

# Teacher Kit 5: *Mixed Media* All Ages



Patrick Landsley, *The Pastoral Life*, 1979, mixed media, 25 x 33 cm. Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Gift of Mr. I.H. Horn, 1987.

## Overview

### Focus:

*Mixed Media techniques*

### Hands-On Workshop:

Mixed Media Artist Trading Cards

### Elements of Design:

Colour, Line, Shape, Form, Space, Texture

### Principles of Design:

Emphasis, Balance, Rhythm, Unity, Variety, Proportion

## Mixed Media Art

In the first half of the 20th century, Cubists Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso began to combine art materials and techniques in assemblage works, a technique they coined collage (from the French: *coller*, *to glue*). Many recognize these as the first mixed media artworks of the modern era.

Since then many artists have embraced this creative and broad-ranging medium. Simply put, mixed media art requires an artist to combine two or more materials and art-making techniques in a single piece. It encompasses both traditional approaches to art-making (e.g., drawing and painting) as well as extended media works (e.g., installation) and may be 2 or 3-dimensional. The work, *Wrapped Telephone*, featured above incorporates string, plastic, metal, and ink along with drawing and sculpting techniques.

In this Teacher Kit, your students will have an opportunity to experiment with a variety of art-making materials and methods. They will also experience the exciting world of Artist Trading Cards, producing their own miniature mixed media works to be enjoyed and shared with others.




# Mixed Media Art: Decisions, Decisions...

## 1. Will you be working in 2D or 3D?

## 2. Select your materials:

| Natural Materials  | Papers   | Paints  | Drawing Materials  | Miscellaneous  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood/masonite</li> <li>• Sand</li> <li>• Stone</li> <li>• Seeds/plants</li> <li>• Leather</li> <li>• Mud/clay</li> <li>• Bark/twigs</li> <li>• Feathers</li> <li>• Wax</li> <li>• Shells</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction paper</li> <li>• Books/magazines</li> <li>• Cardboard</li> <li>• Watercolour Paper</li> <li>• Canvas</li> <li>• Tissue paper</li> <li>• Poster/illustrator board</li> <li>• Other paper</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil</li> <li>• Acrylic</li> <li>• Tempera</li> <li>• Gouache</li> <li>• Watercolour</li> <li>• Finger paint</li> <li>• Pastes/glazes</li> <li>• Dyes (natural or synthetic)</li> <li>• Inks</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastels</li> <li>• Graphite/pencils</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Crayons</li> <li>• Charcoal</li> <li>• Conte</li> <li>• Pen and Ink</li> <li>• Pencil Crayons</li> <li>• Chalk</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packaging/wrappers</li> <li>• Plastics (transparencies, plexiglass, etc.)</li> <li>• Ceramics/clay</li> <li>• Plaster</li> <li>• Wire/metal</li> <li>• Found objects</li> <li>• Fabric/textiles</li> <li>• String/yarn</li> <li>• Beads/buttons</li> <li>• Glass</li> </ul> |

## 3. Choose your technique(s):

| Painting   | Drawing   | Collage  | Printmaking *   |
|--|---|--|---|
|                                       |    |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monotype</li> <li>• Relief print</li> <li>• Intaglio print</li> <li>• Screen print</li> <li>• Computer-generated prints</li> </ul> |
| Sculpture *  | Textile art   | Photography  | Digital Media   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemblage</li> <li>• Carving</li> <li>• Casting</li> <li>• Modeling</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quilts</li> <li>• Tapestry</li> <li>• Fashion design</li> <li>• Yarn-based work (knitting, crochet, lace-making, etc.)</li> <li>• Weaving</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Film</li> <li>• Digital</li> </ul>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video</li> <li>• Sound art</li> <li>• Digital projection</li> </ul>  |

\* See *Additional Resources* for definitions

## Get started...

# Artist Trading Cards:

## *Art Collectors in your Classroom*

### Quick Facts:

- Swiss Artist, Vanci Sternimann exhibited 1200 handmade artist cards in 1997. Visitors were encouraged to make and trade their own cards at the closing reception.
- Since then, Artist Trading Card groups and programs have sprung up at galleries and in communities around the world
- Artist Trading Card etiquette stipulates that cards cannot be sold, only exchanged one-for-one
- ATCs are typically 2.5" x 3.5" or 64 x 89mm
- Artists should indicate on the back of each card: name, title of the ATC, and number in series (e.g., 1/5 cards created in this series, etc.)
- Artists should interact (face-to-face, online, or by mail)
- There is no limit to how ATC collections can be stored or displayed (e.g., in envelopes, trading card sleeves/binders, picture frames, business card holders, gallery exhibitions, etc.)
- Materials, techniques and individual approaches to creating ATCs are only limited by your imagination

