



THE THINK TANK FOR YOUTH ON ART AND IDEAS

The Think Tank for Youth on Art and Ideas facilitates young people's interaction with both the Vancouver Art Gallery's exhibitions and our increasingly complex world through questions, self-reflection and visual responses in a way that encourages students to think creatively and independently. This presentation includes the work of students from Britannia, Carson Graham, Jules Verne and King George Secondary Schools who participated in our spring 2018 Think Tank, which uses the lens of contemporary art to examine current issues and ideas.

PRESENTATION HOURS

SATURDAY APRIL 21, 10AM-5PM

SUNDAY APRIL 22, 10AM-5PM

Support for this program provided by:

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This Think Tank focused on the exhibition *Takashi Murakami: The Octopus Eats Its Own Leg*. The students began with a question and answer session with Takashi Murakami, followed by a tour of the exhibition with the artist, examining one work in particular, *100 Arhats* (2013). Murakami shared that this work was produced after the devastation of the 2011 earthquake in Japan and in response to his own sense of a disappearing cultural identity. Arhats were originally students of Buddha who would walk the earth and bring healing or good wishes to people and places.

Using Murakami's signature aesthetic of mixing high and low art forms and cultural references, the students worked with artist-in-residence Cindy Mochizuki in a creative, factory-like environment, rethinking 2D space to create a collaborative large-scale room of messengers from the future. Using a variety of techniques, styles, colours and patterns, students created their own Arhat (or messenger from the future) alongside a library of symbols, collaboratively mixing and matching their symbols into a single large-scale artwork.

Each messenger speaks to us from a fantastical space that we cannot see in the present. What do the messengers of the future say, predict, question or celebrate? Are these messengers figures of luck and protection? Or do they help us to not forget the past? What clues can we find in popular culture and around the globe that might help us to create the world that these future figures beckon?

The Vancouver Art Gallery wishes to thank all participating students and teachers Ariel Boulet, Josee Hemond, Christine Giesbrecht, Daylen Luchsinger and Matt Sinclair. Special thanks to the artists Cindy Mochizuki, for developing the artwork concept, and Takashi Murakami, for the inspiration. We would also like to acknowledge the support and expertise of the Gallery's staff, especially Susan Rome for her coordination of the program.

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