

DURATION
• 15 MINUTES

OBJECTIVE
• BECOME AWARE OF OUR IMPACT
ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE
THINGS WE WILL LEAVE BEHIND
FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.



Juan Ortiz-Apuy, still taken from the video *Tropicana* (detail), 2020.

WHAT OBJECTS WILL FUTURE EXPLORERS FIND?

Start by asking students what traces of the past have survived until our times.

Q What objects found in the ruins of ancient civilizations are still around today? (Name, for example, the Egyptian or Mexican pyramids, temples in Asia, the city of Pompeii, etc.)

A Mostly mineral materials—pottery, tools, stone sculptures, bones—but also other objects made of natural materials, like jewels, textiles and parchments.

Now get your students to think about what will be left of us in the future, by asking them to take part in a role-play.

Q Imagine you are human explorers in the future who discover vestiges of our civilization 1000 years from now. What do you find? What materials are there a lot of?

A Among the many possible answers: electronic devices (e.g., computers, smartphones), plastic items (e.g., bottles, packaging), etc.

ARE HUMANS HOOKED ON PLASTIC?

There are such massive quantities of plastic produced and thrown away on the planet every year that our civilization just might go down in history as the Plastic Age! The reason is that this material can take hundreds of years to degrade in the environment. The plastic objects we consume today may end up being the vestiges of our civilization for future inhabitants of the Earth. Will they be preserved and exhibited in museums? Think about the objects presented in Juan Ortiz-Apuy's works (e.g., bottles, cleaning brushes, wrapping paper, and more). How will those future dwellers view us?

EXPLORING FURTHER

Ask students to write about or draw vestiges of our society 1000 years from now. What will humans in the year 3020 learn about us from the objects we continue to throw away today?