This guide is designed to prepare your students for a meaningful Art Truck experience. A basic understanding of the artist and key concepts addressed in her artwork prior to the Art Truck’s visit will heighten your students’ enthusiasm and greatly enhance their appreciation of this unique opportunity.

Included in this guide is an introduction to this year’s Art Truck exhibit by artist Mary Toscano, as well as four lesson plans that will help you reinforce important ideas in the classroom before and after your Art Truck visit. Each lesson plan indicates the grade levels for which it is most recommended, but all four lessons can be adapted to students in grades K-12.

Ask Your Students:
• How is our response to an artwork affected by how and where it is displayed?
• Why are stories important? How might a story be told without words?
• What role does narrative play in helping us understand ourselves and our world?
What is installation art?
Installation art is often created specifically for one location and is intended to transform perceptions of the space in which it is located.

How is the installation experience different from the traditional art museum experience?
The visitor cannot view the same work at a later time in a different location. Once the installation is taken down, it will never again be re-constructed in exactly the same way. Why? Because installations are site specific; that is, they are conceived and created for a specific exhibition space. Another exhibition space would require the artist to re-think the materials, configuration, and even the message of the installation.

In addition, unlike more traditional displays, installation art is meant to immerse the viewer in a transformed environment that evokes our emotions and senses. Installations can vary widely in the experience they present. For example, you may encounter a multitude of visual stimuli into a fictional world, or the experience may be subtler in its change to a particular environment. You may be asked to participate, or just observe. Installations can include an array of materials from found objects to new media including video or sound. Often experiences of installation art are focused on the viewer’s interpretation of the experience, rather than solely on the artist’s intention or materials.

In this particular truck installation, the viewer is called upon to ask questions about themselves and how they fit into the world around them. Upon entering the Art Truck, viewers are surrounded by Mary Toscano’s large-scale pencil drawings. Each single image depicts a personal narrative through characters and setting, while also suggesting broader connections to cultural issues and relationships. In addition, viewers become participants in the artwork by adding images that represent their own experiences.

Where do artists obtain their materials?
Contemporary installation artists utilize a wide variety of materials depending on their concept. These can include personal belongings, recycled materials, fabricated objects, or traditional materials like paper and pencil. The artist may collect, create or purchase these materials. Keep in mind that an artist’s materials often help communicate meaning. By working with paper and pencil, Toscano is able to compose images that include only the most essential visual information, utilizing large blank areas of the paper to place emphasis on the details that are provided and hint at what lies unseen.

Do artists know exactly what their installations are going to look like before they arrive at the exhibition site?
They usually have a general idea, but often the pieces evolve as the artist begins to work within the actual exhibition space. Often, the nature of the space itself will prompt changes and revisions in the artist’s original conception. Other considerations include safety, cost and meeting timelines.

Do installation artists assemble their work by themselves, or do they have assistance?
Installations are sometimes so multifaceted and complex that they require a fabrication team to assist the artist. For this installation, the artist worked with museum staff to install her completed drawings in the Art Truck.

Should an installation be perceived as one artwork or many?
It depends on the installation. In the case of this Art Truck installation, the inside and outside of the truck display several individual artworks, but both spaces work in conjunction with one another to communicate different aspects of the artist’s concept.

What happens to the installation art after the exhibition is over?
Unlike traditional works of art, installations are disassembled when their time is done. Some of the materials are thrown away. Others are recycled. Yet other materials are re-used in future installations.
INTRODUCTION
ABOUT THE ART AND THE ARTIST

MARY TOSCANO

Mary Toscano grew up in Salt Lake City and attended the University of Utah, earning a BFA in Printmaking and Photography. Using paper as her primary medium in the form of drawings, prints, or installation, she addresses the individual’s relationship to the collective through ambiguous yet emotional visual narratives.

