VIEWS OF THE COLLECTION: THE STREET

Jack Shadbolt
Yates Street Evening, Victoria; Dominion Theatre, Yates St., Victoria, 1946
watercolour, gouache, ink on paper
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Acquisition Fund

TEACHER’S STUDY GUIDE
SPRING 2019
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The exhibition *Views of the Collection: The Street* includes more than 50 paintings, photographs and prints from the Vancouver Art Gallery’s own collection—ranging in date from the late eighteenth century to the present—which take the street as their subject matter in a wide variety of ways.

**DEAR TEACHER:**

This guide will assist you in preparing for your class tour of the exhibition *Views of the Collection: The Street*. It also provides follow-up activities to facilitate discussion after your visit to the Gallery. Engaging in the suggested activities before and after your visit will reinforce ideas generated by the tour and build continuity between the Gallery experience and your ongoing work in the classroom. Most activities require few materials and can be adapted easily to the age, grade level and needs of your students. Underlined words in this guide are defined in the Vocabulary section.

The tour of *Views of the Collection: The Street* has three main goals:

- To introduce students to the work of a variety of artists and genres,
- To consider the variety of ways artists are inspired by the landscape of the street,
- To explore individual artworks in terms of ideas, materials, techniques and inspiration.
THE EXHIBITION
Views of the Collection: The Street

The urban street has been an important source of inspiration for artists since the Renaissance. The exhibition Views of the Collection: The Street explores many different ways in which the street has inspired artists, curated from the Vancouver Art Gallery’s own collection. It includes more than 50 paintings, photographs and prints created from the 18th century to the present, by both Canadian and international artists.

The street is a place of encounters—gatherings of friends, chance meetings with strangers, sites where business is conducted and, at times, where social unrest occurs and change is created. The street is one of the main locations where culture is formed and portrayed, a place where an individual’s private and public life intersect—where you can decide to read a book on the playground while your friends are all playing.

The exhibition is divided into three themes on the tour:

- Exploring the plans, maps and grids of the street, focusing on how we live in cities defined by grids, how maps, grids and plans create order on the street and how grids play a role in bringing order to our lives.
- Looking at the street through the everyday encounters that happen there.
- Considering the street as a place where displacement, gentrification and change of landscape take place.
ARTISTS' BACKGROUNDS

The following background information highlights some of the artists whose work may be explored in the school tour.

Roy Arden (b. 1957)
Roy Arden lives and works in Vancouver. He graduated from Emily Carr Institute in 1982 and received an MFA from UBC in 1990. He is best known for his photographic work, and he explores other media as well. Through photography, video, sculpture and collage, Arden explores human culture and its assembled environment. All of his work is consistent with his own life experience and addresses questions of modern time.

Carl Beam (1943–2005)
Recognized as one of Canada’s most important contemporary artists, Carl Beam was born in M’Chigeeng, Manitoulin Island, of Anishinaabe heritage. Beam worked in a range of media, including paintings, printmaking and sculpture. With his collage and photo transfer technique, he visually brought together subjects and events from different historical moments and blended them with political commentary. Beam drew to viewers’ attention problems that affect contemporary Indigenous cultures, and through his linking of images with collage, his work shows how these concerns relate to larger world issues. Through his work, Beam joined personal memory with challenges related to the environment and a rethinking of the way histories are told. Beam made Canadian art history in 1985 when his painting The North American Iceberg was the first work by an artist of Indigenous ancestry to be purchased by the National Gallery of Canada. He was inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy in 2000.

Michael de Courcy (b. 1944)
Born in Montreal, Michael de Courcy is an artist, poet and educator. He has exhibited both nationally and internationally and has lectured and given workshops at cultural institutions. In the late 1960s, de Courcy was a core member of the Vancouver artists collective known as the Intermedia Society. Over the past forty years, generally using photography, he has worked in various combinations of media, including printmaking and publishing, public art initiatives and installations, and web-based media projects. “Art-making is, for the most part, an activity which connects me in meaningful ways to the world at large, to my community, and to my family,” he asserts. “The focus of my work has consistently been on place, social identity, and everyday life. As interaction with the public has always been a prime motivation, I have worked to discover new and effective means (often beyond the conventional gallery setting) to position my work within my community in a relevant way.”

