

# ***Portrait of the Artist: An Exhibition from the Royal Collection and Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive***



Artemisia Gentileschi  
*Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting (La Pittura)*  
c. 1638–39  
oil on canvas

Photo: Royal Collection Trust/Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, 2017



Carol Sawyer  
*Natalie Brettschneider and unknown pianist, the Banff Centre for the Arts, c. 1951*  
archival ink jet print from original negative  
Carol Sawyer/Nathalie Brettschneider Archive  
acquired with the assistance of Sarah Fuller, Banff Centre, 2012

## **TEACHER'S STUDY GUIDE FALL 2017**

**Vancouver**  
Artgallery

# Contents

---

Program Information and Goals .....	3
Background to the Exhibitions <i>Portrait of the Artist</i> and <i>Carol Sawyer</i> .....	4
Artists' Background .....	5
Pre- and Post-Visit Activities	
1. About the Artists.....	7
Artist Information Sheet .....	8
Student Worksheet .....	9
2. Partner Pencil Portrait .....	10
3. Letters from Long Ago.....	15
Fictional Characters Worksheet .....	17
Women in Canadian History .....	18
4. Selfie-Portraits .....	20
5. Digital Portraits.....	24
Vocabulary .....	27
Resources .....	28

# Vancouver Art Gallery

## Teacher's Guide for School Programs

---

Your upcoming gallery tour includes two distinct exhibitions: *Portrait of the Artist: An Exhibition from the Royal Collection* and *Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive*. *Portrait of the Artist* presents a remarkable group of works of art highlighting the deep and complex relationship that the monarchy has had with artists for the last three and half centuries. The exhibition includes more than ninety paintings, drawings, prints, photographs and sculptures that offer insights into how artists see themselves. In the exhibition *Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive*, students will be introduced to the work of Carol Sawyer, a contemporary Vancouver artist, whose ongoing research project reconstructs the life and work of the fictional artist Natalie Brettschneider, through the use of photographs, text, archival materials, video and music recitals.

### DEAR TEACHER:

This guide will assist you in preparing for your tour of the exhibitions *Portrait of the Artist: An Exhibition from the Royal Collection* and *Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive*. It also provides follow-up activities to facilitate discussion after your Gallery visit. Engaging in the suggested activities before and after your visit will reinforce ideas generated by the tour and build continuity between the Gallery experience and your ongoing work in the classroom. Most activities require few materials and can be adapted easily to the age, grade level and needs of your students. Underlined words in this guide are defined in the Vocabulary section.

The tour of *Portrait of the Artist* and *Carol Sawyer* has three main goals:

- to introduce students to a variety of artists who engage with traditions of portraiture in diverse ways,
- to consider diverse artistic traditions and disciplines,
- to explore individual artworks in terms of ideas, materials, techniques and inspiration.

# THE EXHIBITIONS

---

## **Portrait of the Artist: An Exhibition from the Royal Collection**

*Portrait of the Artist: An Exhibition from the Royal Collection* presents a remarkable group of more than ninety paintings, drawings, prints, photographs and sculpture highlighting both the enormous richness of the Royal Collection and the deep and complex relationship that the British monarchy has had with artists for the last three and half centuries.

Since the Renaissance, artists have claimed an increasingly central role in visual culture and emerged as unique, famous and recognizable individuals. The Royal Collection includes a large group of images of artists—both portraits and self-portraits—that offer powerful insights into how artists see themselves and their position in society. The growing respect for artists as creators led to the collecting of their self-portraits and images of artists both at work and playing roles. The exhibition presents a diverse range of works by both historical and contemporary artists such as Gianlorenzo Bernini, Lucian Freud, David Hockney and Sarah Bernhardt. Through their works the exhibition traces the evolving role and importance of artists within society at large.

The Royal Collection is one of the most important collections of art in the world. Built over centuries by successive British monarchs and continuing today by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the collection includes a remarkable range of objects and works of art. Central to the history of the monarchy has been the role of art, both to define the image of the monarchy and to confirm their power, wealth and taste.

This exhibition, which is exclusive to Vancouver, is presented by kind permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and helps mark the sesquicentennial of Canada.

Organized by Royal Collection Trust and curated by Anna Reynolds, Lucy Peter and Martin Clayton. The coordinating curator is Ian M. Thom, Senior Curator–Historical.

## **Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive**

For fifteen years, the Vancouver-based artist Carol Sawyer has been conducting research and making artworks that enrich and expand the Natalie Brettschneider Archive. *Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive* presents the latest findings of this ongoing research project, which skillfully reconstructs the life and work of the fictional artist Natalie Brettschneider.

Beginning with her childhood in New Westminster, through her travels in Canada and Europe and her eventual return to British Columbia, Brettschneider's story is shot through with appearances by real people, places and events. The photographs, letters, paintings, films and other materials on view connect Natalie Brettschneider to a rich community of interdisciplinary women artists working in Europe and British Columbia from the 1920s to the 1970s. The practices of these artists were often under-represented in institutional collections and largely excluded from historical accounts of modernist art history in this region. By using a fictional character to draw attention to the work of these artists, Sawyer reconsiders and sheds light on the diverse practices, subjects and actors that shaped the course of mid-century Modernism in this area and in many ways set the stage for the interdisciplinary practices of the 1960s and '70s.

*Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive* features works from the Vancouver Art Gallery's permanent collection alongside artworks and archival materials borrowed from regional and national galleries, archives and private lenders.

Organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery in collaboration with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, the Art Gallery of Windsor and Carleton University Art Gallery. Curated by Bruce Grenville, Senior Curator.

## ARTISTS' BACKGROUND

---

The following background information highlights some of the artists whose work may be explored in the school tour.

### **Gianlorenzo Bernini (1598–1680)**

Gianlorenzo Bernini was an Italian sculptor and architect, both a major figure in the world of architecture and the leading sculptor of his age, credited with creating the Baroque style of sculpture. He was also known as a painter, though few of his canvases can be identified today. During his long career, Bernini received numerous important commissions. He dominated the Italian art world of the seventeenth century, flourishing under the patronage of cardinals and popes, while also challenging contemporary artistic traditions. His sculptural and architectural projects reveal an innovative interpretation of subjects, use of forms and combination of media. He played an instrumental role in establishing the dramatic vocabulary of the Baroque style, which greatly influenced future artists. Bernini died at age 81, after having served eight popes, and was widely considered one of Europe's greatest artists.

### **Sarah Bernhardt (1844–1923)**

Born in Paris, France, on October 22, 1844, Sarah Bernhardt is regarded as one of the finest actors of the nineteenth century, appearing on the stage and in some of the earliest films ever produced. Bernhardt was raised by her mother and attended the Paris Conservatoire when she was a teenager. She later achieved widespread fame acting on stages throughout Europe and America. When the new medium of film was introduced, she was one of the first actors to appear in motion pictures, starring in her first film in 1900. Bernhardt played some seventy roles in 125 productions in Europe, the United States, Canada, South America, Australia and the Middle East. She managed several theatres in Paris before leasing the Théâtre des Nations in Paris, which was renamed Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt (today Théâtre de la Ville). Bernhardt died in 1923, and was honoured posthumously with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

### **Lucian Freud (1922–2011)**

Lucian Michael Freud was a British painter and draftsman who specialized in figurative art, and is still considered one of the foremost twentieth-century British portraitists. He was born in Berlin, the son of a Jewish architect and the grandson of Sigmund Freud. In 1938–39 Freud studied at the Central School of Arts in London, from 1939 to 1942 at the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing in Dedham and in 1942–43 at Goldsmiths College, London. In 1946–47 he painted in Paris and Greece. In 1951 he won the Arts Council prize at the Festival of Britain. Freud's early artistic practice was characterized by a meticulously realistic approach to painting. In the mid-1950s, however, he diverged from this approach in favour of looser brushwork and richer application of colour. His first retrospective exhibition was held in 1974 at the Hayward Gallery in London. During his career Freud had numerous exhibitions, including a large retrospective at the Tate Gallery in 2002.

### **Artemisia Gentileschi (1593–1653)**

Born in Rome, Italy, in 1593, Artemisia Gentileschi was an Italian Baroque painter, today considered one of the most accomplished painters of her generation. Her innovative compositions and her focus on Biblical heroines set her apart from her male contemporaries and have led to Gentileschi becoming known as a painter with a uniquely female perspective. Her father trained her as an artist from an early age. He also introduced her to many of the numerous artists of Rome, including Caravaggio, whose use of dramatic chiaroscuro (light and shadow) influenced her painting. In 1616, she was the first woman to be accepted into the Florence Academy of Fine Arts, where she continued her artistic education. During this period, Gentileschi was held in high esteem by both scholars and the royal court. She was one of the first woman artists to achieve recognition in the male-dominated

world of post-Renaissance art. In an era when female artists were limited to portrait painting, she was the first woman to paint major historical and religious scenarios. She died in Naples, Italy, in 1653.

### **David Hockney (b. 1937)**

Born in Bradford, United Kingdom, David Hockney is an English painter, draftsman, printmaker, stage designer and photographer. Known for his photo collages, as well as portraits and paintings of Los Angeles swimming pools in the 1960s and '70s, Hockney is considered one of the most influential British artists of the twentieth century. In the late 1980s, he painted mainly seascapes, flowers and portraits of loved ones. He also began incorporating technology in his art, creating his first homemade prints on a photocopier in 1986. The intersection of art and technology became an ongoing fascination, and in 2009 he started creating paintings with the *Brushes* app on iPhones and iPads. A 2011 exhibit at the Royal Museum of Ontario showcased 100 of these paintings. Hockney continues to paint and exhibit, and advocates for funding for the arts.

### **Carol Sawyer**

Carol Sawyer is a Vancouver artist whose interdisciplinary practice encompasses photography, video, installation, performance and improvised music. Sawyer's work is often concerned with memory and the construction of history, and the ways in which fact and fiction are sometimes entwined. In 1982 she received an honours diploma in photography from Emily Carr College of Art + Design, and she earned her MFA in interdisciplinary studies from the School for Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University in 1998. Since the early 1990s her visual artwork has been concerned with the connections between photography and fiction, performance, memory and history. An accomplished vocalist, she performs regularly with her ensemble *ion Zoo* and in other ad hoc improvising ensembles. She is represented by Republic Gallery. Carol Sawyer's work is in the collections of the Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa; City of Vancouver; Microsoft Corporation, Seattle; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Simon Fraser University, Burnaby; and the Vancouver Public Library.

## PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: About the Artists (intermediate and secondary students)

---

### **Objective:**

Students read, research and share information about some of the artists represented in *Portrait of the Artist: An Exhibition from the Royal Collection* and *Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive*.

