

# TEACHERS GUIDE

## Mimetic Workshop: Studio Still Lives of Fiona Ackerman & Kelly Lycan

### Small Stages: Still Life from the Permanent Collection

### Jay Bundy Johnson: Being still (life) shows us who we are



WITH BIG IDEAS CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Fiona Ackerman, *The Past is Prologue* (2013), oil on canvas.  
Photo courtesy of artist.

# Dear Teachers

This guide is a classroom resource, designed to support teachers and students attending the exhibitions *Mimetic Workshop: Studio Still Lives of Fiona Ackerman & Kelly Lycan*, *Small Stages: Still Life from the Permanent Collection*, and *Jay Bundy Johnson: Being still (life) shows us who we are*, on display at the Surrey Art Gallery from September to December 2016. The Teachers Guide contains exhibit information, as well as activities that will prepare your students for their Gallery visit and engage them in classroom discussion afterwards. These activities reinforce the ideas and processes explored in the exhibitions—specifically the themes of still life, composition, found objects, the studio, and creative process—and provide continuity between the Gallery visit and classroom. The pre-visit activity addresses the themes of composition and found objects, the hands-on Art Encounter Workshop offered at the Surrey Art Gallery explores the still life and colour, and the post-visit activity addresses the themes of the studio and creative process.

The activities in this guide are adaptable to different grade levels and require a minimum of materials. The guide also provides vocabulary, a resource section, and links to the new BC Curriculum in the area of Arts Education from grades K-7. We hope that you enjoy exploring and creating art with your students using this guide.

*Sincerely,*  
*Amelia Epp, Interpretive Programmer*

The Teachers' Guide is created with contributions from Surrey Art Gallery staff including: Art Educator April Davis, Visual Arts Programmer Lindsay McArthur, Volunteer Coordinator Chris Dawson-Murphy, Interpretive Programmer Amelia Epp, Curator of Education and Engagement Alison Rajah, Publicist Charlene Back, Assistant Curator Brian Foreman, and Curator of Exhibitions and Collections Jordan Strom.

# ABOUT THE SURREY ART GALLERY

Surrey Art Gallery is the second largest public art gallery in the Metro Vancouver region. Internationally recognized, the Gallery showcases diverse contemporary art practices including digital and sound art and exhibits renowned local, national, and international artists. Located on the west wall of Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre, UrbanScreen is an offsite programming venue of the Surrey Art Gallery. The Surrey Art Gallery's mission is to engage the public in an ongoing dialogue about issues and ideas that affect our numerous communities as expressed through contemporary art, and to provide opportunities for the public to interact with artists and the artistic process.

To receive announcements about exhibitions and related events at the Gallery, sign up for our e-newsletters at [www.surrey.ca/arts-signup](http://www.surrey.ca/arts-signup). The City of Surrey also has an e-newsletter specifically for teachers: [www.surrey.ca/enews](http://www.surrey.ca/enews).

# SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Gallery's school programs develop an appreciation for, understanding of, and excitement about contemporary art. Visit the Gallery's website to learn about our school programs and the resources that we offer for teachers: [www.surrey.ca/artgallery](http://www.surrey.ca/artgallery).



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Bill Burns, *How to Help Animals Escape from Natural History (The Lama Version)* (2005), detail, chromogenic photographic print on paper. Collection of the Surrey Art Gallery.



Jay Bundy Johnson, *Being still (life) shows us who we are* (2016), detail.  
Photo courtesy of the Artist.



Tam Irving, *Song for Morandi 3* (1994), stoneware, wood and stucco.  
Photo by Scott Massey. Collection of the Surrey Art Gallery.

## ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS

Delve into artists' homes and studios through a cluster of exhibits exploring still life that highlights the intimate and often unusual relationship we have with objects.

### Mimetic Workshop:

#### Studio Still Lives of Fiona Ackerman & Kelly Lycan

Sept 17 – Dec 4, 2016

Where do artists work? Ackerman and Lycan investigate the romanticized/ de-romanticized studio of the 19th and 20th centuries, creating still life-like compositions of the fleeting images, icons, and materials of artmaking within their own studios and in relation to the studio environments of other artists. In doing so, they break down the distinction between preliminary models or sketches and the final work, drawing attention to the process as art.

