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RICHMOND art gallery

## SCHOOL ART PROGRAM

### Teacher's Guide

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***Even birds choose trees to perch:*** June Yun

***Illuminations:*** Shima Iuchi

***Boundless I and II:*** Charlotte Wall

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[www.richmondartgallery.org](http://www.richmondartgallery.org)

## ABOUT THE RICHMOND ART GALLERY

The Richmond Art Gallery is a non-profit organization, which means we are not in the business of selling art like a commercial gallery would be. Our mandate is to exhibit and collect contemporary art. Exhibiting and preserving art is an outward expression of the value that a community places in the making of art. Art enriches a community's cultural experience while supporting artistic expression. We show art for visitor's enjoyment and learning. Our educational programs complement the exhibitions to help develop visual literacy and educate visitors about contemporary art practices.

## SCHOOL ART PROGRAM INFORMATION



The School Art Program has been developed for Elementary Students and Teachers to experience the contemporary arts in Richmond. The goal of the program is to educate students about contemporary art, practice art skills, and to develop visual literacy. We do this by:

- Viewing and talking about works of art in the Gallery
- Learning vocabulary relevant to the visual arts
- Discussing the context of artworks
- Creating art projects related to the exhibition and tour

### While in the Gallery : Gallery Rules

It is important for all visitors to remember these rules of the Gallery:

- Do not touch the artworks or walls. Please stay at least 12 inches away from the artwork. Touching damages the artworks.
- Do not take still or video images of the artworks. Artwork is copyrighted by the artist and may not be photographed or copied. Photos are permitted in the art studio while your workshop is in session.
- Switch off cell phone ringers while on your gallery tour.
- Absolutely no running or yelling in the Gallery. Please be respectful of the Gallery space and careful around the artworks.
- During the workshops, please do not touch other's artworks. It is important for each young artist to work on their art by themselves.

### For Your Information:

- Most art projects take at least one day to dry. Please arrange for pick-up of artworks at a later date.
- Free parking is available at the Cultural Centre parking lot, just off Granville Avenue.
- The Gallery is completely accessible to people with disabilities.
- Washrooms are located in the Cultural Centre rotunda behind the front desk, and there is one unisex stall in the art studio.

## IN THE GALLERY : WHAT YOU WILL SEE

### *Even birds choose trees to perch* - [June Yun](#)



June Yun's work incorporates papermaking, traditional Chinese brush painting, and lanterns to create an illuminating wall sculpture. Combining traditional Chinese techniques with contemporary Western concepts, the artist combines these forms to tell the story of her experiences as a Chinese immigrant living in Canada. Using symbolic poetry and imagery in her paintings, June tells the story of her strong ties

to China both in her ideas and in the traditional art forms she uses. The influences of Western culture are seen throughout her narrative and in the formal grid-like presentation of her work.

As we view June Yun's work on the tour, we will discuss Chinese and Canadian art and culture. How and why artists use specific materials and images to tell a narrative will also be discussed.

### *Illuminations* – [Shima Iuchi](#)

Shima Iuchi's work also uses traditional papermaking and lantern techniques, but from a Japanese perspective. Shima has researched the history of the Japanese-Canadian community in Kamloops and gathered personal narratives from members of this community. She uses these narratives in her artwork by incorporating collected photographs and oral stories with hand-made paper structures. While her structures reference the large lanterns of the Nebuta Festival in Japan, they also resemble large 3-dimensional topographical maps. These 'maps' record the history and personal stories of Japanese-Canadians in a specific area.



On the tour, we will discuss Shima's use of materials and how she references both Japanese and Canadian culture. The use of narrative in artworks will also be discussed.

### *Boundless I and II* - [Charlotte Wall](#)



Charlotte Wall's work almost creates an optical illusion in the Gallery space. Charlotte creates an installation in the Gallery window that seems to create a new façade for the building through the use of digital imaging and sculptural elements.

On the tour, we will discuss the use of space and form, and how artists use the exhibition space when creating a site-specific installation.

## SCHOOL ART WORKSHOP : WHAT YOU WILL DO

All tours and workshops are adapted for the grade level of your students.