Christos Dikeakos (b. 1946)
Christos Dikeakos was born in Greece and currently lives in Vancouver. His photographic practice has played an important role in the development of conceptual photography in Vancouver. Dikeakos’s work addresses the urban landscape, especially Vancouver’s, and our understanding of its history. The landscape subject, and its changing face and overlaid histories, compels his work. He asks the viewer to consider how we locate ourselves within the landscape and how we alter or occupy it to serve our needs.
Fred Herzog (b. 1930)
Fred Herzog is a Canadian photographer known for his photographs of working-class people and their connections to the city around them in Vancouver. Herzog is one of the pioneers of artistic colour photography. He emigrated from Germany to Canada, and quickly found work as a medical photographer in Vancouver. But outside the lab, Herzog devoted himself to what was, at the time, an unusual and even frowned-upon medium, at least artistically: color photography. Working as a virtually unknown pioneer in this field, he quietly documented in rich Kodachrome the streets of Vancouver: its supermarkets, gas stations, bars, urban scenery and, above all, its working-class culture. Herzog used slide film to make his photographs, which limited his ability to exhibit them, but in recent decades this color pioneer has drawn great acclaim, thanks to his unique style and the recently understood possibilities of digital inkjet printing.

William Hogarth (1697–1764)
William Hogarth was an English painter, printmaker, pictorial satirist, social critic and editorial cartoonist. His work ranged from realistic portraiture to comic strip-like series of pictures called “modern moral subjects.” Influenced by French and Italian painting and engraving, Hogarth’s works are mostly satirical caricatures. They became widely popular and mass-produced via prints in his lifetime, and he was by far the most significant English artist of his generation. His engravings were so widely plagiarized that he lobbied for the Copyright Act of 1735 as protection for writers and artists. To this day, satirical political illustrations in this style are often referred to as “Hogarthian.”

Hong Chun Park (b. 1960)
Hong Chun Park is an internationally recognized Korean photographer who lives in Surrey. His images eloquently describe the human experience and the passing of time, yet there are no people in his photographs. Hong Chun Park shows how we remember experiences through his long exposure of environments where we live. Among other works, he created a series of large collages in which 10,000 contact prints were put together by hand. One work in the series combines 10,000 photographs from contact sheets of licence plates that he took from an overpass. Ten thousand photos give a unique sense of how order is created in a city civilization. Hong Chun Park’s work prompts viewers to look within and ponder how we live in cities by providing us with images of the city condensed in time and space.

Axel Hutte (b. 1951)
Axel Hutte is a German photographer best known for his mysterious images of landscapes and cities such as London and Paris. His carefully constructed geometric compositions, as well as his use of long exposure time, crystallize Hutte’s landscapes, giving them a timeless quality. He has become known for his photographs of architecture of post-war Germany. Hutte has made the decision to keep human presence away from his artworks. In his work he blurs the borders between reality and fantasy. “In my landscape work I am working with the emptiness, avoiding any signs of civilization or narrative indication, so in [the] best case you are lost in time and space.” He studied photography at Dusseldorf Art Academy, where he is considered one of five main representatives of the school. He travels the world with his camera and presents the captured images to the public, so we too can witness the beauty of the world.
Lisette Model (1901–1983)
Lisette Model was an Austrian-born American. She began her creative life as a student of music, but after borrowing a camera from her sister Olga she decided to become a photographer. An early piece of advice she received from a colleague, “Never photograph anything you are not passionately interested in,” became her motto. Model never formally studied photography, but she redefined the concept of documentary photography in America. Her images can be categorized as “street photography,” a style developed after the invention of the handheld camera, which made quick candid shots possible. Model is one of the most influential street photographers of the 1940s. Her work is notable for its emphasis on the characteristics of average people in everyday situations, and for its direct, honest portrayal of modern life and its effects on human character. She had quick success as a commercial photographer for magazines, including Harper’s Bazaar, and as an artist with her work exhibited at the Modern Museum of Art. She taught photography for thirty years, right up until her death in 1983.

Danny Singer (b. 1945)
Danny Singer is a photographer living and working in Vancouver. He makes photographs of entire main streets, from beginning to end, of small prairie towns in Canada and the United States, and presents them as grand panoramas. These photographs comprise up to 150 continuous images digitally conjoined into seamless panorama-like images. Each building on the street is photographed to appear straight on to the viewer, creating an unusual perspective with multiple vanishing points and an accurate representation of the architecture and scale of the street. The finished prints are large, allowing viewers to immerse themselves in the tiniest details. These unique images provide an original way of seeing architectural heritage in the context of geography and weather, but the apparent simplicity of the photographs belies the technology used to produce them.

Neil Wedman (b. 1954)
Neil Wedman was born in Vancouver. He has been painting for thirty years and has devoted equal time to creating drawings, and works on paper—including print editions, book works and photographs. He has made numerous short films and a few musical recordings. Wedman is known for his quirky sense of humour and has been called an eccentric at the very heart of the contemporary Vancouver art scene. He treats art as an invention, and he creates his paintings in a manner that suggests black and white photography. Wedman is an instructor at Simon Fraser University and Emily Carr University.
PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: ABOUT THE ARTISTS
(intermediate and secondary students)

Objective:
Students read, research and share information about some of the artists represented in the Views of the Collection: The Street tour.

