



K - 5th - Woodside PTA Art Docent lesson - February 2026.

These talking points can be used if you'd like to share more information with students about his work on slides 5 and 6.

(Slide 5)

Bliz-aard Ball Sale on February 13, 1983.

- Location: Cooper Square in New York City's East Village.
- The Act: Hammons set up a small rug on the sidewalk alongside regular street vendors. He sold hand-rolled snowballs of varying sizes, meticulously arranged in graduated rows, for one dollar each.
- Concept: The work was a witty critique of the art market, commodification, and value. He deliberately sold a "product" (snow) that would inevitably melt and leave no trace, challenging the idea of art as a permanent, high-value asset.

Basketball Chandelier(s)

- David Hammons created his basketball chandelier works as part of an evolving series across several years.
- 1983 - the original which featured bottle-cap-studded telephone poles topped with basketball hoops.
- 1997 - 2000: Created more versions of the same idea.
- Concept: The chandelier series is widely considered a more "luxe" and ironic continuation of these themes, reflecting on the glamorized yet often unattainable social aspirations of African American youth

(Slide 5)

African-American Flag(1990)

- Design: The piece reimagines the traditional United States flag by replacing its red, white, and blue colors with the red, black, and green of Marcus Garvey's Pan-African flag.
- Symbolism: It explores the "two-ness" of being both American and Black, merging Black pride and heritage with a critique of America's unfulfilled promises of equality.
- Cultural Context: It was originally created for the 1990 exhibition *"Black USA"*. The work was also produced in the context of the 1989 election of David Dinkins as New York City's first Black mayor.

(Slide 6)

"Hair and Wire, Venice Beach" (also known as "Venice Beach Hair Garden") in 1977

- The Act: While living in Los Angeles, Hammons gathered Black hair from local barbershops, pierced small clumps with straightened coat-hanger wires, and "planted" them in the wet sand along the Venice Beach shoreline.
- Documentation: The ephemeral event was documented by photographer Bruce Talamon, who drove Hammons to the beach in his Fiat. The resulting photographs are now the primary way the piece is viewed in museum collections.
- Significance: The work is considered a "minimal gesture" that used highly personal, culturally significant material (hair) in a public, non-art space without permission. Like many of his works, it was designed to be temporary; the hair "garden" lasted only a day or two before being washed away by the tide.

(Slide 6)

Untitled (1992)

- The Act: While living in Harlem, New York, Hammons used pieces of black hair collected from barbershops and attached them to long metal wires to make his sculpture.
- In this sculpture, thin, spiky shapes stick up from smooth stones on the ground.
- Significance: Barbershops are important places where people talk, share stories, and feel part of a community. By using hair from many different people, the artwork shows that lots of people helped make it, not just one artist. Some hair falls around the artwork, showing that things can change over time. Hammons wanted people to think differently about what art can be and who art is for. His sculpture reminds us that art can be made from ordinary things and that everyone's story matters.