### TOUR:

What are the differences between Western and Eastern art? How can art tell a story? As students are led through the exhibit, we will discuss the artists and their particular style of working. We will also look at the exhibition as a whole and how each artist addresses the theme of personal history and culture. The tour will focus on:

- Introducing students to different types of art mediums and art genres.
- Encouraging students to think about subject matter and inspiration for creating art; the ways “reality” is portrayed and interpreted by artists.
- Introducing students to the idea of conceptual art and how artists use ideas as a focus of art making.
- How artists are influenced and inspired by their surroundings.
- How narrative is used in art, and how images can communicate ideas.

### EXHIBITION-BASED WORKSHOPS:

#### Chinese Ink Drawing and Painting:

Looking at the work of June Yun for inspiration, we will explore the techniques of traditional Chinese Brush Painting on rice paper. Students will experiment with various brushstrokes and marks as they are shown techniques on how to create washes, opaque areas, and various lines. After experimenting, students will create their finished black and white paintings on rice paper or thicker drawing paper.



#### \*Paper Pulp Sculptural Landscapes:

Looking at the work of Shima Iuchi, students will learn the basics of papermaking and how to create an additive sculpture. Students will begin by drawing a map or a birds-eye view of a specific landscape. Paper pulp will be added and shaped by hand, to turn their maps into 3-D relief landscapes complete with landforms, structures, and plant-life. Learn about scale, texture, and form while using the pulp as a form of paperclay.

This is a messy project...please be dressed for mess!

*\*Projects will take a few days to dry. Once dry, these landscapes can be worked on further at school with drawings, collage, or paint.*

## GLOSSARY OF ART TERMS



**Chinese Brush Painting:** Painting in the traditional Chinese style is done with a brush dipped in black or coloured inks, or watercolours. In traditional Chinese paintings, the purpose was not to reproduce exactly the appearance of nature but rather to grasp an emotion or atmosphere so as to catch the “rhythm” of nature.

**Conceptual Art:** Art that is concerned in expressing an idea (concept) to the viewer.

**Contemporary Art:** Generally defined as art made after 1970, it refers to the methods, styles, and techniques of artists living now. It is characterized by great diversity both of materials and concepts.

**Grid:** A pattern developed by crossing vertical and horizontal lines.

**Installation Art:** An art form that uses almost any media (sculpture, video, paint, etc.) to create a sensual and/or conceptual experience in a particular environment. Often, the gallery space is used directly in the installation.

**Multidisciplinary Artist:** An artist that works within many disciplines, such as sculpture, photography, painting, etc.

**Narrative Art:** Art which tells a story or relays information about an important event.



## RESOURCES

Gatto, Joseph, Albert Porter and Jack Selleck. (1978). *Exploring Visual Design*. Davis Publications Inc., Massachusetts, USA.

Herberhjolz, Barbara and Donald. (1998). *Artworks for Elementary Teachers, Eighth Edition*. McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., Boston, USA.

Richmond Art Gallery Association. (1992). *Kaleidoscope: Fragments of Self, Teacher’s Workbook*. Richmond, BC: Amir Ali Alibhai, ed.

Aomori Nebuta Festival Official Site - [http://www.nebuta.or.jp/english/index\\_e.htm](http://www.nebuta.or.jp/english/index_e.htm)

Asia-art.net: For Asian Art Appreciation - <http://www.asia-art.net>

China: DimSum: A Connection to Chinese-American Culture - <http://www.newton.mec.edu/angier/DimSum/chinadimsumconnection.html>

Resource Guide: Exploring Asia Through Art - <http://www.dia.org/education/tao/default.htm>

## LESSON PLAN – COMMUNICATING IDEAS WITH IMAGES

This activity may be done before or after you visit the Art Gallery to extend the ideas in this exhibition. This is an exercise that can be done in almost any media you have on hand. Projects may be a painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, etc.

### **Background: Narrative Art**

Narrative art is art that tells a story. The subject matter may be taken from literature, mythology, history, current events, or personal events. Genre paintings depict everyday scenes that tell a story, while historical narratives depict a famous event. Narrative art may also refer to art that includes text within the image.

