

The background of the entire page is a vibrant, abstract composition. It features several circular paint palettes in various colors, including yellow, blue, red, and green. These palettes are scattered across a dark, textured surface. Interspersed among the palettes are numerous small, colorful splatters and droplets of paint, creating a dynamic and artistic feel. The overall color palette is rich and saturated, with a strong contrast between the bright colors of the paint and the dark background.

The 2023–2024

Canadian Art Inspiration

Student Challenge

Art Examples
and Ideas to
Spark Student
Creativity

The 2023–2024 Canadian Art Inspiration Student Challenge

Celebrating the Next Generation of Art in Canada

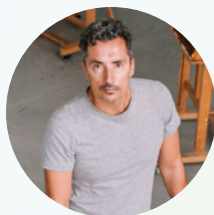
The Canadian Art Inspiration Student Challenge is a celebration of art from across the country, with Canada's future artists at its heart.

How It Works

We invite young artists in Grades 7 through 12 to submit original artworks and accompanying artist statements inspired by leaders in Canadian art history and major Canadian artworks. Applicants are encouraged to interpret this theme as broadly as they wish, and to create works in any media. Learn more by visiting our [student challenge webpage](#).

Meet the Judges

This year's winning works will be selected by three of the country's leading artists.



Kent Monkman



Karen Tam



Edward Burtynsky

Prizes and Online Exhibition

Cash prizes of \$500 for first place winners and \$250 for honorable mentions will be awarded in both the Grades 7–9 and Grades 10–12 age categories.

In June 2024, all finalists will have their artwork showcased in an online exhibition hosted on ACI's website.

Important Dates

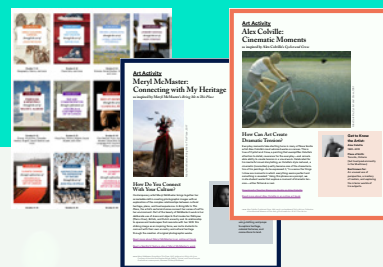
Fall term submissions will be accepted online from September 20–December 15, 2023; and winter term submissions will be accepted online from January 15–March 29, 2024.

Winners will be announced and prizes awarded in June 2024.



Resources for Teachers

- 10 New Art Activities
- 38 Online Exhibitions
- 42 Teacher Resource Guides
- Visit www.aci-iac.ca/education to start exploring ACI's art education resources for teachers.



For More Information

Please visit www.aci-iac.ca/education/art-challenge, or contact Emma Doubt, Director of Programming and Education at edoubt@aci-iac.ca.

Art Activity

Kent Monkman: Community Leaders

as inspired by the work *Aurora Ominika-Enosse*

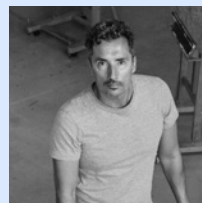


Kent Monkman, *Aurora Ominika-Enosse*, 2020

Who Are Your Personal Heroes?

Contemporary Cree artist Kent Monkman's powerful portrait of Aurora Ominika-Enosse is part of a series entitled *Wâsê-acâhkosak* (Shining Stars), which honours activists, knowledge keepers, artists, and thinkers who have had a profound influence on the artist's life. Ominika-Enosse, who is originally from Wikwemikong First Nation, works to make her community stronger through her advocacy for Indigenous youth and for the rights of Indigenous women and girls. Inspired by the many changemakers working for the betterment of the world around them, we invite students to explore Monkman's portraits of personal heroes and to create their own tribute to someone who has made a profound impact on their lives.

[Read more about Kent Monkman in an Online Art Book](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Kent Monkman
B.1965

Place of birth:
St. Mary's, Ontario

Best known for:
Large-scale history paintings and portraits that explore Indigenous presence in Canada.

Art Activity

Karen Tam: Making Meaning

as inspired by the works *Sporting Life: Golf* and *Sporting Life: Football*, 2015



Karen Tam, *Sporting Life: Golf* and *Sporting Life: Football*, 2015

How Can Objects Tell Stories?

Through her creative practice, Montreal-based artist Karen Tam explores the identities and material cultures of Chinese diasporic communities in Canada. In this pair of sculptural objects made from papier-mâché, the artist reimagines the form of a blue and white porcelain vase, mixing historical and fantastical “chinoiserie” motifs with contemporary references to sport. Through these works, Tam demonstrates that objects have a powerful way of travelling through time and carrying the stories that matter with them. For this activity, we invite students to make objects that have a story to tell, exploring narratives about their own families, histories, or traditions in a three-dimensional creation.

[View an Online Exhibition of Karen Tam's art](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Karen Tam
B.1977

Place of birth:
Montreal, Quebec

Best known for:
Multimedia installations, including recreated Chinese restaurants and karaoke lounges, that examine constructions and imaginations of cultures and communities.

IMAGE: Karen Tam, *Sporting Life: Golf* and *Sporting Life: Football*, 2015, papier-mâché (Chinese newspaper, wallpaper paste w/ fungicide and moisture protection), pigmented India ink/encre de Chine, gesso, UV archival varnish, 40 x 25 x 25 cm each. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Hugues Charbonneau. Photo credit: Karen Tam.

Art Activity

Edward Burtynsky: People and the Planet

as inspired by the work *Row Irrigation, Imperial Valley, Southern California, USA*



Edward Burtynsky, *Row Irrigation, Imperial Valley, Southern California, USA*, 2009

What Is Our Responsibility to the Planet?

Contemporary photographer Edward Burtynsky is known for creating compelling images that explore the “Anthropocene”: the proposed term for our current geological epoch in recognition of the significant impact human activity has had on the Earth. In this photograph from his Water series, Burtynsky presents a sweeping aerial view of an irrigation system in Southern California, highlighting the environmental repercussions of modern agriculture—one of the largest human activities on the planet. Using the natural world as his muse, Burtynsky’s monumental photographs are a powerful source of inspiration for student artworks that explore our collective responsibility to the planet that we call home.

[Download a Teacher Resource Guide on Climate Change](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Edward Burtynsky
B.1955

Place of birth:
St. Catharines, Ontario

Best known for:
Large-scale photographs capturing the effects of human activity and industry on the environment.

Art Activity

Marion Nicoll: Seasonal Abstraction

as inspired by the work *Alberta IV: Winter Morning*



Marion Nicoll, *Alberta IV: Winter Morning*, 1961

How Can We Evoke the Four Seasons?

Alberta modernist Marion Nicoll explores the symbolic and emotional effects of colour in this striking abstract painting created in response to the topography, climate, and vegetation of her home province. Rather than depicting the landscape as it appears, Nicoll uses alternating fields of warm and cool colours to recall the feeling of a winter morning in the Prairies. Canadian artists like Nicoll have long experimented with the elements of art—using line, shape, form, space, colour, value, and texture to inspire viewers to see their surroundings in new and exciting ways. Her radical development of abstract art is the perfect springboard for student projects that explore different seasonal sensations through abstract form.

[Read more about Marion Nicoll in an Online Art Book](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Marion Nicoll
1909–1985

Place of birth:
Calgary, Alberta

Best known for:
Hard-edge abstract
paintings that redefined
the landscape of modern
art in the province of
Alberta.

Art Activity

Alex Colville: Cinematic Moments

as inspired by the work *Cyclist and Crow*



Alex Colville, *Cyclist and Crow*, 1981

How Can Art Create Dramatic Tension?

Everyday moments take startling turns in many of Maritimes artist Alex Colville's most admired works. This is true of *Cyclist and Crow*, a painting that exemplifies Colville's attention to detail, reverence for the everyday, and remarkable ability to create tension in a visual work. Celebrated for his masterful visual storytelling, as Colville's style matured, a cinematic (movie-like) quality became one of the characteristics of his paintings. As he expressed it, "In a sense the things I show are moments in which everything seems perfect and something is revealed." Using this phrase as a prompt, we invite student works that explore a moment of dramatic tension—either fictional or real.

[Download a Teacher Resource Guide on Alex Colville](#)

[Read more about Alex Colville in an Online Art Book](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Alex Colville
1920–2013

Place of birth:
Toronto, Ontario
(but lived predominantly
in the Maritimes)

Best known for:
An unusual use of
perspective, a mastery
of realism, and an
exploration of the interior
worlds of his subjects.

Art Activity

Meryl McMaster: Connecting with My Heritage

as inspired by the work *Bring Me to This Place*



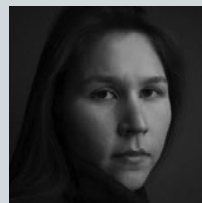
Meryl McMaster, *Bring Me to This Place*, 2017

How Do You Connect with Your Culture?

Contemporary artist Meryl McMaster brings together her remarkable skill in creating photographic images with an exploration of the complex relationships between cultural heritage, place, and lived experience. In *Bring Me to This Place*, the artist's sartorial choices connect her sense of self to her environment. Part of the beauty of McMaster's work is her deliberate use of dress and objects that invoke her nêhiyaw (Plains Cree), British, and Dutch ancestry and its relationship to spaces and landscapes that resonate with her. With this striking image as an inspiring force, we invite students to connect with their own ancestry and cultural heritage through the creation of original photographic works.

[Read more about Meryl McMaster in an Online Art Book](#)

[Read a Spotlight feature about Meryl McMaster's work](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Meryl McMaster
B.1988

Place of birth:
Ottawa, Ontario

Best known for:
Contemporary photography and performance using clothing and props to explore heritage, colonial histories, and connections to land.

Art Activity

Alfred Pellán: Views from Away

as inspired by the work *Maisons de Charlevoix* (*Houses in Charlevoix*), 1941

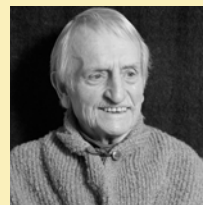


Alfred Pellán, *Maisons de Charlevoix* (*Houses in Charlevoix*), 1941

What Are the Cherished Places You Have Visited?

In the summer of 1941, celebrated painter Alfred Pellán was invited to Charlevoix, Quebec, where he spent time with artist friends Jean Palardy (1905–1991) and Jori Smith (1907–2005). The unique traits of the region must have remained in his mind's eye, as he created vivid works like *Maisons de Charlevoix* that summer, evoking the sensational sunlight, colourful architecture, and lush green vegetation distinctive to the area. Taking a note out of Pellán's vibrant representation of his time away, and his lifelong commitment to the “irresistible urge to colour, to bring to life with a brush what I saw,” we invite student works that evoke a place or location that has captured their imaginations—perhaps somewhere they have visited or travelled to, that has stayed with them.

[Read more about Alfred Pellán in an Online Art Book](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Alfred Pellán
1906–1988

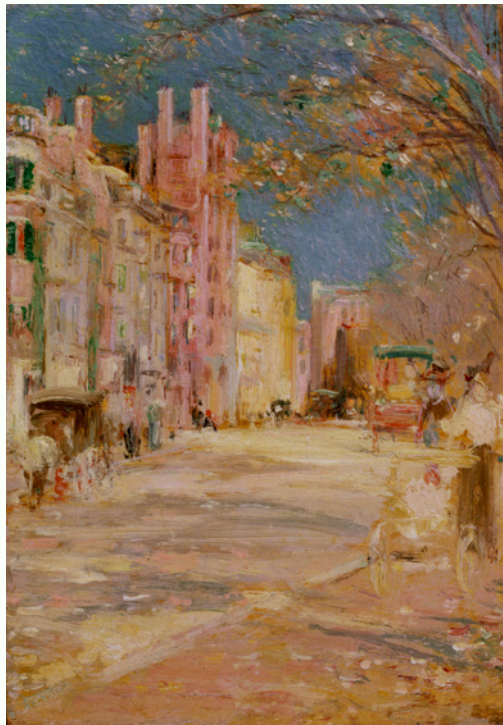
Place of birth:
Quebec City, Quebec

Best known for:
Detailed drawings and paintings that bridge representation and abstraction—with an emphasis on the surreal in later works.

Art Activity

Edward Mitchell Bannister: Street Scenes

as inspired by the work *Boston Street Scene (Boston Common)*

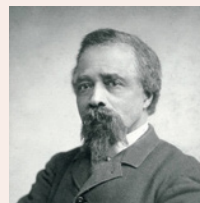


Edward Mitchell Bannister, *Boston Street Scene (Boston Common)*, 1898–99

What Are Your Favourite Outdoor Spaces?

