

**BLACK
AND
WHITE
AND
EVERY
THING
IN
BETWEEN**

A MONOCHROME JOURNEY

TEACHER STUDY GUIDE
FALL 2024

Vancouver
Artgallery

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Gathie Falk, *30 Grapefruit*, 1970, ceramic, glaze, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Endowment Fund, VAG 70.112, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Black and White and Everything In Between: A Monochrome Journey showcases over fifty local, national and international artists and over one hundred artworks. Drawn almost entirely from the Gallery's permanent collection, the works are organized and arranged by singular colours to create both intentional and unintentional connections, inspiring us to share ideas and consider the many ways that colour shapes our lives. The exhibition is an ode to the monochrome, celebrating its artistic possibilities through a variety of styles, genres, themes, media and sound-based expressions to create a journey through colour that engages all of our senses.

DEAR TEACHER,

This teaching guide will assist you in preparing your class for their tour of the exhibition *Black and White and Everything In Between: A Monochrome Journey*. It provides activities to facilitate discussion before and after your visit. Engaging in the suggested activities will reinforce ideas generated by the tour and build continuity between the Gallery experience and your ongoing work in the classroom. Most activities require very 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 Glossary section.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Black and White and Everything In Between: A Monochrome Journey takes place on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

BLACK AND WHITE AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN **HAS 3 MAIN GOALS:**

1

TO INTRODUCE

STUDENTS TO ARTISTS EXPLORING EXPRESSION THROUGH
A SINGULAR COLOUR

2

TO CONSIDER

THE IMPORTANCE OF COLOUR IN ART AND ITS ABILITY
TO COMMUNICATE IDEAS

3

TO EXPLORE

INDIVIDUAL ARTWORKS IN THE CONTEXT OF IDEAS, TECHNIQUES
AND PROCESS



Ken Lum, *Untitled (Red Circle)*, 1986, textile, wood, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Acquisition Fund, VAG 91.29 a-l, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery

GLOSSARY

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 unrecognisable and have no direct reference to external reality (also called non-representational art).

CONCEPTUAL ART The idea itself, even if it is not made visual, is as much the work of art as any finished product.

Conceptual artists used their work to question the notion of “what art is.”

INSTALLATION ART A term used to describe large-scale, mixed-media constructions, often designed for a specific place or for a temporary period of time.

LIGHT AND SPACE An art movement that focuses on using light in order to create colour and form. It is centred around one theme: how interactions with light shape our personal experiences, sensory perception and connection to space.

MONOCHROME A term that means “one colour.” A monochrome artwork is an artwork that includes only one colour.

