



Strand: Visual Art
Level: Grades 6,7,8
Content: 45 minute
broadcast +
hands-on activity

LIVE Arts with Jean-Sébastien Gauthier : Living Sculpture and Drawing

This dynamic program introduces students to new ways of making visual art. Using examples from contemporary and historical art, Jean-Sébastien will discuss performative approaches to art making. Students will learn how to create living sculptures from their own bodies and everyday materials, and will be inspired to use these temporary constructions as models for sketching and drawing.

Artist Biography

Jean-Sébastien (JS) Gauthier is a Fransaskois artist from Saskatoon. His art practice combines a range of disciplines, including sculpture, video, and performance.

JS is the grandson of sculptor Bill Epp, well known for creating public sculpture for cities throughout Saskatchewan and the world. As a child JS apprenticed in his grandfather's bronze foundry. After high school, JS studied animation, worked in a sculpture foundry in France, and studied Fine Arts at Concordia University in Montreal.

JS's sculptures, videos, and performances have been exhibited throughout Canada, the US, and Europe. In 2014, he collaborated with two other Saskatoon artists to create a bronze monument titled « The Spirit of Alliance ». This public work commemorates the alliance between First Nations People and the British Crown during the War of 1812.

Curriculum Aims & Goals

Creative/Productive:

Students will create living sculptures and sketches.

Critical/Responsive:

Students will learn how some artists express their ideas using contemporary art forms.

Cultural/Historical:

Students will learn about conceptual art and the use of everyday objects as art materials.

Broadcast (45 minutes)

Presentation 1: Artist Bio.

Activity 1: Artistic warm ups.

Presentation / Discussion 2

What is an artistic practice? What is the role of practice for visual artists?

Demonstration / Activity 2

Draw the path of a balloon in motion.

Presentation 3

Art History: materials and ideas.

Performance art and drawing: Raphaele de Groot.

Demonstration and Activity 3

How to create a living sculpture.

How to make quick drawings / sketches.

Materials and resources for the broadcast

- 6 balloons (not inflated) for class
- A pencil and several sheets of paper for each student.

Curriculum Outcomes; www.curriculum.gov.sk.ca

CP6.12

Demonstrate increased skills and problem-solving abilities in a variety of visual art media.

CR6.3

Examine arts expressions and artists of various times and places.

CP7.12

Use image-making skills, tools, techniques, and problem-solving abilities in a variety of visual art media.

CR7.3

Examine and describe how arts expressions of various times and places reflect diverse experience, values, and beliefs.

CP8.12

Solve visual art problems using a variety of processes and media.

CR8.3

Investigate and identify how arts expressions can reflect diverse worldviews.

CH8.4

Examine and respond to the work of artists who incorporate more than one art form in their work (e.g., combining poetry and music).

Post Broadcast Activity (45 minutes)

Preparation

The day before doing the activity, ask the children to bring clean rags, pieces of fabric, old sheets or clothing from home. These materials will be used to disguise and dress the children who will be the live models/sculptures for drawing. (If students want the materials returned to them, they should be labeled.)

Once the materials have been collected, place all rags, sheets, balloons, string and tape on a table.

Activity

1. Warm-ups (5 minutes)

Ask students to:

- Stand in a circle
- Stretch arms, legs, fingers, hands, neck
- Do eye exercises: look at objects near and far in succession, follow your thumb with your eyes (without moving your head) while making large circles
- Take three deep breaths

*Remind students that it is important to see well and to find a calm energy within.

- Ask students to inflate balloons and place them on the table.
- Return to form a circle.

2. Preparing and selecting materials for making living sculptures (3 minutes)

- Remind students that visual artists need materials to create new artworks. Students will collaboratively make living sculptures from which to sketch.
- Tell students that each person will select one material to add to the living sculpture from the pile of sheets, balloons, rags, etc. While remaining in a circle, ask students to look at the materials on the table and to silently choose one particular thing that they would like to use.
- Ask each person at a time to get their one item from the table and place it in the center of the circle or at the front of the classroom.

3. Demonstration: first living sculpture (5-8 min)

- Select / ask for two volunteers: one student will take the role of sculpture and the other will be the sculptor.
- For this exercise the sculptor will have 1-2 minutes to make a living sculpture with all the materials inside the circle. This should be improvisational and free. To add to the surprise the kids watching can turn their backs until the sculpture is complete.

List of materials for the post broadcast activity

- A pack of balloons (1-2 balloons per student)
- Sheets of paper/ 8.5x11 or larger if available (4 per student)
- Pencils
- Markers or crayons
- Newspaper (1 or 2 full papers)
- Masking tape (about 1 roll for every 3 students)
- Scissors
- 3-4 balls of yarn or string
- Clean fabric scraps, old clothes and rags (children can bring from these from home)
- Clothespins
- One or two tables on which to place the materials
- Space requirements: if possible, allow enough space for students to work in a circle in an open space.

****Note :** while sculpting/dressing the sculpture be careful that they do not overheat. Also nothing should be tied around the model's neck.

- Once the time for sculpting has elapsed, ask the sculpture to remain still for 30-60 seconds.
- Ask the group to walk in a circle around the sculpture to see all its sides.
- Lead a short discussion;
 - o Imagine you are in an art gallery now. Does the sculpture remind you of other things? (The links that can be made are important to make connections with the world around us)
 - o Did the sculptor have a clear idea?
 - o Observe folds in the surface of cloth, colors and volumes of the sculpture. By moving around the sculpture, forms change. Do you see the breath of the sculpture? What does the sculpture sound like?
- Thank the living sculpture and have the sculptors gently remove the materials from the model.
- Have students return all materials to the table.

4. Living sculptures and drawings in groups (25 minutes)

Sculpting and Drawing

- Divide students into groups of three. Each group will choose a person who will become the living sculpture to start. (All students will have the chance to become a sculpture)
- Give a felt pen/crayon, a pencil and two sheets of paper to each student.
- All materials (sheets, rags, balloons, string) can now be used by groups to create living sculptures.
- In each group, two students will dress/sculpt their model with the materials. They will have 4 minutes to complete this task. The models should remain silent. *See photo below for an example.
- Next, students will have 3 minutes to make a drawing of the sculpture that covers the whole page vertically, from top to bottom. We should see the feet of the model at the bottom of the page, and head at the top. The goal is to draw a sketch, or a picture that serves as a reference, and not to a specific representation. What is important is to leave a trace of our actions on the paper. If the model moves continue to draw and try to redraw the moving parts in a new way or new colour.
- Once the 3 minutes are up, gently remove materials from the sculpture and return them to the materials table.
- Repeat the exercise two more times to ensure every student has the chance to be a sculpture.

Reflection (4 minutes)

- Have students respond verbally or write down their thoughts on the back of their drawings.
- Possible questions: During the broadcast, Jean-Sébastien Gauthier discussed the idea that visual artists should practice like athletes, musicians, etc. Did repetition of the activity allow you to develop new strategies and ideas? Did the repetition/ practice make the activity easier or more difficult? Which drawings most accurately depict what you observed? Why?

*Photo Example: Three sculptures that were produced by students in less than 5 minutes.

