

Educator Guide

In March 2010 **Gallery Crawl** visited Baer Ridgway Exhibitions in San Francisco to view a group show titled **Paper!Awesome!** and interview artist and curator, Brion Nuda Rosch. The exhibition features over 300 artworks on paper by more than 100 local artists. Also on view at Baer Ridgway Exhibitions was a hallway installation created with tape and pencil by artist Tucker Nichols. This guide provides resources for educators to support the utilization of this online virtual visit to the galleries to teach about contemporary art. The Gallery Crawl videos can be found at www.KQED.org/gallerycrawl. Information about taking your students to the galleries can be found at the bottom of this guide.

Exhibition *Paper!Awesome!*

Location Baer Ridgway Exhibitions, San Francisco [Google Map](#)

Grades 6 - 12

Standards Addressed Artistic Perception, Creative Expression, Aesthetic Valuing

The Exhibition

At Baer Ridgway Exhibitions, artist and curator Brion Nuda Rosch invited over one hundred artists to create new works on approachably sized 8.5 x 11" sheets of paper. This third installment of *Paper!Awesome!* is the most ambitious to date and includes over three hundred works on paper. Rosch invited established bay area artists such as Barry McGee and Tucker Nichols, as well as younger emerging artists like Alexis Mackenzie and Mads Lynnerup to contribute to the show. Artists Chris Duncan and Jason Jaegel were invited to create larger commissioned works, rounding out a rich collection of samplings from the local art scene. The exhibit illustrates the myriad ways that artists create vastly different images, even when working with similar materials and limited dimensions. In the gallery's hallway installation space, artist Tucker Nichols created an art piece serving as a blueprint for SFMOMA's storage facilities using black electrical tape and penciled hand-lettering.

Teaching with Gallery Crawl

Using video in the classroom can breathe life and meaning into 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 artists and promotes critical viewing skills and media awareness. For more information about using media in the classroom download KQED's [Media Tips](#) teaching tool. 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. Gallery Crawl is also available as a free video podcast on iTunes and YouTube. 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 activities can be used after viewing the Gallery Crawl Video, and/or after a school tour of **Baer Ridgway Exhibitions**.

➤ **Discussing Conceptual Art**

Paper!Awesome! is an exhibition curated by Conceptual artist Brion Nuda Rosch. Conceptual art is defined as an art movement in which an artist deliberately avoids using traditional art materials and techniques. Conceptual artists create works of art based solely on an idea or concept, which takes precedence over the arts physical representation. Based on the intellect rather than the eye, Conceptual art often relies on text or the dialogue surrounding it.

Invite students to make notes and discuss ideas around Conceptual art and its validity as an art form. Consider and discuss the following questions to help students get started.

- What makes something a work of art?
- Should art have a purpose or an objective?
- What effect, if any, should a work of art have on the viewer?
- How is the value of art determined and who might determine its value?

Suggest that students work in small groups to investigate ways that Conceptual art may challenge fixed ideas about art and what constitutes or legitimizes art. Ask each small group to share their thoughts with the group as a whole. As a final point, ask students if the discussion has altered or changed their way of thinking about art.

➤ **Everyday Objects As Art – Creating Conceptual Art**

Examine, with the use of slides or pictures, and discuss the artwork of influential Conceptual artists that use or have used everyday objects in their art. Using open ended questions, engage the students in a discussion about the visuals in the imagery. The objective is to encourage students to explore how everyday objects are used by recognized artists. Discuss the question “can anything be considered art?”

Invite students to bring in an everyday tangible object that they are willing to transform into art. In some way, the object should be interesting or inspiring to them. It could be an old phone, a basket, a hairbrush, a broom, a lamp, an old appliance – almost anything will do. Working in small groups, encourage each student to present their object to the group while focusing on the following topics:

- Describe the object in as much detail as possible, identifying different materials used, colors, textures and shapes. Discuss the objects significance and what interests or inspires them about the object.
- How does the object make them feel?
- Do they associate it with other objects, feelings, memories or ideas?

Invite students to join in a dialogue sharing their thoughts and ideas about the relationships they feel with everyday objects. Discuss similarities and differences of opinions. Lastly, recognize as a group how common everyday objects can easily be elevated to represent larger issues, concepts and ideas.

Younger students can enjoy painting, collage or decorating their everyday object as a process of transforming their object into a piece of art. Encourage the students to study the objects physical attributes as well as its function.

For older students, divide the class into groups of six to eight. Challenge the students to assemble the objects into one cohesive Conceptual artwork with one singular theme or idea to explore. Encourage students to discuss their ideas, motivations and underlying principles for their choices during the art making process. Students can supplement materials with text, photographs, paint or collage, but essentially should use found objects for the art piece. Request that the groups title their artwork, or purposefully leave the piece untitled.

This project could be extended for a period of several weeks giving each group the opportunity to exhibit their art in a prominent and public school location. Invite a discussion with each student group. Talk about the art making process and their experiences and/or challenges creating artwork as a group. Invite viewer participation, asking students to discuss their own experiences.

➤ **Working Like Brion Nuda Rosch – Altered Image Project**

Conceptual artist Brion Nuda Rosch investigates the value of materials in his artwork. Brion creates mixed media collages of nature scenes made from found books or magazine pages, wood scraps, and other recycled household items. Although his approach is simple, his message is deliberate using found and common everyday objects in an intended juxtaposition to communicate his theme or message.