### **Materials:**

- writing materials
- access to the Internet
- Artist Information Sheet (p. 8), Student Worksheet (p. 9)

### **Process:**

1. Divide the students into seven groups. Cut up the Artist Information Sheet (p. 8) and assign one artist to each group.
2. Give each group a copy of the Student Worksheet (p. 9), and ask them to transfer the information about their artist to the appropriate box.
3. Have students figure out what they need to know to complete the section on their artist, and have them find it on the Internet, either at home or at school. Older students can find more information; younger students, just the basics.
4. Ask each group to find/copy/sketch a piece of work by their artist on a separate piece of paper. Do not label with the artist's name or any other information.
5. Have each group present the information on their artist while the rest of the class adds the information to their worksheets.
6. After the presentations, lay out the images, and have the class guess which image is by which artist.

### **Conclusion:**

#### Discuss:

- What were some of the most interesting things that students learned or discovered?
- Which artists and/or kinds of artwork made students curious about seeing the actual work in the exhibition?
- Are there any artists, ways of working or ideas that the students would like to know more about?

# Artist Information Sheet

---

## Gianlorenzo Bernini

- Born in 1598 in Naples, Italy, died in 1680 in Italy
- Italian sculptor and architect who also made drawings and paintings
- Credited with creating the Baroque style of sculpture
- Received numerous important commissions and served as an artist to eight popes
- Widely considered one of Europe's greatest artists

## Sarah Bernhardt

- Born on October 22, 1844, in Paris, France
- Regarded as one of the finest actors of the nineteenth century
- Earned widespread fame acting on stages throughout Europe and America
- One of the first actors to appear in motion pictures, starring in her first film in 1900
- Died in 1923 in Paris, and now has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame

## Lucian Freud

- Born in Berlin in 1922, died in London, England, in 2011
- British painter and draftsman, specializing in figurative art
- Known as one of the foremost twentieth-century British portraitists
- Studied in London, England, and painted in Paris and Greece
- Used loose brushwork and rich application of paint and colour
- Has had numerous exhibitions at major museums and galleries

## Artemisia Gentileschi

- Born in Rome, Italy, in 1593, died in Naples, Italy, in 1653
- An Italian Baroque painter
- Considered one of the most accomplished painters in her generation
- First woman to be accepted into the Florence Academy of Fine Arts in 1616
- First woman to paint major historical and religious scenarios

## David Hockney

- Born in Bradford, England, in 1937
- English painter, draftsman, printmaker, stage designer and photographer
- Known for his photo collages, portraits and paintings of Los Angeles swimming pools
- Began incorporating technology in his art in the 1980s
- In 2009 started creating paintings with the *Brushes* app on iPhones and iPads
- Has exhibited his work at the National Gallery in London, England, and many other notable museums and galleries

## Carol Sawyer

- Contemporary Vancouver artist
- Interdisciplinary practice encompasses photography, video, installation, performance and improvised music
- Work is often concerned with memory and the construction of history
- Received an honours diploma in photography from Emily Carr College of Art + Design in 1982
- Earned her MFA in Interdisciplinary Studies from the School for Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University in 1998
- Her work is in the collections of the Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa; City of Vancouver; Microsoft Corporation, Seattle; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, among others



# Student Worksheet

Artist	Personal Information	Type of Art	Materials Used	An Artwork
Gianlorenzo Bernini				
Sarah Bernhardt				
Lucian Freud				
Artemisia Gentileschi				
David Hockney				
Carol Sawyer				

## PRE- or POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Partner Pencil Portraits (all levels)

---

### Objective:

Students create pencil portraits of classmates.

### Discussion:

Portrait painting has been an artistic tradition for centuries. Artists have represented people in portraits showing historical figures as well as individuals from everyday life. These images prompt us to ask questions about who these people are and why they have had their images captured for others to see and contemplate. In the exhibition *Portrait of the Artist*, many portraits have been made using only pencil or graphite, enabling artists to focus on form, line and shading, rather than colours and their tones.

### Materials:

- ❑ white drawing paper (8 1/2 x 11") or sketchbooks
- ❑ pencils or graphite

### Process:

1. Discuss portraiture with the students. What is a portrait? Why do portraits exist? What kinds of portraits have they seen before? Do all portraits look realistic?
2. Have students look at the examples of portraits in the exhibition *Portrait of the Artist* on p. 11.
3. What do they notice about the way the artist has drawn the portrait? How they've used the pencil or graphite? Shading? Light vs. dark areas?
4. Discuss drawing the face. Oval head, ears in the middle, hairline from one ear to the other, eyes where the ears are in the middle, then nose halfway between the eyes and chin, and lips halfway between the nose and chin.
5. See p. 12 for instructions on drawing the proportions of the face.
6. Model for students how to begin their portrait with an oval for the face. Show them how to compose their portraits on the page, encouraging them to fill the entire paper.
7. Show students how to use their pencils in different ways to shade and create thick, thin light and dark lines. See shading examples on p. 13.
8. Have students work in pairs, sitting across from each other at a table or at their desks.
9. Have students take turns sitting for each other.
10. Encourage students to experiment using the pencil in different ways and to shade light and dark areas.
11. Display the portraits.