### Small Stages: Still Life from the Permanent Collection

Sept 17 – Dec 4, 2016

Paintings of bowls of fruit, flowers, and objects on a table are imagery commonly associated with classic still life art, but what about a photograph of books with miniature llamas on them, or a chandelier-like sculpture of kitchen and garden utensils? Drawn from the Gallery's permanent collection, the artworks in this show depict carefully arranged—and sometimes unusual—scenes that reflect on and expand the still life genre.

### Jay Bundy Johnson: *Being still (life) shows us who we are*

Jun 25, 2016 – Jan 10, 2017

What do our possessions sound like? Johnson deconstructs electronic objects made over the past half century—including toys, clocks, and stereos—and reassembles them into elaborate sculptures inspired by “still life” painting. Interact with switches and toggles to create a soundscape of things past!

Read more about the exhibitions online:

<http://www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/1564.aspx>



# VOCABULARY

**Collage:** Artwork created by assembling separate elements to create a whole, often including photographs, news clippings, fabric, coloured paper and found objects. From the French term *coller*: to glue.

**Composition:** The placement or arrangement of visual elements or ingredients in a work of art, as distinct from the subject of a work. The term composition means 'putting together,' and can apply to any work of art, from music to writing to photography, that is arranged or put together using conscious thought.

**Creative process:** The process of the formation of art: the gathering, sorting, collating, associating, patterning, and moreover the initiation of actions and proceedings. The creative process can be described as having branches like a tree, and each choice has ramifications, which may not be known in advance.

**Found object:** Found object originates from the French *objet trouvé*, describing art created from undisguised, but often modified, objects or products that are not normally considered art, often

because they already have a non-art function.

**Mechanical:** Being a machine; operated by machinery. A machine is an apparatus consisting of interrelated parts with separate functions, used in the performance of some kind of work.

**Model:** A three-dimensional representation of a person or thing or of a proposed structure, typically on a smaller scale than the original.

**Object:** A thing that you can see and touch and that is not alive.

**Printing:** A process for reproducing text and images using a master form or template.

**Printmaking:** The process of making artworks by printing, normally on paper.

**Sculpture:** The creation of artistic objects in three dimensions — length, width, and height. The main feature of a sculpture's design is the way its forms extend through space. Sculpture may be either in the round or in relief. A sculpture in the round stands on its own. It can be viewed from all sides. A relief is attached to a background, so it is not designed to be viewed from the

back.

**Soundscape:** The sounds heard in a particular location, considered as a whole.

**Still life:** A work of art depicting mostly inanimate subject matter, typically commonplace objects which may be either natural (food, flowers, dead animals, plants, rocks, or shells) or man-made (drinking glasses, books, vases, jewelry, coins, pipes, and so on).

Still life is one of the principal genres (subject types) of Western art — essentially, the subject matter of a still life painting or sculpture is anything that does not move or is dead.

**Studio:** An artist's or worker's workroom.

**Sketch:** A rough or unfinished drawing or painting, often made to assist in making a more finished picture.

**Texture:** The quality of a surface (i.e. smooth, rough, etc.).

**Vitrine:** A glass display case.

## SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: Found Objects Prints

**THEMES:** Composition, Found objects

### OBJECTIVES

To explore key ideas and artistic elements – composition, and found objects – as addressed in the fall 2016 exhibitions *Mimetic Workshop: Studio Still Lives of Fiona Ackerman & Kelly Lycan*, *Small Stages: Still Life from the Permanent Collection*, and *Jay Bundy Johnson: Being still (life) shows us who we are*. Students will learn a simple stamping technique in order to create a print.

Share Corsaut, *Untitled* (1983),  
cyanotype photogram on paper,  
Photo by Scott Massey.  
Collection of the Surrey Art Gallery.



