

Art Exchange

Teen Artist Statements





Art Exchange is a full-scholarship visual arts program for students ages 12 to 15 from across the Lower Mainland.

Over eight months, students meet weekly to explore and unpack exhibitions at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and then respond to the artworks through reflective studio practice at Arts Umbrella.

This program offers a unique opportunity for teens to express and expand their creative practice working with a wide range of ideas and exhibitions.

Full scholarships are provided through the generous support of **Terrence and Lisa Turner** and **Elmar and Christine Klukas**.



Images: Installation views of flags, created by teens as part of the Art Exchange program, a partnership with Arts Umbrella, and now on view in the interpretive area for *The Tin Man Was a Dreamer: Allegories, Poetics and Performances of Power* at Vancouver Art Gallery until November 1, 2020, Photo: Ian Lefebvre, Vancouver Art Gallery



Maide Akan

Music of the Steppe, 2020

mixed media (acrylic and watercolour)

"What empowers me most at present is the culture and nature of the Great Steppes of Eurasia. I come from Kazakhstan and the nomadic culture of my ancestors is a significant part of who I am. It is intrinsic to my artwork.

Meanwhile, nature is a vital extrinsic factor to my creativity. I perceive all plants and creatures in nature as its music. My flag design is based on both. I depicted *Shanyrak*, the dome of the nomadic house- yurt that symbolizes the eternal sky, *Eagle* that is a symbol of freedom, *Tulips* that originated from those lands, and finally *Fire* that gives life to those who live in the harsh climate of the Steppe."