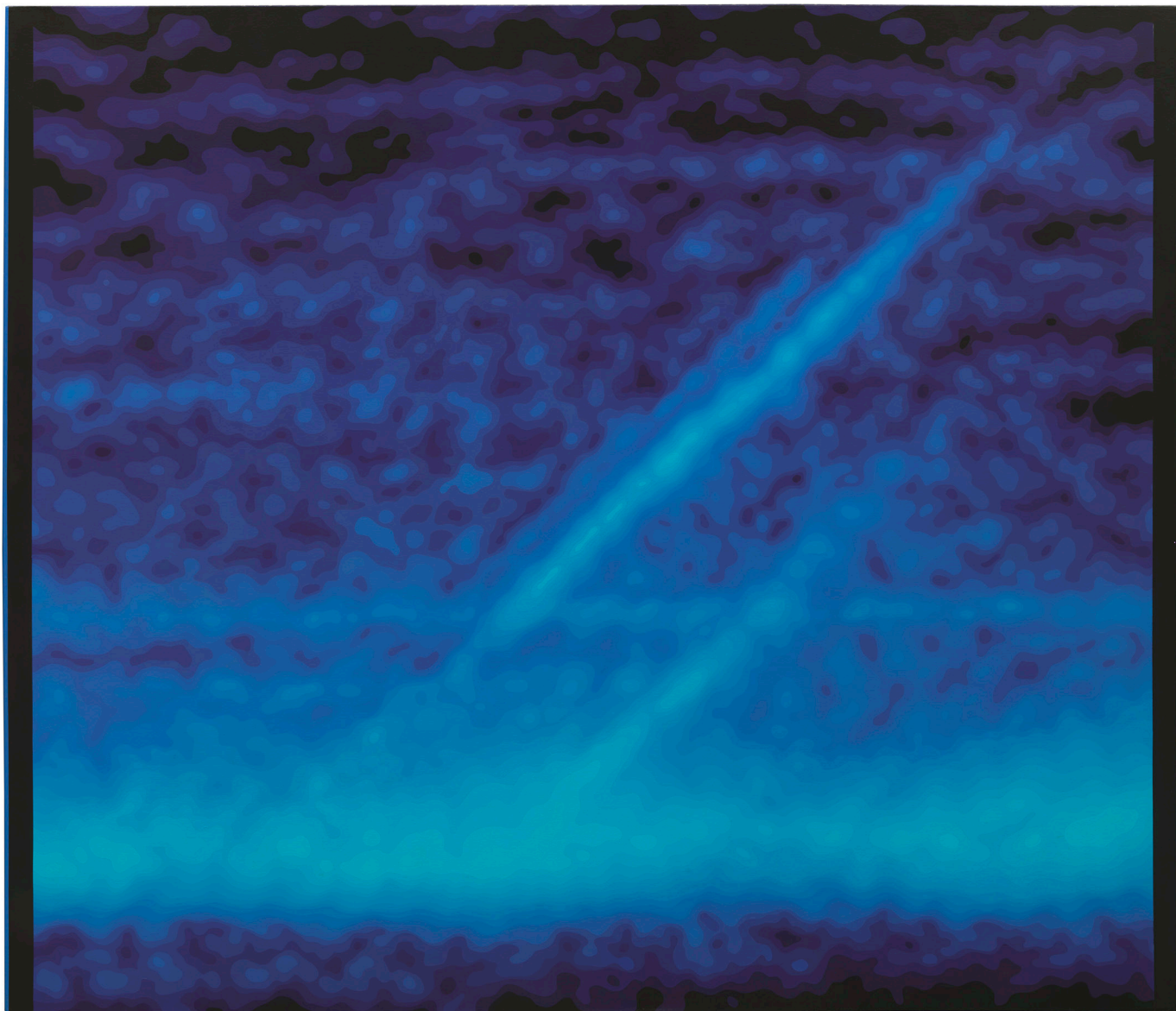
NEW INK MOVEMENT An art movement founded in the 1960s by Lui Shou Kwan in Hong Kong. It draws on traditional Chinese landscapes as well as Western aesthetics to create modern Zen-inspired abstractions using traditional Chinese ink on paper.

OP ART Short for Optical Art. Artists use shapes, colours and patterns in special ways to create images that look as if they are moving or blurring.

PERFORMANCE ART This kind of art typically involves an artist using their body to express ideas. Performances can be spontaneous or planned. Artists can perform to the camera, to an audience or in a public space. It can be a bit unexpected and unusual but it often makes the viewer think deeply about the context and environment in which the performance takes place.

UNCEDDED A term for a relationship between the government of Canada and Indigenous people when no treaties have been established. In general, “unceded” means the lands and waters of Indigenous peoples were never surrendered and were taken without permission.

VALUE The lightness or darkness in a colour. When you add white to a colour, you’ll get a tint. When you add black to a colour, it is called a shade. Value is one of the seven elements of art.