Materials:
- Writing materials
- Access to the Internet. Some useful websites:
  - http://canadianart.ca
  - www.wikipedia.com
- Artist Information Sheet (page 8), Student Worksheet (page 9)

Process:
1. Divide students into six groups. Cut up the Artist Information Sheet (p 8) and assign one artist to each group.
2. Give each group a copy of the Student Worksheet (p 9) and ask them to transfer the information about their artist to the appropriate box.
3. Have students figure out what they need to know to complete the section on their artist, and find it on the Internet, either at home or at school. Older students can find more information; younger students, just the basics.
4. Ask each group to find/copy/sketch a piece of work by their artist on a separate piece of paper. Do not label with the artist’s name or any information.
5. Have each group present the information on their artist while the rest of the class adds the information to their worksheets.
6. After the presentations, lay out the images and have the class guess which image is by which artist.

Conclusion:
Discuss the following:
- What were some of the most interesting things that students learned or discovered?
- Which artist and/or kinds of artwork made students curious about seeing the actual work in the exhibition?
- Are there any artists, ways of working or ideas that the students would like to know more about?
ARTIST INFORMATION SHEET

Carl Beam
- Used collage and photo transfer to bring together subjects from different historical moments.
- Brought to attention problems that affect contemporary Indigenous cultures and how these concerns relate to larger world issues.
- Joined his personal memories with issues related to the environment and a rethinking of the way histories are told.
- Made Canadian art history by becoming the first artist of indigenous ancestry to have a work purchased by the National Gallery of Canada.

William Hogarth
- Best known for his moral and satirical engravings and paintings.
- His comic strip-like series of pictures, called "modern moral subjects," became widely popular and were mass produced in his lifetime.
- He was the most significant English artist of his generation.

Hong Chun Park
- His photographs are classically composed
- His work prompts viewers to think about how we live in cities by providing us with images of the city condensed in time and space.
- Images eloquently describe human experience and the passing of time, yet there are no people in them.
- He created a series of large collages each containing 10,000 photographs.

Lisette Model
- "Never photograph anything you are not passionately interested in" became her motto.
- One of the most influential street photographers of the 1940s.
- Her work is notable for its emphasis on everyday people in everyday situations.
- She redefined the concept of documentary photography in America.

Danny Singer
- Makes photographs of the entire main streets of small prairie towns.
- Photographs are composed of up to 150 continuous images pieced together into seamless panorama images.
- Each street is photographed straight on with multiple vanishing points.
- Finished prints are large, allowing the viewer to see the tiniest details.
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<th>Personal Information</th>
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<th>An Artwork</th>
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PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: ROY ARDEN STORIES
(all levels)

Objective: Students create a written story based on the photographs of Roy Arden.

Discussion: *Fragments* is a photographic series by the Vancouver artist Roy Arden. *Views of the Collection: The Street* includes three photographs from the series taken by Arden on meandering walks in Vancouver, Paris, Venice and Geneva. As an observer of contemporary urban life, he is an astute documentarian of the city. His rich narratives are created with his love of place and his eye for detail. Narrative art tells a story, either as a moment in an ongoing story or as a sequence of events unfolding over time. Choosing one of Arden's photographs from the exhibition as inspiration, write your own narrative about the picture. It can be a poem, essay or short story.

Materials:
- Paper
- Pencils or pens
- Reference photograph

Process:
1. Discuss the photographs by Roy Arden from his *Fragments* series. Have students look at the images of his work on page. What do they see? What images spark their imagination to create a story?
2. Have each student create a poem or short story using one of the three photographs for inspiration.

Conclusion:

Discuss:
- Have each student show the Arden photograph they used for inspiration, and share their story.
- Was writing a narrative to go with the photograph easier or more difficult than they expected?
- Were stories inspired by the same photograph the same or different? What are the students' thoughts as to why?
- What were some of the things students took into consideration while planning and writing their work?
Examples of Roy Arden artworks:

Roy Arden
*Partito Socialista, Venice (from Fragments)*, 1981–85
inkjet print
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the Artist
Roy Arden
*Charles (#2), Geneva (from Fragments)*, 1981–85
inkjet print
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the Artist
Roy Arden

_Flea Market, Paris (from Fragments), 1981–85_

inkjet print

Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the Artist
PRE- VISIT ACTIVITY: ABSTRACT MAP PAINTING
(all levels)

Objective: Students are introduced to maps and grids of maps and produce an abstract painting based on a map of Vancouver.

