Campesinos: Workers of the Land

Virtual Tour
Art Viewing Curriculum

Campesinos: Workers of the Land was curated by Gabriel Medina and Judy Stabile. Juried by Consuelo Alba, Gabriel Medina and Judy Stabile, this exhibit was conceived to honor the dignity of our campesinos/agricultural workers and farmers. We asked artists to create and bring us work that represent what they see, feel, and believe as they pass by our fields everyday. We asked for artwork that represents the issues of dignity, labor, workers' rights, immigration, and the duality of every day living for migrant workers. We received incredibly personal visual and audio stories that celebrate the lives and contributions of our families and community of agricultural workers.

Grades:
Middle School (6–8)
High School (9–12)
Subject: Visual Arts

Suggested Pathways
• Pre-tour Guide English  Pre-Tour Guide Spanish
• Virtual Tour
• Five Artist Specific Curriculum Pages
• Pajaro Valley Agricultural Timeline English
• Pajaro Valley Agricultural Timeline Spanish
• YAYA Timeline of Agricultural Labor: farm workers and immigration USA
• YAYA Immigration Terms

CA Visual and Performing Arts Framework for Public Schools
State Standards Addressed: Visual Arts

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION: Processing, analyzing, and responding to sensory information through the language and skills unique to the visual arts. Students perceive and respond to works of art, objects in nature, events, and the environment. They also use the vocabulary of the visual arts to express their observations.

2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION: Creating, performing, and participating in the visual arts. Students apply artistic processes and skills, using a variety of media to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING: Responding to, analyzing, and making judgments about works in the visual arts. Students analyze, assess, and derive meaning from works of art, including their own, according to the elements of art, the principles of design, and aesthetic qualities.

National Core Arts Anchor Standards: Visual Arts
Creating
Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work
Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work

Performing Presenting Producing
Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through presentation of artistic work

Responding
Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work
Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work
Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work

Connecting
Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

PVA thanks Karen Lemon who developed this curriculum and Rhianna Hurt, who reviewed and provided input; and our artists for contributing their insights.
WHO is the artist?
WARREN CHANG
WHAT is the name of the artwork?
Flower Girl
WHAT materials were used?
Oil on Canvas
WHERE is the Artist from?
Monterey, CA
WHEN was this artwork made?
2013

About the Artist
Born and bred in Monterey, California (USA) Warren Chang is an acclaimed artist who is recognized for his realist paintings of biographical interiors and field-workers of the Monterey, California area. Chang earned a BFA from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena in Illustration and worked as an award-winning Illustrator in California and New York before transitioning to a career as a fine artist. His paintings are Influenced by Masters such as 17th century artist Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675), and 19th century artists Jean Francois Millet (1814-1875), among others, Warren Chang creates subtle narratives that celebrate the human spirit. His work is in many permanent collections and most recently in a solo exhibition at the New Museum Los Gatos. He is a Signature member of the California Art Club and a Master Signature member of the Oil Painters of America. More about Warren Chang can be found on his website: [www.warrenchang.com](http://www.warrenchang.com)

Let’s Look
1. How does the artist use color and value to create a mood?
2. What do you think the girl is thinking or feeling in this painting?
3. How do you feel when you view this artwork? How does the artist evoke feeling? Is it the content or the way the painting is created?

Voice of the Artist
“My paintings are narrative in nature, basically telling stories. I want to express essentially the human condition and I feel my subjects are representative of that, expressing all the myriad of human emotions and feelings in their struggle for existence in their daily lives. I do not want to be just a good technical painter, I want to add expression and meaning to the realism of my work.

I find inspiration from great literature and cinema as much as from great paintings. My process is similar to making a film or writing a novel. All my art starts from an idea, first with a small sketch from my imagination. I than go about making this idea a reality. This more often than not requires research and the hiring of models. Like a film director, I have to find a location for the environment, find props and wardrobe and then hire models, much like hiring actors.”

About the Piece
“Flower Girl is a scene I witnessed off the entrance to Holman Highway off Hwy 1. The scene of what appeared to be a migrant worker selling flowers struck me for the sense of isolation of this sympathetic girl with cars whizzing past her. No one taking particular notice. I took a picture of her walking away along side the road, and as I often do, I was able to recreate the scene as I remembered it.