### BIG IDEAS FROM THE BC CURRICULUM

- Engagement in the arts creates opportunities for inquiry through purposeful play. (Kindergarten, Arts Education)
- Creative experiences involve an interplay between exploration, inquiry, and purposeful choice. (Grade 3, Arts Education)
- Artists experiment in a variety of ways to discover new possibilities and perspectives. (Grade 5, Arts Education)

### ACTIVITY

Students will create *Found Objects Prints* by stamping with everyday or “found” objects. Students will consider shape, texture, and composition in choosing found objects to stamp with.

### DISCUSSION & INTRODUCTION

The fall 2016 exhibitions feature artworks that explore the still life genre. While paintings of bowls of fruit, flowers, and objects on a table top are imagery commonly associated with classic still life art, the exhibitions feature contemporary explorations including a photograph of books with miniature llamas on them and a chandelier-like sculpture made of kitchen and garden utensils.

## SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: Found Objects Prints

### THEMES: Composition, Found objects

#### DISCUSSION & INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

What these diverse works have in common is the inclusion and depiction of everyday objects found by the artist. For example, the painting *Maureen's Window with Mountie* (1983) by Leonard Brett depicts house plants, figurines, antlers, and postcards arranged in front of a window. Often, artists who create still life works have chosen to include specific objects in order to represent certain values, activities, or ideas. Artists also choose and compose objects due to their specific shape, colour, and texture. For example, the photograph *Untitled (Nuts)* (1986) by Bob Strazicich features an orange, nuts, and a number of insects (see this photograph on pages 7 and 16).

Ask the students to brainstorm definitions for the following terms: still life, composition, and found objects (see the vocabulary list on page 4 for definitions). Show the students the images of Leonard Brett's painting *Maureen's Window with Mountie* (see page 15) and Bob Strazicich's photograph *Untitled (Nuts)* (see page 16). Ask your students to discuss the following questions:

- Are these both examples of still lifes?
- How are these two artworks different? How are they similar?
- List and describe the objects that you can see in each of these artworks.

- Why do you think that the artists chose to include these objects in their still lifes?
- How have these artists composed the objects included in their still lifes?



Leonard Brett, *Maureen's Window with Mountie* (1983), egg tempera paint over gesso on panel board.  
Photo by Cameron Heryot.  
Collection of the Surrey Art Gallery.



## SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: Found Objects Prints

### THEMES: Composition, Found objects

#### MATERIALS

- A collection of found objects such as: corks, small pieces of sponge, leaves, small pieces of scrap wood, thick bark, pieces of fabric (i.e. burlap, lace), crumpled

tin foil, crumpled Saran wrap, corrugated cardboard, Styrofoam, bubble wrap, etc. Divide the objects into trays in order to create several printing 'collections' that can be shared amongst groups of students.

- Yogurt container lids (for paint)
- Tempera paint in a dark colour (use the same colour (i.e. black or dark blue) for the whole class)
- 11"x17" white construction paper (1 sheet per student)

#### PROCESS

Explain to the students that they will create their *Found Objects Prints* by stamping with found objects. Like the artists Bob Strazicich and Leonard Brett they will choose which objects to include in their prints and how to compose the stamped objects.

Ask your students to consider what objects they will choose to stamp and how they will compose their prints:

- What types of textures and shapes will you include in your print? Will you repeat certain textures and shapes?
- How will you compose your still life? Will shapes overlap or touch? Where in your composition will you place large and small shapes?

Bob Strazicich, *Untitled (Nuts)* (1986), colour photographic print on paper.  
Collection of the Surrey Art Gallery.



## SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: Found Objects Prints

### THEMES: Composition, Found objects

#### PROCESS CONTINUED

Pairs of two students can share one yogurt container lid filled with tempera paint. Groups of three to four students can share trays of found objects. Groups can trade trays when they have finished stamping with a collection of objects.

To create their prints, students will choose an object, dip it in the paint, and then stamp it onto their white construction paper.

#### CONCLUSION

Display the finished *Found Object Prints* together on tables or on a bulletin board. Encourage the students to spend time observing each other's prints.

