



Roxanne Charles, *Surrey Urban Sprawl*, 2015, 8' x 8', cedar bark, construction tape, copper, brass, wire, polyethylene, vinyl siding, nylon and synthetic fiber, from the Surrey Art Gallery exhibition *Views from the Southbank I: Histories, Memories, Myths*, Photograph by Scott Massey

surrey
art gallery

TEACHERS' GUIDE

WITH BIG IDEAS CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

**Sharing Perspectives:
Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop
Grades 4-12**

**WITH ARTIST-EDUCATOR
ROXANNE CHARLES**

Dear Teachers,

This guide has been developed as a preparation and follow-up for the Sharing Perspectives: Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop. The inquiry-focused activities and suggestions provided in this resource were developed considering the new BC curriculum. We strongly encourage engagement in the suggested activities before and after the visit, as this will reinforce ideas and processes discussed in the workshop as well as provide continuity between the workshop and classroom learning. You can adapt the content in the workshop and these documents to make connections with the concepts and curricular content that your students have been or will be learning. Curricular connections to a number of subjects are provided to highlight the interconnectedness between disciplines, thereby promoting **holistic learning**.

The image-viewing methods referenced in some of the provided observation activities aid in the development of core competencies in the BC Curriculum including **communication**, **creative thinking** and **critical thinking** as well as visual literacy – skills that are transferrable to students' everyday lives. Development of the additional core competencies – **social responsibility** and **positive personal and cultural identity** – can be activated through engagement with hands-on activities.

The activities in this guide are suitable for students in grades 4 to 12 and require some preparation of materials. The guide also provides recommended resources to support Aboriginal Education and the development of visual literacy. We hope that this guide and supplementary resources can be used alongside the Sharing Perspectives: Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop to expand the breadth and depth of your students' learning.

Sincerely,
Surrey Art Gallery Education Team

The Teachers' Guide is created with contributions from Roxanne Charles and Surrey Art Gallery staff including: Gallery Education Assistant Susanne Chow and Interpretive Programmer Amelia Epp with Curator of Education and Engagement Alison Rajah, and Visual Arts Programmer Lindsay McArthur.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP & RESOURCES

To encourage and promote discussion and inquiry about the world through Indigenous perspectives and contemporary art.

HOW TO USE THESE RESOURCES

1. Prior to your scheduled Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop, carry out the **pre-visit activity** in your classroom. Take note of the curricular connections indicated by the following symbols:



2. Take part in the Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop.
3. After the Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop, carry out the **post-visit activity**.
4. To further extend your students' inquiry, carry out provided extension activities in this Teachers' Guide.

* An additional resource available for download is an interview with artist Brandon Gabriel whose work can be found in the City of Surrey's Public Art Collection. The online video and accompanying educational handout can be found here:

<http://www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/19985.aspx>

5. View the video with your class and learn about the artist's influences, processes and artwork in his own words.
6. Make use of the discussion questions and extension activities in the educational hand-out that accompanies the video.
7. Finally, activate **experiential and community-based learning** by taking your students to see the public artwork in person, right here in Surrey!

ASSESSMENT

Regular student reflection can be used not only as a form of formative assessment, it also develops metacognition – an ability that allows students to recognize the processes that help them learn. After each activity, have students reflect on and document their learning using tools such as exit slips, visual journal entries, and visual thinking habits (referenced throughout this guide).

SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: Elaboration Game

LINKS TO THE BC CURRICULUM

ELA 8-9 | People understand text depending on their worldviews and perspectives

Arts 4-9 | The visual arts is a unique language for creating and communicating

Describe, interpret and respond to works of art (Arts 4-8)

Identify how differences in context, perspectives, and voice influence meaning in texts (ELA 4-5)

◆ Elements of art: Shape, space, texture, form, colour (Arts 4-12)

◆ Contemporary Aboriginal arts and arts-making processes (Arts 4-8)

