



Interpretive Guide & Hands-on Activities

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts  
Travelling Exhibition Program

# Aakí isskská'takssin (Woman - thought)



# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## The Interpretive Guide

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The Art Gallery of Alberta is pleased to present your community with a selection from its Travelling Exhibition Program. This is one of several exhibitions distributed by The Art Gallery of Alberta as part of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program. This Interpretive Guide has been specifically designed to complement the exhibition you are now hosting. The suggested topics for discussion and accompanying activities can act as a guide to increase your viewers' enjoyment and to assist you in developing programs to complement the exhibition. Questions and activities have been included at both elementary and advanced levels for younger and older visitors.

At the Elementary School Level the Alberta Art Curriculum includes four components to provide students with a variety of experiences. These are:

- Reflection:** Responses to visual forms in nature, designed objects and artworks
- Depiction:** Development of imagery based on notions of realism
- Composition:** Organization of images and their qualities in the creation of visual art
- Expression:** Use of art materials as a vehicle for expressing statements

The Secondary Level focuses on three major components of visual learning. These are:

- Drawings:** Examining the ways we record visual information and discoveries
- Encounters:** Meeting and responding to visual imagery
- Composition:** Analyzing the ways images are put together to create meaning

The activities in the Interpretive Guide address one or more of the above components and are generally suited for adaptation to a range of grade levels. As well, this guide contains coloured images of the artworks in the exhibition which can be used for review and discussion at any time. Please be aware that copyright restrictions apply to unauthorized use or reproduction of artists' images.

The Travelling Exhibition Program, funded by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, is designed to bring you closer to Alberta's artists and collections. We welcome your comments and suggestions and invite you to contact:

**Shane Golby, Manager/Curator**  
Travelling Exhibition Program  
**Ph: 780.428.3830; Fax: 780.445.0130 Email: [shane.golby@youraga.ca](mailto:shane.golby@youraga.ca)**



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Synchrude Canada Ltd., the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, the Art Gallery of Alberta

# Curatorial Statement

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## **Aakíí isskská'takssin (Woman - thought)**

**Aakíí isskská'takssin** examines the theme of 'story' within the context of Blackfoot traditional teachings and cultural expression of *aakíí* artists applied in a contemporary context. This photography series is curated to explore emerging Indigenous artistic practice within the traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy.

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf and Star Crop Eared Wolf are recent graduates of the University of Lethbridge's Native American Art History and Museums studies program. Their photographs reflect the way in which Blackfoot oral history and visual culture intersects with contemporary thought, as the question of cultural identity has become fluid and mutable. Story is shared through song, dance, language, and art. We use story as a way to entertain and to share who we are with each other. In this way, story is used as a tool to carry our experiences forward for future generations to reflect on.

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf's artistic practice challenges academic institutions to legitimize the traditional art practices of Indigenous people. In this photography series, she disrupts racist graffiti with pictographs she designed and which were inspired by her Blackfoot and Shuswap heritage. The graffiti Marjie 're-works' often targets Indigenous people and perpetuate a visual language of hate. These visual landmarks affect everyone who walks through these spaces, especially young children. Marjie's pictographs interfere with the negative energy implied by the spray paint. She references the visual culture of Blackfoot people to counter graffiti that is typically used in urban spaces to contrast images of commercialism. But in Southern Alberta, some

graffiti is used to assert racial messages in underground bike paths and on bridges. By placing her pictographs over the racist images, she sees it as an act of counting coup.

Star Crop Eared Wolf's artistic practice explores Blackfoot cultural, political, and social issues through contemporary photography. In this work of images, Star has used black and white photographs to capture the moment of knowledge transfer between mother and daughter, father and son, and elder and community and which are shown through relationships. Indigenous teachings are demonstrated and shared through connections of community and family.

The women in this exhibition are exploring within their studio practice a contemporary interpretation of story that raises awareness and hopes to influence how we move forward as a society within Canada.

*This exhibition was curated by Jennifer Bowen and organized by the Art Gallery of Alberta for the Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program. The AFA Travelling Exhibition Program is supported by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.*

*The exhibition **Aakíí isskská'takssin (Woman - thought)** was made possible through generous sponsorship from Syncrude Canada Ltd.*

## Visual Inventory - List of Works

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Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Capture Rifle*, 2010  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Coyote and Spider*, 2010  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Crop Eared Wolf Pictograph*, 2018  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Insect*, 2018  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Heavy Shields*, 2017  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Tall Man*, 2018  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Small Pox*, 2017  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Three Bears*, 2010  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Two Elk*, 2018  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Four Beaver*, 2018  
Photograph of installation  
12 inches x 16 inches  
Collection of the artist

Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #1*, 2018  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #2*, 2018  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #3*, 2018  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #4*, 2018  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

# Visual Inventory - List of Works

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Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #5, 2018*  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #6, 2018*  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #7, 2018*  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #8, 2018*  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #9, 2018*  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #10, 2018*  
Photograph  
12 inches x 18 inches  
Private collection

**Total Images:** 20 framed 2D works

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program  
**Visual Inventory - Images**

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*Small Pox*, 2017  
Photography of installation  
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Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
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Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
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*ssksinima' tstohki (Teachers) #1*, 2018  
Photograph  
Private collection



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
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**Visual Inventory - Images**

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Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima' tsohki (Teachers) #3*, 2018  
Photograph  
Private collection



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima' tsohki (Teachers) #4*, 2018  
Photograph  
Private collection



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima' tsohki (Teachers) #5*, 2018  
Photograph  
Private collection



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima' tsohki (Teachers) #6*, 2018  
Photograph  
Private collection

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Photograph  
Private collection



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima' tstohki (Teachers) #8, 2018*  
Photograph  
Private collection



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima' tstohki (Teachers) #9, 2018*  
Photograph  
Private collection



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima' tstohki (Teachers) #10, 2018*  
Photograph  
Private collection

# Talking Art



Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Small Pox*, 2017  
Photography of installation  
Collection of the artist

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# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Art Curriculum Connections

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The following curricular connections taken from the Alberta Learning Program of Studies provide an overview of key topics that can be addressed through viewing and discussing the exhibition **Aakíí isskská'takssin (Woman - thought)**. Through the art projects included in this exhibition guide students will be provided the opportunity for a variety of learning experiences.

### LEVEL k-6

#### REFLECTION

Component 1: ANALYSIS: Students will notice commonalities within classes of natural objects or forms.

Concepts

- A. Natural forms have common physical attributes according to the class in which they belong.
- B. Natural forms are related to the environment from which they originate.
- C. Natural forms have different surface qualities in colour, texture and tone.
- D. Natural forms display patterns and make patterns.

Component 2: ASSESSMENT: Students will assess the use or function of objects.

Concepts

- A. Designed objects serve specific purposes.
- B. Designed objects serve people.
- C. Designed objects are made by people or machines.

Component 3: APPRECIATION: Students will interpret artworks literally.

Concepts

- A. Art takes different forms depending on the materials and techniques used.
- B. An art form dictates the way it is experienced.
- C. An artwork tells something about its subject matter and the artist who made it.
- D. Colour variation is built on three basic colours.
- E. Tints and shades of colours or hues affect the contrast of a composition.
- F. All aspects of an artwork contribute to the story it tells.

### Grades 5 and 6

Students will interpret artworks for their symbolic meaning.

Concepts

- A. Artistic style affects the emotional impact of an artwork.
- B. An artwork can be analyzed for the meaning of its visible components and their inter-relationships.
- C. Artworks contain symbolic representations of a subject or theme.

# Art Curriculum Connections continued

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## DEPICTION

Component 4: MAIN FORMS AND PROPORTIONS: Students will learn the shapes of things as well as develop decorative styles.

Concepts

- A. All shapes can be reduced to basic shapes; i.e., circular, triangular, rectangular.
- B. Shapes can be depicted as organic or geometric.
- C. Shapes can be made using different procedures; e.g., cutting, drawing, tearing, stitching.

Component 6: QUALITIES AND DETAILS: Students will represent surface qualities of objects and forms.

Concepts

- C. Primary colours can be mixed to produce new hues.
- D. Colour can be lightened to make tints or darkened to make shades.
- E. Images are stronger when contrasts of light and dark are used.
- F. Details enrich forms.

## COMPOSITION

Component 8: UNITY: Students will create unity through density and rhythm.

Concepts

- A. Families of shapes, and shapes inside or beside shapes, create harmony.
- B. Overlapping forms help to unify a composition.
- C. Repetition of qualities such as colour, texture and tone produce rhythm and balance.

Component 9: CRAFTSMANSHIP: Students will add finishing touches.

Concepts

- A. Finishing touches (accents, contrasts, outlines) can be added to make a work more powerful.

## EXPRESSION

Component 10 (i) PURPOSE 1: Students will record or document activities, people and discoveries.

Concepts

- B. Special events, such as field trips, visits and festive occasions can be recorded visually.
- C. Family groups and people relationships can be recorded visually.
- D. Knowledge gained from study or experimentation can be recorded visually.

PURPOSE 2: Students will illustrate or tell a story.

Concepts

- A. A narrative can be retold or interpreted visually.

PURPOSE 4: Students will express a feeling or a message.

Concepts

- A. Feeling and moods can be interpreted visually.
- B. Specific messages, beliefs and interests can be interpreted visually or symbolized.

# Art Curriculum Connections continued

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## Grades 7-9

### ENCOUNTERS

#### GRADE 7

Students will:

- investigate natural forms, man-made forms, cultural traditions and social activities as sources of imagery through time and across cultures
- understand that the role and form of art differs through time and across cultures
- understand that art reflects and affects cultural character

### COMPOSITIONS

Components 2: Students will experiment with techniques and media within complete compositions of two and three dimensions.

### ENCOUNTERS

Sources of Images: Students will identify similarities and differences in expressions of selected cultural groups.

Concepts:

- A. Symbolic meanings are expressed in different ways by different cultural groups.
- B. Different cultural groups use different materials to create images or artifacts.

Transformations Through Time: Students will recognize the significance of the visual symbols which identify the selected cultural groups.

Concepts:

- A. Artifacts can have religious, magical and ceremonial meanings.
- C. Visual symbols are used for identification and status by people in groups.
- D. External influences may have modified the imagery of a cultural group over time.

Impact of Images: Students will search for contemporary evidence relating to themes studied.

Concepts:

- A. Religious, magical or ceremonial images used in contemporary society can be identified.
- B. Authority, power or politics in contemporary society may be described in image form.
- C. The ways people generate visual works can be influenced by a number of factors.

# Art Curriculum Connections continued

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## Art 10-20-30

### Art 10

Transformations Through Time

Concepts:

- A. Works of art contain themes and images that reflect various personal and social conditions.
- B. Technology has an affect on materials used in image making.

Impact of Images

Concepts

- A. Simplified form communicates the purpose and function of designed objects.
- B. The function of an artwork can be emphasized by its decoration.

### Art 20

ENCOUNTERS

Students will:

Sources of Images: Recognize that while the sources of images are universal, the formation of an image is influenced by the artist's choice of medium, the time and the culture.

Concepts

- A. Different periods of history yield different interpretations of the same subject or theme.
- B. Artists and craftspeople use the possibilities and limitations of different materials to develop imagery.
- C. Different cultures exhibit different preferences for forms, colours and materials in their artifacts.

### Art 30

COMPOSITIONS

Students will:

Components

USE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AS SOURCES FOR IMAGE MAKING.

Concepts

- A. The selection and presentation of perceptions, conceptions and experience as visual content for artworks is an important aim of the artist.
- B. Planned and spontaneous methods of working are ways of developing visual images.

ENCOUNTERS

Students will:

Sources of Images: Research selected artists and periods to discover factors in the artists' environments that influenced their personal visions.

Concepts

- A. Personal situations and events in artists' lives affect their personal visions and work.
- B. Historical events and society's norms have an affect on an artist's way of life and work.



# Art Curriculum Connections continued

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## Transformations Through Time

Analyze the factors that generate a work of art, or an artistic movement: The experiences of the artists and the impact of the culture.

### Concepts

A. A specific artistic movement and its works of art are influenced by the members' philosophic theme, stylistic identity and relationship to the community in which they exist.

## Impact of Images

Question sources of images that are personally relevant or significant to them in contemporary culture.

### Concepts

B. Imagery can depict important aspects of the student's own life.

## Curriculum Connections continued

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**This exhibition is an excellent source for using art as a means of investigating topics addressed in other subject areas. The theme of the exhibition, and the works within it, are especially relevant as a spring-board for addressing aspects of the Science, Social Studies and Language Arts program of studies. The following is an overview of cross-curricular connections which may be addressed through viewing and discussing the exhibition.**

### **ELEMENTARY SCIENCE**

1–5 Students will identify and evaluate methods for creating colour and for applying colours to different materials.

- i. Identify colours in a variety of natural and manufactured objects.
- ii. Compare and contrast colours, using terms such as lighter than, darker than, more blue, brighter than.
- iii. Order a group of coloured objects, based on a given colour criterion.
- iv. Predict and describe changes in colour that result from the mixing of primary colours and from mixing a primary colour with white or with black.
- v. Create a colour that matches a given sample, by mixing the appropriate amounts of two primary colours.
- vi. Distinguish colours that are transparent from those that are not. Students should recognize that some coloured liquids and gels can be seen through and are thus transparent and that other colours are opaque.
- vii. Compare the effect of different thicknesses of paint. Students should recognize that a very thin layer of paint, or a paint that has been watered down, may be partly transparent.
- viii. Compare the adherence of a paint to different surfaces; e.g., different forms of papers, fabrics and plastics.

### **JUNIOR HIGH SCIENCE**

#### **SCIENCE 7 Unit A: Interactions and Ecosystems**

Students will:

1. Investigate and describe relationships between humans and their environments
  - describe examples of interaction and interdependency within an ecosystem
  - identify examples of human impacts on ecosystems, and investigate and analyze the link between these impacts and the human wants and needs that give rise to them
  - analyze personal and public decisions that involve consideration of environmental impacts, and identify needs for scientific knowledge that can inform those decisions
4. Describe the relationship among knowledge, decisions and actions in maintaining life-supporting environments
  - identify intended and unintended consequences of human activities within local and global environments

# Curriculum Connections continued

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## SOCIAL STUDIES

### K.1 I am Unique

**General Outcome:** Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the multiple social, physical, cultural and linguistic factors that contribute to an individual's unique identity.

#### Specific Outcomes

#### Values and Attitudes

*Students will:*

- K.1.1 value their unique characteristics, interests, gifts and talents
- K.1.2 appreciate the unique characteristics, interests, gifts and talents of others:
  - appreciate feelings, ideas, stories and experiences shared by others

#### Knowledge and Understanding

*Students will:*

- K.1.3 examine what makes them unique individuals by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions for inquiry:
  - What are my gifts, interests, talents and characteristics?
  - How do my gifts, interests, talents and characteristics make me a unique individual?
  - How do culture and language contribute to my unique identity?
- K.1.4 explore how we demonstrate respect for ourselves and others by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions for inquiry:
  - What are the origins of the people in our school, groups or communities?
  - How can we show interest and sensitivity toward social, physical, cultural and linguistic diversity in the school, groups and communities?
  - How can we show respect and acceptance of people as they are?

### 1.1 My World: Home, School, and Community

**General Outcome:** Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how identity and self-esteem are enhanced by their sense of belonging in their world and how active members in a community contribute to the well-being, growth and vitality of their groups and communities.

#### Specific Outcomes

#### Values and Attitudes

*Students will:*

- 1.1.1 value self and others as unique individuals in relation to their world:
  - appreciate how belonging to groups and communities enriches an individual's identity
  - appreciate multiple points of view, languages, cultures and experiences within their groups and communities
  - demonstrate respect for their individual rights and the rights of others
  - recognize and respect how the needs of others may be different from their own

# Curriculum Connections continued

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## SOCIAL STUDIES CONTINUED

- 1.1.2 value the groups and communities to which they belong:
- appreciate how their actions might affect other people and how the actions of others might affect them

### 1.2 Moving Forward with the Past: My Family, My History and My Community

**General Outcome:** Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how changes over time have affected their families and influenced how their families and communities are today.

#### Specific Outcomes

##### Values and Attitudes

*Students will:*

- 1.2.1 appreciate how stories and events of the past connect their families and communities to the present:
- recognize how their families and communities might have been different in the past then they are today
  - appreciate how the languages, traditions, celebrations and stories of their families, groups and communities contribute to their sense of identity and belonging
  - recognize how diverse Aboriginal...communities are integral to Canada's character
  - acknowledge and respect symbols of heritage and traditions in their family and communities

##### Knowledge and Understanding

*Students will:*

- 1.2.2 analyze how their families and communities in the present are influenced by events of people of the past by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions for inquiry:
- How have changes affected my family over time?
  - In what ways has my community changed over time?
  - How have changes over time affected their families and communities in the present?
  - In what ways have Aboriginal...and diverse cultural groups contributed to the origins and evolution of their communities over time?
  - What connections do we have to the Aboriginal...and diverse cultures found in our communities?
  - What are some examples of traditions, celebrations and stories that started in the past and continue today in their families and communities?

### 2.1 Canada's Dynamic Communities

**General Outcome:** Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how geography, culture, language, heritage, economics and resources shape and change Canada's communities

# Curriculum Connections continued

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## SOCIAL STUDIES CONTINUED

### Specific Outcomes

#### Knowledge and Understanding

*Students will:*

2.1.3 investigate the cultural and linguistic characteristics of an Inuit, an Acadian and a prairie community in Canada by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions for inquiry:

- What are the cultural characteristics of the communities?
- What are the traditions and celebrations in the communities that connect the people to the past and to each other?
- How are the communities strengthened by their stories, traditions and events of the past?
- How do the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the communities studied contribute to Canada's identity?

#### 4.2 The Stories, Histories and Peoples of Alberta

**General Outcome:** Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the role of stories, history and culture in strengthening communities and contributing to identity and a sense of belonging.

### Specific Outcomes

#### Values and Attitudes

*Students will:*

4.2.1 appreciate how an understanding of Alberta's history, peoples and stories contributes to their own sense of belonging and identity:

- recognize how stories of people and events provide multiple perspectives on past and present events
- recognize oral traditions, narratives and stories as valid sources of knowledge about the land, culture and history
- recognize the presence and influence of diverse Aboriginal peoples as inherent to Alberta's culture and identity

#### Knowledge and Understanding

*Students will:*

4.2.2 assess, critically, how the cultural and linguistic heritage and diversity of Alberta has evolved over time by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- Which First Nations originally inhabited the different areas of the province?
- What do the stories of Aboriginal peoples tell us about their beliefs regarding the relationship between people and the land?

# Curriculum Connections continued

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## SOCIAL STUDIES CONTINUED

### 4.3 Alberta: Celebrations and Challenges

**General Outcome:** Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how Alberta has grown and changed culturally, economically and socially since 1905.

#### Specific Outcomes

#### Values and Attitudes

*Students will:*

- 4.3.1 appreciate the factors contributing to quality of life in Alberta:
- value and respect their own and other cultural identities
  - demonstrate respect for the rights, opinions and perspectives of others
  - demonstrate respect for the cultural and linguistic diversity in Alberta
  - value and respect their relationships with the environment

#### Knowledge and Understanding

*Students will:*

- 4.3.3 examine, critically, Alberta's changing cultural and social dynamics by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
- In what ways has Alberta changed demographically since 1905?
  - In what ways have Aboriginal peoples and communities changed over time?
  - In what ways have music, art, narratives and literature contributed to the vitality of the culture, language and identity of diverse Alberta communities over time?

## LANGUAGE ARTS

K.4.3 Students will use drawings to illustrate ideas and information and talk about them.

2.1 Use knowledge of context, pictures, letters, words, sentences...in a variety of oral, print and other media texts to construct and confirm meaning

5.2.2 Experience oral, print and other media texts from a variety of cultural traditions and genres, such as historical fiction, myths, biographies, and poetry

6.4.3 Demonstrate attentive listening and viewing. Students will identify the tone, mood and emotion conveyed in oral and visual presentations

# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Artist and Curator Biographies/Statements

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### **Jennifer Bowen**

As an emerging Indigenous curator and scholar, I knew I wanted to work with female artists from indigenous communities. Shane Golby, Curator and Manager of the AFA Travelling Exhibition program (TREX), TREX Region 2, organized by the Art Gallery of Alberta, heard about me from my participation with CARFAC, a Canadian Advocacy group for artists with whom I had curated a doll exhibit with the Yukon Arts Centre in Whitehorse. I had just relocated to Lethbridge, Alberta, to start a Native American Art History and Museum studies program at the University of Lethbridge. When I was offered the invitation to curate an exhibition for TREK, I was excited and a little bit nervous, because I was new to Lethbridge and unknown to the Blackfoot artist community. I knew there would be challenges, but also saw an opportunity to learn.

One of the first things that attracted me to art were the artists. I was introduced to do the idea of art in Inuvik, Northwest Territories, at the Great Northern Art festival. The ten-day festival fosters a community of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists from across Canada's northern territories. A visitor could walk through the exhibition gallery, then wonder through the artist demonstration tents. The idea of separating the work from the artists always fascinated me. The separation allows you to choose to meet an artist before meeting their work, or to meet the work before meeting the artist. I liked the separation because it revealed to me what I actually liked about the work or the artist. You can create or have two different relationships; one with art, and one with the artist. In art galleries the artists generally comes to the opening of exhibition, and I find these two relationships are more challenging to create. I guess I prefer to meet the art before the artist. What about you? Which would you prefer?

### **Historical Context**

In 1763, the British laid the foundations of Canada's Indian policy with the Royal Proclamation, an act which outlined a peaceful co-existence between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. By 1830, that intention of the Royal Proclamation changed to a policy of 'civilization and assimilation', which allowed non-Indigenous people to determine who was Indigenous. This legislation over Indigenous people restricted and controlled all aspects of Indigenous peoples lives, determining where they could live, whom they could marry, and what types of social and cultural and religious beliefs they were allowed to practice publicly and policies which led to Residential Schools designed to assimilate and Christianize Indigenous children into European-Canadian culture. Many people believe that World War II, and the discovery of the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution of six million Jews, affected the Canadian public. This led to the loosening of some of Canada's assimilation policies. By the 1950s, Indigenous people began to explore their physical and cultural freedom in Canada.

So where are we now, after two centuries of colonial trauma, legislation, and globalization? We are still here. As descendants of Indigenous and early settler people, and in some cases, the descendants of both, we learn from each others' history and recognize the past. We continue forward together. Within Indigenous nations, communities, and families, there is resilience; a resilience to recover quickly from our shared history and to begin the work of preservation and protection of our heritage. As a student audience, I wanted to include Canada's history with

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## Artist and Curator Biographies/Statements

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Indigenous people to help frame the context of the artistic expression shown in work of this exhibition.

The Blackfoot Confederacy is comprised of four Nations: the Kainai, Piikani, Amsskapipiikunni, and Siksika. The traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy spans beyond the Canadian-US borders into, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Montana. Blackfoot people have governed over their territory for thousands of years.

### **Marjie Crop Eared Wolf**

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf is a Blackfoot/ Shuswap First Nation visual artist and is currently a student at the University of Lethbridge. Crop Eared Wolf graduated with a Bachelors of Fine Art in 2009 and also received a Kainai Studies Certificate from the Red Crow Community College in 2015. Crop Eared Wolf works with a variety of artistic mediums such as painting, drawing, print making, and photography. Crop Eared Wolf's art practice is inspired by her Blackfoot and Shuswap heritage. Her art is greatly influenced by her tribal traditions as well as contemporary western art forms.

### **Star Crop Eared Wolf**

Star Crop Eared Wolf is a visual artist, curator and a member of the Blood Tribe (Kainai) which is part of the Blackfoot Confederacy. Crop Eared Wolf uses many different mediums to produce her dynamic artwork such as photography, video, painting, drawing, sculpture, and beading. Crop Eared Wolf's artwork takes a critical view of the cultural, political, and social issues in the past and present day society and focuses on the fusion between these two facets. Much of the work she has produced has been centered around issues regarding the environment, stereotypes of First Nations people, cultural and political injustices, and identity. In 2017 she graduated from the BFA Native Art Museum Studies/Art History program at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta. Crop Eared Wolf was recently a featured artist at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, where she continues to sell her beadwork and painted photo prints. Her future plans are to work on the repatriations of Blackfoot cultural artifacts in the Museums throughout the world.



## Artist Interviews

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### Marjie Crop Eared Wolf

Marjie Crop Eared Wolf was born in Fort Macleod, Alberta. Her early childhood was spent with the Shuswap Nation, her father's people, in Kamloops, B.C. and then on the Kainai Nation (Blood) reserve south of Calgary, where she currently lives. The Kainai Nation is one of the three nations which make up the Blackfoot Confederacy.

According to Crop Eared Wolf, she was introduced to art by her father. He had studied at Emily Carr art school (now Emily Carr University) in Vancouver and had his own art practice with exhibitions in southern Alberta and Kamloops and introduced his daughter to art making at a young age. In High School she received further encouragement from one of her teachers, Delia Crosschild, who help her to develop her portfolio. Crop Eared Wolf then applied to Kamloops, Emily Carr, the Alberta College of Art and Design (ACAD) in Calgary, and the University of Lethbridge. She was accepted by ACAD, where she studied for two years, and then transferred to the University of Lethbridge. Marjie Crop Eared Wolf graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2009 and is currently taking a multidisciplinary program at the University of Lethbridge.

Like many artists, Crop Eared Wolf entered art school focusing on drawing and painting. In art school, however, she was introduced to a variety of media and this has influenced her current practice. As she describes it, she now takes a very fluid approach to art making. In some cases the media she's using influences the idea of the work whereas in other, the idea behind the work determines how it is made.

For Marjie Crop Eared Wolf, much of her artistic inspiration comes from wanting to share what she knows about her culture with her son. She also hopes to make viewers in general aware of the Indigenous art history of North America.

In the art works she has submitted for the Travelling Exhibition **Aakí isskská'takssin (Woman - thought)** Crop Eared Wolf was inspired by traditional pictographic images seen at Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park in southern Alberta and other sites. Her interest in these sites and images derives from a trip she once took to Writing-On-Stone and her discovery that a fence had been built around the pictographs there as contemporary graffiti had defaced many images. This experience generated for Crop Eared Wolf an interest in both the pictographs and in graffiti itself, interests that were furthered by her experiences at art school. There she found that Indigenous art was not recognized, or was categorized as primitive. Finding this rather insulting, she began researching the meaning or stories behind pictographs. She also began researching graffiti art itself, wishing to know its history and the techniques used by graffiti artists.



Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Coyote and Spider*, 2010  
Photography of installation  
Collection of the artist

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# Artist Interviews continued

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## Marjie Crop Eared Wolf continued

Crop Eared Wolf's research inspired her to create art pieces in answer to the graffiti and vandalism she witnessed at the pictographic art sites she visited and researched. Her research in graffiti introduced her to the stencilling method which she thought would be best for her purposes. In her project she created stencils of both Shuswap and Blackfoot pictographic images and went to spots on her reserve, around the reserve and to areas of traditional Blackfoot territory and put the pictographs 'back up'. Through this work Crop Eared Wolf states that she is

*...hoping that the viewer recognizes the first art of North America...and reads it as a renewal of that first art practice. Maybe they too will be more understanding of those site-specific areas where traditional art is located and help safe-guard them for the future.*

While admitting to using traditional Indigenous pictographic imagery, Marjie Crop Eared Wolf is extremely conscious of not re-purposing sacred images. Rather, the images that she has used are from stories or a part of traditional knowledge and history. The insect in the photograph *Insect*, for example, is a Shuswap pictograph while the images in *Coyote and Spider* are from a Shuswap legend. The image entitled *Three Bears*, meanwhile, was inspired by Chief Black Bear, a chief who succeeded the famous Kainai Chief Red Crow who signed Treaty 7 in 1877 for the Kainai Nation. Black Bear was only chief for one year and died in a small pox epidemic. Finally, the work *Capture-Rifle* is based on a pictographic image which may refer to Chief Red Crow, who was also known as Captured the Gun Inside.



Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Three Bears*, 2010  
Photography of installation  
Collection of the artist

# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Artist Interviews continued

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### Star Crop Eared Wolf

Star Crop Eared Wolf was born in Lethbridge and lives on the Blood Reserve outside the city. She is a member of the Blackfoot Confederacy/Kainai Tribe. Star began drawing and painting as a child and then, influenced by her father's work in the medium, began working with photography when she was fifteen years old. While she took basic art studies in High School, she was more interested in history and photography as a form of documentation and so continued with this when she attended university. In June of 2017 she graduated from the University of Lethbridge with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Art History/Museum Studies and Native American Art.



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #1*, 2018  
Photograph  
Private collection

Her focus during university was on the repatriation of Blackfoot artifacts from museums but she also studied photography in order to use this medium as a voice to express her ideas concerning the environment and cultural stereotypes.

Star is inspired in her work by the simple need to create and to share what she sees with the world. For her, artistic expression is *...like I'm giving a gift to others*. In her photographic work she focuses on documentation, using photographs as a means of documenting her people as she sees them rather than as they have been seen by outsiders. She also enjoys the freedom of photography which allows the artist to take a photograph and then manipulate it. As she expresses it, *...there's so much one can keep doing to a photo*. Finally, Star finds that there is a 'healing aspect' to the art of photography. The medium demands that the artist has to go out into the world to take their photos and this really makes one notice the world and the beauty and interest in everything.

Much of Star's work involves her community and she finds a great deal of inspiration in her community. As she states

*I like to capture the true essence of what's going on at this time.*

For her works included in the exhibition [Aakí isskská'takssin \(Woman - thought\)](#) Star focused on different traditional practices that are still being pursued and are being passed on to younger generations. This is seen in such images as a father and son tanning hides or a grandmother showing her grand-daughter how to bead. Her photographs express the moment when this traditional knowledge is being passed on through story and lived experience. Through these images Star wants the viewer to see that such practices are still being passed on: that Indigenous people are a real people and not a vanishing race and are still here, thriving, and practicing their traditions. As described by the artist:

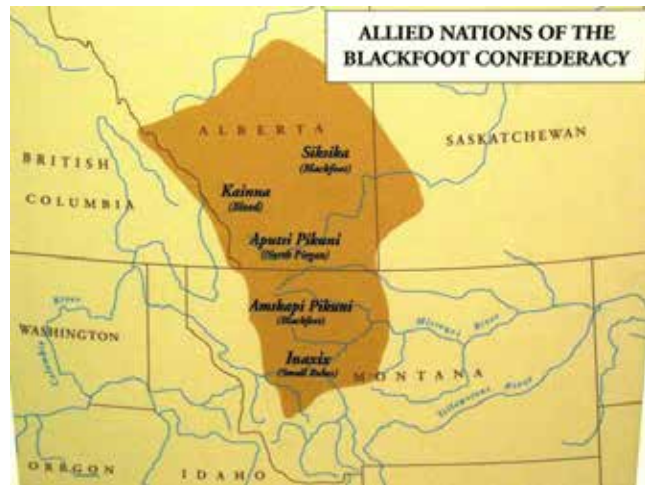
*These aren't staged photos. We're not mascots or princesses...we're not buckskin and feathers. We're a real people and a way of thinking and living.*

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# The Blackfoot Confederacy - History and Culture: an Introduction

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**The Blackfoot Confederacy refers to four Indigenous nations which make up the Blackfoot people.** Three of these - the Siksika (Blackfoot), the Kainai (Blood) and the Northern Piegan reside in the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia in Canada. The fourth nation, the Southern Piegan, are located in the United States. The nations have their own separate governments ruled by a chief, but come together for religious and social celebrations.



Map of Blackfoot Territory

**The Blackfoot Confederacy refers to itself as Niitsitapi or 'the people' and their traditional territory as Niitsitpiis-stahkoi or 'Original Peoples Land'.** This territory stretched from the North Saskatchewan River, in the area where Edmonton is today, south to the Yellowstone River of Montana, and west from the Rocky Mountains to east past the Cypress Hills. Due to cultural and language patterns, anthropologists believe the *Niitsitapi* originated from the upper Northeastern part of North America and, by 1200, began moving west in search of more land, eventually settling in the Great Plains. Whatever the nations' origins, the confederacy is considered to be the oldest residents of the western prairie region.



Alfred Jacob Miller  
*Hunting Buffalo*, approx. 1858  
Walters Art Museum  
Baltimore, Maryland

**The Blackfoot Confederacy was a buffalo-hunting culture.** During the summers they followed the bison herds as they migrated between what are now the United States and Canada. The buffalo were used for meat while fur and tanned hides, sinew, bones and dung were used for clothing, shelter, decoration, tools and fuel. The Blackfoot nations also hunted deer, moose, mountain sheep and other large game while women gathered berries and root vegetables. In the fall the people would begin shifting to their wintering areas, in camps along wooded river valleys, where they remained for almost half the year.

Before the introduction of the horse, the Niitsitapi hunted buffalo in two main ways. First, they often used camouflage to creep up close to the feeding herds. Hunters would take buffalo skins and drape them over their bodies to blend in and mask their scent. In this way they could get close to the buffalo and, when close enough, attack with arrows or spears. A second method used for hunting was using 'buffalo jumps'. Hunters would direct the buffalo into V-shaped pens and then drive them over cliffs. Afterwards hunters would go to the bottom of the cliff and harvest

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# The Blackfoot Confederacy - History and Culture: an Introduction continued

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as much of the animals as they could carry. One of the more famous buffalo jump sites is at Head-Smashed-In, Alberta.

**The introduction of horses to the western Plains in the early 1700s revolutionized Blackfoot life.** Horses were used for hunting and made both following and harvesting the buffalo herds much easier than previously. Besides their use in hunting, the introduction of horses also allowed for a significant expansion of Blackfoot territory. The Blackfoot were traditional enemies of a number of other Indigenous groups such as the Crow, Cheyenne, Sioux, the Shoshone, Flathead, Nez Perce and their most dangerous enemies, the Plains Cree and their allies the Stoney and Saulteaux.



Head-Smashed-In-Buffalo-Jump  
near Fort Macleod, Alberta

The Shoshone acquired horses much earlier than the Blackfoot and soon occupied much of present-day Alberta, most of Montana, and parts of Wyoming. Once the Blackfoot gained access to horses in the early 1700s, however, they pushed back and by 1787 explorer David Thompson reported that the Blackfoot had conquered most of Shoshone territory and controlled the territory from the North Saskatchewan River in the north to the Missouri River in the south.

**The Blackfoot came into contact with Euro-American hunters and traders by the mid 18th century.** In 1754 Anthony Henday of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) met a large Blackfoot group in what is now Alberta. The HBC encouraged the Blackfoot to trade by setting up posts, such as Fort Edmonton and Rocky Mountain House, along the North Saskatchewan River. While trade enabled the Blackfoot Confederacy to become the richest and most powerful group in the Western plains, contact also exposed the Indigenous peoples to infectious diseases. In 1837 the Niitsitapi contracted smallpox. This outbreak eventually killed 6,000 people and effectively ended Blackfoot dominance on the plains.

While the Blackfoot, like other Indigenous groups, often had hostile relationships with Euro-North American traders, trappers and settlers, they largely stayed out of the major conflicts of the 1800s. When the Sioux approached the Blackfoot for assistance in their war with the United States Army in the 1870s, Crowfoot, one of the most influential Blackfoot chiefs, dismissed them and threatened to join with the North West Mounted Police to fight them if they ever came back to Blackfoot territory. The Blackfoot also chose to stay out of the Northwest Rebellion, led by Louis Riel, in 1885.

**The Blackfoot Confederacy was one of the last First Nations group to enter into treaties with the American and Canadian governments.** By the 1860s and 1870s the virtual extermination of the buffalo by European-American hunters and government policies coupled with encroaching settlement in what is now the United States and outbreaks of disease

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# The Blackfoot Confederacy - History and Culture: an Introduction continued

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Crowfoot  
1830-1890



Red Crow  
1830-1900

made Indigenous peoples more and more dependent on government assistance. A treaty was signed on the American side of the 49th parallel in 1855 but it was not until 1877 that the Blackfoot signed Treaty 7 in Canada.

**Treaty 7 was primarily a peace treaty intended to facilitate a means of peaceful co-existence with the white government.** Key signatories for the Blackfoot Confederacy were Chief Crowfoot of the Siksika and Chief Red Crow of the Kainai. Treaty 7 involved an area of 50,000 square miles of land south of the Red Deer River and adjacent to the Rock Mountains. The Kainai had a reserve of land designated for them along the Bow River. Red Crow, however, was not consulted on this, preferring traditional lands further south, and so refused to settle the Kainai on the reserved lands. In 1882 a new reserve for the Kainai, comprised of 708.4 square miles, was surveyed with a southern boundary set at 9 miles from the border with the United States. In 1883, however, this land was re-surveyed without consulting the Kainai and reduced to 547.5 square miles. The Kainai have never accepted these various adjustments and continue to advance the claims to the lands identified by Chief Red Crow.

**Traditionally, the peoples of the Blackfoot Confederacy were nomadic buffalo hunters with a fluid but highly organized social structure.** Because of the nomadic nature of their lives, the people were divided into many bands which ranged in size from 10 to 30 lodges, or about 80 to 240 people. The band was the basic unit of organization for hunting and defence and consisted of several households that lived and worked together. Band membership was fluid and typically coalesced around bonds of kinship and friendship where family was highly valued. Bands came together during times of celebration or war to form tribes or nations which are groupings that are culturally and linguistically related.

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# The Blackfoot Confederacy - History and Culture: an Introduction continued

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**In tribes, leadership skills were highly valued.** During times of peace the people would elect a peace chief who could lead the people and improve relations with other tribes. During times of war a war chief was chosen. This role, however, was not elected but needed to be earned by those who had successfully performed various acts of bravery. Within the Blackfoot nation there were also different societies, such as war, religious or women's societies, to which people belonged. Each of these societies had functions within the tribe and members were invited into societies after proving themselves by recognized passages and rituals.

The Blackfoot continue many of the cultural traditions of the past and hope to extend these to their children. There is a significant effort to learn Pikuni, the official language of the Blackfoot, and various societies and ceremonies previously banned, such as the Sun Dance, have been revived.



Sundance ceremony, 1908  
Library and Archives of Canada

# First Nations Sacred Places

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Many Indigenous artists have been inspired in their creativity by First Nations heritage and spiritual beliefs. In her work *Marjie Crop Eared Wolf* has been inspired by Blackfoot symbols and pictographs, especially those found in such places as Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park in southern Alberta.



## Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park and National Historic Site

Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park runs along the Milk River in southern Alberta, approximately 100 kilometers southeast of Lethbridge. The park is one of the largest areas of protected prairie in the Alberta park system. Comprising 17.80 square kilometers of coulee and prairie habitat, it boasts a diverse variety of birds and animals. It also protects a large number of aboriginal rock carvings and paintings. The park is important and sacred to the Blackfoot and many other First Nations groups.

The area which comprises Writing-On-Stone contains the largest concentration of pictographs and petroglyphs on the North American plains. **Pictographs** - ideographic paintings that convey their meaning through pictorial resemblance to physical objects - and **petroglyphs** - images created by removing part of a rock surface by incising, picking, carving and abrading - are found worldwide. At Writing-On-Stone there are over 50 petroglyph sites and thousands of works which tell not only of the lives and journeys of those who created them, but also of the spirits they found in the area. Due to the abundance of game in the area and the shelter of the coulees the region was an excellent location for nomadic peoples to stop on their seasonal migrations. There is evidence that the region has been in use for over 9000 years and First Nations Elders still visit the images and ceremonies are still held at the base of the cliffs.

Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park was established by the Alberta provincial government in 1957. In 1977 an archaeological preserve was established to prevent damage by graffiti and vandalism to the pictographs and petroglyphs. In 2005 the region was designated a national historic site. The most sensitive areas of the site are now set aside and designated for guided tours only.



Pictograph - Writing - On - Stone



# Art History and Art Movements

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The artworks in the exhibition [Aakii isskská'takssin \(Woman - thought\)](#) reflect a variety of artistic modes or styles of expression and concerns which are characteristic of both First Nations art practices over time and western art practices. While all periods of history have witnessed aspects of innovation in various realms, no period has witnessed such profound and rapid change in a multitude of areas as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These centuries witnessed major technological advancements, changes in political and social systems, and changes in how mankind actually perceived the world; changes which continue to impact the world into the 21st century. The art realm was one segment of society which was dramatically affected by changes in all these areas. In art these changes were expressed by revised notions of what is considered art and through the use of new means of art production and new and challenging methods of art expression.

The following analysis examines the history of various First Nations and western art movements and media as these are relevant to the artistic expressions of the artists in the exhibition.

# Pictographs and Petroglyphs

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Rock art is generally divided into two categories: petroglyphs - where images have been etched or carved into the stone - and pictographs - where images are created through painting on the stone, usually by applying red ochre (although black, white and yellow are sometimes seen). Rock art sites have been discovered all throughout Canada and constitute the country's oldest and most widespread artistic tradition. It is believed that much of rock art is associated with the search for helping spirits and with shamanism.



Petroglyphs at Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park

Petroglyphs and pictographs are important prehistoric art forms in both southern Saskatchewan and Alberta. Many pictographs have been found on rocky outcrops along the foothills near Calgary. At Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park in southern Alberta there is a large series of petroglyphs etched on the sandstone bluffs of the Milk River. The images depict spiritual icons such as Thunderbird or shaman figures and some narratives have also been illustrated. Human beings are also commonly depicted in the rock art of Writing-On-Stone. Some figures are round-bodied and are believed to be warriors standing behind large shields. Others are square-bodied or have hourglass figures. Many animals are depicted as well. These include deer, elk, sheep, skunks, bears, antelope, dogs, snakes, bison and horses. The presence of horses and other items introduced to Native People by Europeans indicates that some rock art was made in historic times (since around 1730). Rock art can be described as biographical or ceremonial in nature. Biographical art appears to tell a specific story, such as a battle or the performance of great deeds. Biographical works can contain numerous figures. Ceremonial rock art does not tell a particular story but rather features powerful figures and spiritual relationships. Most ceremonial art consists of single or a few characters.

Explorers, travellers and settlers mentioned discoveries of pictographs and petroglyphs as early as the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Significant records and studies, however, only began after 1850 through the efforts of American scholars. The 1960s were very rich years for rock art investigation in Canada and led to the foundation of the Canadian Rock Art Research Association in 1969. By the late 1960s more accurate systems of photographic as well as other means of recording have been applied and experiments have been undertaken for the dating and preservation of unprotected sites. Research has recently been focused on the interpretation of both the function and meaning of rock art in the context of native culture and the relationship of pictographs and petroglyphs to other forms of native visual expression.

Archaeologists believe that the rock art at Writing-On-Stone was made by ancestors of the Blackfoot and other Indigenous groups of the northern Plains. Many Blackfoot, however, believe that the works were created by the spirits and they have always viewed the area as a sacred place.

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# Art and Art Styles: First Nations Art in the Twentieth Century - a brief survey

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Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Heavy Shields*, 2017  
Photography of installation  
Collection of the artist

While First Nations peoples have been creating visual imagery for millennia it was not until the 1960s that their imagery was recognized by the Canadian Art establishment as anything more than cultural artifacts or records. The first First Nations artist to achieve any recognition in Canada was Norval Morrisseau who developed what has come to be termed the Woodland School of art. In 1973 Morrisseau joined artists Alex Janvier, Daphne Odjig, Carl Ray, Eddy Cobiness and Joe Sanchez, to form a group which came to be called the 'Indian Group of Seven' whose mission was to spread the word about Native woodland art. This group has had a tremendous influence on the First Nations artists who have followed them.

## Norval Morrisseau

**Norval Morrisseau (1932-2007)** was one of Canada's foremost aboriginal artists and founder of the Woodland Style of painting. Born near Thunder Bay, Ontario, on the Sand Point Reserve, Morrisseau was an Ojibwa shaman and self-taught artist who painted for more than 50 years, gaining an International reputation as one of Canada's original master artists. Morrisseau was brought up by both of his maternal grandparents. His grandfather was a shaman who schooled him in the traditional ways of his culture while his grandmother, a Catholic, made sure he was familiar with Christian beliefs. According to accounts, it was the conflict between the two cultures that influenced Morrisseau's outlook and became his art.



Norval Morrisseau  
*Fish Unity in Cosmic Sea*, n.d.  
Serigraph on paper  
Art Gallery of Alberta Collection

## Norval Morrisseau continued

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Morrisseau was known for taking traditional icons expressed in his native culture in rock art and birch bark scrolls and translating these images in the Western media of easel painting and printmaking. He was also fascinated with modern European painting, which he was exposed to by his first Anglo-Canadian patrons in 1959.

Morrisseau's first exhibition was in 1962 and throughout his career he received numerous distinctions. In 1970 he became a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Art. In 1978 he was made a Member of the Order of Canada and also received honorary doctorates from McGill University in Montreal and McMaster University in Hamilton. In 1995 The Assembly of First Nations presented him with its highest honour, a presentation of an eagle feather. In 2006 Morrisseau had the only native solo art exhibition in the 127 year history of the National Gallery of Canada. Shortly before his death Morrisseau had a major solo exhibition entitled *Norval Morrisseau: Shaman Artist*, at the National Museum of the North American Indian in New York City. As stated by Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine following Morrisseau's death:

*Norval Morrisseau's courageous and often controversial approach to his work was instrumental in encouraging First Nations people to know their spirituality, history and culture in order to better understand themselves.*

Norval Morrisseau could lay claim to being the creator and spiritual leader of the Woodland Indian art movement, not only in Canada but in the northeast United States. He developed his style independent of the influence of any other artist and was the first to depict Ojibwa legends and history to the non-native world. In Morrisseau's work there is little attention to figurative modelling, and no delving into the problems of perspective or pictorial depth. Instead, he presented stylized versions of what he knew: the bears, loons, fish and other animals and the people in the town around him. **The rudiments of Woodland, also called the pictographic style or x-ray style, paintings are expressive formline; a system for transparency and interconnecting lines that determine relationships in terms of spiritual power. For Morrisseau, the use of bright, contrasting colours were also a key resource in his repertory of symbols.** His manner of separating form into areas of distinct colour is reminiscent of stained glass and may have been a result of his conversion to Christianity and frequent trips to a Catholic Church when he was recovering from tuberculosis in his early 20s. He used connecting lines to depict interdependence between forms and colours. Three generations of native artists have followed in Morrisseau's footsteps, producing variations of the Morrisseau style using heavy black outlines to enclose colourful, flat shapes. As expressed by Morrisseau himself:

*I want to make paintings full of colour, laughter, compassion and love....If I can do that, I can paint for 100 years.*

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## Art History: The Indian Group of Seven

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Norval Morrisseau's work showed that native artists and native art could stand shoulder to shoulder with other contemporary Canadian artists and his success inspired other artists to follow. In 1973 the Winnipeg Art Gallery held a groundbreaking exhibition entitled *Treaty Numbers 23, 287, 1171* which featured work by First Nations artists Jackson Beardy, Alex Janvier and Daphne Odjig. This breakthrough exhibition was one of the first exhibitions in Canada to address First Nations art within an aesthetic as opposed to an anthropological framework and showed that native artists truly had a unique contribution to make to the art world. The exhibition was followed, in 1973, by the foundation of the "Professional Native Indian Artists Association". Daphne Odjig was the driving force behind this group which also included Alex Janvier, Jackson Beardy, Norval Morrisseau, Eddy Cobiness, Carl Ray and Joseph Sanchez. The group, which came to be called 'The Indian Group of Seven', an informal name given by Winnipeg Free Press reporter Gary Scherbain, had as its main aims the development of a fund to enable artists to paint; the development of a marketing strategy involving prestigious commercial galleries in order to allow artists to exhibit their work; the stimulation of young artists; and the establishment of a trust fund for scholarship programs for emerging artists.



Daphne Odjig  
*Companions*  
Acrylic on Canvas



Carl Ray  
*A Medicine Bag*, 1972  
Ink, Acrylic on Paper  
Art Gallery of Alberta Collection



Jackson Beardy  
*Untitled (Bird)*, 1967  
Acrylic, Gouache on Board  
Art Gallery of Alberta Collection

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# Art History: The Indian Group of Seven

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While united in their aims, the members of the Indian Group of Seven followed their separate artistic visions. Carl Ray, who apprenticed under Norval Morrisseau, was strongly influenced by the Woodland Style of painting developed by Norval Morrisseau, using heavy dark outlines to render forms and shapes within forms and focusing on native legends and healing. Eddy Cobiness and Alex Janvier, while initially influenced by the Woodland style, gradually evolved to more abstract forms.



Eddy Cobiness  
*Hoopdancer*  
the Bearclaw Gallery, Edmonton



Alex Janvier  
*Lubicon*, 1988  
Acrylic on Canvas  
Art Gallery of Alberta Collection

Daphne Odjig, whose work is often associated with the Woodland school, claims that she is not part of the school as her works incorporate the importance of womanhood and sense of family while others in the group were concerned with a spiritual quest. Odjig's work is also different in that she was influenced by Picasso's cubism but within an Aboriginal context, fusing together elements of aboriginal pictographs and First Nations arts with European techniques and styles of the 20th century.

The Indian Group of Seven had three shows throughout Canada and disbanded in 1975. Though the groups 'life' was brief, however, it was extremely important for moving native art into the mainstream of the Canadian art world and influencing younger native artists. As expressed by Daphne Odjig:

*If my work as an artist has somehow helped to open doors between our people and the non-Native community, then I am glad. I am even more deeply pleased if it has helped to encourage the young people that have followed our generation to express their pride in our heritage more openly, more joyfully than I would have ever dared to think possible.*

(Odjig: *the Art of Daphne Odjig*, pg. 78)

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# Art History: Indigenous Artists of Southern Alberta - an introduction

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Members of the Indian Group of Seven received both national and international recognition and their efforts in gaining recognition for art produced by Indigenous artists have borne fruit with many of Canada's most important contemporary artists, such as Kent Monkman from Ontario, being of Indigenous heritage.

In Alberta itself there are a number of contemporary artists of Indigenous heritage who have made their mark on the provincial and national art scene. Two important forerunners of this recognition, who were members of the Blackfoot Confederacy, were Gerald Tailfeathers and Joane Cardinal-Schubert.



Gerald Tailfeathers

**Gerald Tailfeathers (1925-1975)** was born at Stand Off, Alberta, and died at the Blood reservation. Tailfeathers was one of the first Indigenous Canadians to become a professional artist and came to prominence in the 1950s.

Tailfeathers had extensive formal art training. He began his artistic training at Saint Mary's Lake Summer Art School. In 1941 he studied at the Banff School of Fine Arts under the guidance of Charles Comfort, Walter J. Phillips and H.G. Glyde. In 1942 he attended the Provincial Institute of Art and Technology in Calgary (now the Alberta College of Art and Design), studying commercial design. Tailfeathers also attended Summer Art Schools in Glacier National Park (Montana) with New York portrait painters Winold Reiss and Carl Link and was influenced by the cowboy school of painting led by Charles Russell. Working as a graphic artist for the Hudson's Bay Company, he continued his fine art practice and produced a large volume of works in charcoals, pastels, watercolours, oils, pen and ink and in sculpture.

Gerald Tailfeathers' works exhibit a romantic and nostalgic vision of the Blood people's life in the late 19th century. His works feature warriors in their traditional activities of warfare, hunting and ceremonial life. While his career spanned a period when Indigenous art wasn't really recognized by galleries or the buying public, he did receive important commissions for paintings for the Indians of Canada Pavilion at Expo '67 in Montreal, the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, and for Canada Post. His works can be found in the collections of the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Quebec; the department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Ottawa; the Galt Museum in Lethbridge, Alberta; and the Glenbow Museum in Calgary.

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Art History: Indigenous Artists of Southern Alberta - an introduction continued

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## Joane Cardinal-Schubert (1942-2009)

Joane Cardinal-Schubert was born in Red Deer, Alberta, in 1942. Through her art and life she honoured her identity and Kainai (Blackfoot) heritage, demonstrating her values of representing the indigenous experience and history. Cardinal-Schubert was a multimedia, visual, and installation artist. Although best known for her paintings and installations, throughout her long and successful career she engaged in an impressive range of other activities as curator, writer, lecturer, poet and activist for First Nations artists and individuals engaged in the struggle for Native sovereignty. Her writing has been published nationally and internationally in art magazines, catalogues, and books and she also served as an editor of Fuse magazine.



Joane Cardinal-Schubert  
*Warshirt - Self Portrait*  
Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta

Cardinal-Schubert completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a double major in painting and print making in 1977 at the University of Calgary. She also received a certificate from the Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary and in 1983 received a certificate in Management Development for Arts Administration from the Banff Centre. Cardinal-Schubert served as Assistant Curator at the Nickle Arts Museum at the University of Calgary from 1979 to 1985. She was also a lobbyist for the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry (SCANA) and an outspoken advocate of Native causes.

Throughout her life Joane Cardinal-Schubert received many awards, scholarships, and Canada Council grants for her work. In 1985 she became the fourth Albertan woman to be inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy. She was also awarded the Commemorative Medal of Canada in 1993 for her contribution to the Arts, and in 2007 was awarded a National Aboriginal Achievement Award. She was an advocate for Native artists and inspired and enabled Native artists to challenge and reclaim their creative identities. Her painting and installation practice is prominent for its incisive evocation of contemporary First Nations experiences and examination of the imposition of EuroAmerican religious, educational and governmental systems upon Aboriginal people. Joane Cardinal-Schubert believed that making issues known that needed addressing was important. As she stated:

*I suppose that I have advocated to have Aboriginal art exhibited in galleries and museums as a lot of artists have done. I just joined in and contributed what I could from my point of view. I suppose one of the more important issues I was involved in was saving the Alberta Aboriginal Art Collection from being sold off piece by piece. That involved telephoning a lot of collectors to not bid on the work. Fortunately, it was saved almost in its entirety.*



The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Art History: Indigenous Artists of Southern Alberta - an introduction continued

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Cardinal-Schubert said her life and career was about ‘the joy of discovery, curiosity, the journey, the people met, experiences, learning, just being within the creative process.’ To the end of her life she said “there is still a lot to be done, mainly in figuring out how to continue to share my work in more innovative ways. Basically my career is, I think, to just keep working and everything will follow along. “

As described by artist and curator Jeffrey Spalding, president of the Royal Canadian Academy, “Joane was a fiery, indomitable, free spirit. She is renowned as a ground breaking artist who fought tenaciously for recognition of the qualities of First Nations artists and inclusion of their issues and works in museums of art rather than anthropology. Her works are a wonderful admixture of societal critique and probing autobiographical inquiry.”

Joane Cardinal-Schubert passed away at the age of sixty-seven from cancer on September 16, 2009.

# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Art Styles: Abstraction

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*Of all the arts, abstract painting is the most difficult. It demands that you know how to draw well, that you have a heightened sensitivity for composition and for colours, and that you be a true poet. This last is essential.*

Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944)

**Abstract Art** is a term applied to 20th century styles in reaction against the traditional European view of art as the imitation of nature. **Abstraction stresses the formal or elemental structure of a work and has been expressed in all genres or subjects of visual expression.** Characteristics of abstraction are seen in the works of Marjie Crop Eared Wolf in the exhibition .

**Like all painting, abstract painting is not a unified practice.** Rather, the term 'abstraction' covers two main, distinct tendencies. **The first involves the reduction of natural appearances to simplified forms.** Reduction may lead to the depiction of the essential or generic forms of things by eliminating particular and accidental variations. Reduction can also involve the creation of art which works away from the individual and particular with a view to creating an independent construct of shapes and colours having aesthetic appeal in their own right.



Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Capture Rifle*, 2010  
Photography of installation  
Collection of the artist

**The second tendency in abstraction involves the construction of art objects from non-representational basic forms.** These objects are not created by abstracting from natural appearances but by **building up with non-representational shapes and patterns.** In other words, in this mode, abstract works are ones without a recognizable subject and do not relate to anything external or try to 'look like something'. Instead, the colour and form (and often the materials and support) are the subject of the abstract painting.

Whatever the tendency in abstraction, it is characteristic of most modes of abstraction that they abandon or subordinate the traditional function of art to portray perceptible reality and emphasize its function to create a new reality for the viewer's perception. As described by Roald Nasgaard in his work Abstract Painting in Canada:

*The first message of an abstract work is the immediate reality of our perception of it as an actual object in and of themselves, like other things in the world, except that they are uniquely made for concentrated aesthetic experience. (pg. 11)*

# The History of Abstraction: A Survey

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Bison Painting, 18,000 - 13,000 years B.P.  
Altamira Cave, Spain



Clay Jaguar  
200 BC - 600 AD  
Monte Alban, Mesoamerica

**It is generally stated that abstraction in western art was developed in the early decades of the 20th century. The practice of abstracting from reality, however, is virtually as old as mankind itself. Early hunters and gatherers, as seen in the cave painting image above, created marvelous simplified or stylized images of the animals they depended on, both spiritually and in terms of sustenance, in caves throughout the world.**

**The artworks produced by non-European cultures, as seen in the two examples above and whether pre-historic or contemporary in nature, also provide examples of various degrees of abstraction in both two and three dimensional forms. The development of abstraction in European art in the early 20th century was, in fact, fostered by the study of such artworks by European artists such as Pablo Picasso.**

# The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

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## Abstraction in European Art History

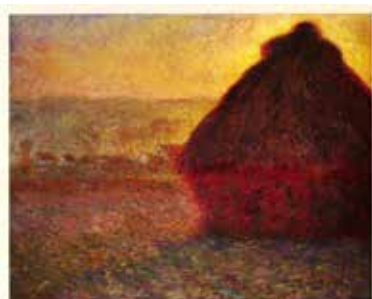
**Wassily Kandinsky** (1866-1944) is usually credited with making the first entirely non-representational painting in 1910. **The history of abstraction in European art, however, begins before Kandinsky in the later decades of the 19th century with the work of the French Impressionist artists** such as Claude Monet, Paul Cézanne and Georges Seurat. While the work of these artists was grounded in visible reality, their methods of working and artistic concerns began the process of breaking down the academic restrictions concerning what was acceptable subject matter in art, how artworks were produced and, most importantly, challenged the perception of what a painting actually was.



Wassily Kandinsky  
*Composition VII*, 1913  
The Tretyalov Gallery, Moscow



Paul Cézanne  
*Maison Arbies*, 1890-1894  
The Tretyalov Gallery, Moscow



Claude Monet  
*Haystacks (sunset)*, 1890-1891  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



George Seurat  
*A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, 1884-1886

Radicals in their time, early Impressionists broke the rules of academic painting. They began by giving colours, freely brushed, primacy over line. They also took the act of painting out of the studio and into the modern world. Painting realistic scenes of modern life, they portrayed overall visual effects instead of details. They used short “broken” brush strokes of mixed and pure unmixed colour, not smoothly blended or shades as was customary, in order to achieve the effect of intense colour vibration.

**The vibrant colour used by the Impressionist artists was adopted by their successors, the Fauve artists.** The Fauves were modern artists whose works emphasized painterly qualities and strong colour over the representational or realistic values retained by the Impressionists. This group, which basically operated from 1905 to 1907, was led by Henri Matisse and André Derain.

# The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

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Henri Matisse  
*Harmony in Red*, 1908



André Derain  
*Charing Cross Bridge, London* 1906  
National Gallery of Art, Washington

The paintings of the Fauve artists were characterized by seemingly wild brush work and strident colours and, in their focus on colour over line and drawing, the subjects of their paintings came to be characterized by a high degree of simplification and abstraction.



Pablo Picasso  
*Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J. Version O)*, 1911-12  
Museum of Modern Art  
New York, New York



Pablo Picasso  
*Portrait of Ambroise Vollard*,  
1910

**While the Impressionists and Fauve artists are the direct ancestors of the abstract movement in 20th century art, the real creator of abstraction was Pablo Picasso.** Picasso used primitive art from Africa and Oceania as a 'battering ram' against the classical conception of beauty. Picasso made his first cubist paintings, such as *Les Femmes d'Alger*, based on Cézanne's idea that all depiction of nature can be reduced to three solids: cube, sphere and cone. Together with Georges Braque, Picasso continued his experiments and invented **facet** or **analytical cubism**. As expressed in the *Portrait of Ambroise Vollard*, Picasso created works which can no longer be read as images of the external world but as worlds of their own.

# The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

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Fragmented and redefined, the images preserved remnants of Renaissance principles of perspective as **space lies behind the picture plane** and has no visible limits. By 1911 Picasso and Georges Braque developed what is known as **Synthetic Cubism** which introduced collage into art making. Through this process these artists introduced a whole new concept of space into art making.

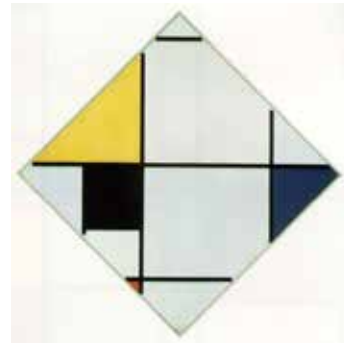


Pablo Picasso  
*Still Life with a Bottle of Rum*, 1911

In synthetic cubism, **the picture plane lies in front of the picture plane and the picture is recognized as essentially a flat object**. This re-definition of space, so different from the Renaissance principle of three-dimensional illusion that had dominated academic teaching for centuries, would have a profound effect on the development of abstraction in art and was a true landmark in the history of painting.



Wassily Kandinsky  
*Composition X*, 1939



Piet Mondrian  
*Lozenge Composition with Yellow, Black, Blue, Red and Gray*, 1921

**Influenced by the practices of Impressionism, Fauvism and Cubism, artists gradually developed the idea that colour, line, form and texture could be the actual subjects of a painting and formed the essential characteristics of art. Adhering to this, Wassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian developed the first pure abstract works in 20th century art.**

# The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

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**For both Kandinsky and Mondrian, abstraction was a search for truths behind appearances, expressed in a pure visual vocabulary stripped of representational references.**

**Wassily Kandinsky** (1866-1944) was born in Moscow. Originally trained in law and economics, Kandinsky started painting at the age of 30 and, in 1896, moved to Germany to study art full-time. After a brief return to Russia (1914-1921) Kandinsky returned to Germany where he taught at the Bauhaus school of art and architecture until it was closed by the Nazis in 1933. He then moved to France where he remained for the rest of his life.

Kandinsky's creation of purely abstract work followed a long period of development and maturation of theoretical thought based on his personal artistic experience. At first influenced by both pointillism and the Fauve artists, by 1922 geometrical elements had taken on increasing importance in his paintings. Kandinsky was also extremely influenced by music as he considered music abstract by nature as it does not try to represent the exterior world but rather to express in an immediate way the inner feelings of the human soul. He was also influenced by the theories of Theosophy expressed by H.P. Blavatsky. These theories, which had a tremendous influence on many artists during the 1920s, postulated that creation was a geometrical progression beginning with a single point. Kandinsky's mature paintings focus on geometric forms and the use of colour as something autonomous and apart from a visual description of an object or other form and through relinquishing outer appearances he hoped to more directly communicate feelings to the viewer.

**The most radical abstractionist of the early 20th century was Piet Mondrian** (1872-1944). Born in Amersfoort, the Netherlands, Mondrian began his career as a primary teacher. While teaching he also practiced painting and these early works, while definitely representational in nature, show the influence various artistic movements such as pointillism and fauvism had on him. Mondrian's art, like Kandinsky's, was also strongly influenced by the theosophical movement and his work from 1908 to the end of his life involved a search for the spiritual knowledge expressed by theosophist theory.



Piet Mondrian  
*Composition with Yellow Patch*, 1930  
Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-  
Westfalen, Dusseldorf

In 1911 Mondrian moved to Paris and came under the influence of Picasso's cubism. While cubist influences can be seen in his works from 1911 to 1914, however, unlike the Cubists Mondrian attempted to reconcile his painting with his spiritual pursuits. In this pursuit he began to simplify elements in his paintings further than the cubists had done until he had developed a completely non-representational, geometric style. In this work Mondrian did not strive for pure lyrical emotion as Kandinsky did. Rather, his goal was pure reality defined as equilibrium achieved through the balance of unequal but equivalent oppositions. By 1919 Mondrian began producing the grid-based paintings for which he became renowned and this subject motivated his art practice for the rest of his life.

# The History of Abstraction: A Survey con't

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## Conclusion:

**Abstraction in the visual arts has taken many forms over the 20th and into the 21st century. Among these modes are Colour Field Painting, Lyrical Abstraction, Abstract Expressionism/Action Painting, Op Art, and Post-painterly Abstraction. Whatever the tendency in abstraction, it is characteristic of most modes of abstraction that they abandon or subordinate the traditional function of art to portray perceptible reality and emphasize its function to create a new reality for the viewer's perception.**



## Portraiture - a brief survey

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**A second genre expressed in the exhibition is the art of portraiture. A portrait** is a painting, photograph, sculpture or other artistic representation of a person. In a portrait the artist's main concern is to characterize the sitter as an individual. While some portraits restrict themselves to physical descriptions, most attempt more than this, conveying the sitter's status in the world, their personality, or their state of mind at the time of the portrait. It is important to understand that not every portrait is an accurate likeness of a person and not every portrayal of a person is a portrait, no matter how accurate the likeness of the person shown is. To be a true portrait, the sitter or sitters have the central role in the composition.



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*sksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #10*, 2018  
Photograph  
Private collection

The art of portraiture is an ancient one. Egyptian portrait statues and reliefs survive from before 3000 B.C. and there are many individualized portrait heads from ancient Greece and Rome. Most early representations that are clearly intended to show an individual are of rulers and generally follow idealized artistic conventions. Some of the earliest surviving painted portraits of more common people are the greco-Roman funeral portraits that survived in Egypt's dry climate. During the 4th century A.D. the portrait began to retreat in importance, being replaced by idealized symbolic representations. It was not until the late middle ages that true portraits of individuals began to re-emerge in the art of western Europe.

In creating a portrait the artist usually attempts more than merely representing the sitter's outward appearance. Rather, artists also usually try to depict the sitter's 'soul' or character in some way. There are generally three ways of doing this.

### **1/Pose**

To create a psychological connection between the subject and the viewer, the sitter is often placed turned towards the viewer. This is seen, for example, in Leonardo da Vinci's portrait of Mona Lisa. It is through this positioning that a connection is formed between the sitter and the viewer and through this character and status of the sitter are often conveyed.

The viewer's actual viewing position of the sitter is also very important and can suggest the subject's attitude towards the viewer and, by extension, to the world in which he or she lives. Depending on the pose of the sitter, the viewer can draw different conclusions as to the sitters character. This is seen, for example, in John Singer Sargent's portrait of Madame X where the distance between the viewer and subject and the subjects pose gives the impression of a very aloof, distant woman.

# Portraiture continued

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Leonardo da Vinci  
*Mona Lisa*, 1503  
The Louve, Paris, France



John Singer Sargent  
*Madame X*, 1884



Anthony Van Dyke  
*Charles I at the Hunt*, 1635

## 2/ Expression

## 3/ Setting

A subject's dress/attire, the setting in which they are placed and the objects and possessions which surround them can provide as much information on the subject's social position, character and profession as does the actual face portrayed. Objects and the setting can indicate a subject's status and profession and can also be symbolic in nature, reflecting the sitter's beliefs and interests. These hints to character are evidenced in Anthony Van Dyke's portrait of Charles I, shown above.

Portraits have many aims and uses but their main function is commemorative - to preserve a likeness long after the sitter is gone.

# Art Styles - Graffiti

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The photographs of Marjie Crop Eared Wolf in the exhibition [Aakíí isskská'takssin \(Woman - thought\)](#) document a sense of place. An important aspect of this documentation is the use of stencil graffiti to recognize Indigenous traditional territory.

**Graffiti** are writings or drawings that have been scribbled, scratched, or painted on a wall or other surface, often within public view. Graffiti range from simple written words to complete and complex wall paintings and such work is often considered illicit.

The word 'graffiti' comes from the Italian word *graffiato* (scratched). In art history the word is applied to works of art produced by scratching a design into a surface. The use of the word has evolved to include any graphics applied to surfaces in a manner that constitutes vandalism.



Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Four Beaver*, 2018  
Photography of installation  
Collection of the artist



Ancient graffiti at Kom Ombo  
Temple, Egypt

**The history of graffiti is extremely long.** Inscriptions and figure drawings have been found scrawled on surfaces on ancient Egyptian ruins; on monuments and more domestic walls from classical Rome, such as at the ruins of Pompeii; at the Mayan site of Tikal in Guatemala; in the prisons at the Tower of London in London and basically anywhere there was a surface suitable for such purposes. Such graffiti has helped gain understanding into the social and political lives and languages of past cultures

**Graffiti has played an important role in 20th century street art and over the course of the 20th century has seen a steady rise in prominence and artistic recognition.** Many important 20th century artists, such as Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring, had their origins in New York City subway graffiti circles.

Graffiti writing is often seen as intertwined with hip hop culture and the many international styles derived from Philadelphia and New York City subway graffiti. Graffiti also became associated with the anti-establishment punk rock movement beginning in the 1970s. This period also saw the emergence of the new stencil graffiti genre which, by 1985, had appeared in cities around the world.

**Contemporary graffiti artists have a huge arsenal of various materials and methods for creating their work.** Spray paint in aerosol cans has long been the number one medium for

## Art Styles - Graffiti continued

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graffiti. **Stencil graffiti**, which originated in the early 1980s, is created by cutting out shapes and designs in a stiff material to form an overall design or image. The stencil is then placed on the surface (ie: wall or other surface) and with quick strokes of the aerosol can the image begins to appear.



Tags, Edmonton, Alberta

**The most common styles of graffiti have their own names.** A **tag** is the most basic writing of an artist's name where the graffiti writer's tag is his or her personalized signature.

Some artists also use self-adhesive **stickers** as a quick way to do catch up pieces.



Stickers and Tags  
Tokyo, Japan

**Many art critics and analysts have begun to see artistic value in some graffiti and to recognize it as a form of public art.** In the early 1980s art galleries in New York began to display graffiti as an art form and this recognition has spread throughout the world. Graffiti has become, in some cases, an effective tool of social emancipation or been used in the achievement of a political goal and can be an effective tool in establishing dialog. Graffiti has also been used as a means of advertising, both legally or illegally, and has been used as an offensive expression.



Wall, Berlin, Germany

# Art History: The Development and Art of Photography

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The art works presented in this exhibition are photographic in nature and this exhibition is thus an excellent vehicle for understanding photography as a means of artistic expression. Since the early 1970s photography has increasingly been accorded a place in fine art galleries and exhibitions, but what is this medium? How and why did photography develop, how is photography related to artistic pursuits such as painting, and what makes a fine-art photograph different than the 'snapshots' virtually everyone takes with their digital cameras or cell phones?

The following pages briefly examine the history of photography and photographic genres and styles in order to answer the above questions and provide an entry into the photographic works in the exhibition.

## Photography: A brief history

*While there is perhaps a province in which the photograph can tell us nothing more than what we see with our own eyes, there is another in which it proves to us how little our eyes permit us to see.*

Dorothea Lange



Image credit: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camera>

The word photography derives from the Greek words *phōs* meaning light, and *gráphein* meaning 'to write'. The word was coined by Sir John Herschel in 1839.

Artists and scientists have been interested in the properties of light, chemistry and optics for over 1000 years. In the tenth century the Arab mathematician and scientist Alhazen of Basra invented the first 'camera obscura', a device which demonstrated the behavior of light to create an inverted image in a darkened room.

Artists turned to mathematics and optics to solve problems in perspective.

The development of the *camera obscura* allowed artists to faithfully record the external world. The principle of this device involved light entering a minute hole in a darkened room which formed, on the opposite wall, an inverted image of whatever was outside the room.

The camera obscura, at first actually a room big enough for a man to enter, gradually grew smaller and by the 17th and 18th centuries it was the size of a two foot box which had a lens fitted into one end. By the mid 18th century the camera obscura had become standard equipment for artists.

# Art History: Photography: A Brief History continued

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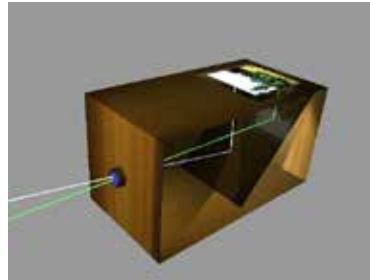


Image credits: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camera\\_obscura](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camera_obscura)

In the early 1700s it was discovered that light not only formed images, but also changed the nature of many substances. The light sensitivity of silver salts, discovered in 1727, opened the way to discover a method to trap the 'elusive image of the camera' ([The History of Photography](#), Beaumont Newhall, pg.11)

Developments in optics, and the incentive to find a practical means to capture images produced by the camera obscura, were stimulated by the growth of the middle class in the 18th century which created a demand for portraits at reasonable prices. By the 1800s a number of inventors were working towards a means to obtain an image using light and to fix the image making it permanent.

The first inventor to create a permanent photographic image was Nicéphore Niépce of France in 1826. In 1829 Niépce signed a contract with Louis Jacques Mande Daguerre who, while '...he did not invent photography, made it work, made it popular, and made it his own' ([The Picture History of Photography](#), Peter Pollack, pg. 19) In partnership with Louis Daguerre, Niépce refined his silver process and, after his death in 1833, his experiments were furthered by Daguerre. In 1839 Daguerre announced the invention of the *daguerreotype*, which was immediately patented by the French government and the era of the camera began.



Louis Daguerre  
*L'Atelier de l'artiste*, 1837  
Daguerreotype

The daguerreotype proved popular in responding to the demand for portraiture emerging from the middle classes during the Industrial Revolution. This demand, which could not be met by oil paintings, added to the push for the development of photography. This push was also the result of the limitations of the daguerreotype, which was a fragile and expensive process and could not be duplicated. Photographers and inventors, then, continued to look for other methods of creating photographs. Ultimately the modern photographic process came about from a series of refinements and improvements in the first 20 years. In 1844 George Eastman of Rochester, New York, developed dry gel on paper, or film, to replace the photographic plate. This was followed in 1888 by his Kodak camera, with the result that anyone could take a photograph. Photography became readily available for the mass-market in 1901 with the introduction of the Kodak Brownie.

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Art History: Realism in Photography: The Documentary Eye

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*Most art in the world does not have a capital 'A', but is a way of turning everyday objects into personal expressions.*

Gloria Steinem, American feminist, journalist, 1934 -

**Photography's capacity for recording fact, giving evidence, and presenting a document is what truly separates this medium from all others and is the main aspect that practitioners and their public value most. This aim of photographers to create a 'real' document, which derived from the genre of realism in painting, resulted in the genre of DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY and is expressed in the exhibition by both of the featured artists.**



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
sksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #7, 2018  
Photograph  
Private collection

**Documentary photography** has been defined as '...a depiction of the real world by a photographer whose intent is to communicate something of importance - to make a comment - that will be understood by the viewer.' ([Time Life Library of Photography](#), pg. 12) In such photography the photographer attempts to produce truthful, objective, and usually candid photography of a particular subject, most often pictures of people.

**As a genre of photography, documentary photography developed in three general stages.** While the actual term 'documentary photography' was coined in the 1930s to describe a category of photography which comments on reality, photographs meant to accurately describe otherwise unknown, hidden, forbidden, or difficult-to-access places or circumstance date to the earliest daguerreotypes and calotype surveys of the ruins of the Near East, Egypt, the historic architecture of Europe, and the American wilderness. **This desire to create a permanent record of familiar and exotic scenes and the appearance of friends and family marked the first stage of documentary photography.**

As expressed by photographer John Thomson in the 1860s

*...the photograph affords the nearest approach that can be made toward placing (the reader) actually before the scene which is represented'*

Documentary Photography, [Time Life Library of Photography](#), pg. 16

At this early stage in photography's development, photographs were seen as miraculous, enabling the human eye to see things it did not always notice or would never see. **Photography took over the concerns with realism that had been developing in painting** and the camera was used mainly as a copier of nature. This faith in the camera as a literal recorder gave rise to the belief that the camera does not lie.

# Photography and the Documentary Eye continued

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The development of new reproduction methods for photography provided impetus for the next era of documentary photography in the late 1880s and reaching into the early decades of the 20th century. This period saw a decisive shift in documentation from antiquarian and landscape subjects to that of the city and its crises. Once the camera had proven itself as a tool for showing things as they were, it was inevitably thought of as a device for changing things to the way they ought to be. **In this second stage photographers discovered the camera's power to hold up a mirror to society and photographs could thus become social documents. This visual comment on the joys and pains of society has, to a great extent, occupied documentary photographers ever since.**

The photographer most directly associated with the birth of this new form of documentary was the journalist and urban social reformer Jacob Riis who documented the slums of New York in his historic book How the Other Half Lives in 1890. Riis's documentary photography was passionately devoted to changing the inhumane conditions under which the poor lived in the rapidly-expanding urban-industrial centers.



Dorothea Lange  
*Migrant Mother*, 1936

In the 1930s the Great Depression brought a new wave of documentary, both of rural and urban conditions. During this period the Farm Security Administration in the United States enlisted a band of young photographers to document the state of the nation during the depression. Among these were Walker Evans, Ben Shahn, Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee, and Carl Mydans. This generation of documentary photographers is generally credited for codifying the documentary code of accuracy mixed with impassioned advocacy, with the goal of arousing public commitment to social change. The photographers in the FSA project were the first ever to be called documentary photographers and their work wrote the idea of documentary photography as a means of examining society large in peoples minds.

During the Second World War and postwar eras, documentary photography increasingly became subsumed under the rubric of photojournalism. This led to the development of a different attitude among documentary photographers in the 1950s, a new generation which did not feel bound by any mission except to see life clearly. As expressed by the photographer Gary Winogrand:

*The true business of photography is to capture a bit of reality (whatever that is) on film.*  
Time Life Library of Photography, pg. 164

**According to photographers in this group, their work made no effort to judge but instead to express, and they were committed not to social change but to formal and iconographical investigation of the social experience of modernity.**



# Portrait Photography

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**Portrait photography** is photography of a person or group of people that captures the personality of a subject by using effective lighting, backdrops and poses. Portrait photography developed at the very beginning of photography when the relatively low cost of the daguerreotype and the reduced sitting time for a subject led to a general rise in the popularity of portrait photography over painted portraiture.

There are many different techniques for portrait photography. Sometimes focus is placed on the subject's eyes and face, rendered with sharp focus, while at other times portraits of individual features, such as a subject's hands or eyes, might be the focus of the composition.



Don English  
*Marlene Dietrich*, 1932

There are four basic approaches to photographic portraiture.

**1/ Constructionist Approach** - this is when the photographer constructs an idea around the portrait such as the happy family, romantic couple etc. This approach is used in most studio and social photography.

**2/ Environmental Approach.** In this approach the photographer depicts the subject in their environment - such as work or home - and the subject is often shown doing something. With this approach more is revealed about the subject and such pictures can be of historical and social significance as primary sources of information.

**3/ The Candid Approach.** This is where people are photographed without their knowledge going about their daily business.

**4/ The Creative Approach.** This is where digital manipulation/darkroom manipulation is brought to bear in the creation of a photograph.

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Visual Learning and Hands-On Art Activities



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #1, 2018*  
Photograph  
Private collection

# What is Visual Learning?

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All art has many sides to it. The artist makes the works for people to experience. They in turn can make discoveries about both the work and the artist that help them learn and give them pleasure for a long time.

How we look at an object determines what we come to know about it. We remember information about an object far better when we are able to see (and handle) objects rather than by only reading about them. This investigation through observation (looking) is very important to understanding how objects fit into our world in the past and in the present and will help viewers reach a **considered response** to what they see. The following is a six-step method to looking at, and understanding, a work of art.

**STEP 1: INITIAL, INTUITIVE RESPONSE** The first 'gut level' response to a visual presentation. What do you see and what do you think of it?

**STEP 2: DESCRIPTION** Naming facts - a visual inventory of the elements of design.

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

What colours do you see? What shapes are most noticeable?

What objects are most apparent? Describe the lines in the work.

**STEP 3: ANALYSIS** Exploring how the parts relate to each other.

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

What proportions can you see? eg. What percentage of the work is background? Foreground?

Land? Sky? Why are there these differences? What effect do these differences create?

What parts seem closest to you? Farthest away? How does the artist give this impression?

**STEP 4: INTERPRETATION** Exploring what the work might mean or be about

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

How does this work make you feel? Why?

What word would best describe the mood of this work?

What is this painting/photograph/sculpture about?

Is the artist trying to tell a story? What might be the story in this work?

**STEP 5: INFORMATION** Looking beyond the work for information that may further understanding.

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

What is the artist's name? When did he/she live?

What art style and medium does the artist use?

What artist's work is this artist interested in?

What art was being made at the same time as this artist was working?

What was happening in history at the time this artist was working?

What social/political/economic/cultural issues is this artist interested in?

**STEP 6: PERSONALIZATION** What do I think about this work? (Reaching a considered response).

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# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Elements of Design Tour

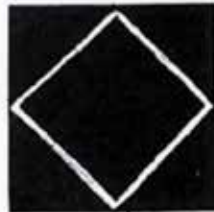
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The following pages provide definitions and examples of the elements and principles of art that are used by artists in the images found in the exhibition [Aakí isskská'takssin \(Woman - thought\)](#). Teacher/facilitator questions for inquiry are in **bold** while possible answers are in *italics*.

The elements of art are components of a work of art that can be isolated and defined. They are the building blocks used to create a work of art.



***LINE !***



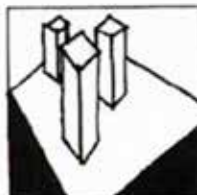
***SHAPE!***



***COLOUR!***



***TEXTURE!***



***SPACE!***

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Elements of Design Tour

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**LINE:** An element of art that is used to define shape, contours and outlines. It is also used to suggest mass and volume and can be used to indicate direction and movement.