### Conclusion:

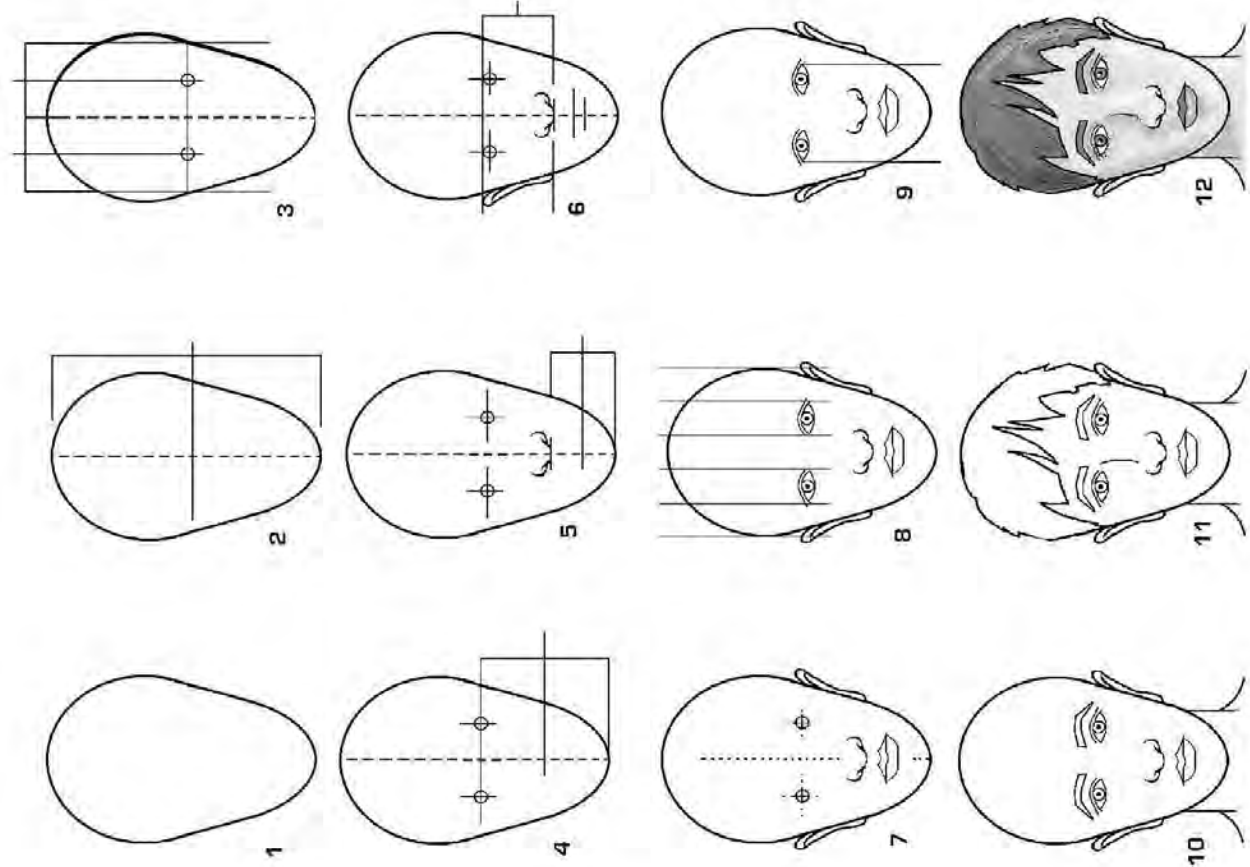
Discuss:

- What did students enjoy most about creating their classmates' portraits? What was most challenging?
- What did students discover about using a simple pencil? What techniques worked well? What techniques didn't?
- What was the most challenging feature to draw? Why?

Examples of works in  
*Portrait of the Artist: An Exhibition from the Royal Collection*



## How to draw a face in 12 steps

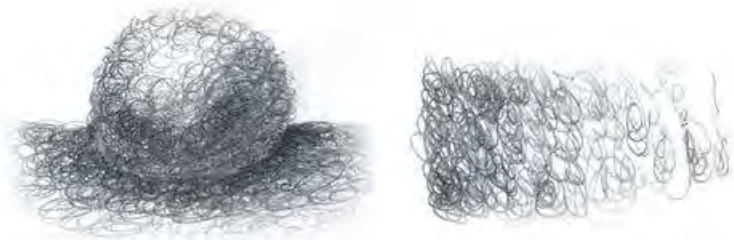


1. Draw an upside-down egg shape
2. Draw the line of symmetry and the eye line at the midpoint of the head.
3. The eye center is located between the sides of the face and the symmetry line.
4. The bottom of the nose is located at the midpoint between the eye line and chin.
5. The bottom of the mouth is located at the midpoint between the nose line and chin.
6. The ears are located between the eye line and nose line.
7. Erase your guide-lines.
8. The face is five eyes wide. Leave an eye width between the eyes.
9. The neck is found by aligning with the outside edge of the eyes.
10. Eyebrows and shoulder slope are added.
11. Hair and nose bridge are added.
12. Add value / shading to bring your person to life.

Stippling



Scumbling



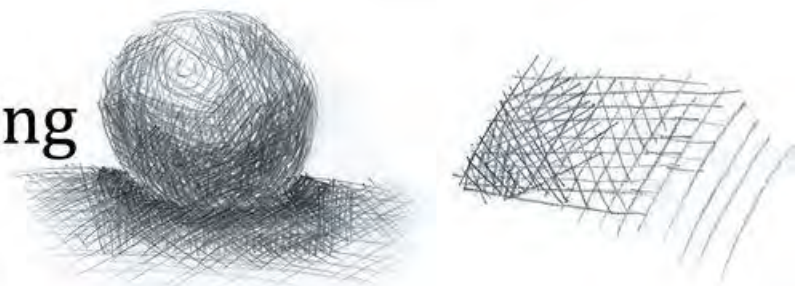
Shading



Smudging



Crosshatching



Examples of Student Work



## PRE- or POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Letters from Long Ago (intermediate grades)

---

### Objective:

Students create a fictional character who writes a letter to a female figure in Canadian history.

### Discussion:

In her solo exhibition, Carol Sawyer presents *The Natalie Brettschneider Archive*, a significant and ongoing project that centres on the life and practice of Natalie Brettschneider, a fictional artist born in 1896 conceived by Sawyer. *The Natalie Brettschneider Archive* illuminates what often gets left out of history. Sawyer's hope is that the exhibition will encourage the viewer to be curious about not only Brettschneider, but all of the other female artists who have slipped through the gaps of history, only to remain largely unknown.

### Materials:

- access to the Internet
- Fictional Character Worksheet (p. 17)
- Women in Canadian History (pp. 18–19)
- paper and pencils
- printer

### Process:

1. Discuss the concept of *history* with students. History is the systematic narrative of past events as relating to a particular period or person, according to historians. Explain to students that not every person or event is recorded or sufficiently documented. Ask students: Why does this happen? Who are some people that might have been left out of history books or not given much attention? Why? Have students consider gender, race and class.
2. Discuss the work of Carol Sawyer in the exhibition *Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive*.
3. Explain to students that Sawyer created a fictional character, Natalie Brettschneider, born in 1896 in New Westminster. She then created fictional scenarios where Natalie Brettschneider meets and interacts with female artists who actually existed but have remained largely unknown. In the exhibition, there are fictional letters that Brettschneider wrote to these artists, many of whom lived in the 1930s. Sawyer has her fictional character, Natalie Brettschneider, interact with these female artists, so that we learn more about them and they become visible.
4. Explain to students that they will be creating a fictional character who lived a long time ago. This fictional character will write a letter to female figures in Canadian history who existed, some of whom were historically acknowledged and some who remain more obscure.
5. Using the six biographies provided on pp. 18–19, assign a historical figure to each student. Copies of the biographies can be printed, cut out and distributed to students.
6. Provide each student with a copy of the Fictional Character Worksheet on p. 17.
7. Students will create a name for their character, give them dates of birth and death that fit their assigned historical figure's dates, and make up three interesting facts about them.
8. Have students use the Internet to research their chosen period in history to assist them in imagining what it was like to live during that time.

9. Once their worksheets are completed, encourage students to further research their historical figures using the Internet.
10. Have each student write a letter to their assigned historical figure, written from the point of view of their fictional character.
11. Encourage students to write at least two or three paragraphs.
12. Display the letters in the classroom alongside the historical biographies.

**Conclusion:**

Discuss:

- Discuss the process of creating a fictional character. Was it challenging? Why or why not? What did they enjoy most about the process?
- What did the students find most interesting about their assigned historical figure?
- What did students have to take into consideration while planning their letter?
- How did this activity help to expand their understanding of Canadian history and history in general?



## Fictional Character Worksheet

Name:

Date and place of birth:

Date and place of death:

3 facts about your character:

1.

2.

3.

## Women in Canadian History



### **Ga'axstal'as, Jane Constance Cook (1870–1951)**

Kwakwaka'wakw leader, cultural mediator and activist. Born on Vancouver Island, Ga'axstal'as, Jane Constance Cook was the daughter of a Kwakwaka'wakw noblewoman and a white fur trader. Raised by a missionary couple, she had strong literacy skills and developed a good understanding of both cultures and legal systems. As the grip of colonialism tightened around West Coast nations, Cook lobbied for First Nations to retain rights of access to land and resources. She testified at the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission of 1914 and was the only woman on the executive of the Allied Indian Tribes of British Columbia in 1922. A fierce advocate for women and children, she was also a midwife and healer and raised sixteen children.



### **Viola Desmond (1914–1965)**

Challenger of segregation practices in Nova Scotia. Long before the modern civil rights movement in the United States, a black woman from Halifax took a stand for racial equality in a rural Nova Scotia movie theatre. It was 1946, and Viola Desmond, a hairdresser, caused a stir by refusing to move to a section of the theatre unofficially set aside for black patrons. Desmond was dragged out of the theatre and jailed. While officials denied that Desmond's race was the root of the issue, her case galvanized Nova Scotia's black population to fight for change. In 1954, segregation was legally ended in Nova Scotia.



### **Pauline Johnson (1861–1913)**

Poet and public speaker. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake) is best known for her poetry celebrating her Aboriginal heritage. The daughter of George Johnson, a Mohawk chief, she wrote stories about Aboriginal women and children that were based in an idealistic setting but were more realistic than those written by her contemporaries. Some of her work is included in *Songs of the Great Dominion* (1889), edited by W.D. Lighthall, the first anthology to include French-Canadian and Aboriginal poetry. Johnson travelled across Canada, the United States and England to give speeches and poetry readings. Her patriotic poems and short stories made her a popular ambassador for Canada.



**Jean Lumb (1919–2002)**

Businesswoman and community organizer. Jean Lumb, one of twelve children, was born in Nanaimo, BC. She left school at age twelve to work and support her family. In 1935, she moved to Toronto and opened her own grocery store at age eighteen. Lumb was the co-owner and Director of the Kwong Chow Restaurant in Toronto for twenty-three years. She was the first Chinese Canadian woman and the first restaurateur to receive the Order of Canada for her tireless community work. Most notably, she was recognized for her pivotal role in changing Canada's immigration laws that separated Chinese families, and for her contribution to saving Chinatowns in Toronto and other cities. Her many awards and honours included a Governor General's Award, City of Toronto Award of Merit, Elizabeth Fry Society honouree, YWCA Women of Change honour roll and, posthumously, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Award.



**Hide Hyodo Shimizu (1908–1999)**

Japanese-Canadian educator and activist. Born in Vancouver, Shimizu studied at the University of British Columbia and the Teachers' Training School. She earned her teaching certificate in 1926 and began teaching Grade 1 at Lord Byng School. She was the first and only Japanese Canadian to receive a certificate, as shortly thereafter, the provincial government refused to grant one to any other Japanese Canadian. At age eighteen, in 1936, Shimizu was the female member of a delegation of four sent to Ottawa by the Japanese Canadian Citizens' League to seek the franchise for Japanese Canadians. Parliament defeated the motion, but she and the others set a precedent for a non-white community demanding the vote. When Japanese Canadians were removed from the BC coast in 1942, Shimizu was asked to supervise the education of Japanese Canadian youth first in Hastings Park, a clearing house for Japanese Canadians being expelled from the coast, and then in the internment camps of the interior. She was inducted into the Order of Canada in 1982.



**Portia May White (1911–1968)**

Pioneering concert singer. Born in Truro, Nova Scotia, in 1911, Portia White broke through the colour barrier to become the first Black Canadian concert singer to win international acclaim. Considered one of the best classical singers of the twentieth century, White made her national debut as a singer in Toronto in 1941, and her international debut in New York City in 1944. A three-month tour of Central and South America followed in 1946, and she sang in France and Switzerland in 1948. White was named a "person of national historic significance" by the Government of Canada in 1995. She did not make any studio recordings, but her voice can be heard in several concert recordings, including the song recital *Think on Me* (1968). The Portia White Prize is awarded each year by the Nova Scotia Arts Council to an outstanding Nova Scotian in the arts.

## PRE- or POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Selfie-Portraits (all levels)

---

### **Objective:**

Students draw self-portraits to create *selfies*.

### **Discussion:**

Traditionally, portraits have been drawn, painted, sculpted or photographed professionally. In today's world, modern technology has enabled individuals to take their own photographs easily using smartphones or digital tablets. The term *selfie* is commonplace slang and the practice of taking one's own photograph has become an everyday activity. The appeal of selfies comes from the ease with which they are created and shared, and the control photographers have over how subjects present themselves. Many selfies are intended to present a flattering image of the person and are often shared on social networking services such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The practice is reminiscent of a bygone time in Europe, when it was popular for people to have small miniature portraits of themselves painted to share with loved ones.

### **Materials:**

- ❑ smartphone template sheet (p. 21)
- ❑ pencils
- ❑ coloured pencils
- ❑ black fine-tip markers (optional)
- ❑ scissors
- ❑ mirrors
- ❑ personal electronic devices