- What types of textures and shapes have their classmates chosen to include in their prints?
- What are some of the unique ways that their classmates have composed their prints?

When the students visit the fall exhibitions at the Surrey Art Gallery, look out for the wide variety of still life works that have been included. What types of found objects have been used by artists to create the works? Would they consider all of the artworks to be examples of still lifes? Why or why not? Why do they think the curators chose to include so many different types of artworks in still life-themed exhibitions?

Carole Itter, *Grey Rattle* (1986-1994), sculpture - assemblage.  
Photograph by Brian Foreman.  
Collection of the Surrey Art Gallery.





Fiona Ackerman, *Still Life with Action* (2013), oil on canvas.  
Photo courtesy of artist.

## SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Creative Workspace Collage

### THEMES: The studio, Creative process



#### OBJECTIVES

To explore the themes of the studio and creative process in relation to the exhibition *Mimetic Workshop: Studio Still Lives of Fiona Ackerman & Kelly Lycan*. Students will create collages representing their own ideal creative workspace.

#### BIG IDEAS FROM THE BC CURRICULUM

- Engagement in the arts creates opportunities for inquiry through purposeful play. (Kindergarten, Arts Education)
- Works of art influence and are influenced by the world around us. (Grade 5, Arts Education)
- Creative experiences involve an interplay between exploration, inquiry, and purposeful choice. (Grade 3, Arts Education)

#### ACTIVITY

Students will explore the concept of the creative process and will consider different types of creative workspaces, inspired by works from the exhibition *Mimetic Workshop: Studio Still Lives of Fiona Ackerman & Kelly Lycan*. Students will create collages representing their own ideal creative workspace.

## SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Creative Workspace Collage

### THEMES: The studio, Creative process

#### DISCUSSION & INTRODUCTION

There's something about an artist's studio that inspires our curiosity—the opportunity to glimpse behind the scenes, to encounter the free play and struggle of the creative process, and to gain insights about the art and the artist. The work in the exhibition *Mimetic Workshop: Studio Still Lives of Fiona Ackerman and Kelly Lycan* explores the connections between the artwork, artmaking tools, and the spaces in which they are displayed. Fiona

Kelly Lycan, *Studio Study Model 1* (2016), drywall, house paint, ink jet photo.  
Photo courtesy of artist.



Ackerman and Kelly Lycan both explore the concepts of the artist's studio and the creative process by creating still life-like compositions of the fleeting images, icons, and materials of artmaking within their own studios and in the studio environments of other artists.

Invite the students to reflect on their experiences visiting the exhibition *Mimetic Workshop: Studio Still Lives of Fiona Ackerman and Kelly Lycan*. What stands out to them about this exhibition? Remind them of the work by Fiona Ackerman entitled *The Past is Prologue*. Show students the image of this artwork found on page 17. Ask them to examine the image and to consider the following questions:

- What types of artmaking tools do you notice in this space?
- Do you see any examples of finished or unfinished artworks?
- Does this look like a space where you would feel inspired to create things? Why or why not?

Share with the students that Fiona Ackerman creates her paintings based on images of both her own studio and the studio spaces of other artists.

**SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITY:** Creative Workspace Collage  
**THEMES:** The studio, Creative process

## MATERIALS

- Two 8.5"x11" sheets of white construction paper for each student
- Ruler
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Pencil crayons
- Magazines for collage
- Scissors
- Glue Sticks

## PROCESS

Brainstorm with the students a definition of the word “studio.” Ask the students: Have you ever visited a studio, workshop, or other creative workspace? This could include a workspace used by a painter, ceramicist, woodworker, quilter, welder, computer programmer, etc.

Share with students that creative workspaces can take up an entire room, garage, or building, or they can be a small space found on a desk, on a wall, or in the corner of a room. Remind them that they visited a creative workspace or studio at the Surrey Art Gallery when they took part in their workshop.

Ask the students: Do you have a creative workspace of your own at home?

