

Educator Guide

In October 2010, Gallery Crawl checked out *From the Collection of Randi and Bob Fisher* at Pier 24 on San Francisco's Embarcadero. The group exhibition examines the work of several twentieth century American photographers. This guide provides resources for educators to support the utilization of this online virtual visit to the gallery to teach about contemporary art. The Gallery Crawl video can be found at www.KQED.org/gallerycrawl. Information about taking your students to the galleries can be found at the bottom of this guide.

Exhibition *From the Randi and Bob Fisher Collection*

Location Pier 24 Photography on the Embarcadero, San Francisco, CA [Google Map](#)

Grades 6 - 12

Standards Addressed Artistic Perception, Creative Expression, Aesthetic Valuing

* **NOTE:** Always remember to preview Gallery Crawl video content before sharing it with your students. Some references may not be appropriate for your classroom.

The Exhibition

In October 2010, **Gallery Crawl** headed to the edge of the bay to view selections from another Fisher Family collection boasting over 1,000 images shot by iconic American artists. Unlike his parents Doris and Don, Bob Fisher focused on collecting photography by important American artists in depth. *From the Collection of Randi and Bob Fisher* at Pier 24 is the first large-scale exhibition of the work and features important works by May Ray, Lee Freidlander, Diane Arbus, and William Eggleston among others. In an exclusive interview with **Gallery Crawl**, Bob Fisher discusses the roots and inspirations that have been fueling his collecting practice for nearly 30 years.

Teaching with Gallery Crawl

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. Using a Gallery Crawl video in the classroom allows student to virtually view a local art exhibit, while listening to firsthand information about exhibitions from curators, gallerists, and artists. In order to present Gallery Crawl 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. Gallery Crawl is also available as a free video podcast on iTunes and YouTube. 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 your Virtual Visit

The following activity ideas may be used in the classroom after viewing the Gallery Crawl Video, **and/or** after a school tour of Pier 24 Photography.

➤ **Interpreting and Discussing Photographs**

Collect several groups of photographs using books, magazines or a library collection that represent different styles of photography. Include portrait, documentary, landscape, adventure, wildlife, historical, snapshot, color, and black-and-white. Ask students to develop a vocabulary list to interpret and discuss the images in the different groups. Vocabulary words can include but are not limited to balance, composition, background, foreground, middle ground, color, contrast, focal point, point of view, symmetry, asymmetry, juxtaposition, rhythm, scale, texture and shape. Invite students to compare two different photographs from one style of photos. Ask students to describe each image using the list of vocabulary words, identifying the subject, elements of style and point of view of the photographer.

For an extension to this lesson, invite students to choose one image and write a short story about what is happening in the photograph. Include in the story elements of place, time, people, objects and any specific details that support the photograph. If the image is historic or representational of a specific place and/or time, encourage students to research and discover what the objects or places are, including any specific details that support the image. Invite students to share their stories with the class.

➤ **Photography and Truth**

Consider the role of photography as a document of truth. Discuss as a group how photography has historically had an analogical relationship with places, people and objects in the world and has often been thought of as a truthful document to be used as a means to help explain a specific place or event, with the intention of making it easier to understand. Compile a group of photos from artists shown in the exhibition, *From the Randi and Bob Fisher Collection*, which both represent and misrepresent the truth. Include images from Walker Evans, Robert Adams, Lee Friedlander, Diane Arbus, Man Ray and Edward Weston. Encourage conversation about the notion of truth in photography and if truth is an important aspect of photography. How have our ideas about the uses of photography changed and why?

➤ **Intention**

Collect a group of photographs of the same subject, such as animals, trees, flowers, buildings, etc. Using the vocabulary listed above, discuss with students the different ways that viewpoints can be expressed. Talk to students about using specific elements, such as color, texture, point of view or composition to communicate intention.

Using a digital, cell phone or disposable camera, ask students to take 3 -4 pictures of the same object with the intention of conveying a different perspective, point of view, or feeling with each image. Select an object from the classroom or on campus, such as a tree, chair, bench, door, etc. After the images are complete, display them together and invite each student to discuss his or her group of photos, including how they were made and what perspective or intention they were trying to achieve.

Invite the other students to respond by assessing how well their intention was achieved. Keeping away from terms such as "good," and "bad," encourage students to speak about specific elements in the image, such as "the bright colors in this image successfully communicate playfulness and joy." Encourage students to relate specific elements to intention.

➤ **Create a "Rayograph"**

Works of Man Ray's are included in *From the Randi and Bob Fisher Collection* exhibition. Man Ray explored processes for creating photographic images without the use of a camera. This type of imagery is called a photogram, or renamed by Man Ray, a Rayograph (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Man_Ray). Man Ray created a Rayograph by placing objects directly on the surface of a piece of photo sensitive paper and then exposing it to light. The result is a negative shadow image that varies in tone. Areas of the paper that received no light appear white. Those exposed through transparent or semi-transparent objects appear grey.

Provide photosensitive (sun print) paper for each student. Ask students to collect a variety of objects with interesting shapes. Intricate and flat objects work well, such as feathers, leaves, keys, combs, string, etc. Explain to the students that the image that will appear in the print is the shape of the object, rather than the detail, texture or dimension of the object. In the classroom before exposing the paper to sunlight, invite students to arrange the objects on the surface of the paper to create an interesting composition. Next, expose the print to sunlight. Exposure time will vary depending on the brightness of the sun, from 10 minutes on a bright sunny day to 30 minutes on an overcast day. Rinse the surface of the paper with water until the water runs clear, taking care not to expose the print to sunlight while it is drying as well as keeping the print flat while it is drying.

Dark construction paper can be used as a substitute for the photosensitive paper. As with the photo paper, objects are placed on top of the construction paper, which is then set out in the sun. Exposure to sunlight will cause the paper to fade, resulting in a dark silhouette of the objects. While this is a simple and inexpensive way to create a print, it does require several hours of exposure time to direct sunlight.

When the printmaking is complete, invite discussion about the process used to create the prints and the value of experimentation during the art making process.

➤ **Camera as Sketchbook**

Many artists use a sketchbook to record information about what attracts them to the people and places they observe. Using a digital, cell phone or disposable camera, invite students to use a camera as a sketchbook, taking images to investigate and explore light, color, form and texture. Ask students to choose a favorite place (park, street, building, home, etc.) to create a series of images with the intention of documentation. Invite students to share their images with the class and discuss if this method of recording information was effective and useful.

➤ **Inspired by the Visual Elements**

Using a digital or cell phone camera, invite students to take an image somewhere in the classroom or school grounds that is interesting to them. Encourage them to look at and see familiar places with a new perspective, exploring shape, light, form, color and texture. With the images printed, invite students to write a free verse, short poem or haiku about the image, using the visual elements of the image to inspire theme, tone, format, length, etc.

Visiting the Gallery

From the Randi and Bob Fisher Collection exhibition is showing at Pier 24 Photography in the Embarcadero, San Francisco, CA. The exhibition will be on view through September 16, 2010 to February 28, 2011. School tours are welcome, but appointments are required. For gallery hours, location and public transportation, visit the gallery Web site listed below.

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

Pier 24 Photography

<http://www.pier24.org>

Pier 24 Photography: *From the Collection of Randi and Bob Fisher*

<http://www.pier24.org/exhibitions/current.html>

Art Practical, *Entertaining Wonder When Rationality Seems to Fail*

http://www.artpractical.com/review/from_the_collection_of_randi_and_bob_fisher/

Wikipedia entry on photogram

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/photogram>

Wikipedia entry on sun prints

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_Printing

The following KQED [Spark](#) & [Gallery Crawl](#) documentaries and educator's guides may be used for compare/contrast purposes, and to extend learning about contemporary art:

KQED Spark documentary and educator guide about photographer [Roman Loranc](#)

KQED Spark documentary and educator guide about Conceptual artist and photographer [Trevor Paglen](#)

KQED Spark documentary and educator guide about photographer [Todd Hido](#)

KQED Gallery Crawl documentary and educator guide about Holly Andres's photo exhibition [Sparrow Lane](#)

KQED Gallery Crawl documentary and educator guide about Katherine Westerhout's photo exhibition [Rust Belt](#)

Visit the KQED Spark Web site for additional Educator Guides and videos about local contemporary artists at www.KQED.org/spark. Also available are educator resources on media literacy and production, using video in the classroom, standards-based arts instruction, program development, and more. For more information about KQED's Arts Education resources, send an email to ArtsEd@KQED.org or call 800.723.3566.