Narratives serve many different functions in a work of art, depending on the artist's intention. They may teach, enlighten, or inspire and often carry moral, social, or patriotic messages. Early examples include the frescos and stained glass images in churches, designed to tell bible stories to the masses who could not read. Traditional Chinese scrolls often depicted illustrated novels with the text presented in calligraphy. Narrative art can be in any medium, from video to painting to sculpture to book illustrations.

Some techniques for creating narrative art include:

- Portraying exaggerated facial expressions of subjects in the artwork
- Freezing an action like a movie still
- Dramatic use of light or shadow to emphasize a detail
- Using symbols or symbolic imagery
- Using multiple images (i.e. a storyboard)
- Combining text or pictograms within the images

[June Yun](#) uses calligraphic poetry and images linked to China to tell the story of her being an exile from China living here in Canada. By placing the text and images in a grid formation, June uses multiple images to create something like a storyboard or a sequential painting.

[Shima Iuchi's](#) installation includes images and audio stories of people she has met and interviewed in Kamloops. Exploring her interests in mapping, memory, and sense of place, Shima combines oral story-telling with photographs and images to create a narrative of a specific place.

### **Objectives:**

- Explore the use of a word or phrase within an artwork.
- To understand how artists use personal imagery to communicate ideas or tell a story.
- To use purely visual means (colour, line, form, shape, etc.) to communicate a word or story.

### **Materials:**

- Story books with illustrations
- Art supplies of your choice (i.e. watercolour paints, pencils, felt markers, pencil crayons, tempera paints, etc.)

### **Preparation:**

- Have some examples of narrative artwork or telling stories with pictures, with picture books or images from art history.
- This project can connect to lessons in poetry, journal writing, novel studies, or other forms of narrative that you are already doing in class.

**Activity:**

- Discuss narrative and telling stories with images. Show some samples of picture books or artworks that use this technique. Discuss the techniques the artists used to tell a story or narrative (i.e. depicting an action, the expression on a person's face, etc.)
- Discuss symbols and provide examples of some common symbols (i.e. lion=power, red rose=love, dove=peace). Can students think of any symbols they have seen before? Make a list of all the symbols you can think of.
- Can students create their own image from a word or story? The teacher selects words at random and assigns a word or sentence from a story to each student or group of students in the class. Students may use pictograms or personal symbols. They may use objects they associate with the word(s), or they may translate and write the words in another script or language with which they are familiar. Encourage students to use personal imagery and associations.
- Once they have finished their image, share with the rest of the class both the text and the image. Are the associations the same or different for other students in the class?

**Extension:**

- Students will make their own narrative artwork based on a theme such as their home or the landscape where they live. This theme will be the focus of their composition, to which they add words and images they associate with the subject and communicate its significance. This may be a group project which requires brainstorming and consensus. Some ideas for the media of this art project: a collage, a painting, a book, a sculpture, a ceramic vessel, a drawing, a mural, a scroll, or a lantern.
- Teachers may want to have a list of words for younger students to choose from to illustrate. Otherwise, have students brainstorm in a journal possible personal experiences they might want to portray and text they might want to include with their images.
- Students plan their images and composition, sketching them out in pencil first. Students may use multiple images, each one telling a part of the story. Another option is to create one continuous image and portray a different event in sequence. Or students may depict one scene frozen in time. Any text should not simply label each image, but work with the images to help relate the story.

**Conclusion:**

- Students share their works with the class and discuss:
  - What story do you think the artist was trying to tell?
  - What narrative techniques did the artist use to tell their story?
  - What emotions are expressed in this artwork?
  - Why did you choose to represent this story or event? What relevance does it have for you?
  - How did you use the elements of art (colour, line, shape, texture, and value) in your artwork?
  - How did you use text in your artwork?
  - Does your artwork accomplish what you intended it to say?
  - Is it necessary to know the story behind an artwork to fully appreciate it? Explain.

For more information see <http://www.richmondartgallery.org>