Kelly Lycan, *Rumination  
Three, Still Life* (2014),  
installation view from  
*Autobiography for No One*,  
SFU Gallery Burnaby, various  
materials.  
Photo courtesy of artist.





# SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Creative Workspace Collage

## THEMES: The studio, Creative process

### PROCESS CONTINUED

Next, ask the students to brainstorm a definition of the term “creative process.” For more information from the Ministry of Education about the creative process, look here: [https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/pdf/en\\_ae\\_support\\_CP.pdf](https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/pdf/en_ae_support_CP.pdf).

Ask your students the following questions:

- When do you get your best ideas? At what time of the day? Are you alone or with other people? What kind of space helps you to develop new ideas?
- What are some of your favourite objects and/or images that inspire you or that inspire your curiosity?
- What kinds of tools, objects, or resources are required for you to develop and explore your ideas?
- What would your dream creative workspace look like?
- What would you create there?

Ask the students to think about how they would design a creative workspace for themselves. They should consider the shape of the space and any features that it might have including doors, windows, stairs, shelves, and furniture. Have the students draw the larger details within this space on an 8”x11” sheet of white construction paper using pencil.

Next, provide the students with magazines so that they can look for and cut out elements that they would like to include within their creative workspaces. This might

include furniture, animals, plants, objects, books, tools, people, inventions, etc. Students can glue these onto their drawings.

Lastly, ask the students to think about what they would create in this workspace. Would they display finished projects in the space? Would they have projects in the space that are still in process? Ask the students to draw their creations on white construction paper. They can colour them using pencil crayon, cut them out, and then glue them onto their *Creative Workspace Collages*.

### CONCLUSION

Display the finished *Creative Workspace Collages* as a collection on tables or on a bulletin board. Give the students time to observe each other’s work. What similarities to they notice amongst the creative workspaces? What differences do they notice? Ask the students to choose one other person’s artwork and to imagine that they can shrink down and enter the creative workspace. How do they feel inside that place? What do they see there? Do they feel inspired to create or to explore?

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS FOR SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Participating in a guided tour, studio workshop, or self-guided tour in conjunction with the exhibitions supports Big Ideas and Learning Standards in the British Columbia Arts Education Curriculum for grades K-7. The exhibitions can be used as a touchstone for discussion relating to themes and concepts addressed in a variety of curricular areas.

## K-7 ARTS EDUCATION CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

### KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 2

- Explore elements, processes, materials, movements, technologies, and techniques of the arts
- Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual, using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation, and purposeful play
- Explore artistic expressions of themselves and community through creative processes
- Observe and share how artists use processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, and techniques
- Reflect on creative processes and make connections to other experiences
- Express feelings, ideas, stories, observations, and experiences through the arts
- Describe and respond to works of art
- Experience, document, perform, and share creative works in a variety of ways

### GRADE 3 - 4

- Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual, using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation, and purposeful play
- Reflect on creative processes and make connections to personal experiences
- Express feelings, ideas, and experiences in creative ways

- Experience, document, perform, and share creative works in a variety of ways

### GRADE 5 - 7

- Intentionally select artistic elements, processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, techniques, and environments to express meaning in their work
- Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual, using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation, and purposeful play
- Observe, listen, describe, inquire, and predict how artists use processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, techniques, and environments to create and communicate
- Develop and refine ideas, processes, and technical skills in a variety of art forms to improve the quality of artistic creations
- Express feelings, ideas, and experiences through the arts
- Describe and respond to works of art and explore artists' intent

# ONLINE RESOURCES

## **FIONA ACKERMAN**

- <https://www.artsy.net/artist/fiona-ackerman>
- <https://vimeo.com/86049158>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3G0tHP4jsE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxrMYTVjI0>
- <http://www.straight.com/arts/530781/fall-arts-preview-2015-fiona-ackermans-paintings-mash-forms>

## **KELLY LYCAN**

- <http://www.kellylycan.com/splash.html>
- <https://vimeo.com/62454577>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdJu6NcC0pQ>
- <http://www.straight.com/arts/724786/fall-arts-preview-visual-artist-kelly-lycan-merges-photos-and-installations>

## **JAY BUNDY JOHNSON**

- <http://underthewonder.blogspot.ca/>
- <https://vimeo.com/jaybundyjohnson>



Leonard Brett, *Maureen's Window with Mountie* (1983),  
egg tempera paint over gesso  
on panel board. Photo by  
Cameron Heryot. Collection of  
the Surrey Art Gallery.