The painting shows two distinct yet parallel worlds colliding: in one, a solitary young woman in a sweatshirt and jeans offers bouquets for sale from the highway’s shoulder; in the other, anonymous drivers in their comfortably self-contained vehicles whiz past. The warm, low light suggests approaching dusk, enhancing the strangeness of the situation and its pervading sense of isolation.

My Voice
Sketchbook Prompt: If this was a scene from a film what music would be playing to help set the mood? Give the title of the song and artist and explain why you chose this piece.

Teachers Corner
You are the director
Students will write a short visual scene /script recreating something from daily life. Who is in the scene? What is happening? Describe the mood. Why is this story important to tell?
In groups students create a tableau, film or painting from their scripted scene.
WHO is the artist?  
ARLEENE CORREA VALENCIA

WHAT is the name of the artwork?  
Espacio Sideral / Outer Space

WHAT materials were used?  
Oil on canvas

WHERE is the Artist from?  
Michoacan, Mexico

WHEN was this artwork made?  
2019

About the Artist

Arleene Correa was born in Michoacán, Mexico, and raised in Napa Valley. Now 24, she is a recipient of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA — the program that allows undocumented immigrants brought here as children to live and work in the U.S legally. Growing up, she experienced firsthand the contradictions of living in a wealthy area as an undocumented immigrant. Correa’s openness about her own undocumented status is part of her desire to make hidden truths apparent through her art.

Arleene Correa Valencia completed a BFA in painting from California College of the Arts in 2018 and earned her Masters Degree in Fine Arts May of 2020. In 2019 she held a notable solo exhibition, Invisible, at Cal Maritime Community Art Gallery in Vallejo, Ca. She has been a recipient of the New York Studio Residency Program, the Anderson Ranch Scholarship and a fellow of di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art in Napa. She currently has work on view in the Come to Your Census: Who Counts in America? exhibition at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco More about Arleene Correa Valencia can be found on her website: www.correavalencia.com

Voice of the Artist

“I learned how to make paintings at a really young age. My father always wanted to be painter but because he had to work to make sure we had food on the table and a roof over our heads he never made painting a priority. For me painting became a way to bond with him. I knew that if I became interested in painting we would spend more time together. In this way art has always been about conversations for me. When I look at the world around me I think about how art can be used to say the things that words cannot describe. How can a painting take my anger, frustrations, love, history and culture and freeze them in time? How can a work of mine force people to have conversations that they are not necessarily ready to have?”

About the Piece

“When wildfires ripped through California’s Napa Valley in October 2017, I was shocked to see that farm workers were continuing to work in the vineyards, even as smoke surrounded the area, and the locals were evacuating.

One of these nights, I remember, the moon was out, it was red orange, highlighted by the fires, it was something out of a movie, it was beautiful. Underneath all that, there were people, and they were not safe. They were hustling up and down these long stretches of vineyard, just running to save the grape.

Feeling angry and frustrated because no one cared about these people I knew that I had to do something. Soon this moment would be over and no one would care about my people again. I took my camera and photographed the scenes I thought highlighted the dangerous conditions in which immigrant workers, particularly undocumented ones, are forced to labor. I then made large oil paintings to share with everyone. In many ways these paintings tell the truth of what happened to my community in 2020 but they also honor all those people who risked their lives for economy.”

Teachers Corner

Change the Narrative

Interview a person. Ask an array of questions. How has your narrative of this person changed once you talked with them? What surprised you? What do you have in common? Consider how facial expressions, body language and the background can help inform the narrative you are trying to capture. Photograph the person that you interviewed.

Let’s Look

1. What does the title tell you about this painting? Does it inform it in some way? What terms do politicians use to describe immigrants? How are those terms related to outer space?

2. Why was it important for the artist to capture this image of someone working through unsafe conditions? Why do you think the artist chose to not show the farmworkers face?

