

# ART OF DISSSENT



## Chimneys 1929

### Themes

- Dehumanization
- Industrialization
- Disorientation

### Before the Viewing

- What is the purpose of chimneys? Why do buildings have them? Why are industrial chimneys taller than residential chimneys?
- Discuss what you know of the working conditions in factories at the beginning of the 1900s.
- Even before the Nazis took power in 1933, how did their actions foreshadow bad things to come? Which of their actions foreshadowed war?

### Discussion

- There are four objects in this painting—two chimneys and a hollowed out person. Explain what you feel the other object on the far right is.
- Using normal perspective, chimneys would be larger at the bottom and getting smaller at the top. Why are these chimneys getting smaller at the bottom? What other devices does Fick use to create disorientation?
- The date on the painting is clearly 1929—before death camps. How does the painting capture aspects of dread related to death camps?
- Where are YOU the viewer? From where are you watching? Where would anyone be standing? What is on the earth below?

### Activities

- Sketch all the human-related figures in Fick's works. Put them together in a background of your own. Give your work a title.
- List five adjectives by yourself that reflect your reaction to "Chimneys". As a group select one adjective each. Using markers record your adjective on a ripped piece of paper. Glue these words onto a black background.
- The process of dehumanization. Draw the floating figure standing facing forward. Draw two more versions of the same figure, making each one more human. Place a full or partial line of dialogue below each image.

### Extensions

- The law of the conservation of energy states that energy cannot be created or destroyed; it can only be changed from one form to another. Explain how the painting "Chimneys" is a grim reminder of that law.
- Using Powerpoint or a similar program, create a collage of Fick's paintings, add other images and set the presentation to music.
- In Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, there is a valley of ashes. Compare what it represents to what Fick is describing in "Chimneys".