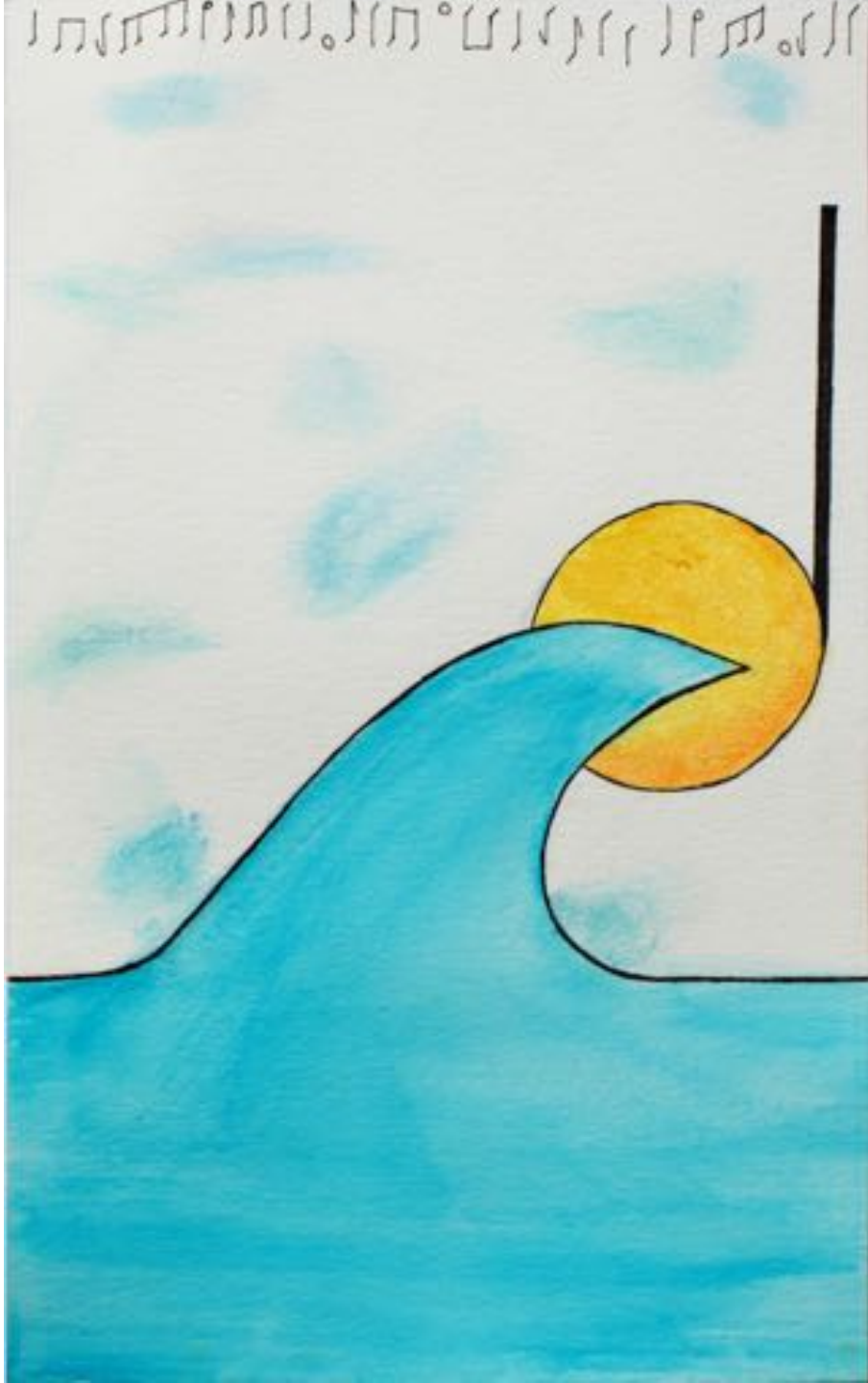


Ezra Avdeyev

Glass of Water, 2020

graphite on paper

"This glass of water is neither half full, nor half empty. What does a full glass of water mean to you?"