See: [Capture Rifle by Marjie Crop Eared Wolf](#)

**What types of lines are there? How can you describe a line? What are some of the characteristics of a line?**

*Width: thick, thin, tapering, uneven*

*Length: long, short, continuous, broken*

*Feeling: sharp, jagged, graceful, smooth*

*Focus: sharp, blurry, fuzzy, choppy*

*Direction: horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curving, perpendicular, oblique, parallel, radial, zigzag*



**Describe the lines you see in this image. Follow the lines in the air with your finger. What quality do the lines have? How do the lines operate in the image?**

*This image uses both curving lines and geometric lines. These lines create shapes and also direct the eye up and around the composition.*

*Geometric lines are used to create shapes, both positive and negative, and help direct movement or frame the composition. Diagonal lines and straight lines outline and create the shape of the teepee and teepee poles. Such lines also define the shape of the human figure and the rifle. A very thick black line, meanwhile, runs vertically on the side of the figure, framing the stencil images of the human figure and directing the eye from the bottom to the top of the image.*

*Curving lines are used to create shape and to direct movement. Curving lines, for example, create the shape of a circle, which is used to define the head of the figure. A faint black curving line, meanwhile, directs the viewer's eye from the top of the picture down to the bottom of the teepee, tying the various areas of the image to each other and giving movement to the composition.*

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Elements of Design Tour

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**SHAPE:** When a line crosses itself or intersects with another line to enclose a space it creates a shape. Shape is two-dimensional. It has height and width but no depth.

See: [ssksinima 'tstohki \(Teachers\) #2 by Star Crop Eared Wolf](#)



**What kind of shapes can you think of?**

*Geometric: circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. We see them in architecture and manufactured items.*

*Organic shapes: a leaf, seashell, flower. We see them in nature with characteristics that are free flowing, informal and irregular.*

*Static shapes: shapes that appear stable and resting.*

*Dynamic shapes: Shapes that appear moving and active.*

**What shapes do you see in this image?**

*The composition is composed of geometric shapes - rectangles/triangles/circular shapes - and organic shapes, seen in the figures and the animal skulls/bones/antlers.*

**How do the shapes operate in this image?**

*Geometric shapes, especially triangular forms, are repeated throughout the image. The shape of a diamond, for example (on the back decorative panel), runs from the left side of the image to the right. This repetition ties the image together. Triangular forms on both sides of the central figures help to create a sense of balance in the work (as does the way figures are arranged with two central figures and then two semi-circular arrangements of figures on either side) and this formal balance creates a very strong sense of stability in the work and unites the elements in this busy scene.*

**What quality do the shapes have? Does the quality of the shapes contribute to the meaning or story suggested in the work?**

*Geometric shapes are those that are man-made. In this image these contrast the irregular organic lines which create the mouse and the plant forms.*

*The man-made shapes appear static and stable while the organic/animal shapes appear more dynamic and the contrast between the two creates a very vibrant work.*

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Elements of Design Tour

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**COLOUR:** Colour comes from light that is reflected off objects. Colour has three main characteristics: Hue, or its name (red, blue, etc.) Value: (how light or dark the colour is) and Intensity (how bright or dull the colour is)

See: [Two Elk by Marjie Crop Eared Wolf](#)



**What are primary colours? Do you see any? Point to them in the drawing. What secondary colours do you see?**

*Colour is made of primary colours, red, blue and yellow. Secondary colours are created from primary colours and include green, orange and purple. This image is made up of both primary colours, or tints and tones of primary colours, and secondary colours. Primary colours seen are blue and red while the secondary colour of green dominate the work.*

**Where is your eye directed to first? Why? Are there any colours that stand out more than others?**

*The viewer's eye may first be directed to the blue bar which runs from left to right in the image. This is because this area is placed directly in the center of the work, dividing the composition into thirds. The focus on this area is accentuated by the large white letters written on this element. Attention to this area is also heightened by the figures of the red elk stenciled on the area. Red is a warm colour which makes these shapes pop out from their background. As well, red is the complement of green and so these shapes, and the form they are on, stand out against the predominantly green background.*

**What are complementary colours? How have they been used to draw attention?**

*Complementary colours are those across from each other on the colour wheel and are placed next to each other to create the most contrast and to create focus in a work. As mentioned above, red is the complement of green which makes the two elk stand out against the green tones of the background. This use of complements draws attention not only to the elk but also to the message they are stenciled on.*

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Elements of Design Tour

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**SPACE:** The area between and around objects. It can also refer to the feeling of depth in a two-dimensional artwork.

See: [sksinima 'tstohki \(Teachers\) #5](#)  
by Star Crop Eared Wolf

**What is space? What dimensions does it have?**

*Space includes the background, middle ground and foreground. It can refer to the distances or areas around, between or within components of a piece. It may have two dimensions (length and width) or three dimensions including height or depth.*



**What do you see in this work? What is closest to you? Farthest away? How do you know this?**

*In this work we see two women, a teepee, a truck, and hills in the background. The woman in traditional dress is closest to the viewer and the focus of the work. She is the largest figure in the scene, placed directly in the center of the work, and cropped so that we only see the upper half of her, giving her a sense of prominence and the sense that she is just in front of the viewer. Overlapping of additional elements (the second woman, the teepee, and the hills) then take the viewer's eye back into space to the far hills in the distance.*

**In what other way has the artist created a sense of space?**

*The artist also uses line to create a sense of space in this work. This is seen specifically in the fence posts which run diagonally from left to right in picture and the path which runs diagonally from the right side behind the teepee. These linear elements direct the viewer's eye through the composition and back into space.*



The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Elements of Design Tour

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**TEXTURE:** Texture is the surface quality of an object that can be seen or felt. Texture can also be implied on a two-dimensional surface through mark making and paint handling.

See: [Coyote and Spider](#)  
by [Marjie Crop Eared Wolf](#)

**What is texture? How do you describe how something feels? What are the two kinds of texture you can think of in artwork?**

*Texture can be real, like the actual texture of an object. Texture can be rough, smooth, hard, soft, glossy etc. Texture can also be implied. This happens when a two-dimensional piece of art is made to look like a certain texture.*



**Allow your eyes to 'feel' the different area within the work and explain the textures. What kind of texture do you think the artist uses in this work - real or implied? What about the work gives you this idea?**

*This work uses implied textures. The work is a photograph, and thus smooth, but the image is a photograph of a very rough surface. The background surface (metal?) is very pitted and surface paint appears to be peeling off so the overall affect is of a very rough (and perhaps sharp) surface.*

**Why do you think the artist chose this manner of presentation or chose to make the work look this way?**

*The artist stenciled her own graffiti over surfaces that had already been painted/targeted by graffiti and so the actual surface was chosen by 'chance' rather than artistic design.*

# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Reading Pictures Program

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Grades 4-12/adults

### Objectives:

The purposes of this program are to:

- 1/ Introduce participants to Art and what artists do – this includes examinations of art styles; art elements; the possible aims and meaning(s) in an art work and how to deduce those meanings and aims.
- 2/ Introduce visitors to the current exhibition – the aim of the exhibition and the kind of exhibition/artwork found.
  - the artist(s) - his/her background(s)
  - his/her place in art history
- 3/ Engage participants in a deeper investigation of artworks.

### Teacher/Facilitator Introduction to Program:

This program is called **Reading Pictures**. What do you think this might involve?

*-generate as many ideas as possible concerning what viewers might think 'Reading Pictures' might involve or what this phrase might mean.*

Before we can 'read' art, however, we should have some understanding what we're talking about.

What is Art? If you had to define this term, how would you define it?

Art can be defined as creative expression - and artistic practice is an aspect and expression of a peoples' culture or the artist's identity.

The discipline of Art, or the creation of a piece of art, however, is much more than simple 'creative expression' by an 'artist' or an isolated component of culture.

How many of you would describe yourselves as artists?

You may not believe it, but everyday you engage in some sort of artistic endeavor.

How many of you got up this morning and thought about what you were going to wear today? Why did you choose the clothes you did? Why do you wear your hair that way? How many of you have tattoos or plan to get a tattoo some day? What kind of tattoo would you choose? Why.....? How many of you own digital cameras or have cameras on cell phones? How many of you take pictures and e-mail them to other people?

# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Reading Pictures Program continued

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Art is all around us and we are all involved in artistic endeavors to some degree. The photographs we take, the colour and styles of the clothes we wear, the ways we build and decorate our homes, gardens and public buildings, the style of our cell phones or the vehicles we drive, the images we see and are attracted to in advertising or the text or symbols on our bumper stickers – all of these things (and 9 billion others) utilize artistic principles. They say something about our personal selves and reflect upon and influence the economic, political, cultural, historical and geographic concerns of our society.

Art, therefore, is not just something some people in a society do – it is something that affects and informs everyone within a society.

Today we're going to look at art - paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures – and see what art can tell us about the world we live in – both the past, the present and possibly the future – and what art can tell us about ourselves.

Art is a language like any other and it can be read.

Art can be read in two ways. It can be looked at **intuitively** – what do you see? What do you like or not like? How does it make you feel and why? – or it can be read **formally** by looking at what are called the Elements of Design – the tools artists use or consider when creating a piece of work.

What do you think is meant by the elements of design? What does an artist use to create a work of art?

Today we're going to examine how to read art – we're going to see how art can affect us emotionally... and how an artist can inform us about our world, and ourselves, through what he or she creates.

### **Tour Program:**

–Proceed to one of the works in the exhibition and discuss the following:

- a) The nature of the work - what kind of work is it and what exhibition is it a part of?
- b) Examine the work itself
  - What do visitors see?
  - How do you initially feel about what you see? Why do you feel this way? What do you like? What don't you like? Why?
  - What is the work made of?
  - How would you describe the style? What does this mean?

# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Reading Pictures Program continued

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–What is the compositional structure? How are the shapes and colours etc. arranged? Why are they arranged this way?

–How does the work make them feel? What is the mood of the work? What gives them this idea? Discuss the element(s) of design which are emphasized in the work in question.

–What might the artist be trying to do in the work? What might the artist be saying or what might the work 'mean'?

c) Summarize the information.

• **At each work chosen, go through the same or similar process, linking the work to the type of exhibition it is a part of. Also, with each stop, discuss a different Element of Design and develop participants visual learning skills.**

**At the 1st stop, determine with the participants the most important Element of Design used and focus the discussion on how this element works within the art work. Do the same with each subsequent art work and make sure to cover all the elements of design on the tour.**

**Stop #1: LINE**

**Stop #2: SHAPE**

**Stop #3: COLOUR**

**Stop #4: TEXTURE**

**Stop #5: SPACE**

**Stop #6: ALL TOGETHER – How do the elements work together to create a certain mood or story? What would you say is the mood of this work? Why? What is the story or meaning or meaning of this work? Why?**

### ***Work sheet activity – 30 minutes***

•Divide participants into groups of two or three to each do this activity. Give them 30 minutes to complete the questions then bring them all together and have each group present one of their pieces to the entire group.

### ***Presentations – 30 minutes***

•Each group to present on one of their chosen works.

**Visual Learning Activity Worksheet \* Photocopy the following worksheet so each participant has their own copy.**

# Reading Pictures Program continued

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## Visual Learning Worksheet

**Instructions:** Choose two very different pieces of artwork in the exhibition and answer the following questions in as much detail as you can.

1. What is the title of the work and who created it?

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2. What do you see and what do you think of it? (What is your **initial reaction** to the work?) Why do you feel this way?

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3. What colours do you see and how does the use of colour affect the way you 'read' the work? Why do you think the artist chose these colours – or lack of colour – for this presentation?

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4. What shapes and objects do you notice most? Why?

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## Reading Pictures Program continued

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5. How are the shapes/objects arranged or composed? How does this affect your feelings towards or about the work? What feeling does this composition give to the work?

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6. How would you describe the mood of this work? (How does it make you feel?) What do you see that makes you describe the mood in this way?

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7. What do you think the artist's purpose was in creating this work? What 'story' might he or she be telling? What aspects of the artwork give you this idea?

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8. What do you think about this work after answering the above questions? Has your opinion of the work changed in any way? Why do you feel this way?

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9. How might this work relate to your own life experiences? Have you ever been in a similar situation/place and how did being there make you feel?

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# Perusing Paintings: An Art-full Scavenger Hunt

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In teaching art, game-playing can enhance learning. If students are engaged in learning, through a variety of methods, then it goes beyond game-playing. Through game-playing we are trying to get students to use higher-order thinking skills by getting them to be active participants in learning. *Blooms's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, which follows, is as applicable to teaching art as any other discipline.

1. *knowledge*: recall of facts
2. *comprehension*: participation in a discussion
3. *application*: applying abstract information in practical situations
4. *analysis*: separating an entity into its parts
5. *synthesis*: creating a new whole from many parts, as in developing a complex work of art
6. *evaluation*: making judgements on criteria

A scavenger hunt based on art works is a fun and engaging way to get students of any age to really look at the art works and begin to discern what the artist(s) is/are doing in the works. **The simple template provided, however, would be most suitable for grade 1-3 students.**

## Instruction:

Using the exhibition works provided, give students a list of things they should search for that are in the particular works of art. The students could work with a partner or in teams. Include a blank for the name of the artwork, the name of the artist, and the year the work was created. Following the hunt, gather students together in the exhibition area and check the answers and discuss the particular works in more detail.

## Sample List:

Scavenger Hunt Item	Title of Artwork	Name of Artist	Year Work Created
someone wearing a hat			
a specific animal			
landscape			
a bright red object			
a night scene			
a house			

\*This activity was adapted from *A Survival Kit for the Elementary/Middle School Art Teacher* by Helen D. Hume.

# An Art-full Scavenger Hunt Template

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Scavenger Hunt Item	Title of Artwork	Name of Artist	Year Work Created



# 28 *From Realism to Abstraction*

## Observing and Thinking Creatively

**Abstract** art usually uses bright colors, sharp edges, geometric shapes, and interesting contrasts to create a mood. Sometimes abstract art simply shows an artist's emotional response to an object or idea. Details may be minimized, proportions **distorted**, and unusual color schemes used. **Nonobjective** art occurs when abstraction departs completely from realism.

Henri Matisse was a French artist who enjoyed changing the usual form of an object. His versions emphasized the pure idea of the object, and are a type of abstract

art. To create the cutouts for the snail shown here, he first picked up a real snail and examined it closely. Then he drew it from every angle possible, noting its texture, color, and construction.

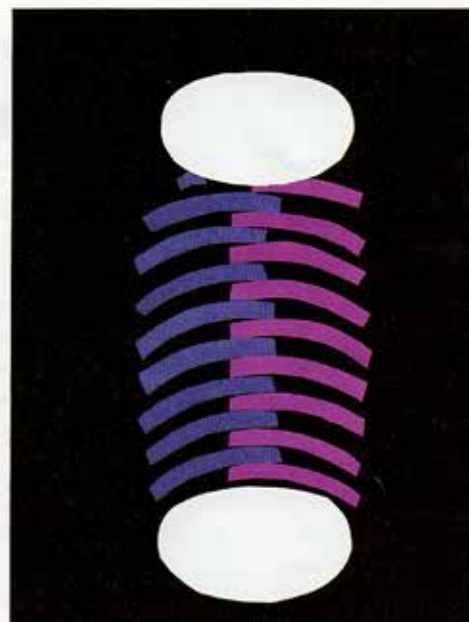
Observe the cut out paper shapes Matisse used in his snail of many colors. Can you see how the simple blue rectangle represents the foot of the snail? Notice which parts of a snail Matisse omitted, and which parts he thought were essential.

In this lesson, you will create an abstract cutout design of an object.



Henri Matisse, *The Snail*, 1952, Tate Gallery, London.

# Abstracting from the Real continued



## Instructions for Creating Art

1. Choose an object with an interesting shape and study it. Sketch it from several angles. Examine how it is built. Does it have a center? What basic shapes compose it? Observe the texture and colors of your object.
2. Now draw the general outer shape of your object. What idea does it give you? Next, draw only the inside parts of your object, without any outside lines. Think about what color reminds you of the feeling or idea of the object. Notice curved and straight lines, light and dark values, and small and large shapes.
3. When you find a shape that seems to capture the idea of your object, practice distorting or changing it to make a more pure, simple shape.
4. Choose one or more colors for your shape, and cut it out of colored paper. Mount the shapes on a sheet of a different

color, and display your abstract cutout design. Can your classmates guess what the real object was?

## Art Materials

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| A variety of objects such as a shell, spoon, corncob, flower, leaf, model, toy, piece of fruit, etc. | Pencil and eraser          |
| Sketch paper   | Colored construction paper |
|  | Scissors                   |
|  | Glue or paste              |



## Learning Outcomes

1. Name two ways of making *abstract* art.
2. Describe how you distorted the shape you made of an object.
3. What parts of your object did you leave out of your cutout design? How did you decide which parts to keep and which parts to omit?

# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Geometry Animals Grades K-3

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### Objectives:

**Geometry Animals** is a good project for young students to identify colours, textures, forms, and subjects in the environment and understand simplification/abstraction. Students are expected to construct recognizable animals from shapes using a variety of colours, forms, and lines as well as use their imagination and creative expression to invent new forms.


### Materials:

- Glue
- Coloured paper
- Paper shapes
- Crayons, coloured pencils or markers
- Example reproductions of animals

**Objectives:**  
**Geometry Animals** is a good project for young students to identify colours, textures, forms, and subjects in the environment and understand simplification/abstraction. Students are expected to construct recognizable animals from shapes using a variety of colours, forms, and lines as well as use their imagination and creative expression to invent new forms.

**Materials:**

- Glue
- Coloured paper
- Paper shapes
- Crayons, coloured pencils or markers
- Example reproductions of animals



<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/MathScienceArtLAMDGeometryAnimalsK1.htm>

**Procedure:**

1. Get materials ready before lesson starts.
2. Introduce photographs or reproductions of recognizable animals and introduce basic shapes of the animal with students.

<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/MathScienceArtLAMDGeometryAnimalsK1.htm>

### Procedure:

1. Get materials ready before lesson starts.
2. Introduce photographs or reproductions of recognizable animals and introduce basic shapes of the animal with students.
3. Point out shapes and ask kids to identify them.
4. Show them the example animal you made.
5. Discuss materials and proper gluing technique.
6. Tell students that they will now be constructing their own animals using shapes.
7. Hand out materials or have students grab them from your small group table or another table in the room.
8. Allow time for students to work on their animals.
9. Walk around the room asking students about their animals and encourage students to add texture onto their shapes using coloured marker.
10. Have students count and write how many shapes they used and what colour they are.
11. If you would like to, have students share.

### Closure:

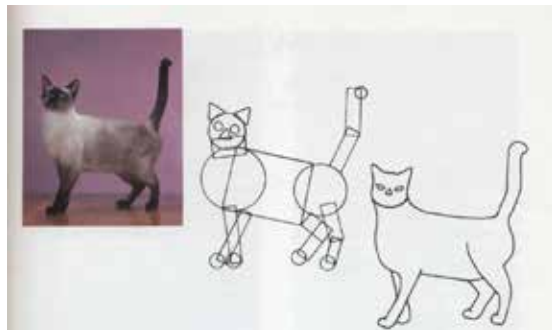
- Ask students how many shapes they used.
- Ask them what colours they used.

## Basic Shapes - Grades 3-5

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Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Capture Rifle*, 2010  
Photography of installation  
Collection of the artist



Art in Action, pg. 12

**Almost all things are made up of four basic shapes: circles, triangles, squares and rectangles. Shapes and variation of shapes - such as oblongs and ovals - create objects. The stencil images in the photographs of Marjie Crop Eared Wolf are created by reducing objects to their basic shapes and using colour and line to define objects. In this lesson students will practice reducing objects to their basic shapes and then filling in the areas with colours 'natural' to the central object and complementary to the background.**

### **Materials:**

- drawing paper
- pencil and eraser
- magazines
- paints and brushes
- mixing trays

### **Instructions:**

1/ Have students look through magazines for pictures of objects made up of several shapes.

# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Basic Shapes continued - Grades 3-5

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2/ Direct students to choose **one** object and determine the basic shapes which make up that object.

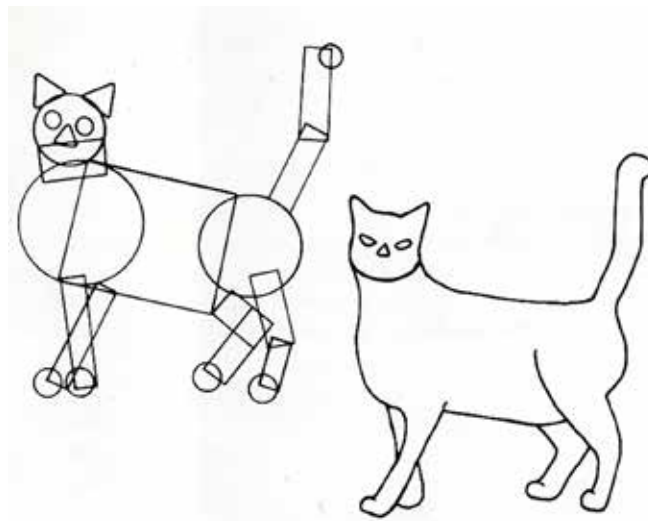
3/ Have students draw their one object using the basic shapes which make up the object.

4/ Students to simplify their drawing further - removing any overlapping/extraneous lines so that the object is broken into simplified shapes/forms. \*see works by Jason Carter for clarification

5/ Students to decide on colour scheme for work. Review the colour wheel and the concept of complementary colours.

- what is the dominant colour of your object? - use tints/tones of that colour to paint the object, keeping shapes separate through the use of heavy black lines.

- what is the complementary colour of your main object's colouring? - paint the background area the complement of the objects colour.



Art in Action, pg. 12

### **Extension (for older students)**

- when students have completed their first painting have them re-draw the basic shapes of their object again, but this time have them soften the edges, change shapes and add connecting lines where necessary so their drawing resembles the original magazine image.

- have students paint this second work using 'natural' colours for both their object and for the background.

- display both of students' drawings and then discuss.

### **Discussion/Evaluation:**

1/ Which shapes did you use most often in your drawing(s)?

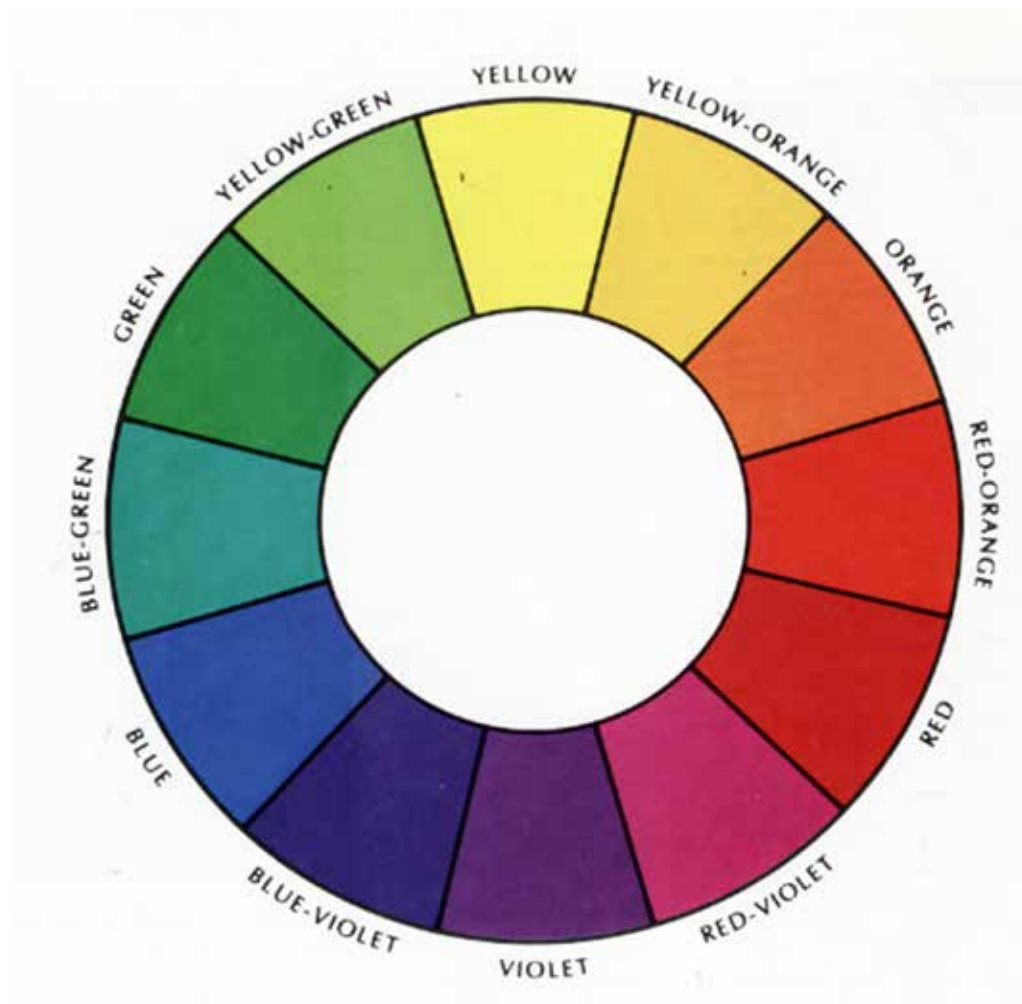
2/ Explain how identifying the basic shapes in your object helped you make the second drawing.

3/ Which of your paintings appeals to you most? Why?

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## Experiments in Colour - Grades 3-9

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When artists create a composition, they plan their colour combinations very carefully. Colour can serve many functions in a work of art. It can be used to create the illusion of space; it can be used to provide focus and emphasis; it can be used to create movement; and it can be used to create a certain mood. In the works in the exhibition the artists use colour to serve all of these functions. In the following project students will examine the use of colour relationships to create the illusion of space and mood within a painting.

### Materials:

Colour Wheel Chart  
Paper  
Paints and brushes  
Mixing trays  
Water container

Paper towels  
Pencils/erasers  
Still life items or landscape drawings  
Magazines/ photographic references

## Experiments in Colour continued

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Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
*Two Elk*, 2018  
Photography of installation  
Collection of the artist

### Methodology:

1/ Through an examination of the colour wheel provided, discuss with students the concepts of **complementary colours** and **split-complements**.

### Questions to guide discussion:

- What is the lightest colour on the colour wheel?
  - yellow
- What is the darkest colour on the colour wheel?
  - violet
- What is the relationship of these two colours? - the colours are **opposite** each other.

Colours that are opposite each other on the colour wheel are called **complementary colours**.

- What are the colours next to violet?
  - red-violet and blue-violet

These colours are called **split complements** because they are split, or separated, by the true complement of yellow. Complements can be split one step further to become a **triad**, three colours **equally spaced** on the colour wheel.

**Complementary colours can be used to create focus, emphasis, and the illusion of space. Brighter (warm) colours in the colour wheel tend to appear in front of - or come forward on the picture plane - compared to darker (cool) colours.**

### Instructions for Creating Art

- 1/ Distribute paper, pencils and erasers to students
- 2/ Instruct students to make several sketches of ideas for their painting - they may base their work on a still-life arrangement or create a landscape based on magazine or photographic sources
- 3/ Have students choose a sketch they like and then plan their colours by first examining the colour wheel. Students to first choose their **dominant or main colour** and then pick the **split complements or triad** to that colour.
- 4/ Students to use their colour scheme to paint their painting.

# Experiments in Colour continued

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## Questions for discussion

- 1/ What are the split complements and triad colour schemes used in your work?
- 2/ What is the colour relationship of the colours used in your painting?
- 3/ Why have you used these particular colours?



# Colour Me a Story

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## Grades 3-9

Many of the artworks in the exhibition **Aakí isskská'takssin (Woman - thought)** focus on stories and story-telling. In this activity students will design and create mixed media works on paper inspired by the exhibition and conversations surrounding it. Students will be challenged to tell their own stories in styles reminiscent of artists in the exhibition. They will think in terms of perspective, colour selection and enhanced narrative while working in a 2D format.

### **Supplies:**

- pencils & erasers
- rinse buckets & brushes
- watercolour paint
- thin markers/sharpiers
- 2x Mayfair
- mixing trays/watercolour & ink trays

### **Objectives**

Through the studio project the students will:

1. Discuss “what is a narrative”. What does it mean “to narrate”?
2. Discuss and review what a protagonist and an antagonist are. Reminding the students to keep the protagonist (themselves – their story) in mind as the focal point of their work
3. Discuss the elements of design; line, shape, colour, texture
4. Discuss simple aerial perspective
5. Discuss the concept of “mixed media”

### **Procedure**

- 1.a. Keep in mind the protagonist or focal point (person, place or thing) in their story
  - b. There are 3 steps to this project: pencil drawing, marker drawing and watercolour painting
  - c. Have students focus on a season. Choose SEASONAL COLOURS = brighter colours for spring and summer, muted colours for autumn
  - d. Keep in mind perspective: foreground / middle ground / background =
    - Things in the foreground are large, bright and in focus
    - Things in the background tend to be smaller, duller and are overlapped or partially blocked by closer items
2. In class distribute paper and pencils and erasers to students.
- 2.a. Pencil Drawing: Have students do a light sketch on the paper. This sketch will tell their story. They will also be going over their drawing in pen and then in watercolour – so draw lightly = easy to erase lines.

Introduction and drawing = 25 minutes

## Colour Me a Story continued

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3. Marker Drawing: While students are doing their pencil drawings, hand out the thin sharpies. Remind students they are not to touch or use the markers until asked to do so.

When everyone is ready, have students retrace their drawings in pen.

When their whole drawing is “re-drawn” in pen they can count to 5 – then erase all pencil marks (this waiting ensures no ink will get smeared!)

Re-draw & erase = 10 minutes

4. While students are re-drawing in ink, hand out the brushes, rinse water and watercolour paints

5. Watercolour Painting: Remind students to choose SEASONAL Colours – they are invited to dilute their paints on a mixing tray.

Again, choosing clear bright colours for the foreground and dull or diluted colours for the background

Painting = 15 minutes... then clean-up

If time allows/studio ended early have a critique – have students choose a work that is not their own and discuss 2 things they like about it:

- Talk about the colour choices. Do they make us “feel like winter”/like summer etc.?
- Talk about the colours the artist selected: dark, bright, cool, hot, dull, bright
- Talk about the mood or atmosphere of the work: dark, sad, happy, loud, quiet
- Does this artwork convey a story or narrative? Are we able to “read it” ourselves? What are our visual clues?

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# Documentary Portraits - High School

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This project is based on the various documentary photographic works in the exhibition and the work of Dorthea Lange for the FAS project in the 1930s.

## Objectives

Students will determine what information is unnecessary to a photograph for it to portray the most powerful image.

Students will tell how they feel when seeing works from the exhibition and Dorthea Lange's *Migrant Mother* series and talk about their own lives in relation to those images.

Students will use a computer to crop an image.

## Materials

Digital Camera(s) (one per student if possible)

Magazines with images of news going on today for look and talk sessions

Images from Dorthea Lange's *Migrant Mother* series for discussion purposes

Mat board for cropping and displaying images

## Procedure

1. Discuss with students the idea of **portraiture** and **social documentary and straight photography**. Study images by the artists in the exhibition and by Dorthea Lange to facilitate discussion.

**Focus Questions:** What is a portrait? What is social documentary? In studying these images, what factors do you think might go into a photographer's decision to crop or not to crop an original image? Does cropping an image make a difference in how we read/feel about the image?

note\* Dorthea Lange's work: Lange happened upon this family by their tent in a pea pickers' camp in California. She took six photographs of the family, starting from forty feet away, moving closer and closer to them with each photograph. Do you think seeing this family from forty feet away would be different from how you see them up close? Why or why not?

2. Students will take this issue of capturing social commentary and translate that into a contemporary photograph. They will

- choose a photograph from a magazine
- have to present their photograph with information on who/what it is, why they chose it, and what speaks to them in the piece. They will also explain how the photographer may have decided to crop the piece and what makes it a strong/weak composition.

3. Students will then have one week to find and produce their own photograph that speaks to 'us' today. In their work they will explore ideas of cropping, composition, and elimination of unnecessary information as both Bromley and Dorthea Lange did in their works.

credit: <http://www.lessonplanspage.com/ArtSSCIPhotography-DortheaLangeMigrantMother912.htm>

revision of above: Shane Golby

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program  
**Documentary Portraits - continued**

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Dorthea Lange, *Migrant Mother*



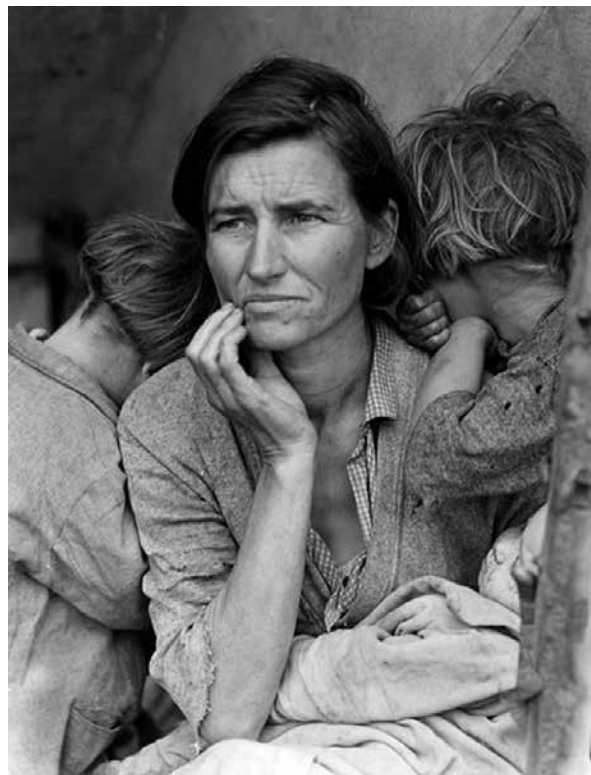
Dorthea Lange, *Migrant Mother*

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program  
**Documentary Portraits - continued**

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Dorthea Lange, *Migrant Mother*



Dorthea Lange, *Migrant Mother* (published image)

# Stencil Printmaking

**\*\* Please note: The following project is most suitable for grades 9-12 but may be modified in numerous ways where students create simple stencils related to plant motifs, animals etc. A simple cut out stencil project would be suitable for grades 3 to 9. For high school students this could also be translated into a silk-screen project.**

## STENCIL PRINTMAKING – POSITIVE NEGATIVE DESIGN NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

A stencil is a template used to draw or paint identical letters, symbols, shapes, or patterns every time it is used.

**Stencils** are formed by removing sections from template material in the form of text or an image. This creates what is essentially a **physical negative**.

The **template** can then be used to create impressions of the stenciled image, by applying pigment on the surface of the template and through the removed sections, leaving a reproduction of the stencil on the underlying surface. Aerosol or painting stencils must remain contiguous after the image is removed, in order for the template to remain functional.



Bob Dylan Stencil



Sections of the remaining template which are isolated inside removed parts of the image are called **islands**. All islands must be connected to other parts of the template with **bridges**, or additional sections of narrow template material which are not removed.



Happy 1984\* - Stencil graffiti found on the Berlin Wall in 2005. The object depicted is a DualShock video game controller.

### Stencil graffiti

Stencils have also become popular for graffiti, since stencil art using spray-paint can be produced quickly and easily. These qualities are important for graffiti artists where stenciling is illegal or quasi-legal, depending on the city and stenciling surface.

The extensive lettering possible with stencils makes it especially attractive to political artists. For example, the anarcho-punk band Crass used stencils of anti-war, anarchist, feminist and anti-consumerist messages in a long-term graffiti campaign around the London Underground system and on advertising billboards.[1] Also well known for their use of stencil art are Blek le Rat from France, Banksy, a British artist and New York artist John Fekner.

**STEP ONE:** Decide on a significant historical figure in which to create your stencil out of. Try to get a high contrast photo.

**STEP TWO:** Begin by drawing the **reverse** outline of your subject matter on the flat top of the piece of paper. **REMEMBER:** to draw the outline of any text backwards as the print will print frontwards. Carefully consider how you design your positive/negative space.

**STEP THREE:** Next begin by cutting out around the sections you have defined – these will be your blank sections which will not be filled with ink when pressed. The outline will appear as you cut away the sections around your subject matter. Consider a variety of texture and detail in your cutting technique.

**STEP FOUR:** Once you have finished cutting your paper using a roller dipped in ink roll across the surface of block to create a mono or test print.

**STEP FIVE: REFLECT:** Answer the following questions using the elements and principles of design and hand them in with your completed drawing for evaluation.

1. What part of your finished project did you find most successful and why?
2. What part of your finished project did you find least successful and why?
3. If you had to do this project again what part would you change?

# Stencil Printmaking continued



**Japanese Woodcut**  
Katsushika Hokusai (Japanese, 1760-1849)  
South Wind, Clearing Skies, from the series Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji, ca. 1829-33 color woodblock print 10 1/16 x 14 7/8 in. (25.5 x 38 cm)

## Stencil History

Stencils may have been used to color cloth for a very long time; the technique probably reached its peak of sophistication in **Katazome** and other techniques used on silks for clothes during the Edo period in Japan.

In Europe, from about 1450 they were very commonly used to colour old master prints printed in black and white, usually woodcuts. This was especially the case with playing-cards, which continued to be coloured by stencil long after most other subjects for prints were left in black and white. Stencilling back in the 2600 BC's was different. They used color from plants and flowers such as indigo (which extracts blue). Stencils were used for mass publications, as the type didn't have to be hand-written. The first book to be printed using stencils was the bible.

## Stencil Examples



The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Stencil Printmaking: Identity Flag Gr. 7-12

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**Graffiti artists often make use of symbols or script to identify themselves or identify their relationship to a place or group. In this activity students will create their own symbolic identity flag; a stencil flag which through word and colour allows students to declare how they see themselves/want to be seen by the larger society.**

**This activity is related to the stencil images created by Marjie Crop Eared Wolf in the exhibition [Aakí isskská'takssin \(Woman - thought\)](#). Please note that the following project uses very low tech. materials/methodologies. If silk-screens are available this project can be adapted into a silkscreening project.**

## Objectives

Students will, through the studio activity, gain an understanding of:

- a) what a print is (multiple images)
- b) how to create a stencil print image
- c) discuss concepts of symbols; identity
- d) consider word/font and colour in the creation of their imagery

## Materials

- access to computers/photocopier to create initial flag design
- heavier card stock (for stencil making)
- fine x-acto knives
- putty adhesive or tape
- heavier paper/matt board (for actual print backing)
- acrylic paint
- sponges, brushes or rags for paint application

## Methodology

**Step 1:** Have students determine a word which could be used to describe themselves/how they feel about themselves or how they wish to be seen.

Using computers/word program, have students create a flag design using their chosen word and showing the general layout of their flag design. Instruct students that the areas to be cut out of their design should be printed in black.

Print the flag design on heavier card stock at 8 inches x 10 inches or if desired, for older students, at legal size.





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# Identity Flag continued

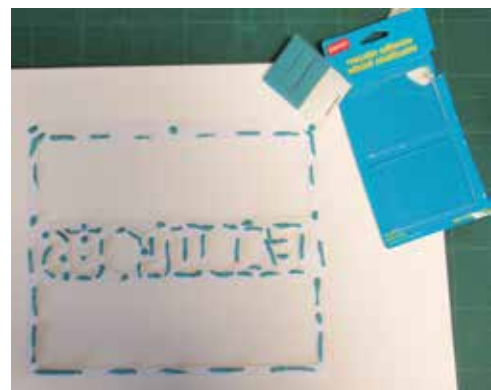
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**Step 2:** Using a fine x-acto knife, have students carefully cut out the black areas of their design (both letters and flag bars) to create their working stencil.



**Step 3:** Once all the black areas are cut away, have students flip their stencil over and apply adhesive putty or tape pieces to the back edges of the design, making sure that all borders and letter edges are securely fastened.

\* also make sure the stencil is flush with the paper to be printed. Otherwise, when paint is applied, it will leak underneath and create uneven/blotted edges. If the adhesive putty does not work well, simply tape the stencil down on the paper.



## The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Identity Flag continued

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**Step 4:** Apply the stencil (good side up) onto matt/board or heavy paper and press down all the edges so the stencil is securely attached to and flush with the backing paper.



**Step 5:** Have students consider the colour(s) they wish their image to be. Colour choice should reflect mood of their word.

Using sponges, rags or a paint brush have students carefully dab paint into the open areas of their stencil.

\* if more than one colour is used, have students block out with paper the area(s) that are different from the first colour used. When the first area is dry, have students block that area from the next area(s)/ colour to be used.



**Step 6:** Once paint is completely dry have students carefully remove/peel the stencil from the backing paper to reveal their completed print. If necessary, have students use a small brush and paint to touch up any blotted areas of the print.

Evaluate the finished print in terms of neatness of work and relationship of colour to word choice and overall design.



# The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

## My World Stencil Project - Grades 7-12

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This activity is a further take on the photographic stencil images created by Marjie Crop Eared Wolf in the exhibition [Aakíí isskská'takssin \(Woman - thought\)](#). Please note that the following project uses very low tech. materials/methodologies. If silk-screens are available this project can be adapted into a silkscreening project.

In this project students will find and produce a photographic image upon which they will put their own 'imprint', claiming the space as their own, much like Marjie Crop Eared Wolf has re-claimed territory/spaces for her people.

### Objectives

Students will, through the studio activity, gain an understanding of:

- a) what a print is (multiple images)
- b) how to create a stencil print image
- c) discuss concepts of symbols; identity
- d) combine photographic imagery with graffiti methods to create a mixed-media work

### Materials

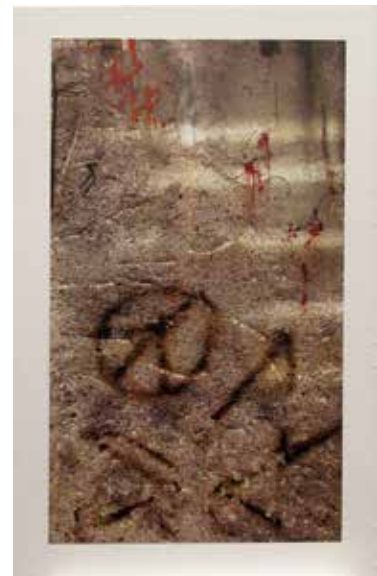
- access to computers/photocopier to create and adjust photographic images
- heavier card stock (for stencil making)
- fine x-acto knives/scissors
- heavier paper/matt board (for photographic backing)
- paint (tempera or acrylic paint)
- sponges, brushes or rags for paint application

### Methodology

**Step 1:** Have students find and photograph a place in their community. This could be a wall, a sign post, a mail box etc.  
- some place which will serve as the 'canvas' for their stencil imagery.

Once the photograph is taken, have students adjust it using photoshop and print the image at about 11 x 17 inches and 325 dpi.

Paste the printed image onto heavier cardstock/bristol board/matt board to fit. (using glue or spray adhesive)



Mounted original wall  
photographic image

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# My World Stencil Project continued

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**Step 2: Have students design a simple image which represents themselves or has meaning to them in some way.**

Have students draw the symbolic image onto card stock and then, carefully using a fine x-acto knife, cut out the center of their design to create a stencil.



**Step 3:** Apply the stencil (good side up) onto the prepared photographic image from step 1.

**Step 4:** Have students consider the colour(s) they wish their image to be. Colour choice should reflect mood of their symbol as well as consider the colour of their background photographic image.

Using sponges, rags or a paint brush have students carefully dab paint into the open areas of their stencil.

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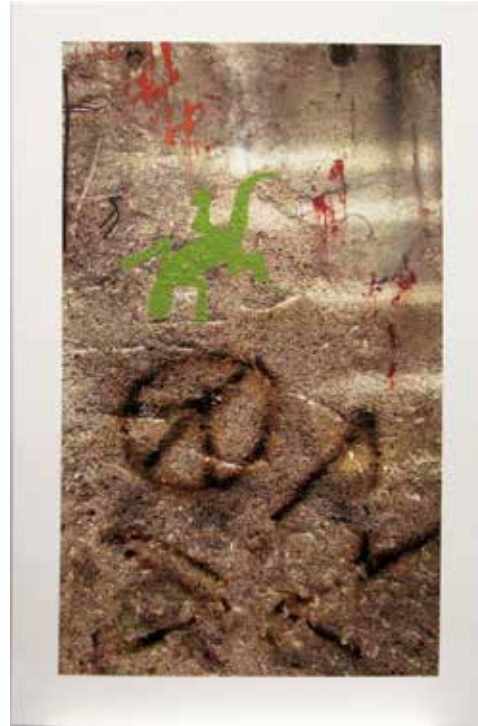
## My World Stencil Project continued

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**Step 5:** Once paint applied have students carefully remove/peel the stencil from the photographic image/backing to reveal their completed print.

If necessary, have students use a small brush and paint to touch up any blotted areas of the print.

Evaluate the finished print in terms of neatness of work and relationship of colour to symbol and overall design.



Completed image - painted lizard stencil design on photographic image

# GLOSSARY



Star Crop Eared Wolf  
*sksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #3*, 2018  
Photograph  
Private collection

# Glossary

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**Aboriginal/First Nations:** The descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

**Abstraction:** Is a term applied to 20th century styles in reaction against the traditional European view of art as the imitation of nature. Abstraction stresses the formal or elemental structure of a work and has been expressed in all genres or subjects of visual expression.

**Collage:** A work of art created by gluing bits of paper, fabric, scraps, photographs, or other materials to a flat surface.

**Complementary colour:** Colours that are directly opposite each other on the colour wheel, for example, blue and orange. These colours when placed next to each other produce the highest contrast.

**Composition:** The arrangement of lines, colours and forms so as to achieve a unified whole; the resulting state or product is referred to as a composition.

**Contemporary artists:** Those whose peak of activity can be situated somewhere between the 1970's (the advent of post-modernism) and the present day.

**Cool colours:** Blues, greens and purples are considered cool colours. In aerial perspective, cool colours are said to move away from you or appear more distant.

**Elements of design:** The basic components which make up any visual image: line, shape, colour, texture and space.

**Exhibition:** A public display of art objects including painting, sculpture, prints, installation, etc.

**Geometric shapes:** Any shape or form having more mathematical than organic design. Examples of geometric shapes include: spheres, cones, cubes, squares, triangles.

**Gradation:** A principle of design that refers to the use of a series of gradual/transitional changes in the use of the elements of art with a given work of art; for example, a transition from lighter to darker colours or a gradation of large shapes to smaller ones.

**Iconography:** A set of specified or traditional symbolic forms associated with the subject or theme of a stylized work of art.

**Mythology:** The body of myths (sacred stories) of a particular culture, or of humankind as a whole; the study and interpretation of such myths.

**Organic shapes:** An irregular shape; refers to shapes or forms having irregular edges or objects resembling things existing in nature

## Glossary continued

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**Pop Art:** A 20th century art style focusing on mass-produced urban culture: movies, advertising, science fiction. In the USA Pop Art was initially regarded as a reaction from Abstract Expressionism because its exponents brought back figural imagery and made use of hard-edged, quasi-photographic techniques. Pop artists employed commercial techniques in preference to the painterly manner of other artists.

**Positive shapes:** Are the objects themselves. They are surrounded in a painting by what are called the negative shapes or spaces.

**Primary colours:** The three colours from which all other colours are derived - red, yellow and blue.

**Realism/Naturalism:** A style of art in which artists try to show objects, scenes, and people as they actually appear.

**Shade:** Add black to a colour to make a shade. Mix the pure colour with increasing quantities of black making the colour darker in small increments. If you add gray to a colour, you produce a tone.

**Symbolism:** The practice of representing things by means of symbols or of attributing symbolic meanings or significance to objects, events, or relationships.

**Tint:** Add white to a colour to create a tint. Mix the pure colour with increasing quantities of white so that the colour lightens.

**Warm colours:** Yellow and reds of the colour spectrum, associated with fire, heat and sun. In aerial perspective warm colours are said to come towards you.

**Woodland Style:** Is a genre of graphic design and painting among First Nations artists from the Great Lakes area - including northern Ontario and southwestern Manitoba. Developed by Norval Morrisseau, this visionary style emphasizes outlines and x-ray views of people, animals, and plant life using vivid colour.



# Credits

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## SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Jennifer Bowen  
Marjie Crop Eared Wolf  
Star Crop Eared Wolf

Syncrude Canada Ltd.  
The Alberta Foundation for the Arts

## SOURCE MATERIALS:

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- <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/gerald-tailfeathers/>

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

# Credits

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This exhibition was developed and managed by the Art Gallery of Alberta for The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

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Shane Golby – Curator/Program Manager  
AFA Travelling Exhibition Program, Region 2  
Sherisse Burke –TREX Technician

## **Front Cover Images:**

**Top Left:** Star Crop Eared Wolf, *ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #9*, 2018, Photograph  
Private Collection

**Top Right:** Marjie Crop Eared Wolf, *Crop Eared Wolf Pictograph* (detail), 2018, Photography of  
installation, Collection of the artist

**Bottom Left:** Star Crop Eared Wolf, *ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #4*, 2018, Photograph  
Private Collection

**Bottom Right:** Marjie Crop Eared Wolf, *Two Elk* (detail), 2018, Photography of installation,  
Collection of the artist

