

Educator Guide

In November 2008, Gallery Crawl visited Aicon Gallery and Stanford Art Gallery to see the exhibitions **The Human Dichotomy** and **Ghostpile**. This guide provides resources for educators to support the utilization of this online virtual visit to the gallery to teach about contemporary art. The Gallery Crawl video can be found at www.KOED.org/gallerycrawl. Information about taking your students to the galleries can be found at the bottom of this guide.

Exhibitions *The Human Dichotomy* and *Ghostpile*

Location Aicon Gallery, Palo Alto [Google Map](#)

Stanford Art Gallery, Stanford Campus [Google Map](#)

Grades 6 - 12

Standards Addressed Artistic Perception, Creative Expression, Aesthetic Valuing

The Exhibitions

The Human Dichotomy features works by Tazeen Qayyum, Attiya Shaukat, Aisha Hussain and Rehana Mangi. All four artists are from Pakistan and have been trained as miniature painters. Qayyum explores the intricacies of humanity in a body of work which focuses on the repeated image of a cockroach. The insect serves as a symbol of dehumanization, and the diminished value of human life. Shaukat delves into the individual and personal aspect of humanity -- her work explores how the human body and mind respond to physical trauma: the voyage from experiencing the trauma itself to the recovery from such an experience. Hussain's body of work is a collection of dualities: personal and political, organic and structured, story-telling and illegibility. Mangi incorporates a very personal facet in her work: human hair, an aspect of the body that is exceptionally representative of life and personality.

Ghostpile features Lukas Felzmann's photographic work, an exploration of the Sacramento Valley as both place and metaphor, documents a marsh altered through agriculture. In this collection, images and ideas about landscape and natural and cultural conditions intersect. The waters photographed are in the middle of the journey from the sky to the sea. They have left the steep watersheds, but have not yet reached the delta. Flowing south between the Coast Ranges and the Sierra Nevada, their paths have been contained in the mud channels and concrete canals. Felzmann's intention was not to produce an inclusive documentation, but to construct an empirical archive and to weave a story out of fragments – a sort of poetry of ruins. "Transitory zones have been important in this collection because they reveal something about the essence of place, but can also point outside themselves," says Felzmann.

The Art Forms

Originally defined as a small painting in an illuminated scroll or book, miniature paintings were popular in the scholarly centers of Europe, Persia, and Asia in the 13th and 14th centuries, where their small scale and great detail made jewel-like additions to the written pages. The main function of the miniature was to visually explain or extend the written text, helping make it more understandable; over time, the practice of miniature painting became a method of storytelling in

itself, with rich details woven into the small spaces¹. In contemporary painting, the term “miniature” refers to the intricacy of the detail in the artwork, rather than the size of the artwork. Miniature paintings often involved the use of a single-hair brush.

Though the birth of photography is usually associated with the first perfected [Daguerreotype](#) images of 1839, it was not until the period of early American Modern art at the turn of the 20th century that photography began to be thought of as an art form alongside painting and sculpture. Three practitioners closely associated with the use of photography as an art form are Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand, and Edward Weston. Each of these photographers experimented with the medium as a window onto the world *and* as a formal art technique itself.

Teaching with Gallery Crawl

Using video in the classroom can breathe life and meaning into almost any lesson. In the arts, video can be particularly effective for introducing large concepts, aspects of the creative process, and key arts-related vocabulary to introduce students to discipline-based and concept-based study. Using media in the classroom helps connect students with faraway places and promotes critical viewing skills and media awareness. For more information about using media in the classroom download KQED's [Media Tips](#) teaching tool (a direct link is provided in the resource section of this guide).

Using a Gallery Crawl video in the classroom allows student to virtually view a local art exhibit, while listening to firsthand information about exhibitions from curators, gallerists, and artists. In order to present Gallery Crawl to your entire class, you will need a projector and computer with the capacity to stream video. Alternatively, assign students to watch the video on their own or in groups. After soliciting student responses to the video, continue the lesson by implementing hands-on or discussion activities to deepen the impact of the media – ideas are provided in this guide.

Making the Most of your Virtual Visit

The following activity ideas may be used in the classroom after viewing the Gallery Crawl Video, **and/or** after a school tour of Aicon Gallery or Stanford Art Gallery.

- ❖ Invite students to sit quietly and dwell on memories that come to mind as they think about different times in their life. Encourage them to focus on memories that resonate strongly and produce powerful, detailed images in their mind's eye. Can they picture clearly people they have known, objects, places, vistas? Suggest that students note down or sketch these images. Is there a central focus or theme? Do these images hang together or fragment with further reflection? Using paper and pencil, guide students to begin to work on a painting by making drawings of different elements of these memories. Reassure them that their images do not need to cohere into a rational scenario, but can echo the dreamlike images of contemporary painters like Attiya Shaukat. When students have an array of images, set them working on a large sheet of paper, mapping out a composition, focusing on small details. Invite them to

¹ Kennedy Center ArtsEdge Web site: <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/pakistan/arts-of-pakistan/miniatures.htm>

begin painting when they are ready. Ensure that in displaying the work, students have the opportunity to talk through their thoughts and feelings about their piece.