### **Process:**

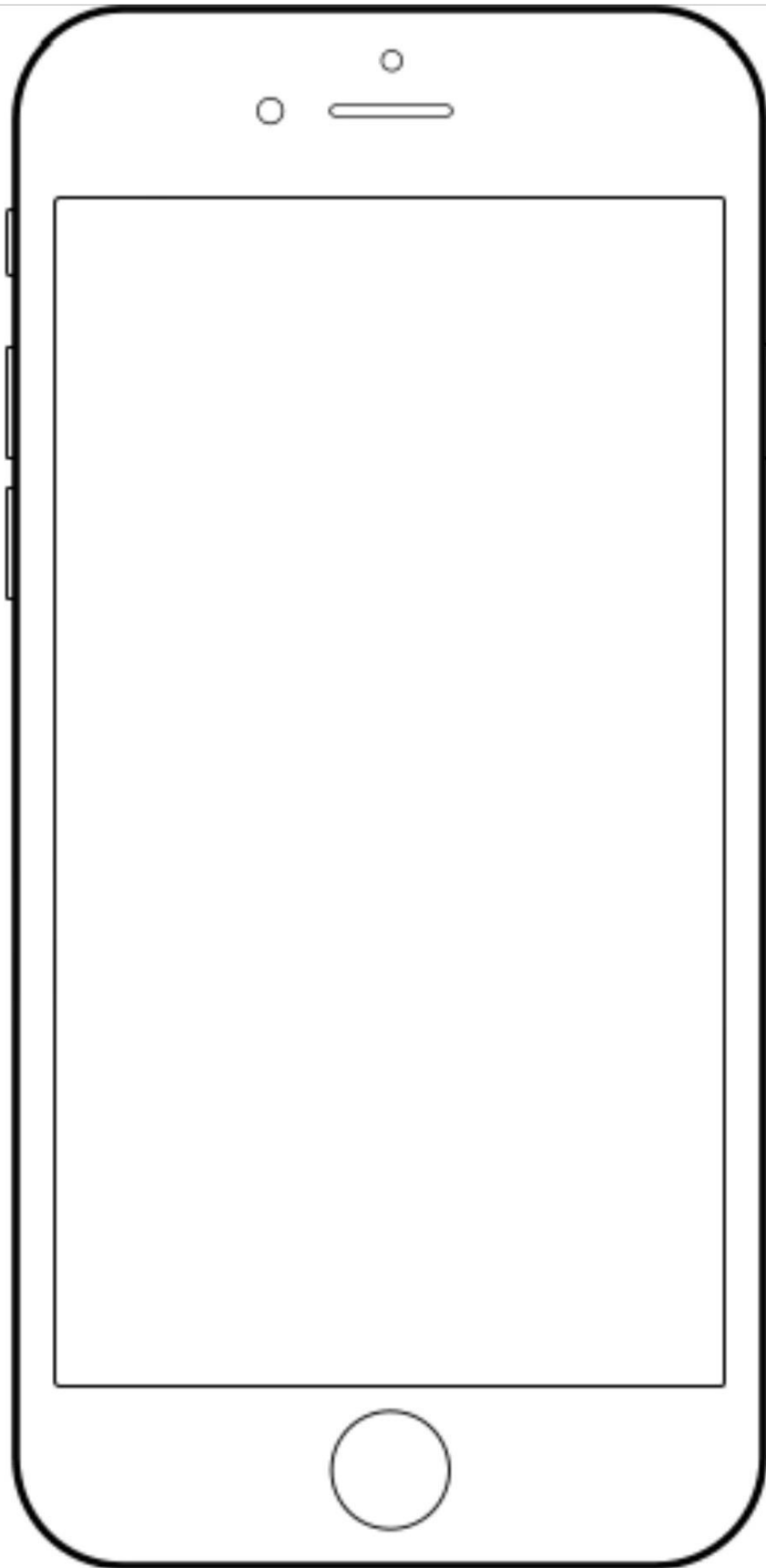
1. Discuss self-portraits with the students. Ask why they think people have images of themselves in photographs, paintings, drawings or sculpture. You may also suggest the following ideas about portraits:
  - They create milestones from which individuals can observe change.
  - They mark a particular point or an important event in one's life.
  - They suggest someone who is celebrated or important to a group.
2. Self-portraits allow people to present themselves as they want to be seen by others. Ask students to identify how self-portraits can communicate something about someone's personality or interests (clothing, props, expression, pose, etc.)
3. Ask students to discuss how self-portraits are commonly made today, using technology, and talk about the concept of the selfie.
4. Explain to students that they are going to create a selfie-portrait joining a traditional practice with a modern-day one.
5. Provide each student with a copy of the smartphone template on p. 22.
6. Using mirrors or their own electronic devices (smartphones or tablets), have each student choose a pose and draw that image in the screen area of the paper "smartphone."
7. Have students start by lightly sketching the face with pencil. Encourage them to fill the screen area with their portrait.
8. Have them use fine-tip permanent black markers to define some outlines, then add colour.
9. Have them decorate the "frame" around the screen with patterns and colours of their choice.
10. Once the self-portraits are complete, have students cut out the smartphone template.

11. *Optional:* Laminate the selfie-portraits.
12. Display the final works.

**Conclusion:**

Discuss:

- Are the final works similar to each other, or different? How so?
- Talk about the process. How easy or hard was it to draw the selfie-portrait?
- What did students have to take into consideration when planning their drawings?
- How might students see selfies differently now?



Examples of Student Work



## PRE- or POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Digital Portraits (all levels)

---

### Objective:

Students create portraits using digital technology.

### Discussion:

David Hockney is a British painter, considered one of the most influential British artists of this century. In addition to painting, he is also an accomplished photographer and, more recently, a digital artist. Many artists have embraced the digital age by creating digital paintings, most popularly on the iPhone and iPad, with apps such as *Brushes*, which Hockney uses.

### Materials:

- ❑ iPads (1 or more)
- ❑ stylus pens (optional)
- ❑ access to the Internet

### Process:

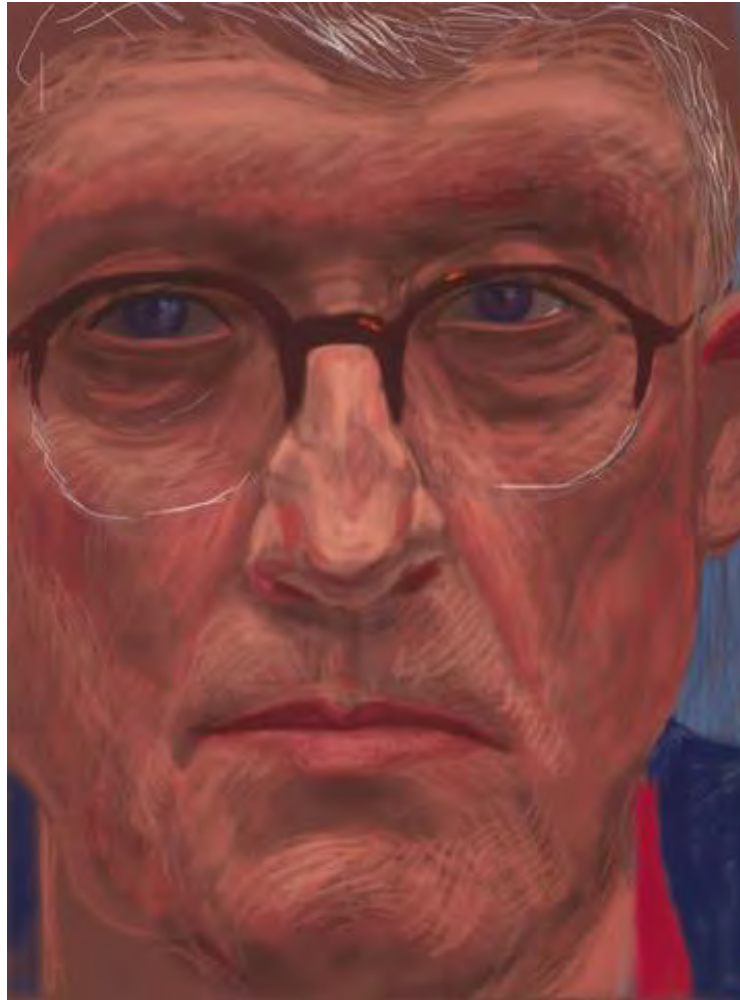
1. Purchase the app *Brushes* and install onto iPads. A free version called *BrushesRedux* is available in the App Store.
2. Have students look at the work of David Hockney on p. 25. What do they notice about the work? Explain to students that Hockney drew his self-portrait using the app *Brushes*. Ask students to discuss how it is different from a traditional painting. Have them notice the lines and colours.
3. Explain to students that *Brushes*, an iPad app, is an artistic tool used by artists all over the world, yet it is also simple enough for beginners.
4. Explain the process for the activity. Refer to the following YouTube video: *Digital portrait on Brushes App* for step-by-step instructions:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjNu5uivDy4>
5. Once students understand the process, have them start their work.
6. Have each student take a photograph of himself or herself to begin the process.
7. If iPads are not available for the entire class, have students take turns using a single iPad at assigned times or days. Have students save their work, so that they can continue working on it at varying times.
8. Alternatively, students can use their devices (iPhones or iPads) at home or bring them to class for the activity.
9. Have students share their final works. You can use the playback function to watch the art being drawn on the screen.