### Some Techniques to Try:

- Paint a self portrait
- Sketch a miniature cartoon
- Use patchwork, embroidery, or beading
- Create a never before seen creature by collaging magazine clippings
- Collect natural objects on a hike and incorporate them into an ATC
- Clip interesting words from a newspaper and arrange them as inventive prose
- Magnify a small object (e.g., a piece of popcorn) and sketch it to fill your ATC
- Create a woven ATC
- Limit your materials to what you can find in the recycle bin
- Finger paint your ATC
- Pound leaves and petals with a hammer onto paper
- Hole punch paint store samples and create a miniature mosaic
- Make an ATC with pop up features
- Invent a technique that is all your own!

### More about Artist Trading Cards:

The New Gallery, Calgary AB (About Artist Trading Cards)  
<http://thenewgallery.wordpress.com/atcs/>

Flickr search (Artist Trading Cards)  
<http://www.flickr.com/search/?q=artist+trading+cards>

ATC Quarterly (Artist Trading Card print journal)  
<http://www.atcquarterly.com/>

Image: 2008 ATC Exhibition at the Richmond Art Gallery (RAG).  
Photo courtesy of Kathy Tycholis, RAG.  
Vist <http://www.richmondartgallery.org/atcs/atc-entries.php>



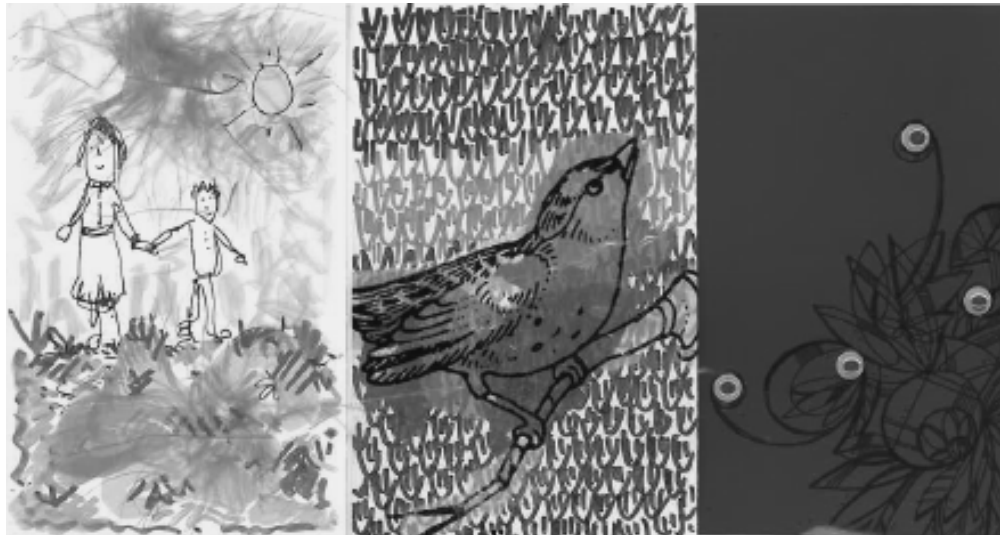
# Mixed Media

## Artist Trading Cards

*This activity accommodates multiple ages and uses simple materials that are safe for use in any classroom.*

### Getting Started

In advance of creating the Artist Trading Cards (ATCs), students will explore various art-making materials and techniques through their participation in Initial Explorations. We recommend planning for at least two exploration periods in the lead-up to making Artist Trading Cards. These explorations will allow students to experience and review a variety of art-making approaches while simultaneously gathering materials for the culminating activity. If you are short on time, you could opt to have students rotate through stations in an art period preceding the creation of your ATCs. Each student's amassed collection of source materials gathered during the Initial Explorations will be used to create collage-based ATCs. In selecting appropriate Initial Explorations, you should consider your students, their interests and experiences, along with the curriculum.