Jack Goldstein, *Untitled (Lightning)*, 1989, acrylic on canvas, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of Sandra L. Simpson, VAG 2008.47.34, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery

PRE- AND POST TOUR ACTIVITIES

GRADES 2-12



1. ALL AGES WHO ARE THE ARTISTS?

Pre-Tour Activity



2. ALL AGES DECEPTIVE COLLAGE

Post-Tour Activity

Iain Baxter, *Four Milk Bottles*, 1965, butyrate, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of J. Ron Longstaffe, VAG 80.26, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery

Mina Totino, *October*, 2019, oil on canvas, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Audain BC Art Acquisition Fund, VAG 2023.10.1, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery



3. ALL AGES SOUND ART

Post-Tour Activity



4. ALL AGES ABSTRACT LANDSCAPE

Post-Tour Activity

Student example

Lui Shou-Kwan, *Abstract Landscape*, 1958, ink, silk, wood on paper, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of Alice, Helen and Anne Lui, VAG 2020.22.1, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery

GRADES 2-12 | WHO ARE THE ARTISTS?

PRE-TOUR ACTIVITY



OBJECTIVE

Students are introduced to the lives, artistic processes and works of artists in *Black and White and Everything In Between*.

MATERIALS

- Writing materials
- Access to the internet
- Artist Information Sheet (p. 13) and Student Worksheet (p. 14)

PROCESS

- Divide the class into small groups.
- Give each group one of the categories from the Artist Information Sheet.
- Give each student a copy of the Student Worksheet and ask them to consider what they need to find out to complete their section.
- Have them conduct research using the internet, either at home or at school.
- Ask each group to find and describe a piece of work by the artist and add it into the space provided on the Worksheet.
- Have each group present their information while the rest of the students fill in their worksheets.

Iain Baxter, *Four Milk Bottles*, 1965, butyrate, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of J. Ron Longstaffe, VAG 80.26, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery

GRADES 4-12 | WHO ARE THE ARTISTS?

PRE-TOUR ACTIVITY

CONCLUSION

Discuss the following:

- What were some of the most interesting things students learned or discovered?
- Which piece are students curious about seeing in the exhibition?
- Does the artist's works connect to or resonate with the student's lives? Why or why not?
- What else are students interested in finding out about the artist?

JOAN BALZAR (1928–2016)

Although today Joan Balzar is recognized as an important figure in the development of abstract painting on the West Coast, she struggled to gain the same attention in the 1960s, when women artists were not taken as seriously as male artists. Fascinated by the infrastructure and buildings of the city, Balzar would sometimes sketch and paint in downtown Vancouver in the middle of the night, saying, "I became a night painter because I loved the 'neon jewels of the night,' the city lights glowing in the dark." She wanted to create light in her large-scale paintings and experimented with vibrant colours, creating op art canvases depicting arcs, orbits and stripes. Balzar was interested in new industrial materials such as neon and plastics to create brightly coloured paintings, mixing metallic powders into both the gesso of her underpainting and into the paint to create fluorescent works that invited people into her "volumes of light." Balzar wanted to create "spontaneous combustions" through her colour combinations and experimented with perspective and scale to create powerful sensory experiences for viewers. To further emphasize the radiant quality of her paintings, she used up to five layers of

white undercoat, repeatedly sanded smooth, as a base to her acrylic colours. Many of her artworks were tragically lost when a fire broke out in her West Vancouver home in 1970. However, Balzar's surviving body of work, including pieces in the Vancouver Art Gallery's collection, is enough to ensure her place in Canadian art history.

GATHIE FALK (B. 1928)

Born in Manitoba, Gathie Falk has fond memories of her childhood: piles of fresh vegetables, trees covered in fruit, beautiful homemade dresses—all images that would later become key to her creative process. She moved to Vancouver in 1947 and taught elementary school. She studied art in her spare time and became a full-time artist in 1965. Falk is perhaps best known for her series of ceramic fruit piles, which she began producing in the late 1960s. Over a period of three years, Falk produced dozens of fruit piles including apples, oranges and grapefruits. Her interest in stacked fruit was inspired by the similar orderly piles she encountered at the greengrocers in her Vancouver neighbourhood. She enjoys creating using different media, such as painting, drawing, performance art, sculpture and ceramics and has produced some of the most well-known art in Canada and abroad, reinventing clothing, fruit, plants and shoes to ask us to consider the beauty of everyday things. Falk has become one of Canada's most critically acclaimed artists and, now in her mid-nineties, is still working and creating in Vancouver today.