### Conclusion:

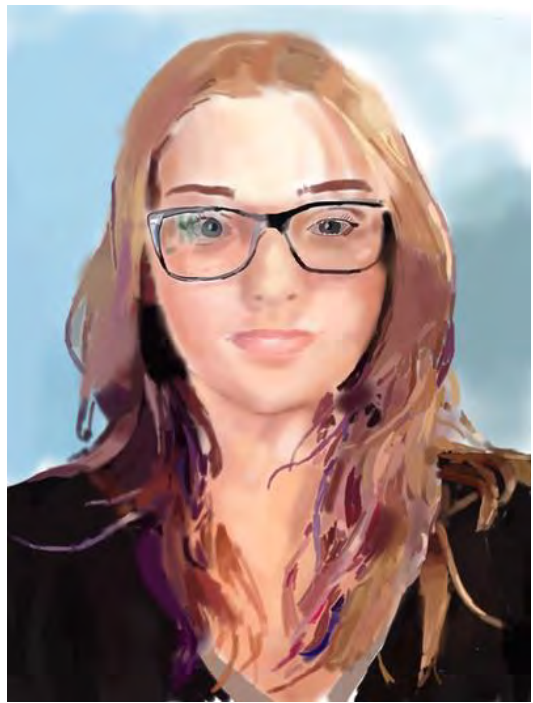
- Ask students about the process. Was it easy or challenging? In what ways?
- What did they enjoy most about the process? What did they enjoy least?
- How are the students' final works similar or different?
- What did they learn from the process?



Self-Portrait by David Hockney using iPad



Examples of Student Work



## VOCABULARY

---

**archive:** a collection of historical documents or records providing information about a person, place, institution or group of people.

**Baroque:** a period of artistic style featuring exaggerated motion and clear, easily interpreted detail to produce drama, tension, exuberance and grandeur in sculpture, painting, architecture, literature, dance, theatre and music. It originated in Rome during the period c. 1590–1720.

**chiaroscuro:** the treatment of light and shade in drawing and painting; an effect of contrasted light and shadow created by light falling on something unevenly or from a particular direction.

**contemporary:** belonging to or occurring in the present; also art created in the last thirty years. Most contemporary artists are living artists.

**installation:** art that is created from a wide range of materials and installed in a specific environment. An installation may be temporary or permanent.

**interdisciplinary art:** a branch of study that employs multiple disciplines in the examination of a specific topic, within the domain of the arts.

**Modern/Modernist:** a historical period of art practice—from 1850 to 1970—during which approaches to art embraced new ideas in science, political thought and many other areas. The Modernists rejected the restrictions of past art traditions and stressed innovation over all other values.

## RESOURCES

---

**Print:**

Reynolds, Anna, Lucy Peter and Martin Clayton. *A Portrait of the Artist: An Exhibition from the Royal Collection*. London: Royal Collection Trust, 2016.

**Online:**

[www.artcyclopedia.com](http://www.artcyclopedia.com)

[www.biography.com](http://www.biography.com)

[www.carolsawyer.net](http://www.carolsawyer.net)

[www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu)

<http://ipadartlessonz.blogspot.ca>

<http://jeanlumbfoundation.ca/>

[www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)

<https://najc.ca>

<http://oasart.weebly.com/blog>

[www.pinterest.co.uk](http://www.pinterest.co.uk)

[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca)

<http://thevirtualinstructor.com>

[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

## Vancouver Art Gallery School Programs Supporters:

Corporate Partners:



Visionary Partner for Community Access:

*diamond*  
FOUNDATION

Generously supported by:

**Ace and Hemsä Fipke**

Visionary Partner for Art Education:

**Ji Ping Bai**

Additional support from:

**NORDSTROM**

**Sheldon Gilmour Foundation**