

In the Studio with Mike Shine: Educator Guide



Flotsam's Wonder World. Photo courtesy Mike Shine, www.shinelounge.com

Subject Visual Art: Stencils

Grades 6 - 12

Standards Addressed Artistic Perception, Creative Expression, Aesthetic Valuing

Teaching with KQED Media

Using video in the classroom can breathe life and meaning into any lesson. In the arts, video can be particularly effective for introducing large concepts, aspects of the creative process, and key arts-related vocabulary to introduce students to discipline-based and concept-based study. Using media in the classroom helps connect students with artists and promotes critical viewing skills and media awareness. For more information about using media in the classroom download KQED's [Media Tips](#) teaching tool (a direct link is provided in the resource section of this guide).

Using KQED media in the classroom allows student to virtually visit a local artist, while listening to firsthand information about the artist's practice. In order to present KQED media to your entire class, you will need a projector and computer with the capacity to stream video. Alternatively, assign students to watch the video on their own or in groups. After soliciting student responses to the video, continue the lesson by implementing hands-on or discussion activities to deepen the impact of the media – ideas are provided in this guide.

Making the Most of Media

The following activity ideas may be used in the classroom after viewing the KQED video “In the Studio with Mike Shine” and “Making Stencils with Mike Shine.”

➤ *Stencil a Symbol*

Mike Shine has recently been working on a large-scale, multi-layered stencil mural in the Tenderloin area of San Francisco, CA. In the KQED video, [In the Studio with Mike Shine](#), Mike explains and demonstrates the stenciling process and talks about his history of working with stencils. After viewing the video, invite students to create and design a stencil symbol that represents them personally.

Encourage students to consider a simple, graphic symbol that they relate to. This could be anything from the first and/or last letter of their name to a stylized design of an animal, flower or object they connect with. Begin with a sketch of the design. Ask students to draw clear, graphic shapes that can be easily cut out. Keeping designs simple, explain to students that they will be cutting away the area that will be painted. There will be no shaded areas in the finished stencil art, only the colors from the paint and the paper.

Next, provide students with a cutting blade such as an X-acto knife. For younger students, simple shapes can be cut out with scissors. If students have not used a cutting knife before, encourage them to practice on a piece of scratch paper before cutting into their stencil, experimenting with the pressure they apply to the blade, as well as moving the blade along a curved line. When the shapes are cut out, provide students with paint. Older students, grades 8 – 12 can use spray paint. Younger students can use tempera or acrylic paint that is watered down and put into spray bottles. Large paint brushes can also be used with the paint. Next, place the stencil over a piece of paper on a flat surface. Tape the stencil and spray, being careful not to let paint drip or run under the stencil. Remove the stencil and view your art! For background and a demonstration, be sure to watch the [Making Stencils with Mike Shine](#) video.

Ideas to extend learning:

- Stenciled images can also be painted on t-shirts or other fabrics. Invite students to stencil their images on a t-shirt or other item brought from home.
- Invite students to design a special logo for a school sports team or school club.
- Art has the power to communicate. Stencil an uplifting or positive image on a deck of cards, index cards or postcards and leave them where people will see them. Here are a few ideas: place them inside books before returning them to the library, leave with your tip at a restaurant, give to store employees, attach to the slats of a park

bench, tack one to a community bulletin board, make one for your teacher, or leave one in a waiting room. Just make sure your art is not considered litter!

Viewing the work of Mike Shine, it is easy to see that stenciling is an accessible way to communicate a message and spread it widely. It also provides an opportunity to initiate a discussion about private property, vandalism and graffiti. Mike Shine was given permission to paint the walls of the buildings by the property owners. He was commissioned, or paid for his work. Students should be reminded to never paint on buildings or in the streets without permission. Precaution should also be used while using spray paint and cutting knives.

➤ **Generating Art Ideas: Where Do Ideas Come From?**

Mike Shine's art reflects his interests and passions. From carnivals to clowns, Norse folklore to surfing, Shine's work reveals his fascination with the macabre. Quoted in an interview from [Curated Magazine](#), April 2001, Shine states that his interest in the carnival "happened 5 or 6 years ago, when I was painting on some driftwood pieces. I tried using an old paint crackling method learned from my days of building furniture, and it involved layers of colors. The finished pieces looked strangely familiar, and that's when I realized that they looked like chunks of a carnival I remember from my youth. Then the whole Faustian narrative sort blew up in my mind- the Flotsam the Clown angle, etc." Shine's inspiration for his carnival characters grew from a memory.

How an artist gets an idea is a theme that will be examined in the following activities. The activities are structured around building skills that encourage original thinking and imagination. Students will progress at different rates at each grade level. The process of doing and understanding is the emphasis.