GRADES 4-12 | WHO ARE THE ARTISTS?

PRE-TOUR ACTIVITY

ANISH KAPOOR (B. 1954)

Born in Mumbai, India, Sir Anish Kapoor is a British Indian sculptor specializing in installation and conceptual art. His path from India to the UK helped to define his own creative approach; his Jewish, Iraqi and Indian background inspires him. Kapoor is a visionary artist, creating art that challenges the way we see things. In this exhibition, Kapoor achieves the form of *Untitled* by stacking multiple layers of fibreboard, each with a clear interior and exterior shape. The work has the potential to momentarily stop the viewer from judging the piece and transport them into a space of reflection. Since 1995, he has worked with the highly reflective surface of polished stainless steel. These works are mirror-like, reflecting and distorting the viewer and their surroundings. His contributions to art have earned him a knighthood, and in 2017, the Genesis Prize recognized him as one of the most influential and innovative artists of his generation, acknowledging his many years of advocacy for refugees and displaced people.

KEN LUM (B. 1956)

Born in Vancouver, Ken Lum is a conceptual artist, writer and educator working in painting, sculpture and photography. He is well known for his works that integrate images and text to address issues of race and class, inviting the viewer to ask questions about social issues such as identity, immigration, language and political differences. Lum began making furniture pieces in 1978. These upholstered sets and surfaces prevent the

viewer from taking a seat, thereby highlighting themes of exclusion and inaccessibility. Lum rarely makes his own art; he collaborates with studio photographers and tradespeople, and constructs most of his furniture works using rented pieces. However, this exhibition features *Untitled (Red Circle)* (1986), one of his rare custom builds. In 2010, Lum completed *Monument for East Vancouver*, known as the East Van Cross, one of the many public art projects he has worked on in his career.

JAMES TURRELL (B. 1943)

Born in Los Angeles, California, James Turrell is an American artist known for his work within the Light and Space movement. Regarded as one of the movement's founders, Turrell abandoned traditional methods of creating art and began experimenting with pure light as a medium, stating, "My work has no object, no image, and no focus." Often considered a master of light, his installations are designed to heighten our awareness of how we perceive the world around us. Turrell describes this experience as "seeing yourself seeing." Turrell studied the psychology of perception in college, learning about how our brains understand what we see. In his art, Turrell is interested in exploring those moments when our eyes might fool our brains into thinking we are seeing something different than what is actually there. His fascination with light is ultimately connected to a very personal, inward search for mankind's place in the universe.

"Art is the heart's explosion on the world." —Anish Kapoor

"The truth is, I wanted people to treasure light as we treasure gold, silver, and of course, paintings." —James Turrell

GRADES 4-12 | WHO ARE THE ARTISTS?

PRE-TOUR ACTIVITY

ARTIST INFORMATION SHEET

JOAN BALZAR

- Important figure in the development of abstract painting on the West Coast
 - Created large-scale, hard-edge geometric paintings
 - Wanted to create light in her paintings
 - Experimented with vibrant colours using arcs, orbits and stripes
- Interested in new materials such as neon and plastics

GATHIE FALK

- Childhood memories are key to her creative process
- Transforms ordinary objects into extraordinary things
- Has created some of the most well-known art in Canada and abroad
- Has produced dozens of ceramic fruit piles inspired by her neighbourhood grocers

ANISH KAPOOR

- Sculptor specializing in installation and conceptual art
- Creates art that challenges the way we see things
- Inspired by his Jewish, Iraqi and Indian background
- His contributions to art have earned him a knighthood

KEN LUM

- Conceptual artist
- Makes furniture sculptures highlighting themes of exclusion and inaccessibility
- Creates image and text works to ask questions about social issues
- Created the public artwork *Monument for East Vancouver* in 2010

JAMES TURRELL

- Uses pure light as an art medium
- Founder of the Light and Space movement
- His fascination with light is connected to the search for mankind's place in the universe
- Installations explore the moments our eyes might fool our brains

GRADES 4-12 | WHO ARE THE ARTISTS?