Mixed Media ATCs (from left to right): Pen and ink, marker, and feathers; Photo transfer, tissue, and marker; Pen and ink, googly eyes, and coloured cellophane.

### Easy-Find Materials

- Collage source materials - *These will vary depending on the Initial Explorations you select. Each student should manage their creative products from each exploration in an individual portfolio or folder)*
- Blank artist trading cards (2 or more for each student) - *Cut cardstock or Bristol board to desired trading card size. We have used 3 ½ x 5 ½" Bristol board to accommodate variations in fine motor skills, although ATC traditionalists swear by a 2 ½ x 3 ½ " standard*
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Rulers
- A variety of drawing tools: markers, crayons, pastels, pencils, etc.

# Mixed Media Artist Trading Cards

## Step 1 – Explore

Look at a variety of historical and contemporary artists and artworks that incorporate mixed media techniques into their arts practice. The posters provided with this package may serve as a launch point. Further suggestions of exemplary mixed media artists follow in the Additional Resources section of this package. Contextualize the Artist Trading Card movement for your students.

## Step 2 – Gather Source Materials

Gather source materials by participating in two or more Initial Explorations of art materials and techniques. Refer to the list of suggested explorations or incorporate your own! Students should manage their creative products from each exploration in a portfolio or folder.

## Step 3 – Create 2 or More Artist Trading Cards

Using the source materials gathered during the Initial Explorations, students will use scissors and glue to compose each trading card (think of them as miniature works of art). Additional details can be added using the drawing materials you elect to provide.

## Step 4 – Trade, Collect, and Display

Once your students have all completed two or more cards they can begin trading with other artists. Through the act of trading, students will acquire miniature art collections as they make artistic choices and negotiate with their peers. The more cards an artist produces, the more cards he/she can trade and collect.

If you want to eliminate the trading aspect of this activity, you could install completed trading cards as a group exhibition in your school or community. Page 3 of this package shows the recent installation of the Richmond Art Gallery's 2008 ATC exhibition for inspiration.

**Initial Explorations:** Gather collage source material by choosing 2 or more explorations from this list, or your own ideas...

- Texture Collections** – Invite your students to create a collection of real and implied textures as source material for their ATC creation. Search out real texture samples from the world around you (feathers, sandpaper, corrugated cardboard, etc.). Capture the essence of various surfaces and textures using a variety of drawing materials (pencils, pastels, markers, etc.). Implied textures can be rendered by observation or by creating wax crayon rubbings.
- Collographs/Stamp Prints** - Create a small collograph printing plate representing a variety of textures and shapes. Start with a piece of thick cardboard or illustrator's board. Glue on repurposed materials (cardboard, bubble wrap, string, etc.) of uniform thickness to create an abstract or representative design. Or, create a stamp by gluing foam or rubber shapes of uniform thickness to a cardboard backing. Use a paint brush or brayer to apply paint or ink to your plate before printing. Try printing on a variety of papers (newsprint, construction paper, cardboard, etc.).
- Photo Transfers** – Have students print relevant photos or images in black and white on the computer. Use drawing materials of your choice to add details or embellish the images. Next, tape over each image using packing tape, carefully ensuring that the front side of the image is covered completely. Have students place their taped images into a warm bucket of water. Once the paper is soaked through, students can rub off the paper surface revealing their 'transfer.'
- Pen and Ink** – If your school has India ink available, this is a very intriguing medium to explore. Ink nibs or fountain pens are helpful, but not always necessary. Intriguing results can also be achieved using paint brushes and/or q-tips. Have students experiment creating lines and shapes with different characteristics. Use different thicknesses and textures of paper. Challenge your students to create a range of tints and shades of ink by adding varying amounts of water. Once they've had a chance to play, invite them to work on creating a composition with the medium.
- Found Objects and Artifacts** – Collage artists are notorious collectors. They are constantly on the look out for objects from ticket stubs to newspaper clippings, and other bits and pieces that intrigue them. In advance of this session, get your students to be on the look out for small found objects that could be incorporated into their eventual ATCs. Your young artists can also look through discarded books, magazines and newspapers gathering words and images that are personally significant to them. Make time for students to meet in small groups to describe their found object collections and the various ways they can be incorporated into a mixed media artwork.
- Altered Painting** – There are a number of commercial and homemade gels, pastes, and mediums out there that alter the consistency and texture of paint. You might opt to experiment with a few of these. Younger students can play with colour-mixing and work to achieve different brushstroke effects, while older students might focus on colour theory and creating brushstrokes that communicate particular thoughts and feelings. Try mixing tempera paint with liquid laundry starch, sawdust, table salt, flour or glue. As an alternative (or in addition to altering the consistency of your paint), you could have students paint with a variety of unconventional tools. Try imitating Seurat's pointillism technique with q-tips and tempera paint, paint with your fingers, a crumpled piece of plastic, or a toothbrush. How does tool selection impact art making?
- Different Ways of Looking** – Create a simple view finder by cutting a small shape out of a piece of cardstock (you can also use an empty slide casing). Enlist students in the task of drawing part of a larger object, using their view finder to locate and frame a specific area of their choice. Once the pencil rendering is complete, have students add further layers/details to their compositions with other drawing materials.
- Other Exploration:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Additional Resources

