

## Educator Guide

In January 2011, Gallery Crawl checked out *As it Was Before* at Gallery Hijinks in San Francisco, California. 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.KQED.org/gallerycrawl](http://www.KQED.org/gallerycrawl). Information about taking your students to the galleries can be found at the bottom of this guide.

**Exhibition:** *As it Was Before*

**Location:** Hijinks Gallery, 2309 Bryant Street, San Francisco, California [Google Map](#)

**Grades** 6 - 12

**Standards Addressed** Artistic Perception, Creative Expression, Aesthetic Valuing

\* **NOTE:** Always remember to preview Gallery Crawl video content before sharing it with your students. Some references may not be appropriate for your classroom.

### The Exhibition

In January 2011, **Gallery Crawl** visited Gallery Hijinks in San Francisco's Mission District to learn about the mission behind this new San Francisco art venue, and meet artists Martin Machado and Aleksandra Zee to learn more about their group exhibition, *As It Was Before*. Along with Todd Freeman, each artist takes cues from their personal experiences with their environments, producing imagery that comments on human relationships with the natural world. Freeman makes prints of real and mythical landscapes and creatures in a style reminiscent of vintage storybook illustrations, Zee's installation juxtaposes natural and manipulated materials, and Machado's paintings and photographs are directly related to his day job as a merchant marine.

### 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 activity ideas may be used in the classroom after viewing the Gallery Crawl Video, and/or after a school visit to Gallery Hijinks.

#### **➤ Check it Out – Media Measurement**

View the Gallery Crawl video in the classroom, allowing time for the students to absorb and understand the art and the artists. Encourage a group discussion about how both the art and artists are represented in the video, asking:

- Who is the intended audience?
- What is the intent of the video? Was the video informative, persuasive, believable, inspirational?
- How does the production of the video support your impression or thoughts on the video? Discuss the camera work, music, length, narration, etc. Describe what features best contribute to the overall effect of the video.
- Discuss the text of the video and the language used. Do you think the language and vocabulary support the intent of the video?
- Do any particular camera views support the intent of the video?
- Describe the music and sound in the video? Does it support the intent or theme of the video? Why or why not?

Invite students to write a summary of the technical aspects of the video including the use of the camera, sound and text. Discuss as a group the technical aspects of production and its impact on the media message.

#### **➤ Create a Memory Landscape**

Martin Machado's artwork focuses on time, memory and transformation, using both the natural world and science to interpret memories, fables and storytelling. Machado frequently works from photographs taken during his travels at sea as a Merchant Marine, sailor, and commercial fisherman. "I often layer days upon days by stacking paintings done on fiberglass cloth and panel. I merge these layers with epoxy, allowing the scenes to blend into one homogenous image. Like a memory, the result is blurred between fact and creation". <http://martinmachado.com/aboutpainting.html>.

Invite students to sit quietly and think of memories that come to mind as they think about different events in their lives. Encourage them to focus on memories that resonate strongly and produce powerful images in their mind. Are they able to clearly picture places, objects, vistas, people? Ask students to sketch these images, and invite them to find a central theme or focus. Do the images move together into a focused theme, or fragment with further contemplation?

Using pencil and paper, invite students to begin drawing a landscape using elements from their memory sketches. Assure them that their drawings do not need to look like a rational or realistic landscape. Invite students to map together their collection of imagery to create a landscape composition. When the composition and sketching is complete, invite them to begin a painting project based on the sketch.

When the art making process is complete, give students the opportunity to talk through their thoughts and feelings about the process of visualizing memories, as well as creating a memory landscape. Ask students their thoughts about recreating time or events in their life through the use of memory imagery, and imagination.

#### ➤ **Painting on a Cardboard Box**

Martin Machado often uses found materials in place of canvas when he paints. The found materials are relative to the subject matter and theme in his work, i.e., fiberglass from boats used in *Santa Maria's* and a cardboard box found in an abandoned salmon cannery for *Canned Salmon Painting*. Invite students to find a cardboard box with both imagery and text that can be incorporated into a painting. Refer students to Machado's *Canned Salmon Painting* and discuss the relevance of the found box and how it relates and contributes to the painting. Invite students to bring in a box with imagery that is relevant to their interests and passions. Using acrylic or tempera paint, guide students to begin the painting process. Some students may want to sketch their ideas and composition before beginning to paint.

When the art making process is complete, invite students to share with the group their paintings, focusing on the importance and relevance of the box image and text. If possible, display the art in a prominent school location and invite other classes for a viewing.

As an extension of this assignment, initiate a discussion about other artists who have worked with cardboard boxes, such as Andy Warhol and [Ann Weber](#).

#### ➤ **Free Journal Writing**

After viewing the Gallery Crawl video and/or the work of Martin Machado, invite students to address the following quote from Machado in a free writing journal exercise. "Somewhere in the classroom of my youth, a larger person told me that the best work is forged out of what you are familiar with. I agree with this and have tried my best to live up close and personal to any subject that I want to make art about. And like the land artists, Andy Goldsworthy and Richard Long, I think that it is not just the resulting creation, but the most ridiculous path you take to make it, that makes something great." <http://www.galleryhijinks.com/blog/2010/12/interview-martin-machado/>

Free writing is a timed exercise (10 and 20 minutes) where students write non-stop without making any corrections. Encourage students to write whatever comes to mind after reading this quote, without self-censoring or judging their writing. After the free writing is complete, invite students to share and discuss their ideas and thoughts on Machado's quote and how it relates to his work, or how it relates to their own artwork.

### ➤ **Merging Natural and Manmade Materials**

Aleksandra Zee works with both man-made and natural materials in her installation titled, *What Happens When They Meet?* After viewing the Gallery Crawl video and Aleksandra's installation piece, invite students to discuss the relationships between the manmade and natural elements that are present in her piece and the graceful merging of these two elements that are evident in the construction. Include in the discussion her inspirations, processes, and manipulation of the materials.

Ask students to gather and collect their own materials for a construction project. Divide students into groups of three to four, and invite them to brainstorm ideas about natural materials that have been transformed into common manmade materials. Encourage them to explore and research the relationships between the materials and how they have made the transformation from natural to manmade. Examples might include trees (branches and twigs) to lumber and paper, sand to glass, sand, water and aggregate to concrete, or crude oil to plastic.

Depending on your classroom space and size, keep in small groups and encourage students to collect and gather objects for a construction project. Starting the project with the brainstorming session, and continue with collecting, gathering, weaving, assembling and reconstructing the natural objects into the new representation of their former essence.

When the art making process is complete, evaluate and discuss the processes involved, and any challenges in the art making process. Invite other students to view the constructions. Photograph the constructions and share the images on a photo-sharing Web site such as [Flickr](#). If possible, print the photographs and hang them in a hallway or display case in your school. You are also invited to add them to KQED's Arts Education Photo Pool on Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/950531@N25/pool/>

### ➤ **Create a Supernatural Kingdom**

Artist Todd Freeman merges nature and fantasy in his work in the exhibition *As it Was Before*. "My prints draw material from the natural and supernatural kingdoms, referencing both alleged anomalies and legitimate marvels. They are inert swatches from

the natural world, and offer documentation for stories that time has lost or dismissed."  
<http://www.galleryhijinks.com/artists/todd-freeman>

Invite students to create their own visual stories using imaginary creatures that live in an imaginary environment. Expand on the idea by creating a mystery world that may or may not exist. Use graphite or colored pencils and paper, invite them to begin sketching aspects of this imaginary place.

When the art making process is complete, ask students to write a short story about their drawing to share with the class as a group. Include fictitious names, places and events that may have taken place.

### Visiting the Gallery

The *As it Was Before* exhibition is showing at Hijinks Gallery in San Francisco, CA. The exhibition will be on view through January 31, 2011. For gallery hours, location and public transportation, visit the gallery Web site listed below.

### Resources to extend learning about the exhibit, art forms and featured artists:

Gallery Hijinks Web site

<http://www.galleryhijinks.com/>

Martin Machado's Web site

<http://www.martinmachado.com/>

Interview: Gallery Hijinks with Martin Machado

<http://www.galleryhijinks.com/blog/2010/12/interview-martin-machado/>

Todd Freeman's Web site

<http://www.toddfreeman.net/>

Interview: Gallery Hijinks with Todd Freeman

<http://www.galleryhijinks.com/blog/2010/12/interview-todd-freeman>

Aleksandra Zee's Web site

<http://www.aleksandrzee.com>

Interview and studio visit: Gallery Hijinks with Aleksandra Zee

<http://www.galleryhijinks.com/blog/2011/01/interview-studio-visit-aleksandra-zee/>

The following KQED Spark & Gallery Crawl documentaries and educator's guides may be used for compare/contrast purposes, and to extend learning about contemporary art:

KQED Spark documentary and educator guide about land artist [Andy Goldsworthy](#)

KQED Spark documentary and educator guide about artist [Caleb Duarte](#)

KQED Spark documentary and educator guide about artist [Christopher Brown](#)

KQED Spark documentary and educator guide about artist [Natalie Jeremijenko](#)

KQED Spark documentary and educator guide about land artists [Jim Denevan and Chris Drury](#)

KQED Spark documentary and educator guide about artist [Mitra Fabian](#)

KQED Gallery Crawl video and educator guide about [The Gleaners](#)

Visit the KQED Spark Web site for additional Educator Guides and videos about local contemporary artists at [www.KQED.org/spark](http://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](mailto:ArtsEd@KQED.org) or call 800.723.3566.