Bob Strazicich, *Untitled (Nuts)* (1986), colour photographic print on paper.  
Collection of the Surrey Art Gallery.

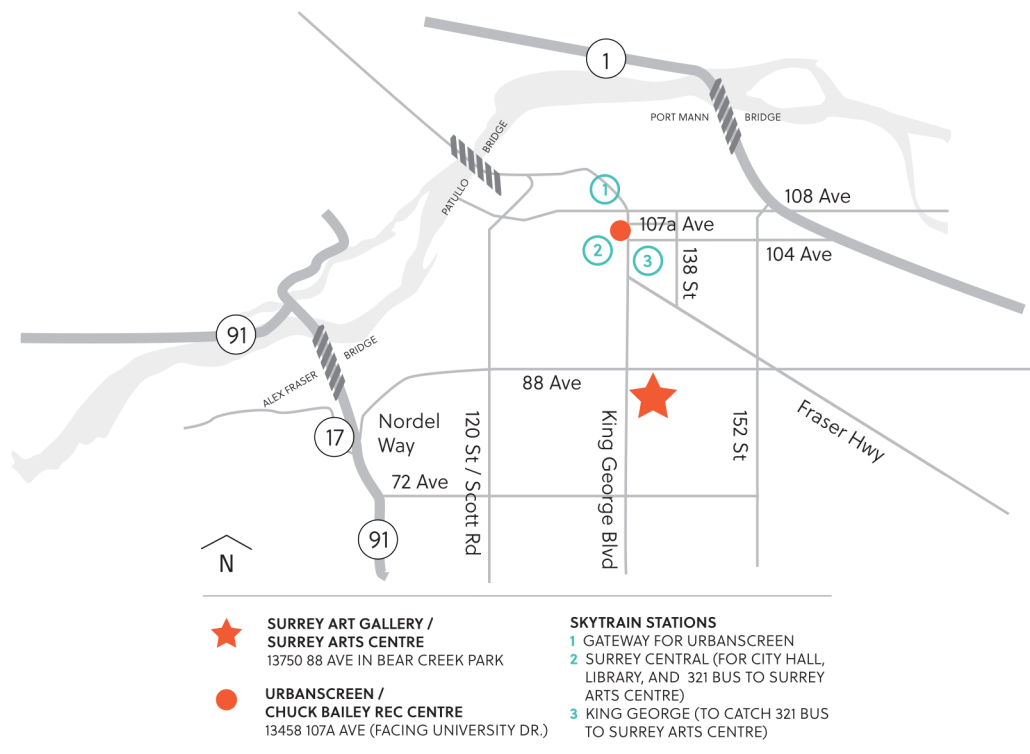




Fiona Ackerman, *The Past is Prologue* (2013), oil on canvas. Photo courtesy of artist.



# INFORMATION / MAP



- 2 km walk from King George Station
- Take the Skytrain to Surrey Central Station and catch Bus #321 or #96 B-line and get off on King George Hwy at 88 Ave
- Free parking

## SURREY ART GALLERY

13750 88 Avenue  
Surrey, BC V3W 3L1

604-501-5566  
artgallery@surrey.ca  
www.surrey.ca/artgallery

## GALLERY HOURS

Tues, Wed, Thurs: 9am – 9pm  
 Fri: 9am – 5pm  
 Sat: 10am – 5pm  
 Sun: Noon – 5pm  
**Closed on Mondays & holidays**  
 Admission by donation

## SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTERS

To receive gallery exhibition and program updates, visit  
[www.surrey.ca/arts-signup](http://www.surrey.ca/arts-signup)



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