoughts about globalization and its effect on the lives of ordinary people.

As you explore the works in Baggage Claims, consider what each artist is telling us about his or her own experiences and how those experiences may, in some way, relate to your own.
For class discussion:

1. If you had to leave your current home to live in another country, what memories, thoughts, and experiences would you take with you?
2. How much baggage do you need to feel comfortable when you travel?
3. Think of the phrase “travel lightly.” If you had to leave your home and could only take five things, what would you take and why?

To learn more about Baggage Claims visit: http://www.curatorsquared.com/baggage-claims/

Discover immigrant and refugee experiences through stories:
http://sixwordmemoirs.com/about/fresh-off-the-boat/
https://www.edutopia.org/article/books-explore-refugee-experience

Related programs

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 6:30-8 PM
PUBLIC RECEPTION
Free and open to the public. Cash bar. No reservations required.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 5 PM
LECTURE: YESOMI UMOLU
Falk Visiting Scholar in Art History

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 6:30-7 PM
PUBLIC TOUR

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 6:30 PM
PANEL DISCUSSION
BUILDING COMMUNITY:
IMMIGRANTS + REFUGEES IN THE TRIAD
Public reception follows.

TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 12 PM
NOON @ THE ‘SPOON PUBLIC TOUR

This exhibition is organized by the Orlando Museum of Art and co-curated by Ginger Gregg Duggan and Judith Hoos Fox of c²-curatorsquared. Its Weatherspoon presentation is supported by a Kohler Grant from UNCG’s International programs center, UNCG’s First Year Common Read, and ArtsGreensboro. Support for this gallery guide comes from the Charlotte W. Toler Education Fund.