Through careful composition, delicate lines, and washes of color, Toscano’s drawings evoke personal stories played out on the page by her recurring characters within sparse landscapes. Sometimes playful but more often with a sense of unease, the drawings form subtle associations to existing cultural norms, myths and histories. She says, “Narratives are important because they help us ask and answer questions about ourselves and our world. They help us think about and analyze our experiences and relate them to a larger community.” The suggestive power behind her visual narratives allows the viewer to form their own understanding of the fictional story before comparing it to their individual lived experiences.

As much as the construction of a visual narrative remains apparent in each of her individual works, Toscano’s subject matter ranges widely from one piece to the next. She has explored themes such as human isolation, memory, culture, politics and the environment.

INFLUENCES

Toscano’s artistic influences and interests are always evolving, but include reading books, listening to podcasts, and exploring design and art blogs. Recently, she has revisited Neil Gaiman’s *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, a novel that includes elements of myth, religion, and childhood fears and anxieties. The interviews in the podcast *Mystery Show*, hosted by Starlee Kine, inspire Toscano to actively connect with each of the people in her own portraits or stories.

In addition to these different forms of media that influence her work, the artist appreciates the ability to collaborate on projects with friends and other creatives, as well as work as an artist’s assistant for Salt Lake City–based retired architect Jim Williams. Working closely with another artist in this way “gives me the opportunity to learn new techniques and ways of working, as well as see how an artist can sustain their practice over a lifetime,” she says.
INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE ART AND THE ARTIST

THE ARTISTIC PROCESS

Contemporary life and access to information offer up a never-ending source of ideas, processes and artistic identities that are open for sampling, recycling and exchange. The following discussion will help your students understand that the artistic process — research, creative thinking, collaboration, choice of materials, and manipulation of these materials — can be as important and meaningful as the completed work.

For Mary Toscano, the beginning of the process of creating artwork is marked by an idea. As she pursues the idea, its evolution is often directed by multiple factors such as time, cost, location and collaborators. Using the example of a project currently in-progress, Toscano describes how she wanted to make a large body of work for and about just one person. She envisioned a series of artworks about her friend that took different forms, like drawings, sculptures, embroidery and projections. After gaining the friend’s approval for what the artworks would be like and how they would be displayed, the artist was able to set up meetings to photograph the friend in their own space. These photo shoots provided Toscano with the visual resource material needed to begin forming the artworks. By working with someone already in her life, Toscano is able to closely study and understand the subject of her artworks.

Just as a poet carefully chooses their words to create meaning, an artist carefully chooses their materials (or media) to convey ideas and thoughts. Although she works primarily with paper materials, Toscano creates many different kinds of art objects, from books to sculptures to drawings. For this exhibit, the artist has used paper and pencil to fill the walls of the Art Truck with images, each frame telling a story about the characters depicted within. These materials — paper and pencil — are the same ones that are typically used to tell stories in written form.

What role does collaboration play in Toscano’s artistic process?
What materials do you see in the truck? Why do you think Toscano chose these materials? How do these materials fit into Toscano’s ideas about sharing a story? How would her artworks be different if she had chosen different materials?
How might the artist’s images be similar to or different than a written account telling the same story? What challenges might an artist encounter when choosing to share a story with pictures instead of words?

MOBILE GALLERY

The space in which we view a work of art can influence the way we see it. Normally, artwork is viewed in a museum setting. Here the context has been changed. Rather than traveling to a gallery to see artworks, the gallery has the ability to travel to you.

How is viewing art in a truck different from visiting a museum? Does it change the way you see and understand the art?
What are some advantages to having an art exhibition in a truck? What difficulties might there be with creating a gallery in a truck rather than a museum?

DISCUSSION TOPIC

What is a narrative?
Why might someone create a narrative?
What are the different ways in which we share narratives?
What is culture?
How does culture inform how we create and understand narrative?

A narrative is a spoken or recorded account of connected events, in other words, a story. The ability to create and share narratives with others is an integral way in which humans create culture all over the world. It is believed that sharing both verbal and visual stories goes back tens of thousands of years in human history, although we may never know for sure when and how the first story was told.