Discussion: City plans, grids and maps play an important role in how we navigate through a city. Maps and grids create order when planning a city and predicting how people will live their daily lives. Grids help you locate places on a map. The grid consists of lines that run across and down to form a pattern of squares, and are labelled with numbers and letters—one going across the top and the other down the side. If you put your finger on a letter and another finger on a number, then move them across and down the lines, you can identify each grid square with a letter number (A3, A4, B2, etc.).

Artists find inspiration in many everyday items, even maps. In Views of the Collection: The Street, the artist Michael de Courcy, in collaboration with Taki Bluesinger, Glenn Lewis, and Gerry Gilbert used a grid for viewers to help identify different parts of their photographic journey in Vancouver Background, 1972. The artist William Vazan also presents the grid format found on maps in his artwork Bit Squaring-For Flight Image Terraforming, 1970–72.

Materials:
- Map of Vancouver
- Pencils
- Rulers (optional)
- 8x8 inch square of paper (or whatever size square you want)
- black markers, oil pastel, black paint or ink

Process:
1. Pass out copies of Vancouver map to class.
2. Discuss how grids on maps are used, ask students to use the grid to find different locations on the map of Vancouver provided.
3. Ask students to find a location they find interesting on the Vancouver map provided. What do they notice inside the grid square?
4. Ignoring words, ask students to focus on the geometric shapes of city blocks and lines of streets in the grid square they chose on the map. What do they notice?
5. Have students lightly sketch with pencil an enlarged copy of the streets and city blocks on the paper provided, filling the square from edge to edge! Use a ruler if desired.
6. Go over pencil lines with marker to complete.
7. Students are free to colour in any areas they wish.
8. When finished, have them erase any pencil lines.

Conclusion:
- Display the students’ work. (Optional: create a collaborative mural.)
- Have students look at the work and talk about the similarities and differences in their artwork, locations, composition, use of black and white.
• What were some of the things they needed to take into consideration while planning and creating their work?
• Discuss the process, how easy or hard it was to create the work. Would they use maps or grids as inspiration to create other artworks?

William Vazan artwork:

William Vazan

*Bit Squaring – For Flight Image Terraforming*, 1970–72
chromogenic print
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the Artist
Downtown Vancouver Map:
Student Examples:
**POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: MY TRIP TO SCHOOL COLLAGE**
*(all levels)*

**Objective:** Students create a visual map of their journey to school using collage inspired by the artist Sara Mameni’s *The Poster Project*.

**Discussion:** Sara Mameni’s *The Poster Project* is a series of drawings based on posters that the artist collected over the course of a year from a single pole located at the intersection of Smithe and Granville Streets in Vancouver. Mameni’s meticulous reconstruction of advertisements for music concerts and other events serves as an unconventional portrait of a specific place over an extended period. The project was originally exhibited as an installation in the windows of Artspeak, a gallery located on Carrall Street in Vancouver, in 2004.

**Materials:**
- Drawing paper
- Markers, pencil crayons or other drawing materials
- Tag board
- Glue sticks

**Process:**
1. Have students look at Sara Mameni’s *The Poster Project* on page. Discuss how she created the different posters she collected from the pole. What drawing materials do the students notice? How has Mameni collaged the posters together?
2. Tell students they will create a collage inspired by Sara Mameni’s work.
3. On their way home from class, or in the morning on their way to class, have them collect three items on their journey to create a visual portrait of their walk to school. (If they drive to school or take the bus, have them collect three items they find in the school hallway or while on the playground.)
4. Have students carefully re-create the items with the paper and drawing materials provided.
5. Have students thoughtfully place their drawings on the tag board provided.
6. Once they are happy with their collage, have them use the glue sticks to fasten the drawings to the tag board. Make sure they start with the artwork that is on the bottom and work up to the top piece of artwork in the collage.
7. Display the collages.
Conclusion:
Discuss the following questions:
• What difference does it make when numerous items are placed close together vs. one alone?
• How does the variety of drawings affect the presentation?
• Discuss the process. How challenging or easy was it to re-create the items they collected?
• Were they surprised by the things they found to create an unconventional portrait of their journey to school?
POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: What Did I See Photo Mural inspired by Michael de Courcy, Taki Bluesinger, Gerry Gilbert and Glenn Lewis (all levels)

Objective: Students create a collaborative photo mural mapping out a walk down the school hallway.

