



KS4 and KS5

Explore the Four Seasons

The *Four Seasons* sculptures you can view in the Garden were created by an American artist called Philip Haas in 2010.

These large-scale fibre-glass sculptures are inspired by **Giuseppe Arcimboldo's** (1526-1593) Renaissance paintings. Each statue is reminiscent of a season, depicting the flowers, ivy, moss, fungi, vegetables, fruit, trees, bark, branches, twigs abundant in that period. They reflect the constantly changing cycle of nature seen in the RHS Garden Harlow Carr. The impressive scale of these works could dominate the space; however, they enhance the area they sit in, complimenting the horticulture around them.



Arcimboldo is best known for his human head paintings created from flora, vegetables, fruit and animals. His work was viewed by his contemporaries with a mixture of fascination and admiration. His style of working had never been created before and might be the first development of 'Surreal Art'. Many people of the period thought that he suffered from a mental imbalance. However, we view his work today as truly inspirational and ground-breaking. Part of his body of work was creating other forms of optical illusions.

Today, many Art Historians view Arcimboldo as the Great Grandfather of Surrealism.

The Surrealist movement started in the 20th Century. It was a group of writers, artists and philosophers who wanted to challenge the normal views of society and invert and explore the meaning of reality. They wanted to challenge the rational and conventional, and unlock deeper meanings to the world around them. **Notable artists from that period are Dali, Margritte, Ernst and Breton.**



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Inspire

The *Four Seasons* statues might inspire you to develop work from different perspectives as starting points to a project e.g.

- Art and nature
- Surrealism
- The work of Arcimboldo
- How artists are inspired by the works of others

Research and Explore

While you are in the Garden, use this as an opportunity to collect and record first hand observations.

Using a variety of materials, collect your observations. Try to record them using a variety of different perspectives.

Analyse and Evaluate

To help you analyse and evaluate The *Four Seasons* sculptures, you might want to reflect on the following questions:

- 1 Would you call the statues 'Modern Art'?
- 2 Does putting the statues in the Garden give a different meaning to them than if they had been in an art gallery?
- 3 What locations of the Garden would you put them in and why?
- 4 Do they enhance the visitor experience in the Garden?
- 5 Does the scale of the statues work? How does it make the viewer feel?
- 6 What message is the artist trying to communicate?
- 7 Does the surface texture of the material lend itself to these works of art?
- 8 Do you prefer the Arcimboldo 2-D works or the Philip Haas 3-D creations?
- 9 Can you see an inspirational link that runs from the 16thC works of Arcimboldo, 20thC Surrealism and 21stC statues by Haas?
- 10 How do the statues make you feel? Do they remind you of anything?
- 11 If you had to create a link between nature and the human form how would you represent that in an artwork?
- 12 Do prefer Surrealism or Photorealism styles? Why?