In addition to being an important aspect of culture, narrative can serve many other functions such as offering a warning, teaching a lesson, providing entertainment, or establishing social connections. A narrative can be found in almost any format, including oral storytelling, epic poetry, dance performance, cave paintings, graffiti, comic books, films, and much more.

Symbols and metaphors are often used within narratives as a way to convey complicated ideas. In art, much of what artists create is intended to convey a metaphor to the viewer. Telling a story through visual symbols can be an effective way to share nuanced experiences and concepts with an audience.
INTRODUCTION
ABOUT THE ART AND THE ARTIST

THE ARTWORK

DOG DAYS
INTENTIONS
Students will explore the presence of lines within the physical world, as well as lines in two-dimensional art. Students will understand the various lines that exist all around them and then create a contour line drawing by tracing the shadow of an everyday object.

BACKDROP
Line is an element of art, one of the basic building blocks of creating an artwork. A line is a mark made by moving a single point through space, just like what appears when you move the tip of your pencil across your paper. However, a line can have many different qualities, like thick, thin, zigzag, diagonal, smooth, irregular, or even three-dimensional. What other words could you use to describe a line?

Actual lines are marks or objects that exist physically in the real world, such as the branches of a tree, the yellow paint on a road, or the marks made when writing or drawing. Contour lines describe the edges of objects. When looking at an object in real life, we can imagine a line that separates the object from its surroundings, like an outline or border. If you change your perspective, the contour of that object will also likely change.

CONVERSATIONS
What is a line? Where do lines exist?
What kinds of lines exist in our environment? What kinds of lines exist on you?
What is the difference between an actual line and a contour line?

ACTIVITY
After introducing line and discussing the prompt questions to generate students’ own ideas, create small groups of two to three students. Ask each group to find a real life example of contour line in their environment. These examples can be found on anything from chairs or scissors to a model skeleton. Have students point out the contour of their object to you. Explain that they will be creating contour line drawings using the shadow of their objects, and that objects with interesting shadows will work the best for their artwork.

Once each group has an item to reference, set up a light source so that the shadow of their object falls on a flat surface where students can place their papers. Once each group has found a pleasing shadow arrangement, allow them to take turns tracing the edges of the shadow, so that each student has their own individual contour drawing.

Optional Vocab: Use this exercise as an opportunity to to discuss positive space and negative space. Do any of the contour lines in the students’ drawings define interesting areas of negative space? How does this relate to the negative space of the object in real life?

Expansion: Have students trace the shadow of their object several times, rotating the object in between to create slightly different shadows, but layering each tracing on top of the one before on the same paper. Students should use a different color for each contour, and then compare how rotating the object impacts the final shape seen on the page.
INTENTIONS
Students will understand emphasis as a principle of art, and use line as a way to create emphasis in a collage artwork. Students will recognize the role emphasis plays within visual culture in their daily lives.

BACKDROP
As a principle of art, emphasis is the way in which the artist draws the viewer’s attention to a particular area of the artwork. This center of interest is called the focal point. Emphasis is used to highlight important visual information, and is a tool used by artists as well as designers, city planners, and advertisers.

Emphasis is common within visual culture, which is the term we use to describe the many different ways we represent our world through images. Art is just one small part of visual culture. Billboards, clothing, and social media are all examples, as well. Why would an advertisement or website benefit from the use of emphasis?

CONVERSATIONS
What is collage?
What is emphasis?
What are examples of emphasis from your environment? On a T-shirt? A house? A sign?
Why would someone want to use emphasis in these areas?
How is emphasis used in art?
How could line be used to create emphasis in art?

ACTIVITY
Explain that each student will create a self-portrait using collage and incorporate emphasis into the artwork in order to highlight their favorite thing about themselves. Designate time for students to brainstorm and select the characteristic they wish to emphasize. Is it physical or internal? Is it something you are most proud of? Encourage students to verbalize the reason(s) behind their decision; thinking about why they are emphasizing this aspect of themselves will help make the image stronger.