### Vocabulary

**Mixed Media** – Artworks or approaches to art-making that incorporate more than one material and technique

**Artist Trading Cards (ATCs)** – Miniature works of art with typical dimensions of 2.5" x 3.5", or 64 x 89mm. Artists typically meet to exchange cards.

### Printmaking Techniques -

- **Monotype** – A hybrid of printmaking and painting techniques where artists work from a smooth unmarked plate
- **Relief Print** – Artists carve away with tools or acids to create a positive image. The remaining surface reveals the final printed image
- **Intaglio Print** – Artists carve away with tools or acids to create a negative image. The area that has been cut away produces the final image.
- **Screen Print** – The printed image is revealed when ink pressed into a fine screen either penetrates the fine mesh or is blocked by a stencil, resulting in the end design.
- **Computer-generated Prints** – Prints produced with the aid of graphic software applications

### Sculpture Techniques -

- **Assemblage** – Sculptors assemble 'pieces' of the same or different materials together to create their works
- **Carving** – Artists begin with a solid form and carve away to reveal the final object
- **Casting** – Sculpture that requires mold-making processes
- **Modeling** – Sculpture created by shaping a malleable material (e.g., clay, wax, plaster)

### Additional works consulted

- Hume, Helen D. *The Art Teacher's Book of Lists*. John Wiley and Sons: San Francisco, 1998.
- Medlej, Joumana. *Art in Your Pocket*. Online at <http://www.cedarseed.com/air/atc.html>. 01/28/09.
- Solga, Kim. *Paint!* North Light Books: Cincinnati, Ohio, 1995.
- ATCs at the Richmond Art Gallery. Online at <http://www.richmondartgallery.org/atcs/atc-entries.php>. 01/30/09.
- *Collage* entry. Wikipedia. Online at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collage>. 01/16/09
- Tate Museum, London. Glossary of Art Terms. Online at: <http://www.tate.org.uk/collections/glossary/definition.jsp?entryId=434>. 01/16/09.

### Mixed Media/ATC Web Links

*Art in Your Pocket* by Joumana Medlej – Online guide to getting started in ATC production with examples and techniques:

<http://www.cedarseed.com/air/atc.html>

National Gallery of Art Online Collage Machine. Try it out at:

<http://www.nga.gov/kids/zone/collagemachine.htm>

Play games to review the elements and principles of design and learn how they work together to create meaning:

<http://www.artsconnected.org/toolkit/index.html>

### Exemplary Mixed Media Artists

The Online Pablo Picasso Project – view thousands of his works at:

<http://picasso.tamu.edu/picasso/>

Toronto artist Sadko Hadzihasonovic:

[http://www.ccca.ca/artists/artist\\_info.html?languagePref=en&link\\_id=1862&artist=Sadko+Hadzihasonovic](http://www.ccca.ca/artists/artist_info.html?languagePref=en&link_id=1862&artist=Sadko+Hadzihasonovic)

KW|AG's own Allan MacKay:

[http://www.ccca.ca/artists/artist\\_info.html?languagePref=en&link\\_id=221&artist=Allan%20H.%20MacKay](http://www.ccca.ca/artists/artist_info.html?languagePref=en&link_id=221&artist=Allan%20H.%20MacKay)