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

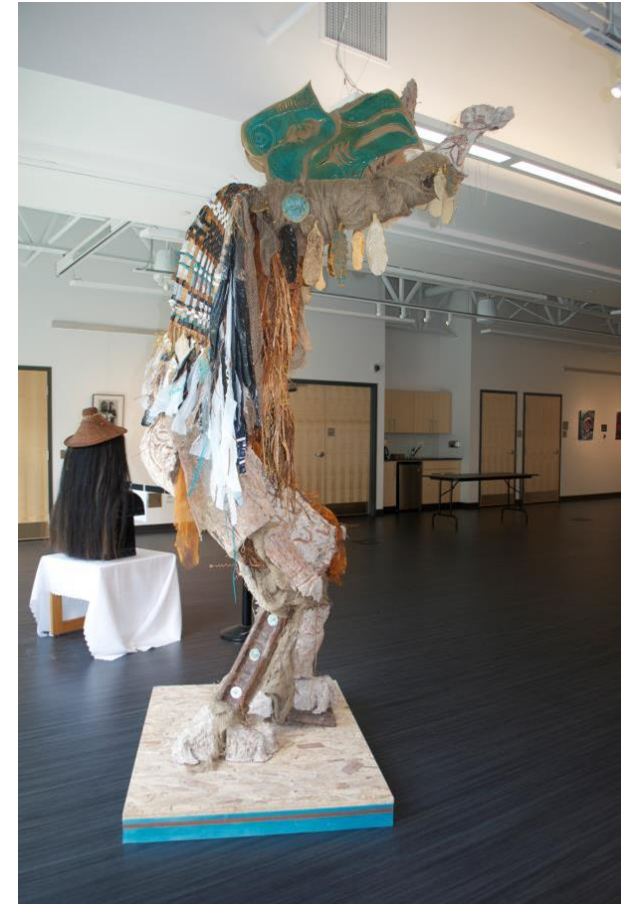
Introduce Roxanne Charles' work, *Transformation Figure* (project image on p.6).

Divide the artwork into 5 sections for students to focus their observations on or allow your students to decide on the areas of focus.

As a group, observe and describe several sections of the artwork. Students should only be describing, not sharing their ideas about the art.

1. One person identifies a specific section of the artwork and describes what he or she sees. Another person elaborates further by adding more detail about the section. Repeat 2 more times with the third and fourth person
2. The next person identifies a new section and the above process is repeated. This step ends when the entire artwork is described.
3. Now, as a group, discuss your ideas about the work. The teacher or a student can record these responses to make them visible.
 - What do you think is going on?
 - What did you observe that makes you say that?

Be ready to tell Roxanne about your discussion and she will share a story about this artwork!



Roxanne Charles, *Transformation Figure*, 2015, recycled materials, cedar, clay, various metals, and cast paper

The activities on this page reference Project Zero's Artful Thinking Website (For a brief description of the resource, see p.5). Details about each activity can be found at the following links:

Differentiation: <http://pzartfulthinking.org/?p=90>

Discussion: <http://pzartfulthinking.org/?p=96>

DIFFERENTIATION – For ELLs and students who are less comfortable with sharing in a large group.

1. View *Transformation Figure* quietly for at least 30 seconds. Observe the entire artwork carefully.
2. List 10 words or phrases about any aspect of the artwork.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2, looking more in depth at the artwork.

Have students share their responses out loud while you type them into:

www.wordclouds.com

It will generate an image comprised of the words you input, with the size of the word indicating its frequency. This will allow students to visualize the words that were generated.

Print or project the word cloud beside the art image and use the observations in the cloud to prompt discussion:

- What do you think is going on in this artwork and what have you observed that makes you say that?

Share these ideas with Roxanne when she visits your classroom for her workshop!

EXTENSION: “Remix” a map

Imagine what a map might look like if its focus wasn't on the features of the land.

Review your class brainstorm about current events issues related to local and/or national urbanization and environmental stewardship. Gather information (e.g. repercussions of an oil spill on the bio-diversity of a region) and think of ways to visually represent this as a map. Show some examples of alternative “maps” through the link below:

<http://sigliopress.com/extrapolations-and-interpolations-maps-that-chart-the-unexpected/>

SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Multimedia Article & Mapping

THEMES: Environmental Stewardship & Urbanization

LINKS TO THE BC CURRICULUM

ELA | Exploring stories and other texts helps us understand ourselves and make connections to others and to the world

Art 8 | Artists often challenge the status quo and open us to new perspectives and experiences

SS | The pursuit of valuable natural resources has played a key role in changing the land, people, and communities of Canada

◆ The urbanization and migration of people (SS 6) ◆ Forms, functions, and genres of text (ELA 4-12)

▶ Explore relationships between identity, place, culture, society, and belonging through arts activities and experiences (Arts 4-9)

▶ Take stakeholders' perspectives on issues, developments, or events by making inferences about their beliefs, values, and motivations (SS 5-6)

ACTIVITY & DISCUSSION

Show Roxanne Charles' *Surrey Urban Sprawl* and *Please Take My Hand* (project images on pp.1 and 7)

- What materials were used to make Roxanne's “regalia”? What is she wearing?
- What materials or elements were used to create the other aspects of the artwork (e.g. audio, space, 2D/3D imagery)? Materials that are not normally considered art in their intended function are called **found objects**.