Discuss how emphasis could be applied in a collage using a few visual aides. For example, what is being emphasized in this collage by Hanna Hoch? How is this accomplished? One particular way to create emphasis is by using converging lines to focus attention on one area of the image. This can be done with actual lines, implied lines like directional gaze from eyes, dashed lines, or shapes organized in a row. At the minimum, students should use converging lines as one method of creating emphasis in their collage.

Other optional strategies to promote emphasis are: contrast between one shape and its surroundings (a square surrounded by circles), contrast between one color and its surroundings (a giant splash of red among cooler blues), constrast of value (bright white amid a wash of dark cloudy grey), or isolationation of an object (surrounding the object with blank space).

Have students use colored paper, magazine clippings, and other available collage materials to cut out and glue together their self-portrait collage. Assist students throughout the process to succesfully incorporate emphasis. Share the collages in small groups so that students can discuss what and how each artist communicated their favorite characteristic.

MATERIALS
Paper (colored paper and/or white paper)
Markers, colored pencils
Collage materials such as magazines, old brochures, newspapers, printed images
Scissors
Glue sticks

LINKS
Hannah Hoch
www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/hannah-hoch
Mark Bradford
www.saatchigallery.com/artists/mark_bradford.htm
Kirstine Roepstorff
www.saatchigallery.com/artists/kirstine_roepstorff.htm
LEsson 3

IMPLIED LINES  GRADES 3-12

INTENTIONS
Students will investigate implied line by creating an artwork using line, pattern and an everyday object.

BACKDROP
An image can be divided in two types of visual space: **positive space** and **negative space**. Positive space is the space that is occupied by object(s) or subject(s), while negative space is the area between and around the object(s) or subject(s). The shape of the positive space in an artwork is determined by the shape of the subject. Like positive space, negative space has shape as well, but the shape of negative space borders and fills in all the space of the paper not occupied by positive space.

Similar to the way negative space forms a shape that isn’t really there, **implied lines** are lines that we can see even though they don’t really exist. Implied line can be created using values, colors, textures and shapes that are arranged to guide the eye in a particular direction. They are found in the gaze between two people and also when our mind fills in the gaps between objects, such as in a line of lights in the ceiling.

CONVERSATIONS
What are positive and negative space? How do they relate to each other?
What is implied line?
How might an image suggest a line without using an actual line?
How might positive and negative space be used to imply lines?

ACTIVITY
Introduce the activity by asking students to create an implied line using physical objects within the classroom. This can be done by creating a line of buttons, arranging pencils a certain direction, or even waving arms and contorting the body. Discuss how implied lines exist all around us and can be created in many different ways. How were implied lines achieved using objects in the room?

To make their artwork, students will use stencils to block off areas of their paper as they fill in the exposed sections with a line–based pattern. They have the option to place a three-dimensional object on their paper to serve as a stencil, or to cut a two-dimensional shape out of colored paper and use a roll of tape to stick it onto their drawing surface. Remind students that they will not be outlining their stencil (this would create an **actual line**), but instead they will be using it as a temporary guide to suggest that a line exists on their paper.

Around the stencil, students will create a linear pattern that fills the exposed space of their paper. If using paper stencils, rulers may be helpful to continue lines through the shape uninterrupted. Each student’s pattern can vary in weight, repetition, color, value, or rhythm. Once students have finished their pattern, they will remove the stencil to reveal the blank space underneath. In the empty space, the students will then continue their pattern after rotating the direction of their lines.

Discuss how the two-dimensional implied line drawings compare to the three-dimensional implied lines created at the very beginning of class. Do lines actually exist in either example? How was implied line achieved in these different ways?

MATERIALS
- White paper
- Everyday objects or colored paper, scissors and tape to create stencils
- Pens, pencils, markers, crayons
- Rulers

LINKS
- Bridget Riley
  www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/bridget-riley-1845
- Hollis Hammonds
  www.hollishammonds.com
- Gabriel Orozco
  whitecube.com/artists/gabriel_orozco
LESSON 4
LINE + NARRATIVE  GRADES 7-12

INTENTIONS
Students will investigate different forms of narrative by writing a story based on a drawing created from their personal lens of experience. This lesson is designed to work well as a follow-up in the classroom after students have completed their Art Truck visit.

