

Richmond Art Gallery School Art Program



Sudarshan Shetty, *Taj Mahal* (detail), 2008, installation

May 1 – June 13, 2010

In Transition: New Art from India –

Shilpa Gupta, Reena Kallat, TV Santhosh, Sudarshan Shetty, Thukral & Tagra
and Hema Upadhyay

PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT TO THE GALLERY

Our educational programs complement the exhibitions to help develop visual literacy and educate visitors about contemporary art practices. The *RAG School Art Program* has been developed for students and teachers to experience contemporary art in person.

The goal of the School Art Program is to **learn about contemporary art** and **Art Gallery etiquette, practice visual art skills**, and to **develop visual literacy**.

FAQs



WHAT IS CONTEMPORARY ART?

Contemporary art is a term used to describe **art of the present era**. Contemporary means “of the times”, so the artwork often comments on **current issues and ideas** or is made with **new and innovative materials or techniques**.

IS THAT ARTIST STILL ALIVE?

Children often ask this question, as most of the artists they study are from history. The Richmond Art Gallery only **shows works from living artists** who are currently active in their professional practice.

WHY DO I HAVE TO BE SO CAREFUL IN AN ART GALLERY?

Touching artworks often damages it, as fingers will leave oils and dirt on the artwork that eats away at it over time. By walking too close to artworks on the walls or floor, we may accidentally knock the work or cause it to fall. Please help us preserve the art!

Picking up Student Works

Most artworks take time to dry, especially paintings and prints. Please discuss arrangements with the Instructor at your workshop when you can come back to pick up the students’ projects.

Parking

Free parking for up to 3 hours is available at the Richmond Cultural Centre and Arenas parking lots, located off Granville Avenue. In case of no parking due to a large event being held at the Arenas, parking is also available across the street at Richmond Centre Mall.

Washrooms

Washrooms are located in the Cultural Centre rotunda (behind the front desk), and there is one unisex stall located in the art studio.

Taking Photos

Please note that **photography is not allowed in the Art Gallery**, or in the Cultural Centre. Parents and teachers may only take photos inside the Studio Art Classroom.

PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT: GALLERY ETIQUETTE

Please remind students that appropriate behaviour is expected in the Gallery. Each artwork is an original piece of art that it is our job to display AND protect. It is important for **all** visitors to remember these rules of the Gallery:

- **Touch with your eyes only.** Please stay at least 12 inches away from the artwork. This includes works on the walls and any sculptural works on the floor.
- **Walk, don't run to the art.** Please be respectful of the Gallery space and very careful around the artworks. Most artworks are very fragile.
- **Quiet voices.** The Gallery is a public space, please keep voices low in respect of others who work in and visit the Gallery.
- **No food or drink** is permitted in the Gallery.

The Richmond Art Gallery is a small gallery that does not require extra chaperones with teachers. Parents may join the tour and workshop, however, **please note there is limited space in the art classroom.** We recommend that parents only accompany students on the tour, or just one or two parents join students in the workshop. To ensure that everyone enjoys their Art Gallery experience, please pass on the following requests for Chaperones.

- **No photography in the Gallery please. Artwork is copyrighted** by the artist and may not be photographed. Photos are permitted in the art classroom only.
- **Please leave younger siblings at home.** Siblings can distract our attention, as well as disrupt students' concentration.
- **Please turn off your cell phone.** A ringing phone or a phone conversation is very distracting during the tour and workshop demonstration.
- **Be a Role Model.** It is important for the children to see you paying attention when the Classroom Teacher and Art Instructor are talking. Modeling good behaviour by listening to and following the Gallery Rules promotes the students to do the same.
- **Focus on the students.** Avoid the temptation to socialize with other parents/chaperones or to discuss your student's progress with the Teacher. Background conversations during the tour and workshop are very distracting to the students. As a chaperone, your role is to stay focused on the students and keep them engaged with the activities at hand.
- **Artist at work – please do not disturb.** Art is a learning process, with no 'right' or 'wrong' way to create. The hands-on workshop is designed to encourage exploration of new ideas, materials, and techniques. Please allow this process to flourish by allowing students make their own creative decisions.

Thank you for all your help in making the students' Richmond Art Gallery experiences a fun and educational time for everyone!

BACKGROUND : INDIA'S PAST AND PRESENT



India has a rich and complex history that runs centuries deep. Today, India is experiencing a period of remarkable growth and transformation. With an eye on its past and a view to the future, artists in India are examining the social, political, economic and religious implications of becoming a major world economy.

To better understand the exhibition *In Transition: New Art from India*, here is a brief introduction to some of the places the artists' reference.

Mumbai is the most populous city in India, with a population of approximately 14 million people. Mumbai lies on the west coast of India and is the commercial and entertainment centre of India. In 2008 there was a terror attack in the heart of

Mumbai, killing 166 people. Terrorists targeted the city's best hotels, busy railway stations, police headquarters and cinemas. The trials for the terrorists involved are still ongoing.

Kashmir is in the northwestern region of India, south of the Himalayas. Once considered a thriving area for tourism due to its beautiful valley setting, Kashmir has been in constant turmoil as India, Pakistan and China wage violent territorial disputes over this region. India and Pakistan have fought three wars over Kashmir in 1947, 1965 and 1999, while India and China clashed in 1962. In 2008 there were militant attacks from Pakistan, and a heavy military presence continues throughout the region.

New Delhi is the capital of India, situated within the metropolis of Delhi. New Delhi was built by the British in the 19th century to the south of the *Old City* which was constructed by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. Today the city is a thriving modern metropolis, and a noted tourist destination due in part to the many historic monuments within the area.



The **Taj Mahal** is a famous monument built in the mid 17th century located in Agra, India. It is regarded one of the Seven Wonders of the World, and was built entirely out of white marble. The construction took place over a period of 22 years. "A monument to love", the legend of the Taj Mahal is that the Emperor Shah Jahan was so heartbroken when his wife and queen Mumtaz Mahal died while giving birth to their 14th child, he ordered a beautiful memorial to his wife be built. Taj Mahal (meaning Crown Palace) is actually a mausoleum that housed the grave of queen Mumtaz Mahal, and the grave of Shah Jahan was added to it later.

PRE-VISIT DISCUSSION: WHAT YOU WILL SEE

In Transition will feature artwork by seven of India's most recognized contemporary artists: Shilpa Gupta, Reena Kallat, TV Santhosh, Sudarshan Shetty, artist collective Thukral and Tagra, and Hema Upadhyay. All the artists currently live and work in Mumbai or New Delhi, and have exhibited internationally in leading institutions and museums. Before you go through the exhibition with your students, consider the themes the artists have worked with and how they connect various ideas throughout their works, in particular the themes of consumerism, progress, tradition, war, and culture.

Shilpa Gupta exhibits the video installation *National Highway No.1*, documenting a journey from the towns of Srinagar to Gulmurg in the Kashmir region of India. Peaceful landscape scenes are abruptly shaken each time a soldier is encountered, alerting viewers to the brutal militarism present in the area.

Reena Kallat's *Lunar Notes* is a sculptural installation inspired by old photographs of names of lovers, or "love graffiti", found scribbled onto public monuments, walls and buildings. Hundreds of marble beads carry the names of lovers, strung together into a large "curtain" that forms an image of the Taj Mahal. The Taj Mahal is a symbol that memorializes love, and the artist uses this monumental, monolithic structure to reveal a fragile and playful celebration of love while considering the relationship to grand architecture and history.

TV Santhosh works with themes of the presence of violence and injustice in contemporary society. *Living with a Wound II* is a sculpture that continues on these themes, but after the terror attacks in Mumbai the context becomes more relevant and personal. Utilizing elements from the media, Santhosh combines text and sculptural forms repeated over and over again to comment on the repetitive and random nature of violence to the point of becoming commonplace.

Sudarshan Shetty's *Taj Mahal* is a large sculptural installation made entirely from miniature metallic reproductions of the famous palace. Shetty creates a large structure using everyday objects from the middle class, in this case tourist objects sold as a memoir of an Indian historical monument. The work comments on the relationships between spirituality and consumption, tradition and modernization.

Jiten Thukral & Sumir Tagra have been working collaboratively since 2000. Their works and art practice reflects the dynamism and ambition of India's rapidly growing economy, while commenting upon consumer culture and social aspirations. *Keep Out of the Reach of Children (Tank)* incorporates painting, sculpture, installation and product design, using exuberant colour and humour to blur the boundaries between advertising, branding, retail and art.

Hema Upadhyay will be working on her sculptures on site at the Richmond Art Gallery and at a residency at Aberdeen Centre throughout the exhibition. Her piece for the Richmond Art Gallery, *Loco – Foco – Motto* (which means self-lightening when in contact with a certain chemical), will be completed during the first week of the exhibition at the Gallery. Upadhyay will construct a large chandelier made entirely from wooden matchsticks, using materials that are literally flammable or destructive to create an object with connotations of luxury. The fragile structure is inspired by the artist's life in Mumbai, the idea of "light of hope" contained within a violent and fragile environment.

Questions to Consider:

- ***What is sculpture?***
- ***What is installation art? How does sculpture/installation utilize a room or space?***
- ***Conflict and war seems to be a common theme with the artists in this exhibition. Why do you think that is?***

PRE-VISIT DISCUSSION: CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE

What is Sculpture?

A sculpture is a three-dimensional work of art. Sculptures may be a **carved, modeled, constructed** or **cast** object that can be made of many different art materials. Examples of sculpture can be found throughout the world, as sculpture has been an important part of culture since ancient times.

Traditional sculpture often took the form of statues that were usually representations of people, gods, or animals. Many of these traditional artworks were made from stone, bronze or clay, and were placed inside, or outside as part of a building or public art.

As new technologies and materials developed, sculptors started to use all types of materials to create art. Modern and contemporary sculptures can be made from almost anything, such as paper, soap, chocolate, balloons, ice, sand, found objects, as well as utilizing holograms, light, and film projections. No matter what material is used, one of four processes are generally used to create a sculpture including **subtraction, substitution, addition, and manipulation**.

- ***As you look at the works in this exhibition, can you tell what processes the artists' used?***

What is Installation Art?

In the 20th century artists started to abandon traditional art processes and materials for unconventional materials from everyday life. Sculpture moved away from trying to portray something in particular (i.e. a figure or animal) towards making the viewer more aware of the space the sculpture was in. Artists also began to incorporate found objects of the everyday world into their art, transforming and infusing objects with new meaning. Contemporary sculpture often attempts to make the viewer see social or political issues in a new way by **presenting a physical object that represents ideas**.

Installation art is artwork that has been **installed or arranged in a place** either by the artist or as specified by the artist. Rather than having isolated objects on a wall or table, installation artists take into account the viewer's entire sensory experience once they walk into the gallery space. The gallery becomes a complete art environment, and the viewer becomes a part of the artwork as they walk through and around the objects placed in specific ways.

Materials used in installation art range greatly from everyday and natural materials, to new media and traditional art materials. Much installation art is dismantled after it is displayed, leaving photo or video documentation as its only trace. Some installation art is site-specific, meaning that they are designed to only exist in the space for which they were created. Often the artist works within that space for a certain amount of time, constructing the installation on-site as Hema Upadhyay is doing for this exhibition.

- ***What ideas do you see being conveyed in the work on display?***
- ***Are there objects used in the artworks that may have more than one meaning?***
- ***Do you see anything that specifically talks about the histories and traditions of India or about issues that are important in contemporary India? How are they different or similar to issues we face here in Canada?***

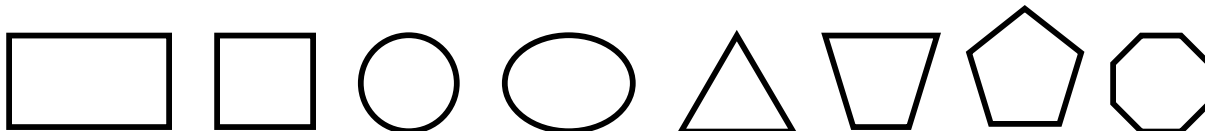
PRE-VISIT DISCUSSION : SHAPE AND PATTERN

*Introduction for Preschool and Kindergarten Classes, or as a review for Primary Grades.

SHAPE

SHAPE is one of the Elements of visual art and design. Wherever the ends of a line meet, they enclose a space and a shape is formed. Shape is often determined by other art elements such as line, colour, value, and texture. The two main categories of shape are GEOMETRIC SHAPES and ORGANIC SHAPES.

Geometric shapes have perfectly straight or round edges. They are uniform in measurement, and don't often appear in nature.



Organic shapes are associated with things in nature, as they have an irregular, unique shape or sometimes called a freeform shape.



In two-dimensional art such as painting and drawing, shapes may appear to be three-dimensional. This is what differentiates shape from form. Shape is two-dimensional, but once a shape is actually three-dimensional (as in sculpture), it is called a form.

- ***What shapes do you see around you in your environment?***
- ***How many different types of shapes can you draw?***

PATTERN

Repeated shapes create patterns. However, the repetition of any thing — shapes, lines or colours — create patterns (also called a motif) in a design. Pattern is one of the principles of design, used to create visual interest, simulate texture, create a decorative effect, or be a vital part of an object's structure. Patterns can be seen in most forms of art and design, including architecture and crafts.



- ***What patterns can you see in your environment?***
- ***While in the gallery, notice the different patterns you may see. What do patterns from India look like?***

IN THE GALLERY : WHAT YOU WILL DO

TOUR:

As students are led through the exhibition, we will discuss the artists and their particular style of working. We will also look at the exhibition as a whole and how each of the artists' works relate to one another.

The tour will focus on:

- Introducing students to the materials and techniques the artists used.
- Encouraging students to think about subject matter and inspiration for creating art, to connect art with current issues or ideas.
- Introducing the basics of developing visual literacy (colour, composition, etc.).
- Discussing how artists work and use their observations of the world around them in the development of artworks and ideas.
- Discussing how the artists' home environment and culture informs and inspires their art, providing some background information on the political and social realities in contemporary India.

EXHIBITION-BASED WORKSHOPS:

Preschool – Kindergarten: Shapes*

Students will learn the basics of composing images using shape and repetition. Pre-cut shapes will be glued onto paper to form images of animals or buildings. Details and backgrounds will be added with drawing materials, for a colourful mixed-media drawing.

Primary Grades: Miniature Beaded Curtains

Inspired by Reena Kallat's large beaded curtain of the Taj Mahal, students will design their own miniature beaded designs. Simple techniques in stringing a row of beads will be demonstrated and designs will be selected by the students to copy from. The result is a unique "picture" produced by small units of colour, similar to pixelated images seen on a computer screen.

Intermediate Grades: Wood Patterns *

Explore geometric and abstract patterns in a 3-D relief collage. Inspired by the artists' works that incorporate traditional Indian designs with everyday materials, students will plan, design and construct their own designs in wood with a focus on repetition and pattern.

Please note that the **Shapes project and **Wood Patterns** project may need to be left behind to dry, depending on the amount of glue students use. Please talk to the instructor for details about picking up artworks at a later date.*

RESOURCES

Artists:

Shilpa Gupta:

Artist's website - <http://www.flyinthe.net/index.htm>

Interview for *Art Dubai Journal* - http://www.artdubai.ae/journal/2009/march/Shilpa_Gupta.html

Artist's online art project, *Blessed Bandwith* - <http://www.blessed-bandwidth.net/>

Reena Kallat:

Artwork, biography, articles and resources at *Saatchi Gallery* –

http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/artists/reena_kallat.htm.en

Artworks and biography at the *Walsh Gallery* - <http://www.walshgallery.com/reena-kallat/>

T.V. Santhosh:

Artwork, biography, articles and resources at *Saatchi Gallery* –

http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/artists/tv_santosh.htm

Interview for *ARTslant* - <http://www.artslant.com/ny/artists/rackroom/49661>

Sudarshan Shetty:

Artwork and biography at *Tilton Gallery* – <http://www.jacktiltongallery.com/shetty.html>

Artwork and catalogue essay at *Gallery SKE* –

<http://www.galleryske.com/SudarshanShetty/Love/index.html>

Profile on *Saffron Art* – <http://www.saffronart.com/artist/artistprofile.aspx?artistid=269>

Thukral and Tagra:

Artists' website - <http://www.thukralandtagra.com/>

Artworks and CV at *Nature Morte Gallery* New Delhi –

<http://www.naturemorte.com/artists/thukral-and-tagra/>

Hema Upadhyay:

Artwork, biography, articles and resources at *Saatchi Gallery* –

http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/artists/hema_upadhyay.htm

Interview and artworks for *Art Concerns: The True Voice of Indian Contemporary Art* - http://www.artconcerns.net/2006/html/interview_hema.htm

RESOURCES

India:

Crossing Borders/Breaking Boundaries – Lesson Plans on the *Arts of India* at the University of Maryland-
<http://www.crbs.umd.edu/crossingborders/ai2008/lessonplans08.html>

India for Kids - http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/india_for_kids.htm

India Past and Present – Lesson Plans, Resources, and Interactive Activities for Kids –
<http://k12east.mrdonn.org/India.html>

Welcome to India – Interactive site for ages 7 – 9 with facts and pictures of contemporary India -
<http://home.freeuk.net/elloughton13/india.htm>

Visual Art Basics and Lesson Plans:

ArtLex Art Dictionary - <http://www.artlex.com/>

Art, Design and Visual Thinking: An Introduction to the Elements of Design –
<http://char.txa.cornell.edu/language/element/element.htm>

Collaborative Art Resources for Education – Elements of Visual Art: Shape Lesson Plan –
http://www.carearts.org/lessons/elements_vis_art_k-2_shape.html

Incredible Art Department – Elements of Design Student Handout –
<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/Files/elements.htm>

Incredible Art Department – Toothpick Sculpture Lesson Plan –
<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/high/Cyndi-sculpture.htm>

Minneapolis Institute of Arts - The Artist's Toolkit: Visual Elements and Principles - Shape –
http://www.artsconnected.org/toolkit/encyc_shapegeorganic.html

Related Links:

Lulu Series Speakers: Art in the City at Richmond City Hall –
<http://www.richmond.ca/culture/about/events/lulu.htm>

Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale - <http://www.vancouverbiennale.com/>

Vancouver Biennale on Twitter - http://twitter.com/van_biennale

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE GALLERY

JOIN US! ALL EVENTS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Opening Reception of *In Transition: New Works from India*

Saturday, May 1, 2010

1:00 – 3:00 pm

Richmond Art Gallery
7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, BC

Lulu Speaker Series - Hema Upadhyay: *Dream a wish, wish a dream*

Thursday, May 20, 2010

7:00 – 9:30pm

Presented in partnership with the [Vancouver Biennale](#).
City of Richmond, Council Chambers
6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC

Hema Upadhyay (Mumbai, India) is one of several artists with work displayed in Richmond as part of the Vancouver Biennale and in the Richmond Art Gallery exhibition, *In Transition : New Art from India* from April 26 - June 13, 2010. The title of Upadhyay's Lulu Series talk is from a 2004-2006 work that played a pivotal role in her career as an artist. For this piece, she reconstructed a detailed, meticulous microcosm of Dharavi, the largest slum in Bombay and all of Asia.

For more details, go to <http://www.richmond.ca/culture/about/events/lulu/hemaupadhyay.htm>

Keith Wallace – *Contemporary Art in India: At Home and in the World*

Thursday, June 3

7:30 pm

Richmond Art Gallery
7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, BC

Keith Wallace, author of the Exhibition Essay *Contemporary Art in India: At Home and in the World* will provide a walk through of the Gallery exhibition. Wallace will discuss his travels and discoveries in India, to provide more insight to the contemporary art scene in India. Wallace has been a curator of contemporary art since 1979 and has organized exhibitions for numerous galleries throughout Canada, worked with artists from all over the world, and has been Editor-in-Chief of *Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*.

Family Sunday

Sunday, April 25 and May 23

1:00 – 4:00pm

Richmond Art Gallery
7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, BC
Sponsored by RBC Foundation

Free, fun and fabulous! Join our Family Sunday Crew for art projects your entire family can create together. Art supplies and hands-on activities provided for parents and children of all ages.

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH at the RICHMOND CULTURAL CENTRE

All events take place at the Richmond Cultural Centre – 7700 Minoru Gate For more information contact 604-247-8300

4th Annual Drumming Extravaganza

Sunday, May 2, 2010 - 1:00 – 3:00pm

Experience traditional Asian drumming from South Asian Dhol drumming to Japanese Taiko and more. Free event for all ages.

Community Dance and Craft Day

Saturday, May 8, 2010 - 12:00 – 2:00pm

A day of Richmond's of community arts, craft and community dance. A chance to celebrate the best that Richmond has to offer and celebrate our City's rich Asian heritage. Indian Classical Dance, Japanese Doll-making, Bonsai, Chinese Calligraphy and more. Free admission, all ages welcome.

ExplorOPERA

Thursday, May 13, 2010 - 7:00 – 8:30pm

Take a whirlwind tour of opera from its historical beginnings to its life on the stage at Vancouver Opera with host Michael Grice, Director of Education, and musicians from Vancouver Opera. From Monteverdi to Puccini discover the world of opera through its history, music and words. All ages welcome.

Celebration of Chinese Poetry

Monday, May 17, 2010 - 6:30 – 8:30pm

World Poetry and explorASIAN celebrate the life of ancient Chinese poet Li Bai (701-762) with an event featuring multicultural poets and multilingual readings. The event features traditional Chinese musicians and cultural displays. For more information call 604-526-4729.

New Asia Film Festival 2010

May 27 – 30, 2010

Celebrate Asian film and Asian filmmakers with the best in contemporary Asian cinema. Co-produced by the City of Richmond and Cinevolution Media Arts Society. \$5 membership fee allows access to all films free of charge. For more information call 604-247-8300 or go to www.vnaff.ca

Kala Utsav – Annual Indian Arts Benefit for Global Relief

May 7, 2010 - 7:00 – 9:00pm

Richmond Cultural Centre Plaza and Richmond Art Gallery

7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, BC

\$15 for Adults, \$12 for Students/Seniors

6th Annual benefit for Global Relief featuring performances by Sudnya Dance Academy, Hari Pal, Kalpana Prasad and Malavika Santhosh. Includes after hours viewing of the Richmond Art Gallery exhibition *In Transition: New Works from India*. All proceeds go to the Canadian Red Cross.

For more information, contact the Richmond Arts Centre at 604-247-8300.