Roxanne describes *Please Take My Hand* as an embodied communication, commonly known as “performance” where her body, her costume, and what she interacts with is the medium.

- How is this different from media such as painting, sculpture, printmaking, and collage?
- What effect can this type of artwork have on the person watching?
- Considering the materials and media Roxanne used, how is her work related to environmental stewardship?

- Brainstorm current events that relate to Roxanne's message in *Please Take My Hand* (record this for extension activity).

Prompt students to focus on the issue of pipelines in Canada and their impact on the land by having them look for and examine a news story.

- Discuss: Who is telling the story (e.g. Who is the writer and what is the source)? Whose opinion does it favor? Whose opinion/perspective does it exclude?

Students will develop a multimedia **installation** that combines **found objects**, sound, and video.

- How can you create a multimedia artwork that speaks to the news story you examined?
- Plan your process through sketching, collage, and a mind map of how each artistic choice conveys meaning.

Reflection: Connect – Extend – Challenge

Specific instructions for this activity can be found here:

<http://pzartfulthinking.org/?p=108>



Roxanne Charles, image of the performance *Please Take My Hand* at inFlux at the Surrey Art Gallery, 2015, western red cedar and recycled materials, Photograph by Debbie Lawrance

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following resource from the Museum of Anthropology contains a glossary of terms, a brief comparison of First Nations of the past and today and information on their nations and territories, social structures, economy, potlatches, and technology.

- <http://moa.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/SchoolProgram-BackgroundInfo.pdf>

The Royal BC Museum's Online Learning Portal features subjects such as *Residential Schools and Reconciliation* and *Our Living Languages* through primary and secondary sources. These are organized into modalities (i.e. read, watch, listen, and look) and media (i.e. links to additional resources, interviews, songs, archival photographs, maps, and timelines) that connect the viewer to the subject.

- <http://learning.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/pathways/our-living-languages/overview/>
- <http://learning.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/pathways/residential-schools-reconciliation/>

FIRST PEOPLES RESOURCES

FirstVoices is developed by the First Peoples' Cultural Council, a First Nations-run Corporation. The website is an online Indigenous language resource that contains information about Indigenous communities and their languages. Words and phrases in text and audio format can be translated and listened to using an app for iOS and Android devices (downloadable on the site). It supports Aboriginal people engaged in language teaching, archiving, and cultural revitalization.

- <http://www.firstvoices.com/en/home>

Recommended texts (mostly illustrated books) that present authentic First Peoples voices depicting themes and issues that are important within their cultures and incorporate their storytelling techniques. Compiled by BC educators, these resources were evaluated according to the criteria in the evaluation tool developed by the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC).

The majority, if not all resources support the development of the **core competency of Positive Personal and Cultural Identity**.

- <http://www.fnesc.ca/k-7/>

DEVELOPING VISUAL LITERACY AND IMAGE-VIEWING HABITS

Visual Thinking Strategies is an image-viewing and discussion facilitation method that aims to develop visual literacy through habitual thinking skills that are applicable to English, math, science, and social studies.

- <http://www.vtshome.org/>

Artful Thinking by Harvard Project Zero is designed for use by teachers of K-12 students (and beyond) in developing thinking habits that support thoughtful learning across subjects through various art forms.

- <http://pzartfulthinking.org/>
- pzartfulthinking.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/ArtfulThinkingFinalReport-1.pdf

TEACHING WITH CONTEMPORARY ART

Art21 contains tools for teaching including advice for educators across multiple disciplines on using contemporary art to teach; as well as educators' guides that support clips and episodes of *Art in the Twenty-First Century* (documentaries of emerging and established contemporary artists in their own words).

- <https://art21.org/for-educators/tools-for-teaching/>
- <https://art21.org/series/art-in-the-twenty-first-century/>

Roxanne Charles,
Transformation Figure, 2015,
recycled material, cedar, clay,
various metals, and cast paper,
from the Turnbull Gallery
Exhibition *PEPA'KEN*,
Photograph courtesy of the
artist



Roxanne Charles,
image of the performance *Please
Take My Hand* at inFlux at the
Surrey Art Gallery, 2015, western
red cedar and recycled materials,
Photograph by Debbie Lawrance