PRE-TOUR ACTIVITY

STUDENT WORKSHEET (FILL IN THE CHART WITH THE FOLLOWING)

	PERSONAL INFORMATION	TYPE OF ART	MATERIALS USED	AN ARTWORK
JOAN BALZAR				
GATHIE FALK				
ANISH KAPOOR				
KEN LUM				
JAMES TURRELL				

ALL AGES | DECEPTIVE COLLAGE

INSPIRED BY THE WORK MINA TOTINO



OBJECTIVE

Discover how to make black using brown and blue; create a collaborative black and white geometric collage.

DISCUSSION

Mina Totino is a Vancouver-based artist who works in painting, sculpture and installation. Throughout her career, she has played with the rules of abstract painting, blurring the line between painting and sculpture. In recent years, she has begun exploring the optical and sensorial effects of immersive colour. From a distance, *October* (2019) looks entirely black; however, no black paint was used, only many layers and shades of deep blue paint. Totino uses a small round brush less than an inch in diameter to build up one

layer of colour at a time. Each brush stroke is defined with both vertical and horizontal layers. Through her experiments with monochromatic painting, Mina Totino plays with colour perception, revealing the instability of human sight.

MATERIALS

- 8.5 x 11" white cardstock cut into four pieces (optional to cut paper into squares)
- Scrap paper to protect desk while creating square
- Poster board for collage surface
- Blue and brown markers
- Glue stick

Mina Totino, *October*, 2019, oil on canvas, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Audain BC Art Acquisition Fund, VAG 2023.10.1, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery

ALL AGES | DECEPTIVE COLLAGE

INSPIRED BY THE WORK MINA TOTINO

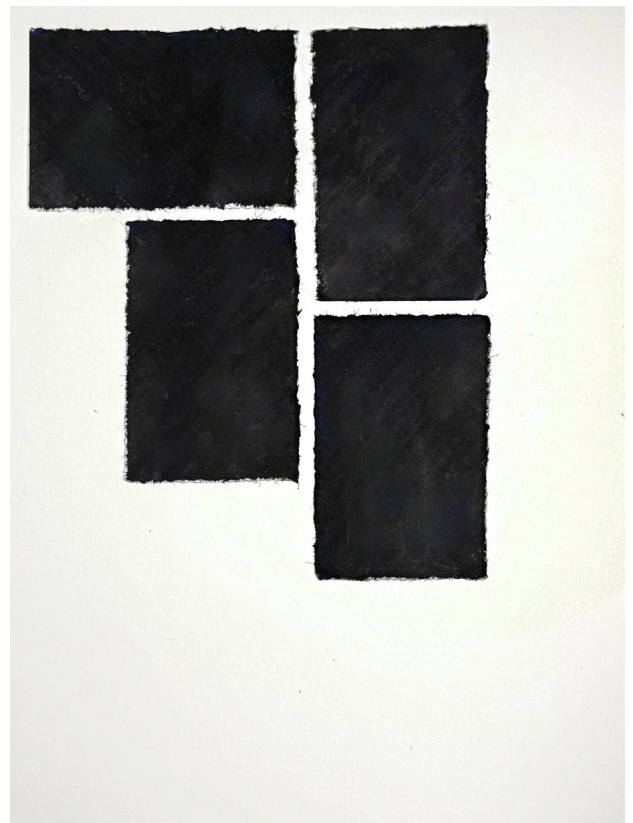
PROCESS

1. Look at Mina Totino's painting *October*. At first glance, this painting looks black. Were you surprised to learn that the artist did not use black paint when creating this work? Why or why not? Black can be created through the mixing of different colours. When all colours are mixed together in equal amounts, they create black. This is known as subtractive colour mixing.
2. Put your cardstock rectangle or square on top of a piece of scrap paper to protect your desk.
3. Mina Totino created *October* using a small round brush and adding many horizontal and vertical layers and shades of blue, which makes the painting process slower and more laborious. Using your blue marker, create intentional horizontal lines across your entire paper. You can put the lines close together or further apart, it is up to you.
4. Now use your brown marker to create vertical lines across the paper again, being intentional in your mark-making. When you are using lines that cross over each other to create light and dark areas, this is called cross-hatching.
5. Continue to cross-hatch, alternating between the blue and brown markers, so each one is being used equally.
6. Relax and enjoy the process of adding the lines of colour to your paper. Take time to notice what is happening as you continue cross-hatching the alternating colours.
7. When you have decided your paper looks black, stop.
8. In small groups or as a class, use your shapes to create a collaborative collage.
9. When everyone is satisfied with the composition—how things are placed together—carefully glue down your squares
10. Display the artwork in your classroom.

CONCLUSION

Discuss the following:

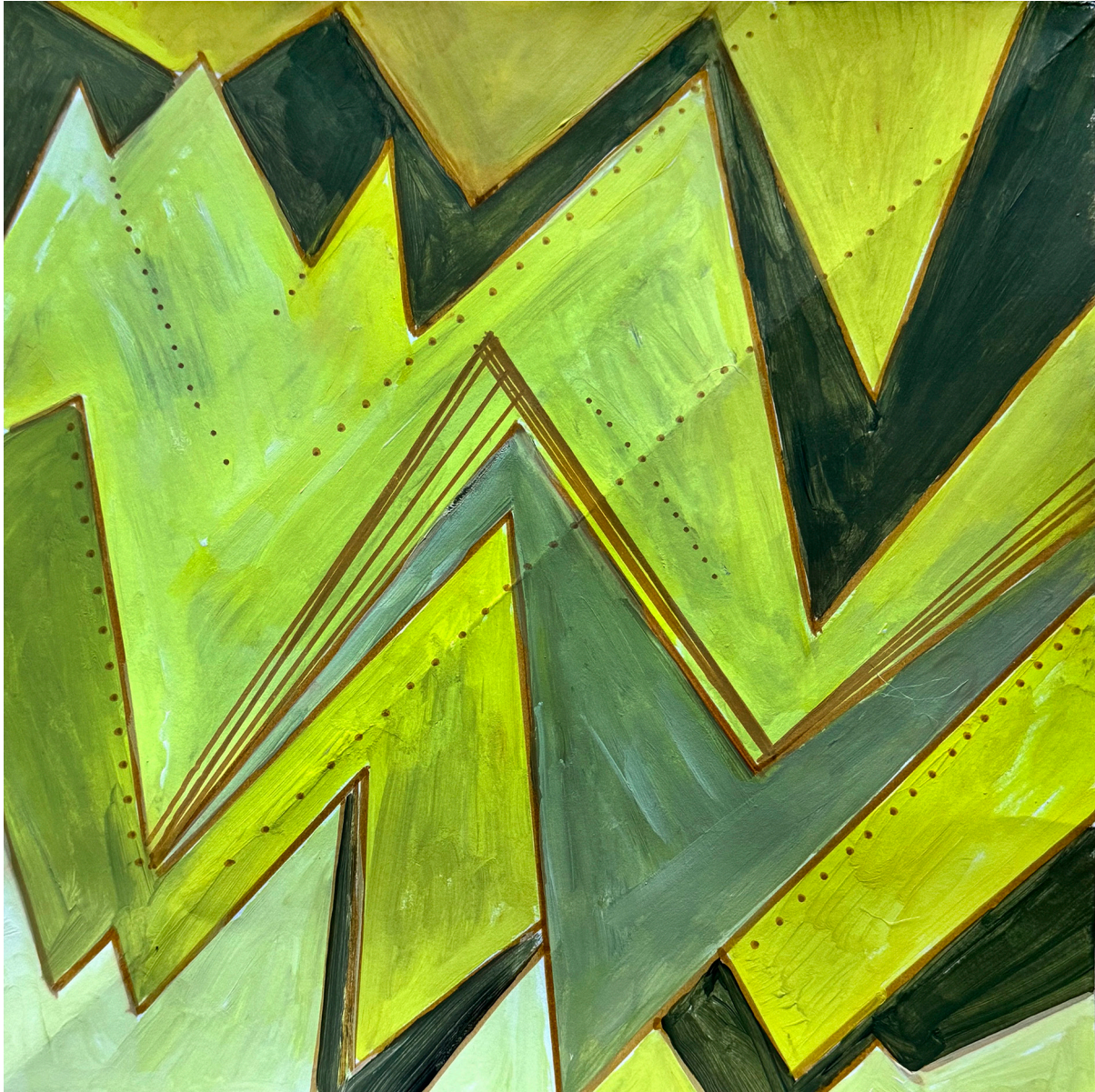
- What do you notice about all the different coloured squares?
- What was it like to play with colour perception like Mina Totino does in *October*?
- What were some of the things you noticed as you layered the brown and blue horizontal and vertical lines?
- Is black a colour? This has been debated for centuries. Some argue that black is not a colour because it is the absorption of all colours. Black absorbs all light in the colour spectrum. Others believe black can be viewed as a colour with its own unique properties and uses in art. What do you think?



Student example

ALL AGES | SOUND ART

INSPIRED BY RUBY SINGH



OBJECTIVE

Create a monochromatic artwork inspired by sound.

DISCUSSION

Ruby Singh is a composer and sound designer. *Vox.Infold* (2022) features an a cappella group of Indigenous, Inuit, Black and South Asian singers whose voices are used as instruments. This sound artwork was composed and recorded

during the COVID-19 pandemic, at a time when many were living alone and amidst social unrest. This sonic landscape creates a journey through which we may find and care for each other. Evoking loneliness, joy, the mysterious and the supernatural, *Vox.Infold* brings together a group of diverse vocal traditions through the human activity most crucial to our existence: breathing. This is how the atmosphere enters our bodies and how we know we are intimately connected to our world.

Student example

ALL AGES | SOUND ART

INSPIRED BY RUBY SINGH

MATERIALS

- Watercolour or cardstock paper
- Pencil crayons
- Acrylic or tempera paint
- Paintbrush
- Coloured markers
- <https://www.rubysingh.ca/vox-infold>

PROCESS

1. *Black and White and Everything in Between* is also looking at colour by engaging other senses, like hearing. Does this surprise you? Why or why not? Have you ever considered colour as a sound? What colour represents the sound of laughter? Yelling? Breathing?
2. Close your eyes and listen to Ruby Singh's *Vox.Infold*. What do you notice?
3. Now let's take what you heard with your ears and translate that into something you see with your eyes! What colour do you think best represents the sonic landscape Singh has created?
4. Listen to *Vox.Infold* again. This time, close your eyes and visualize the shapes or lines Singh's work inspires.
5. Using a pencil crayon in the colour you chose, draw a few of the shapes or lines.
6. Add paint in your chosen colour. Although your artwork will be made with only one base colour, it can make use of different shades and tints.
7. To create lighter colours, add white. The more white you add, the lighter it gets. Tints are created by mixing colour with varying amounts of white.
8. To create darker colours, add black. The more black you add, the darker it gets. Shades are created by mixing colours with varying amounts of black.

9. Apply different shades and tints to your artwork. To create contrast, think about how tints and shades of your chosen colour will go together.

10. When your painting is completely dry, use a marker in your chosen colour to clean up your paint lines (optional).

11. Display your artwork

CONCLUSION

Discuss the following:

- What elements of Singh's work inspired your painting?
- What colour did you choose and why?
- What role did rhythm play in your artwork?
- How are the paintings the same and different?
- For fun, listen to *Vox.Infold* again. What parts of the song do you see in your classmates' artworks? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Discuss the process. What was easy or hard about creating your painting? What are some of the things you discovered? If you were to do the project again, what would you do the same and what would you do differently?