BACKDROP
A narrative is defined as a spoken or recorded account of connected events; in other words, a story. Narratives come in many different forms, including the visual stories created by Mary Toscano and many other contemporary artists.

CONVERSATIONS
What is a narrative?
What are some reasons to tell a story?
Can a story have multiple meanings or interpretations?
How might a story mean something different to different people?
What are culturally significant ways we tell stories?
How might your culture inform how you interpret a story?
Are there differing interpretations of Mary Toscano’s artwork?
How do the artist’s intentions influence the viewer’s interpretations?

ACTIVITY
To review after your students’ Art Truck visit, lead a brief discussion of Toscano’s artwork. Ask questions to help each student further brainstorm what they believe is the story within each image, as well as form ideas of what it means to ‘read’ a visual text. What do you see? What characters are in the drawing? What are they doing? What hints are given to communicate setting to the viewer? What are the characters’ facial expressions? What feeling does the image give you?

Explain that students will create a written narrative to go along with the drawing they created during the Art Truck visit (students will have already answered guiding questions and created a single panel drawing that includes key information to communicate their narrative). Have them think further about the basic components of a story: setting (where and when), characters (major, minor, protagonist and antagonist), and plot (exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution). The key elements of the students’ drawings should be included in their written stories. The intention of the stories they write can be informative, cautionary or humorous.

Set the length of the written assignment to one typed page, or adjust this length based on appropriateness for your class. Once students’ written narratives are completed, have students take turns presenting the visual and written versions of their narratives side-by-side to the class. Have a discussion in which you compare and contrast the two. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each type of narrative? Is your drawing just as successful by itself as a visual text to be ‘read’?

Share copies of your students’ written and visual narrative pairings with UMOCA!

MATERIALS
Paper and pencil or computers

LINKS
Trenton Doyle Hancock
www.pbs.org/art21/artists/trenton-doyle-hancock
Swoon
www.artnet.com/artists/swoon
Clementine Hunter
www.gilleysgallery.com/Artist-Detail.cfm?ArtistsID=672
HOW TO SCHEDULE A VISIT

The Utah Museum of Contemporary Art makes the Art Truck available free-of-charge for a wide variety of educational and charitable purposes. To schedule an Art Truck visit, please contact elly.baldwin@utahmoca.org.

RESOURCES

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION
CORE CURRICULUM LINKS

Visual Arts – Grades 3-6
Core Standard 1, Objective 2
• Predict the processes and techniques needed to make a work of art.
Core Standard 2, Objective 1
• Analyze and reflect on works of art by their elements (line, shape, color, form, texture, space, and value) and principles (e.g., balance, emphasis, and pattern).
Core Standard 3, Objectives 1 and 2
• Explore possible content and purposes in significant works of art.
• Discuss, evaluate, and choose symbols, ideas, subject matter, meanings, and purposes for artworks.

Core Standard 4, Objective 3
• Recognize the connection of visual art to all learning.

Secondary Fine Arts – Visual Arts; Art History and Criticism
Core Standard 1 Visual Arts - Making, Objectives 1 and 2
• Understand techniques and processes in a variety of media.
• Explore how works of art are organized using art elements and principles.
Core Standard 2 Visual Arts - Perceiving, Objectives 1 and 2
• Critique works of art.
• Evaluate works of art.

Core Standard 3 Visual Arts - Expressing, Objective 1
• Perceive content in works of art.
Core Standard 4 Visual Arts - Contextualizing, Objectives 1, 2 and 3
• Align works of art according to history, geography, and personal experience.
• Synthesize visual art with other educational subjects.
• Evaluate the impact of visual art on life outside school.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FAMILY FUN

After visiting the Art Truck, students and their families can make a record of art in unexpected places through photography, drawing, and writing.

Ask them to share their discoveries with us by sending ideas, comments, and images to: elly.baldwin@utahmoca.org

NOTES: