

surrey  
art gallery

# TEACHERS' GUIDE

Sharing Perspectives:  
Indigenous  
Contemporary Art Workshop  
Grades K-3

WITH ARTIST- EDUCATOR  
ROXANNE CHARLES

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

WITH BIG IDEAS CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



## 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 K to 3 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).

## EXTENSION & DIFFERENTIATION:

Have students create “**elements of art**” cards to demonstrate knowledge of different lines, shapes, textures, colours, and patterns. Hand out index cards or paper of similar size and have students draw:

- 3 types (**one on each card**) of lines and write a description of each underneath the drawing (e.g. straight, curvy, thick, jagged)
- 3 different shapes and their description (e.g. geometric such as a triangle or star, natural/organic such as a leaf or cloud)
- Repeat the above instructions with textures, patterns, and colours

For more information on the elements of art and principles of design, see the link below:

[http://awesomeartists.com/ART/AWESOMEARTISTS\\_PDFs\\_ETC/ABCsOfART\\_BOOKLET\\_Color\\_ElementsAndPrinciplesOfDesign\\_2015.pdf](http://awesomeartists.com/ART/AWESOMEARTISTS_PDFs_ETC/ABCsOfART_BOOKLET_Color_ElementsAndPrinciplesOfDesign_2015.pdf)

Have students write on the back of each card what each element might represent to them (e.g. the angular triangle represents precision and perfectionism, organic lines represent love of nature).

These cards can be used for reference during the Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop and any activity that involves looking at art!

# SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: Looking closely...

## LINKS TO THE BC CURRICULUM

### ARTS K-2 |

People who create art express who they are as individuals and community

ARTS 3 | Visual arts is a unique language for creating and communicating

ELA K | Stories and other texts help us learn about ourselves, our families, and our communities

- ▶ Describe and respond to works of art (Arts K-2)
- ▶ Interpret and communicate ideas using symbolism (Arts 3)
- ▶ Use sources of information and prior knowledge to make meaning (ELA K-3)
- ◆ Elements of design (e.g. elements of art and principles of design (Arts K-3))
- ◆ Image development strategies (Arts 3)

Leslie and Leonard Wells, *Elder Moon*, 2009, cedar, Part of the City of Surrey's Public Art Collection, Photograph by Brian Giebelhaus

Follow this link for more information on *Elder Moon*:

<http://www.surrey.ca/files/UnderTheDoubleEagleAndElderMoon.pdf>



## ACTIVITY

Prior to teaching the lesson: Read the activity details and prepare to show your class examples of **pattern** in nature, clothing, and daily life. View the following links on the **elements of art** and **principles of design**:

[https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building\\_lessons/elements\\_art.pdf](https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/elements_art.pdf)

[http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building\\_lessons/principles\\_design.pdf](http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/principles_design.pdf)

Preface: When we look at the world around us, we can find many examples of visuals such as book covers, posters, logos, advertisements, and designs on clothing. All of these visuals are made up of symbols and the elements of art. We often know what these visuals mean and what to think about them, but sometimes we have to look closely to consider their meanings.

- What is a **symbol**? What are examples of symbols found in the world around us? Have students brainstorm a list of symbols and discuss their meanings.
- Create a list of the **elements of art** on the board (the parts that make up a whole image) including **line, shape, colour, texture, and pattern**. Have students brainstorm examples of each and show these examples on the board (use the link provided in the extension activity on the left as reference).

Artists and designers combine and arrange symbols and the elements of art in different ways to represent feelings as well as ideas such as **identity, voice, and personality**.

Show your students several examples patterns. Include diverse examples found in nature, signs, advertising, textile design, and art. Facilitate an image-viewing exercise using the following prompts:

- What do you see? Describe the colours, shapes, and lines (e.g. thick, straight) that make up each pattern.
- What kind of personality or feeling do you think of when you see each pattern? What makes you say that?

Show *Elder Moon* by Leslie and Leonard Wells and repeat the above exercise (**refer to the large image on p.6**):

- What do you see? Describe the lines, shapes, and patterns.
- What do these round shapes and curvy lines make you think of? What about the colours?

When Roxanne visits, she will tell you more about this artwork! Be ready to tell her about your group discussions and she'll show you how to use that knowledge to make art about your own identity!



## EXTENSION:

Have students brainstorm how they would use recycled and discarded materials to create an assemblage that communicates specific meaning.

As a form of assessment, have students use prior knowledge of topics explored in science and/or social studies as inspiration (a starting point) for this artwork. Extend learning further by watching Brandon Gabriel discuss the work *Four Seasons* in Surrey's public art collection. Find the interview and the teaching resource in this link:

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



Roxanne Charles, *Surrey Urban Sprawl*, 2015, 8' x 8', cedar bark, construction tape, copper, brass, wire, polyethylene, vinyl siding, nylon and synthetic fiber

# SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Community Assemblage

## THEMES: Environmental Stewardship, Identities and Relationships

### LINKS TO THE BC CURRICULUM

**ARTS K-1** | Engagement in the arts creates opportunities for inquiry through purposeful play

**ELA K-3** | Curiosity and wonder lead us to new discoveries about ourselves and the world around us

**ARTS K-3** | The arts connect our experiences to the experiences of others

### ACTIVITY & DISCUSSION

Have students write a short artist statement about the medallion they created in the Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop with Roxanne Charles by addressing:

- What elements of art have you included in your medallion and why did you make these choices? How do they represent your voice, identity, and personality?

Students will then create a collaborative artwork that combines all of their medallions into an **assemblage** (a work of art comprised of a grouping of parts, e.g. found objects).

Show Roxanne Charles' *Surrey Urban Sprawl* (refer to large image on p.6):

- What materials did Roxanne use and where can we find them? Why did she use them?
- How are these materials arranged and how does it affect the meaning of the art?

Have students remove the string/yarn from their medallion temporarily

1. Gather a large piece of (dark) scrap fabric or paper and lay it on the floor

- ▶ Interpret how symbols are used through the arts (Arts K)
- ▶ Engage actively as listeners and viewers, as appropriate, to develop understanding of self, identity, and community (ELA K-3)
- ◆ Symbolism as a means of expressing specific meaning (Arts 1-3)
- ◆ Processes, materials, technologies, tools, and techniques to support arts activities (Arts K-3)

2. Have students work collaboratively to arrange their medallions to form an assemblage on the paper or fabric. Possible groupings and arrangements based on the medallions' visual characteristics might include:

- Smooth textures
- Checkered patterns
- Variety of shapes
- Materials from nature
- Arranged chaotically
- Organized arrangement

3. Take a photograph of the collaborative assemblage and display it for viewing. Have the students respond to their new artwork:

- What do you see? Describe how the shapes, lines, colours, textures, and patterns are arranged in the artwork.
- What do you notice about your collaborative artwork that is different from your individual medallions? What kind and whose voices are represented in this artwork? What does this tell you about our **community**?
- What are the similarities and differences between Roxanne's *Surrey Urban Sprawl* and your community assemblage artwork?

4. Have students respond with an artist statement about their collaborative art piece, addressing: How does our community assemblage represent the voices of our class?

**Formative assessment:** Respond on the board: What did you already **KNOW**? – what did you **LEARN**? – what do you **WONDER**?

# 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 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/>

A teacher's resource guide developed by the FNESC with assistance and support from the BC Ministry of Education, the Education Partnerships Program of Aboriginal Affairs, and Northern Development Canada offers guidance and suggested practices for teachers in incorporating authentic First Peoples materials into their classes.

Unit plans with cross-curricular connections and assessment resources are included alongside a FAQs section.

- <http://www.fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples/k-3/>

## 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](http://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 accompany 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/>

Leslie and Leonard Wells, *Elder Moon*  
installed at the traffic  
roundabout at the  
South Surrey  
Recreation and Arts  
Centre, 2009, cedar,  
6' wide, Part of the City  
of Surrey's Public Art  
Collection, Photograph  
by Brian Giebelhaus





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