- ❖ Initiate a discussion about Pakistan with students. What do they know about Pakistan? What have they heard in the news about Pakistan as a country? Invite students to form small groups and choose an aspect of Pakistani culture to research such as food, art, music, language, etc. Ask them to create a presentation of their findings using an artistic avenue such as a descriptive collage or a creative writing piece.
- ❖ After watching the Gallery Crawl video featuring Lukas Felzmann, ask students the following questions:
 - How does the artist interpret his subject? Do his photographs make the subject seem positive, or negative?
 - What elements are used in their photographs to enhance or decrease focus on certain parts of the scene?
 - How is lighting used in the artist's work? How is negative space used in the artist's work?

After discussing the work, have students get into groups of 3 or 4 and spend time coming up with ideas of how to represent their school's landscape in art piece. Using photography, drawing, or collage, students should plan and fabricate an art piece that weaves different elements together and captures a story about the school and/or the surrounding neighborhood. Students should look to Felzmann's photographic story about the Sacramento Valley for inspiration.

- ❖ While viewing the Gallery Crawl video featuring Lukas Felzmann, press pause during a screen shot of one of his photographs. Ask students to do a "Free Write" where they will quickly jot down a list of words that come to mind when viewing the photo (still, quiet, blurred, etc.) Have students share their words lists to pinpoint commonalities. Then ask students to look back at their Free Writing piece and create a short poem that includes some of the words they wrote down to describe Felzmann's work. Students may choose to present their poems to another class alongside the photograph they focused on in order to share and illustrate their inspiration.

Visiting the Galleries

Both Aicon Gallery and Stanford Art Gallery are located in Palo Alto, CA. *The Human Dichotomy* will be on view through November 29, 2008 and *Ghostpile* will be on view through December 6, 2008. Both galleries are available for school group visits. For gallery hours and public transportation information, visit the galleries' Web sites listed below.

Resources to extend learning about the exhibits, art forms, and featured artists

Aicon Gallery <http://www.aicongallery.com>

Stanford Art Gallery <http://art.stanford.edu/galleries-spaces/stanford-art-gallery/>

Kennedy Center ArtsEdge Web resource on Miniature Painting
<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/pakistan/arts-of-pakistan/miniatures.htm>

Web site about Daguerreotype <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/daghtml/daghome.html>

Wikipedia entry on Photography <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photography>

The following KQED [Spark](#) documentaries may be used for compare/contrast purposes and to extend learning about contemporary art:

KQED Spark documentary about painter [Hung Liu](#)
An in-depth Spark Educator Guide accompanies this video.

KQED Spark documentary about the [Sixth Street Photography Workshop](#)
An in-depth Spark Educator Guide accompanies this video.

KQED Spark documentary about photographer [Roman Loranc](#)
An in-depth Spark Educator Guide accompanies this video.

Visit the KQED Spark Web site for additional Educator Guides and videos about local contemporary artists at www.KQED.org/spark. Also available are educator resources on media literacy and production, using video in the classroom, standards-based arts instruction, program development, and more. For more information about KQED's Arts Education resources, send an email to ArtsEd@KQED.org or call 800.723.3566.

Direct Links

- Gallery Crawl: <http://www.kqed.org/arts/gallerycrawl/>
- Spark: <http://www.kqed.org/spark>
- KQED "Media Tips" Tool: <http://www.kqed.org/assets/pdf/arts/programs/spark/video.pdf>
- Hung Liu Spark video: <http://www.kqed.org/arts/programs/spark/profile.jsp?essid=4455>
- Sixth Street Photography Workshop video: <http://www.kqed.org/arts/programs/spark/profile.jsp?essid=5035>
- Roman Loranc Spark video: <http://www.kqed.org/arts/programs/spark/profile.jsp?essid=7081>
- Google Map: Aicon Gallery
<http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&q=535+Bryant+St,+Palo+Alto,+Santa+Clara,+California+94301,+United+States&sll=40.742965,-73.988564&sspn=0.008616,0.016887&ie=UTF8&cd=3&geocode=0,37.445633,-122.161159&ll=37.445647,-122.161167&spn=0.009029,0.016887&z=16&>
- Google Map: Stanford Art Gallery
<http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&geocode=&q=419+Lasuen+Mall+Stanford+CA&sll=37.0625,-95.677068&sspn=34.176059,56.25&ie=UTF8&ll=37.439736,-122.165651&spn=0.008365,0.013733&z=16&g=419+Lasuen+Mall+Stanford+CA&iwloc=addr>