- **Doodle an Idea:** Prior to this activity, create a list of ten drawing directives that will be read to the students. Directives should be simple to understand and follow in a series. Examples can include: draw a curved line, add three circles, draw four lines that relate to the first line, add 4 lines radiating to the circles, etc. Each student will need a piece of drawing paper and a pencil. When students are ready, tell them that you will be reading a set of directions that they will need to listen to and follow. Tell them not to look at their neighbors' drawings, and that directions can be repeated, but not explained. When the students are quiet, read the series of directions assuring them that there is no right or wrong way of doing this exercise. Encourage students to do what they think they should do. When everyone is finished, ask students to hang their work on the board or wall, and then discuss the similarities and differences. Discuss how each student heard the same directions, yet each drawing is unique and individual.

Encourage students to use their finished doodle as a starting point for a concept. Ask them to modify the doodle by coloring it, enlarging it, turning it into a 3D sculpture, a relief, etc., and building on the idea that almost anything can be used as a concept that leads to creating art.

- ***Build Awareness:*** Give students ten to fifteen minutes to walk around their classroom with viewfinders, small drawing boards or clipboards, and unlined sketch paper. A 2 x 2" slide frame can be used as a viewfinder, or viewfinders can be made with 2 x 2" construction or thin cardboard paper with frames cut from the center. Ask each student to make three or more quick sketches in 4 x 4" pre-drawn squares on their drawing paper. Encourage them to make one drawing per sheet. Select one drawing to improve and draw ideas from.
- ***Unlikely Juxtaposition:*** Ask students to change normal expectations. For example, hard things become soft, large is small, smooth is rough, down is up, inside is outside, light is dark, natural becomes geometric, manufactured goods grow on a farm, dream worlds become reality, etc. Encourage each student to do 10 sketches and selects three to improve. Improve one at least three times to create a final project.
- ***Conceptual Art:*** Encourage students to think conceptually by asking them to write and illustrate, in comic book style, the imaginary history of a still life object.

For example, Mike Shine paints on driftwood he finds at the beach. Can a piece of driftwood be explained and drawn in terms of its life cycle as a castle, or in the case of Shine's found driftwood, the walls of a carnival?

What if a Granny Smith apple is drawn as a portrait of Granny Smith? What did she look like? What was she wearing? Where was she? What happened when she discovered her apple? Add details to the story.

What is the story of a Stone Age tool if it is illustrated at the moment of its invention? Who was using the tool? Where was he or she? Was he or she alone, or did a group invent the tool?

Can good and bad art be created and shown with a halo and devil symbol, or some other kind of symbol? Discuss good art vs. bad art. What might that mean?

➤ *Paint on a Found Object*

Mike Shine often paints on driftwood and other objects that have washed up on the beach. Images can be seen on Shine's Website at <http://www.shinelounge.com/>. After viewing the images, discuss the following with students:

- What types of feelings are evoked because the art is painted on found material?
- Would the art have a different meaning if it was made with purchased materials?
- What can be learned from the artwork's history when it is created with found material?

Encourage students to search their home, garage, yard or thrift stores for used or found materials to be used for painting. Ask students to choose a found material that is significant to them and will serve a purpose to the art they will make.

Resources to extend learning about the exhibit, art forms and featured artists:

Mike Shine Web site

<http://www.shinelounge.com/>

"Flotsam's Wonder World" documentary by Colin M. Day

<http://vimeo.com/15823487>

Mike Shine @ 111 Minna

<http://www.fecalface.com/SF/index.php/opening-photos/4791-mike-shine-111-minna>

Dr. Flotsam at 111 Minna Gallery <http://www.111minnagallery.com/2012/dr-flotsam-and-the-carny-bastards/>

"Flotsam's Wonder World" documentary by Colin M. Day

<http://vimeo.com/15823487>

Curated Magazine interview with Mike Shine

<http://www.curatedmag.com/news/2011/04/07/curated-qa-mike-shine/>

The following KQED videos, educator guides and articles may be used for compare/contrast purposes, and to extend leaning about contemporary art:

Making Stencils with Mike Shine: Visual Arts KQED Public Media

<http://www.kqed.org/arts/visualarts/article.jsp?essid=108028>

“EdSpace” Blog post about Mike Shine – KQED

<http://education.kqed.org/edspace/tag/mike-shine/>

KQED Arts Review of Inside/Outside exhibition featuring Mike Shine

<http://www.shinelounge.com/images/news/kqed2.pdf>

KQED Spark documentary about artist [Favianna Rodriguez](#)

KQED Spark documentary about [Mission Street Art](#)

KQED Spark documentary about [Caleb Duarte](#)

KQED Gallery Crawl video People in your Neighborhood, about [Lydia Fong \(Barry McGee\)](#)

KQED Gallery Crawl documentary video [The Streets of San Francisco](#)

KQED Gallery Crawl video [The Luggage Store](#)

KQED Gallery Crawl video “Summer Selections” works by [Margaret Killgallen](#)

PBS Art:21 Documentary about [Barry McGee and Margaret Killgallen](#)

<p>For more information about KQED’s Arts Education resources, send an email to ArtsEd@KQED.org or call 800.723.3566.</p>
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