Discussion: Vancouver Background is a photo-mapping project conceptualized by Michael de Courcy and collaboratively produced with Taki Bluesinger, Gerry Gilbert and Glenn Lewis. The artists were each assigned a pre-determined route to follow as they travelled the city during a single day. The resulting mosaic is a composite image that includes 360 photographs depicting familiar sites and scenes, friends of the artists and public figures. The photographs are organized sequentially in a large grid but convey multiple perspectives, providing an overview of the life and activity of the city at street level. The descriptive and sometimes amusing captions indexed below the photographs tell the story of their travels and experiences that day.

Materials:
- Camera, or 3x5 unlined index cards and pencil, or other drawing material
- Printer to print black and white copies of photos
- Tagboard
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Glue stick

Process:
1. Discuss the artwork Vancouver Background. Have students look at the image of the work on page. What do they see? How did the artists use a map grid to show their journey? How does the index on the bottom of the work direct you to the correct photograph in the work?
2. Divide students into groups of four. Have each group plan a short walk to another location in the school and back to the classroom. All routes should be different and groups should work together to create a pre-determined plan for each student in their group to follow.
3. Using a camera, or index cards and pencil to sketch, send students out to walk their pre-determined paths and photograph/draw four images to document it. (Make sure to put a time limit on the students for this phase.)
4. Print out 3x5 black and white images of photographs and give them to students.
5. Cut out photographs to place on the mural.
6. Have students work as a group to mark out a grid that fits their photos, using ruler and pencil to create if needed.
7. (Optional) Have students work as a group to design a legend at the bottom for viewers to find out more about each photograph on the journey.
8. (Optional) Have students decide as a group what kind of captions they will add to the index to describe their journey.
9. When they are happy with the layout of their collaborative photo mural, have them glue down the photographs.
10. Display the artworks in the classroom.
Conclusion:
• Have students look at all the works and point out similarities and differences.
• Was it easy or difficult to create a photo mural as a group?
• Discuss the process. What were some things they had to take into consideration while planning and creating their photo mural?
• What was it like working on a collaborative piece?

Michael de Courcy with Taki Bluesinger, Glenn Lewis, Gerry Gilbert artwork:

Michael de Courcy with Taki Bluesinger, Glenn Lewis, Gerry Gilbert
*Vancouver Background*, 1972
printed at the Grand Western Canadian Screen Shop, Winnipeg, MB, screenprints on paper
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Permanent Collection Fund
Examples of Student Works:
VOCABULAR

abstract/abstraction: a style of art that can be thought of in two ways:
The artist begins with a recognizable subject and alters, distorts, manipulates or simplifies
elements of it;
The artist creates purely abstract forms that are unrecognizable and have no direct reference
to external reality (also called non-representational art).

collaborate/collaboration: working as a team to create art, in which each person contributes in
some significant way to the artwork.

collage: a work of art made by gluing pieces of different materials to a flat surface.

composition: the placement or arrangement of visual elements or “ingredients” in a work of art.

collage: a work of art made by gluing pieces of different materials to a flat surface.

conceptual art(ist): art in which the idea presented by the artist is considered more important
than the finished product, if there is one.

conceptual photography: photography that illustrates an idea.

contemporary art: created within the last thirty years. Most contemporary artists are living
artists.

displacement:
• The moving of an object from its place or position.
• The enforced departure of people from their homes, typically because of war,
  persecution or natural disaster.
• Using an object as a symbol for a new idea.

gentrification: the process of repairing and rebuilding homes and businesses in a deteriorating
area (such as an urban neighbourhood), accompanied by an influx of middle-class or affluent
people, which often results in the displacement of earlier, usually poorer residents.

medium: (plural: media) the materials that are used to create a work of art.

narrative: a story, told with words, images, other media or a combination.

panorama: an unbroken view of a whole region surrounding an observer; or a picture or
photograph presenting a wide view.

Renaissance: the period from the 14th to the 17th century in Europe. This era bridged the time
between the Middle Ages and modern times. The word “renaissance” means “rebirth.”

street photography: Photography conducted for art or inquiry that features chance encounters
and random incidents in public places. Also called candid photography.

utopia: an imagined place or state of things in which everything is perfect.

vanishing point: the point beyond which something disappears or ceases to exist.
RESOURCES

Online:
Wikipedia.com
Fred Herzog: Photographs
https://www.pinterest.ca
https://www.gallery.ca
https://www.tate.org.uk
https://www.icp.org
http://www.getty.edu/museum/
https://www.etsy.com/ca/shop/gridthegrid?ref=simple-shop-header-name&listing_id=238827817
http://vancouverartinthesixties.com/people/23
http://www.neilwedman.com/greatest-hits/
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