New Brunswick-born artist Edward Mitchell Bannister painted this vibrant scene of the Boston Common during a trip to Massachusetts between 1898 and 1899. In contrast to his previous seascapes and landscapes rendered in muted tones, this bright, expressive painting is in step with the Impressionist style that was becoming increasingly popular in Canada and the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. One of the cornerstones of the movement was its adoption of sketching, drawing, and painting *en plein air*—moving paint and canvas from the studio's interior to the vast open spaces of the great outdoors. Inspired by Bannister's beloved street scene, we invite student works that are created outside—from the schoolyard to the neighbourhood at large.

[Download a Teacher Resource Guide on Edward Mitchell Bannister](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Edward Mitchell Bannister
C.1828–1901

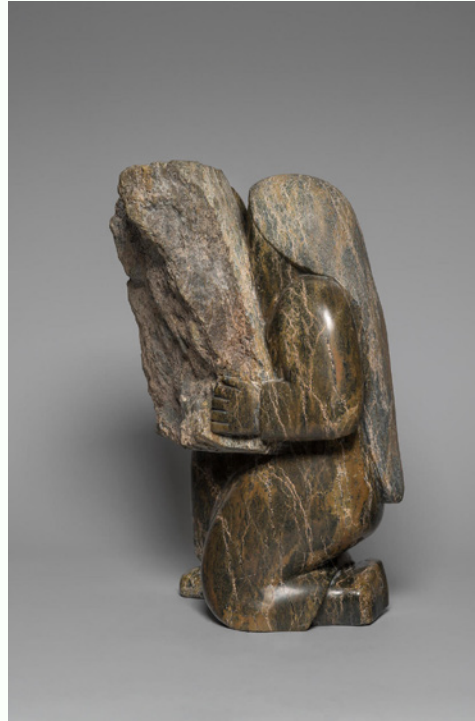
Place of birth:
Saint Andrews,
New Brunswick

Best known for:
Landscapes and
seascapes rendered
in a Tonalist style.

Art Activity

Oviloo Tunnillie: Skills That Define Me

as inspired by the work *Self-Portrait with Carving Stone*



Oviloo Tunnillie, *Self-Portrait with Carving Stone*, 1998

What Skill Do You Care about Cultivating?

Oviloo Tunnillie was an internationally celebrated sculptor who was based in the artistic hamlet of Kinngait (Cape Dorset), Nunavut, for most of her career. She learned to work with stone by watching her father, stating: “From there I began to learn to carve, always noticing the beauty and shapes of the rock.” Eventually, carving became a central component of her life and legacy, captured in works like *Self-Portrait with Carving Stone*, where she becomes one with the material that she shaped, sanded, and polished throughout her illustrious career. Inspired by this tender tribute to the craft that Tunnillie loved most, we invite student self-portraits that explore a pastime, skill, or activity that they feel defines them.

[Download a Teacher Resource Guide
featuring Oviloo Tunnillie's work](#)

[Read more about Oviloo Tunnillie in an Online Art Book](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Oviloo Tunnillie
1949–2014

Place of birth:
Kangia, Baffin Island,
Nunavut

Best known for:
Creating intricate
stone sculptures that
engage with personal
experiences and critical
moments and realities in
Inuit cultures.

Art Activity

Helen McNicoll: Memories from My Childhood

as inspired by the work *Watching the Boat*



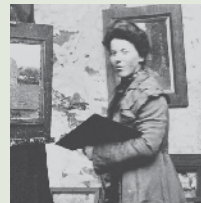
Helen McNicoll, *Watching the Boat*, c.1912

What Is Your Earliest Memory?

One of the nation's most prolific historical female artists, Helen McNicoll garnered international critical acclaim for her bright and sunny representations of rural landscapes and nostalgic views of child subjects at play—works that helped popularize the Impressionist movement in Canada. In *Watching the Boat*, the Montreal painter captures a scene featuring a group of children standing by a river's edge, watching a toy boat float downstream. Moved by McNicoll's warm and tender treatment of an idyllic childhood moment, for this activity we encourage students to make a work of art inspired by one of their earliest memories.

[Download a Teacher Resource Guide about Helen McNicoll](#)

[Watch a short learning video about Helen McNicoll](#)



Get to Know the Artist:

Helen McNicoll
1879–1915

Place of birth:
Toronto, Ontario
(but lived and worked in Montreal)

Best known for:
Luminous canvases depicting a wide range of subjects, from landscapes and cityscapes to domestic scenes featuring women and children.