See a list of Canadian Mixed Media artists at the Centre for Contemporary Canadian Art website:

<http://www.ccca.ca/artists/s-media.html?languagePref=en&vCnt=42,462&vnCnt=558&category=collage#title>

More information on cover page artist and the unique practice of this husband and wife team can be found at:

<http://www.christojeanneclaudenet/>



### Kindergarten

Explore tools, materials and processes related to art making

*\* Practice cutting, gluing, and pattern making as students create their ATCs*

### Grade 1

Describe the texture of various familiar objects

*\*Do Texture Collections as part of your Initial Explorations*

### Grade 2

Describe different ways in which a variety of art materials, tools, and techniques can be used and demonstrate understanding of their safe and proper use

*\*Do the Altered Painting as part of your Initial Explorations*

### Grade 3

Identify and explain the specific choices they made in planning, producing, and displaying their own art work

*\*Leave time for artists to share their artistic process with peers*

### Grade 4

State their preference for a specific work chosen from among several on a similar theme, and defend their choice with reference to their own interest and experience and to the elements

*\*After trading takes place invite your students to share their art collections and explain the choices they made*

### Grade 5

Describe the strengths and limitations of various art tools, materials, and techniques

*\*Have students reflect after each Initial Exploration, responding to the materials and approaches they have used*

### Grade 6

Explain their preference for specific artworks, with reference to the artist's intentional use of the elements and principles of design

*\*After trading takes place invite your students to share their art collections and defend the choices they made*

### Grade 7

Identify the area of emphasis in a work of art

*\*Challenge students to create at least one ATC with a focal point*

### Grade 8

Describe how the repetition of elements of design creates rhythm, which unifies the composition

*\*Challenge students to create at least one ATC that uses the elements to achieve a sense of rhythm in the final work*

### Grade 9

Compile a collection of visual resources

*\*Allow students more independence when it comes to the Initial Explorations they pursue and the types of source materials they create and gather for their ATCs*

### Grade 10

Demonstrate an ever-expanding use of technology in producing artworks

*\*Use Photoshop, or an equivalent imaging software program to create an ATC*

### Grade 11

Demonstrate competence in basic drawing skills

*\*Challenge students to create ATCs that incorporate a variety of approaches to drawing techniques and tools (representational, abstract, conceptual; pastel, graphite, charcoal)*

### Grade 12

Analyse works of art that use the media and processes they wish to explore in their own work

*\* Have students plan and create their ATCs or other mixed media works using materials and methods inspired by contemporary mixed media artists working in ways that intrigue your students*

## Look and Discuss: Open-ended questions for exploring artwork

*Exploring and discussing historical and contemporary works of art are a valuable complement to any art-making process.*

*Use one of the KW/AG permanent collection images included in this package or another work of your choice along with any combination of the questions below to start the discussion.*



1. What do you see when you look at this artwork (colours, shapes, mediums, subject matter, objects, textures, etc.)?
2. Do you like this work of art? Why or why not?
3. Does this work of art remind you of anything you have ever seen or experienced before?
4. What is the mood/emotion of this artwork?
5. What questions would you ask to find out how the artist made this work of art? See if you can brainstorm possible ideas about the artist's process
6. Without revealing the title to students prior to viewing, ask: What do you imagine the title of this artwork to be?
7. Reveal the title of the artwork. How does this contribute to our understanding of this artwork? Do we begin to look at it in a different way?
8. What would be the ideal location to display this artwork in (e.g., museum, living room, public park, etc.) why?
9. What words come to mind when you look at this work. Write them down and share them.
10. Do any of the colours appear to be coming forward or receding? Warm, intense, and dark value colours come forward, while cool, grayed and light value colours recede. Can you see this anywhere?
11. What elements and/or principles of design has the artist drawn on to create this artwork?
12. Does this artwork communicate the idea of movement? How do you know whether objects are moving or stationary?
13. What is the focal point of this artwork? Where is your eye drawn?
14. If this artwork were to speak, what would it say? Do you believe this artwork has a message or story? Does artwork need to have a message?
15. Is there anything missing from this artwork, what would you add or approach differently if you were the artist?
16. Do you think this artwork is older or younger than you? How do you know?
17. What materials and tools do you think the artist used to create this artwork?
18. What artistic problems or obstacles do you think the artist would have encountered while creating this work?