Provide students with books and magazines that can be altered and ultimately transformed into art. Invite students to select images that inspire them or that they relate to through memories, ideas or thoughts. Ask students to select several images thoughtfully and carefully, cutting, tearing and transforming the images as they want. Brion Nuda Rosch states that “Most of my practice involves a selection, and then developing an understanding of that selection.” Ask students to understand their selection of images and create a theme for a collage. Invite students to assemble their images while focusing on their theme, composition, relationships and processes. When the art making is complete, ask students to title their pieces. Display the images in a prominent location and invite students to discuss the art making process and their ideas regarding the value of materials.

➤ **Curate a Works on Paper Exhibition**

Paper!Awesome! is a group exhibition of new works on paper by over 100 artists. Artist and curator Brion Nuda Rosch invited both emerging and internationally recognized artist to create

works on 8.5 x 11 inch pieces of paper. Works by both emerging and recognized artists hang side by side with the only limitation being paper size.

Invite teachers from various classes and disciplines to participate in a Works on Paper exhibition. Provide all participants with an 8.5 x 11 inch piece of paper. Provide a variety of papers and mediums including graphite, colored pencils, markers, watercolor and acrylic paint as well as collage items. Students may also enjoy non traditional art materials such as food (artist Derek Albeck uses tomatoes in his graphite and colored pencil drawings in the *Paper!Awesome!* exhibition). Ideas for non traditional materials may include pudding, syrup, beet juice or other brightly colored vegetable juice, toothpaste, nail polish or makeup. Paper choices can include wrapping paper, brown bags, binder paper, or paper towels, making the only limitation the 8.5 x 11 inch size. Invite students to create 2 to 3 pieces of art using similar techniques and themes.

Display the finished works in a prominent school location such as a hallway, cafeteria or multi-purpose room, hanging pieces from different grade levels side by side. Take the opportunity as a class to view the work and discuss how the pieces relate to each other. Ask students to discuss their ideas about technical abilities and grade level and if it is challenging to determine grade or technical ability by looking only at the art. Discuss the size limitation and if working with the limitation was restrictive or liberating, given the variety of medium choices available.

➤ **Understanding and Responding to Art**

As with making art, students also go through a process of responding and understanding art. Their initial response may be an aesthetic or felt response to what they see. Students should be given time to reflect on and interpret that response. This activity will give students the opportunity to respond to artwork objectively and receptively while considering how we respond to art based on cultural norms, personal pleasure and our understanding of beauty.

Keeping this in mind, provide a wide range of artwork from different time periods for students to view. Include landscapes, portraits, still images, and religious icons. Include works of well known artists such as Claude Monet (European landscape painter), Pablo Picasso (European Modern figurative painter), Piet Mondrian (European abstract artist), Albrecht Dürer (Medieval allegorical painter), Rene Magritte (Conceptual painter), and Salvador Dali (Spanish Surrealist painter).

After viewing these artworks, show works of several Conceptual artists. Include pieces from different historical periods. Examples may include the artwork of Marchel Duchamp (European Dada artist), Paul Kos, (contemporary Bay Area Conceptual artist), Andy Goldsworthy (contemporary Conceptual Land artist), Barbara Kruger (contemporary American Conceptual artist), Eve Andree Laramie (contemporary American Conceptual artist), Alice Aycock (contemporary American sculptor) and Jonathon Keats (contemporary Bay Area Conceptual artist).

Working in small groups, invite students to think about the way they respond to each work of art. Ensure that the discussion focuses on ideas that elicit objective responses, keeping in mind a

goal to create an atmosphere of inquiry and not judgment, where there are no correct or incorrect answers.

- Ask students to describe the works in detail, describing texture, color, shape, size and scale of the work.
- What was the artist's intention, if any?
- Where, when and in what social context was the piece made?

To encourage objective and open responses, consider the following prompts:

- Does knowledge about the art form affect our response and understanding of the art?
- Does social and/or economic background influence the way art is viewed?
- Do fixed ideas about what constitutes art have an effect on our understanding and appreciation of art?

In conclusion, ask students to discuss ideas of aesthetics in art appreciation. Encourage students to refer to their responses above when considering the following:

- Should art be enjoyable and pleasing to view?
- What other objectives might an artist have and why?
- Should an artist be concerned about creating work that is aesthetically pleasing?
- Is aesthetic pleasure a personal response or are there general accepted beliefs about beauty?
- Does culture shape our ideas of beauty?
- Does environment shape our ideas of beauty?
- Does Conceptual art depart from traditional ideas of beauty? Why?

Visiting the Galleries

The Paper!Awesome! exhibition is showing at Baer Ridgway Exhibitions located in San Francisco, CA. The exhibition will be on view through March 27, 2010. For gallery hours, location and public transportation, visit the gallery Web site listed below.

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

Baer Ridgway Exhibitions Web site

http://www.baeridgway.com/Baer_Ridgway_Exhibitions/Baer_Ridgway_Exhibitions.html

Brion Nuda Rosch on Baer Ridgway Exhibitions Web site

http://www.baeridgway.com/Baer_Ridgway_Exhibitions/Brion_Nuda_Rosch_-_A_Modest_Yet_Overbearing_Introduction.html

Brion Nuda Rosch's Web site <http://brionnudarosch.com/>

Brion Nuda Rosch's curating blog <http://www.somethinghomesomething.com/>

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

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Andy Goldsworthy](#)

KQED Spark documentary about sculptor [Caleb Duarte](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [David Ireland](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Jonathon Keats](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Ken Goldberg](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Natalie Jeremijenko](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Paul Kos](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Seyed Alavi](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Stephanie Syjuco](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Thai Bui](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Trevor Paglen](#)

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.