ALL AGES | ABSTRACT LANDSCAPE

INSPIRED BY LUI SHOU-KWAN

OBJECTIVE

Create a monochrome abstract landscape inspired by Chinese ink painting.

DISCUSSION

Known for his brush painting skills in both traditional and modern Chinese ink styles, Lui Shou Kwan founded the New Ink Movement in Hong Kong. Relying on traditional techniques as his base and traditional aesthetics as a reference, he was determined to bring Chinese painting into conversation with Western abstraction. Although his style underwent a drastic shift during the 1960s, Lui remained faithful to traditional media: paper, brush and ink. He frequently looked to the scenery of Hong Kong and its surrounding islands for the subject matter of his paintings. From the late 1960s onward, he produced several landscapes that followed in the Chinese tradition of lines and washing that are bold and defined, with simplified textural strokes that approach the non-representational.

MATERIALS

- Long-format white paper (such as 12 x 18" paper cut into 6 x 18" sheets or smaller)
- Pencils
- Watercolour paints or tempera puck paints
- Paintbrushes in a variety of sizes



ALL AGES | ABSTRACT LANDSCAPE

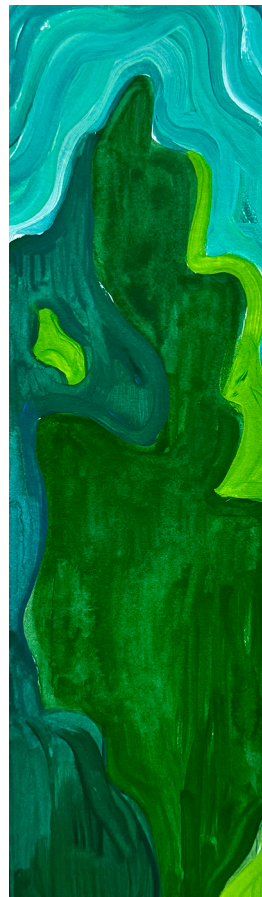
INSPIRED BY LUI SHOU-KWAN

PROCESS

- Discuss Lui Shou-Kwan's *Abstract Landscape* (1958). What do you see? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Notice this painting is just one colour. How does that change the landscape? Colour is used by artists to evoke feelings or to bring attention to a cause. What are some emotions you feel when you are in nature? What colours would you choose to represent your feeling? What colour would you choose if you wanted to bring attention to social issues around nature?
- On your long sheet of paper, lightly sketch a simple landscape.
- Once your sketch is complete, choose a colour that represents your mood or brings attention to your concerns about nature.
- Using only this colour, create values using water to paint in your sketch. If you use more water, the colour will be lighter. If you use less water, the colour will be darker.
- Consider creating a variety of your colour by mixing other colours into it. For example, if you chose green, you could add some blue, yellow or even a small bit of red to create different greens.
- Display your work when finished.

CONCLUSION

- Which elements did you consider from Lui Shou-Kwan's painting?
- Was it different to create on a long sheet of paper? Why or why not?
- What was easy or hard about creating your landscape?
- What considerations did you take into planning the colour you chose for your painting? Share the decisions you made.
- Where do you notice similarities and differences between the artworks created by your class?
- If you were to do the project again, what would you do the same and what would you do differently?



Student example

FURTHER LEARNING

TEACHER AND STUDENT RESOURCES

VIDEO

[Khan Lee on \(Mono\) Restoration](#)

[Ruby Singh - Horizon | Vox.Infold | 2022](#)

ARTICLES

James Turrell - Interview Magazine

<https://art21.org/?s=james+turrell>

WEBSITES

[Exploring Art with Anish Kapoor](#)

<https://www.rubysingh.ca/vox-infold>

DEFINITIONS

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