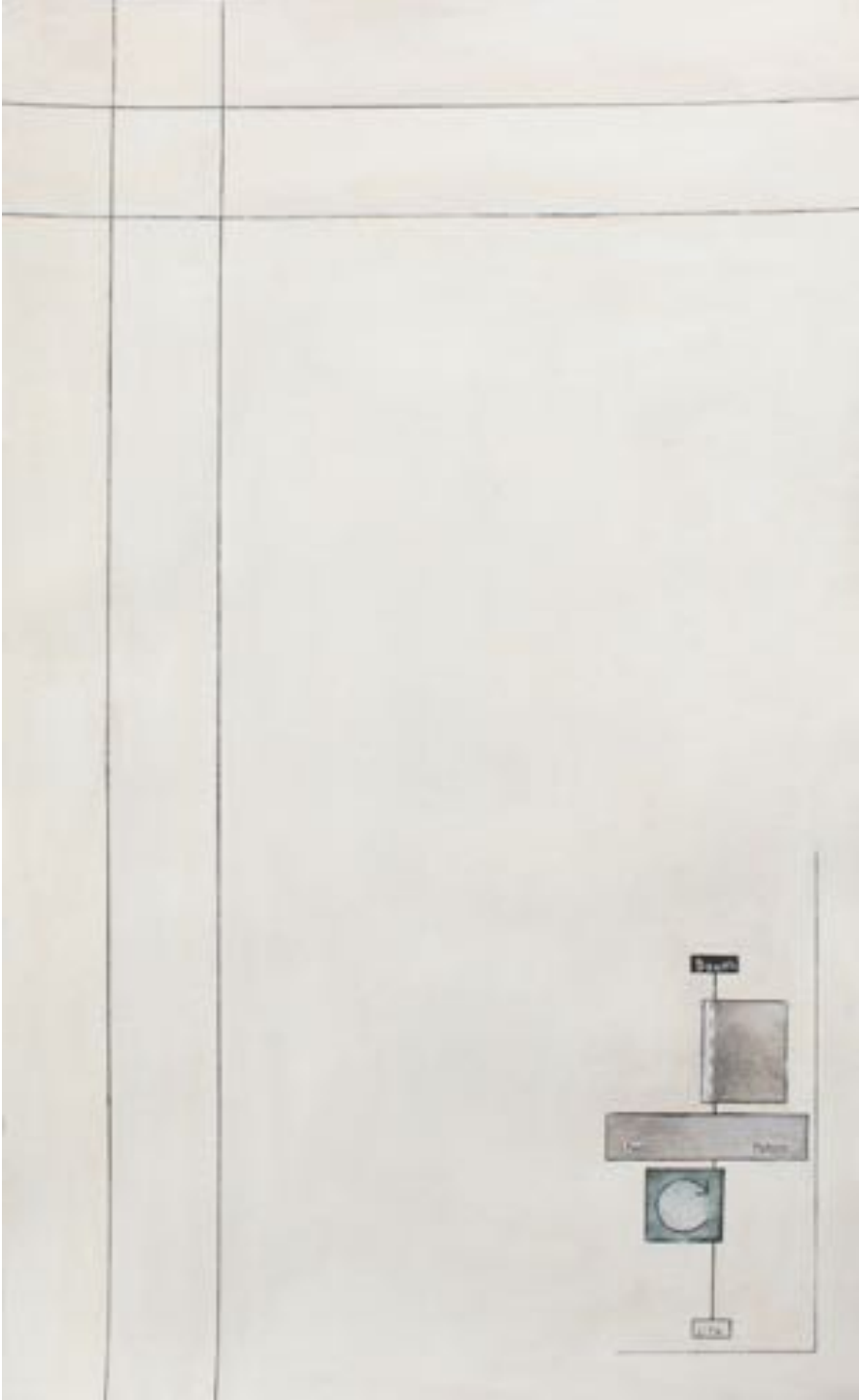


Katherine Brand

Bold Sound, 2020

watercolour, black ballpoint pen

"My artwork is in response to the concept of branding and what it represents for different people. My 'brand' is composed of the different things that I like and that represent me, here being music, going to the beach, and the use of watercolour that expresses my love for art."



Amy Chen

Life Choice, 2020

watercolour, Gouache, pen, and pencil

"My flag is about the choices everyone can make in life. There are times when people can choose to move on or regret. They can restart with fresh ideas on life, or live in the life they made before. The choices you make, make you who you are today."



Stella Grynspar

perspectives throughout the joy of thought, 2020
digitally made

"These are the thoughts I had on a rainy day. Thinking about things I realized I am very happy now and I think this is the way it could be expressed. It does not need explanation, as the art of happiness does not need one. That is the corniest utter nonsense but I think it's true to me at least."

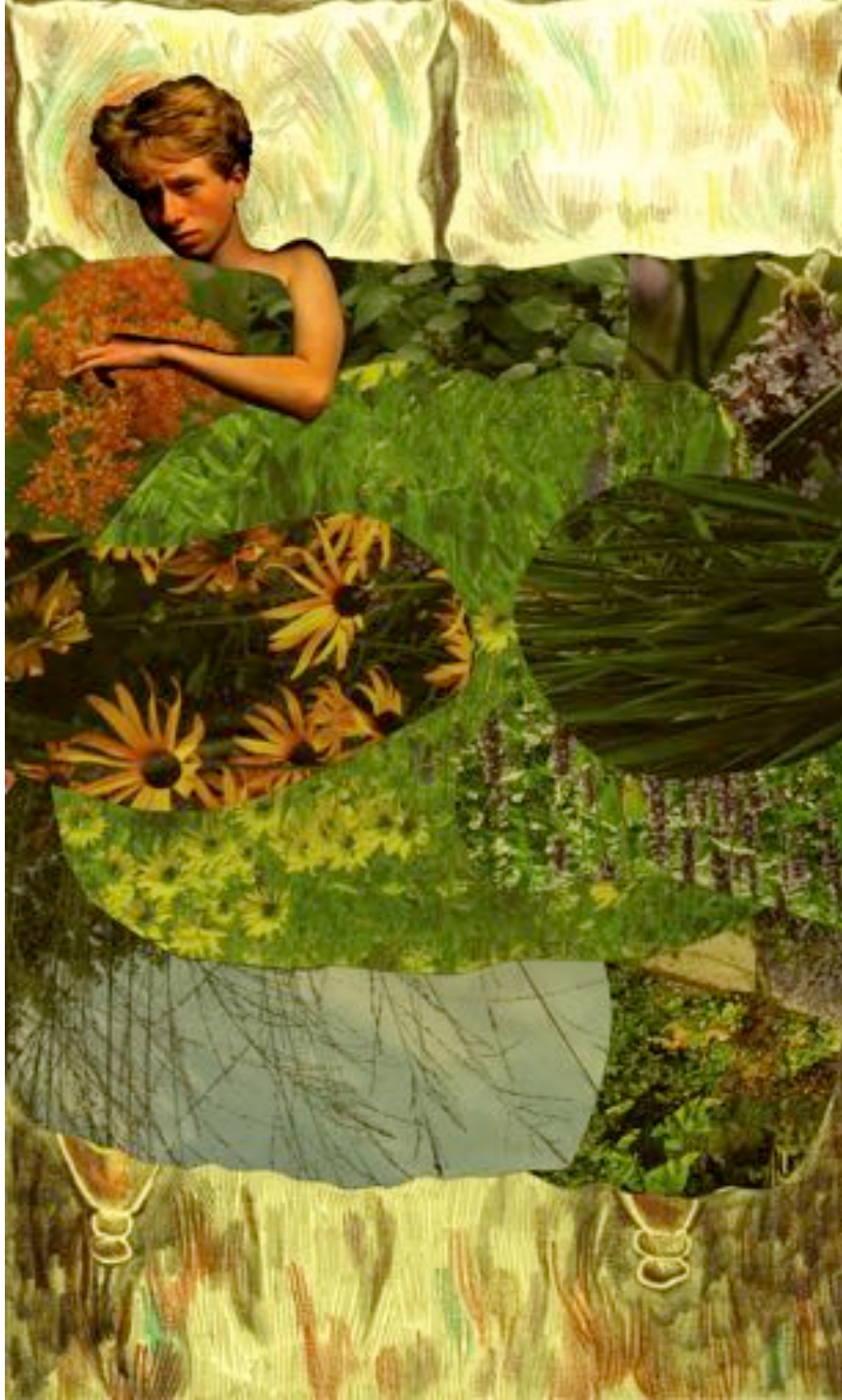


Lucas Kosa

It's Our Turn, 2020

ink, paint, charcoal on paper

"The majority of power in the world is held by an elite few. At times young people like myself struggle to voice our opinions in fear of not being taken seriously by those who hold power. However, it has become clear that we cannot remain silent any longer. This piece calls upon those who have clung to power to let go and share it with those who are no longer willing to wait for change."