3. Do you think the artist can change the way that people see immigrants in America?

4. What mood is established in this painting? How does the artists convey this to the viewer?
WHO is the artist? LUCIEN KUBO
WHAT is the name of the artwork? Japanese Agricultural Workers in Watsonville
WHAT materials were used? Mixed Media
WHERE is the Artist from? Santa Cruz, CA
WHEN was this artwork made? 2020

About the Artist
“[I am] a Sansei, a third generation Japanese American. I think of my art as philosophical, historical and personal narratives. I am sorting out how I feel about humanity and the chaotic world around me.

An important part of my life experience is related to my Japanese American heritage. I have created art relating to the Japanese diaspora to this country, the WWII forced removal to concentration camps, culture and identity.

With the current administration attacks on People of Color and our communities, it is even more important that community artists share this experience. We have inherited a responsibility to look back into history, embrace the present community and tell our stories for this generation and for future generations.”

Voice of the Artist
“I am interested in art that can give voice and vision to our communities. Being a Japanese American artist I feel a responsibility to tell our unique stories to others. In telling our stories one looks back into history in order to understand what came before us. We want to see what our ancestors’ lives were like in this new land. We can see how our experience is related to other communities and in essence how we are all related.”

About the Piece
“Japanese American Agricultural Workers in Watsonville. Creating this art became a very personal journey for me. My grandparents on my father side, immigrated to Delta, California in the late 1880’s. They were sharecroppers and lived a hard life growing asparagus and other vegetables.

In researching for this art work, I read two excellent books; Sandy Lydon’s, The Japanese in the Monterey Bay Region and Kazuko Nakane’s Nothing Left in My Hands. These told the story of immigration, the anti-Asian legislation and the wartime removal of the Japanese community into concentration camps, and the current community. Personal stories of the hardships, agricultural contributions, community life, resilience and contributions of the Japanese community in Watsonville were also told. Regional photographs made the story come alive. I am indebted to their research.

In working with assemblage, I used the strawberry and other fruits to show the contributions to agriculture. I used origami paper and an old fan to reflect the Japanese culture. In using the Hana cards and sake cup, I wanted to show how many of the early immigrants were single men who would gather and socialize after a long day in the fields. The Save America anti-Asia legislation flier, the ID tag and image of the concentration camp showed the discrimination they faced.”

Let’s Look
1. Why is it important that we understand the experience of the early Japanese immigrants?
2. What have other immigrant groups contributed to the economic development and livelihood of Watsonville?
3. What are the similarities of the early Japanese immigrants and that of the current Mexican and Latinx experience in Watsonville today?
4. Why is it important that we support our multi-cultural history, and embrace our current community?

My Voice
Sketchbook Prompt:
Create a personal logo that represents your unique personality and/or ancestry. Sketch at least 3 different ideas.

Teachers Corner
Visualize
Using collage, painting, drawing or digital graphics create an art piece describing an issue that is important to you. What is your vision for yourself and your community?
WHO is the artist?
JAY MERCADO

WHAT is the name of the artwork?
La Fuega - A Woman's Flame

WHAT materials were used?
Acrylic on Burlap

WHERE is the Artist from?
San Francisco

WHEN was this artwork made?
2019

About the Artist
Jay Mercado was born in Sioux City, Iowa and raised in San Francisco during an era when pop art, psychedelic posters and underground comics flourished. After attending UCLA, he spent 15 years in Los Angeles simultaneously working as an illustrator and as a muralist with the Robert Walker Mural Studio in Santa Monica. Jay studied at UCLA, Art Center College of Design, California College of Arts and Crafts, and Academy of Art College. Mercado currently works as a fine artist and muralist and lives in San Francisco. More about Jay Mercado can be found on his website: www.jaymercado.com

Voice of the Artist
“I work large. My intention is to impact a space, to impel the passerby, the loiterer, the traveler, to give more than a glance, to take a chance, to view a subject in a new light, make a connection, and be moved. A grand imposing gesture is meant to give one pause.

My hope is that the viewer will find that thread that connects her to something bigger than herself, that he will be moved through a feeling with no words: a burst of delight or surprise, a comforting warmth, a vehement call to action, friendship, truth. An observer might see something that no one else will see, and, in turn, see the world around them a little differently in every subsequent moment.”

About the Piece
The Spanish word for fire has been intentionally, incorrectly (defiantly) transformed to pay homage to the women working in the fields, working for a better life, to women as creators and seers.

This is especially relevant in this era of amplified discrimination against immigrants seeking refuge and work in the US. The image of the female strawberry harvester, instead harvesting flames, is intended to highlight and emphasize the fire within that not only burns to build a better life, but also reflects the unseen and systematically neglected talent, skill and passion of humankind.

This is a country built on the sweat, labor and sacrifice of immigrants and slaves. Perhaps the words of Ferdinand Foch are more timely than ever: “The most powerful weapon is the human soul on fire.”

Let’s Look
1. What do you think fire represents (symbolizes)? In general? In this image?
2. La Fuega is (insert size) How does it feel when you stand next to a painting that is taller than you? What do you think the scale of the work represents?
3. How do you think the artist feels about the current issues relating to immigrants? Name some of these issues.
4. Why do you think that the artists specifically wants the viewer to pay homage to women who work in the fields?

My Voice
Sketchbook Prompt:
Create a rhyme, rap or poem about the human fire that lives in you.

Teachers Corner
Think Large-Scale
Create life size silhouettes of students in motion. Fill your silhouettes with colors, words, symbols, images that inspire, excite, and impassion you.
WHO is the artist?
CRAIG SHEROD

WHAT is the name of the artwork?
Bracero ID: Antonio Ramirez, San Jose CA

WHAT materials were used?
Digital Photography

WHERE is the Artist from?
San Francisco, CA

WHEN was this artwork made?
2007

About the Artist
“When I was in my mid-20’s and deciding on a career, I was torn between photography and technology. I had not been an “art kid” and photography was a relatively new passion so I went the safe route and got a degree in Electrical Engineering. That led to many interesting roles in technology that I enjoyed. But when I was almost 50, my brain really wanted to think about photography all the time. I took classes for 2 years at night and made a risky career change in 2005. The change was very hard financially but has allowed me to have a wide range of interesting experiences which I value. I currently am a full time Commercial Photographer in the San Francisco and Silicon Valley area.” More about Craig Sherod can be found on his website: www.craigsherodphoto.com

Let’s Look
1. What do you know about the Bracero Program? Why was it called a guest worker program? Do you know anyone who was in the program?

2. What journey(ies) have you taken in your life? What impact did this make on you?

3. Why does the artist choose to create his portraits in black and white? Consider the values and details in this image, how is this part of the story?

4. Do you think that this image a portrait? Why or why not? What does it tell you about this man's journey?

Voice of the Artist
“I’m all about the journey. I’m the guy who finds the little roads, the old roads, the roads that go through towns I’ve never seen and takes them. I’m also a working photographer so I need editors and art directors and marketing people to give me assignments. Assignments are journeys. Cincinnati, Hanoi, and Pasadena; Steel plants, corn fields, and board rooms; Feature stories, ad campaigns, and executive portraits. All are journeys.”

About the Piece
“Bracero ID: Antonio Ramirez is one photograph in a much larger body of work which I made into a photo book entitled Bracero’s at 80. The project was originally done to draw people into to thinking about immigration reform and the ‘gotchas’ of guest worker programs.

I arranged my first photoshoot at the Eastside Neighborhood Center in San Jose CA. A place where many ex-Braceros in the area spend time. Most of the men were in their 80’s. My plan was to use the touching faces of these men to draw visitors into a conversation about a topic that they might not otherwise consider. I knew very little about the Bracero Program before I began the project. The Bracero program was America’s biggest guest worker program and touched the lives of 4.5 million Mexican men from 1942-1964.

I am hopeful that this body of work will humanize the fieldworkers, and bring knowledge about the issues and abuses of the past and aid in protection of workers in the future.”

My Voice
Sketchbook Prompt:
Trace or sketch your hand, palm side up. Create the texture of your fingerprints. Draw a card in your hand. What does the card say? Is it a note of thanks to an essential worker? Is it your own ID card? You choose.

Teachers Corner
Compose
The Bracero Program started with a journey from Mexico to the United States. Write a story or poem that begins with “In a land far away...” to describe a journey.