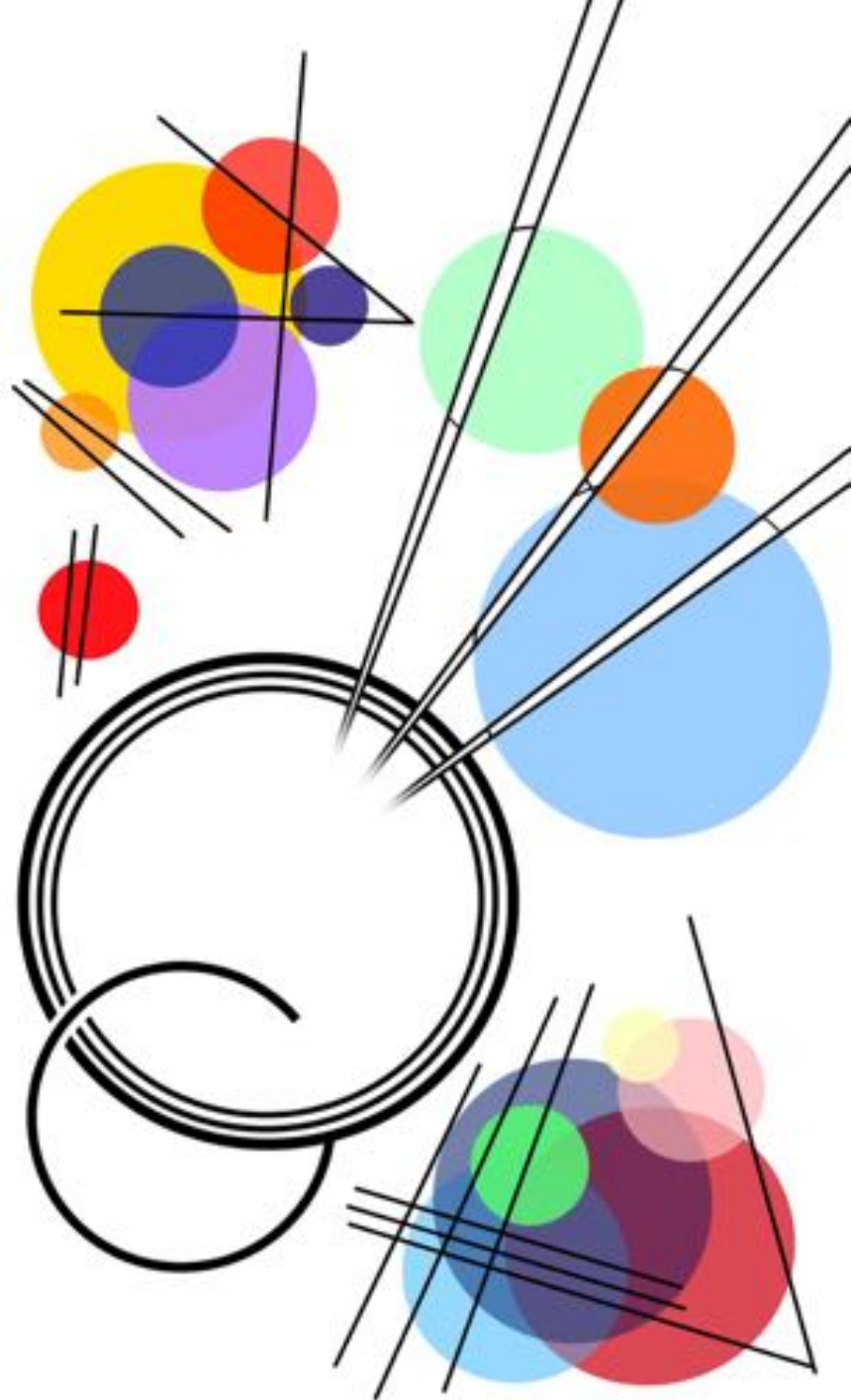


Zachary Munday-Ritchie

All the fear and the fire, 2020

digitally made

"In this work I show, through the symbol of a quilt, the joy that comes from two things: the synthesis of different cultures in our communities, and the returning to the earth—rotting and decomposing. Through my use of an abundance of flowers, I signified the duality of vulnerability and strength that we need to go forward. In this piece, I show the beauty of all the things we come from and how we come back to them."



Lucy Pan

Circles, 2020

digitally made

"My flag represents my social groups primarily using the circle shape. I find empowerment and comfort around the people I trust, and talking to a variety of different people with their own opinions is something I greatly value. The straight lines throughout my piece symbolize the connections I have with distinct crowds of individuals and my relationships."



Tana Rahim

Awaiting, 2020

iPad Pro 2017, Procreate, Apple Pencil

"This combination of symbols consists of a person covering their ears, mouth, and left eye, with a Third Eye on the forehead, the Third Eye representing: thought, conscious, and the subconscious. It represents how most people including me tend to think and behave—thinking before acting, first saying nothing or saying what will seed the best outcome. I've made this icon into a pattern with a rainbow gradient to represent individuality, society, the Rainbow flag and peace. I left the pupils black to symbolize that at the end of the day we are all the same, we are one species, one big civilization and we must unite to avoid chaos. What is most empowering about this for me is the power one person possesses, the power I possess—that every action, small or big, will affect someone else, and I am willing to use it for good."

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ARTWORKS
ABSTRACT
SUBVERSIVE
PROBATION
CRISIS EQUALITY SOCIALISM
OUTDOOR WORKS
WALKING TAKING OBSERVING MAKING
WORKS
DIRECTIONAL SOLVING FOREIGN EXPERIMENT
FRAGMENTATION
ABSTRACT DECONSTRUCTION ANALYSIS CRITIQUE QUESTION
EXPERIMENTAL
DECONSTRUCTION OBJECTIVE BOUNDARIES MINIMALISM

Simon Tanglao

Untitled, 2020
pen on paper

"My sources of empowerment are numerous, changing, fluid, but also subjective. I wanted to create a piece that reflected all of its complexity and ambiguity, that was not one static symbol, meaning or message, but that represented many. In creating this piece, I wanted to draw in the viewer, to make them consider and think about what empowers me, but also them."



Mikaela Wong

Look, not Listen, 2020
digitally made

"Not all communication is verbal—often, subtle shifts in stance hold more truth than the words formed from one's tongue. In this image the figure's hand over their mouth is a reminder that speech is not always required to convey meaning. They appear transparent and their organs are exposed in order to draw attention to the body, highlighting the often forgotten component of communication: one's body language. Paying attention to this area has taught me to be more mindful while communicating, allowing me to better understand my friends and family."



Xin Yi Li

Avenoir, 2020

digitally made

"*Avenoir* consists of my name as well as a few of my interests, expressed through a simple design on a white background. The symbol in between the triangles is a mashup of a character of my name and a music note; I chose the colour red because of my interest in Chinese Calligraphy. The triangles represent the past and the future, with the bigger one representing the past. I have incorporated a few other meanings into my shapes, and I am excited to see what viewers can come up with."



Ruobing Zhou

1949 koi, 2020

watercolour, and paper

"Koi in many different cultures are a representation of luck, as well as a creature with good qualities such as firmness to overcome obstacles. Both the skyline with the koi fish and the water it's surrounded by, are all symbols that's either correspond to my culture or are qualities I have, making this image a summary of my personal brand. I think when reading the title, people will have their own interpretation of the work, and that's the exact blank space I want to leave for them to fill."