

***INTERNATIONAL ORANGE:***  
**Celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Golden Gate Bridge with Stephanie Syjuco**



Artwork by Stephanie Syjuco. Photo by Jan Stürmann

**Subject** Visual Art: Painting

**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.

## Featured Artist: Stephanie Syjuco

In celebration of the Golden Gate Bridge's 75th anniversary, local artist Stephanie Syjuco built an expansive shop in a monochrome palette: the memorable orange hue of the Golden Gate Bridge. Working with the same paint used to keep the bridge looking fresh, Syjuco's installation for the International Orange exhibition at Fort Point features all things reddish-orange: teacups, jewelry, postcards, and tchotchkes. Introduce your students to Stephanie and her project in our video, *In the Studio with Stephanie Syjuco*, which is available on YouTube and [KQED.org/Edspace](http://KQED.org/Edspace).

## Making the Most of Media

The following activity ideas may be used in the classroom after viewing the KQED video [In the Studio with Stephanie Syjuco](#).

### ➤ Commemorating a Special Place

Growing up in San Francisco, the Golden Gate Bridge was always an iconic background in Stephanie Syjuco's life. She describes the bridge as familiar and comforting and compares her rediscovery of the bridge like getting in touch with a relative that she had not seen in a long time, but that she knew was always there in the background. <http://www.international-orange.org/artist/stephanie-syjuco/>

Her proposal for the International Orange project was to create a souvenir shop, *The International Orange Commemorative Store*, stocked with a variety of typical souvenir objects: key chains, books, etc., all painted with the original bridge color, International Orange (which was later changed for a less toxic paint color, simply called "Golden Gate Bridge.") Syjuco's proposal was to create thousands of hand-constructed objects in the bright orange hue, encapsulating the experience of what people remember most about the bridge: the color. Although none of the objects are for sale, visitors are invited to take a free bridge-colored postcard. Her intention could be seen as a reminder that memories and experiences cannot be bought and that an object cannot replace an experience.

Ask students to recall places that have influenced or changed them, or altered their way of understanding or experiencing the world. Invite students to create a list of special places. Places can be in their own community or far away in a different country. Out of the list, ask students to choose one place that had the greatest impression or influence on them. Encourage conversation by asking the following questions:

- Why reasons do you have for choosing the place you did?
- What do you remember most about this place and what was your experience there?
- If you were to commemorate this place with an object, what would that object be and how is it representative of your experience?
- Do you have a keepsake from the place? If you do, did you purchase the keepsake or was it free?
- Syjuco talks about the bridge giving her a sense of familiarity and comfort. What emotions and memories does your place suggest?

Invite students to design and create a commemorative, hand-constructed object to signify their experience of their chosen place. The objects can be anything from a hand colored postcard or object to a small,

handmade sculpture created from found objects. Remind students that the intention is to create an object with value that is only felt or seen by the individual that experienced the place.

### ➤ **Discussing Conceptual Art**

Stephanie Syjuco is described as a conceptual artist. Ask students to explain what they know about conceptual art. Ask them to give examples of any conceptual artworks or artists who work in this genre (see the resources section at the end of this guide for videos about other conceptual artists for compare/contrast purposes).

Introduce the ideas supporting the conceptual art movement in which an artist deliberately avoids using traditional art materials and techniques and instead creates works of art based solely on an idea or concept. This idea takes precedence over the art's physical representation. Based on the intellect rather than the eye, conceptual art often relies on the text or the dialogue surrounding it. The work does not necessarily fit conventional definitions of art and is sometimes exhibited in non-traditional spaces.

Ask students to consider the ways Syjuco's *International Orange Commemorative Store* represents conceptual art and why Syjuco is considered a conceptual artist. Discuss the following questions with the class:

- What ideas are central to her work?
- What ideas regarding capitalism and consumerism is Syjuco addressing, and what political philosophies support her work?
- Does her installation belong in an art gallery? What impact does location have on this installation?
- What value does her work celebrate?

Explore the humor and satire in the *International Orange Commemorative Store*. Do students find the work witty? Clever? Thought provoking? Encourage students to talk about the mediums used, objects created, choices made and the spirit and creativity of the piece.

For further discussion, suggest that students work in small groups to investigate ways that conceptual art challenges traditional ideas about art. Ask each small group to share their thoughts with the group as a whole. As a final point, ask students if the discussion has altered their way of thinking about art.

### ➤ **Exploring Stephanie Syjuco's Ideas**

Divide the class into small groups and ask each group to research one of the following subjects, focusing on one product, service or artist to illustrate the idea. Allow 20 to 30 minutes for the research.

- Consumerism
- Capitalism
- Socially conscious art

Ask each group to report back and initiate a discussion of each subject and the way a product, service or artist illustrates the concept. Explore the relevance of the issue in today's world. Invite each student to write a short article, essay or blog on the issue they have researched and its relevance today. Referring to

Syjuco's work and artistic process, how effective does her artwork explore, reflect or challenge these issues?

### ➤ **Mixed Media Collage - Theme: Consumption and Consumerism**

This activity will encourage students to explore ideas around consumption (the act of consuming or using goods) and consumerism (the act of buying consumer goods) through art. Students will be creating a mixed media collage that will represent the relationship between these two ideas.

Organize the students into small groups and ask each group to research ideas around the theme, consumption and consumerism. Ask students to share their research and expand on the topic. Write key concepts on a board visible to all students.

Prepare for the art making by collecting various objects and materials for the class in advance. Gather magazines, catalogs, newsprint, fabric, small objects, labels, etc. Invite students to bring in materials from home that they think might represent their ideas.

After all of the materials have been collected, organize students into small groups. Invite them to look through the materials and select images, text, and other objects that represent their ideas. Take time to discuss as a class. Provide materials such as glue, glue sticks, scissors, markers, paper, pencils and colored pencils. Invite the groups to assemble a mixed media collage that illustrates their concept of consumption and consumerism using their selected materials.

Ask each group to present their collages to the class, encouraging each member of the group to discuss their motivations, intentions and reasons for their choices. Discuss the following questions to initiate discussion from the class:

- How does the collage address the theme?
- What elements, if any, in the collage help make the groups point effectively? What elements if any, do not?
- How do the chosen objects relate to each other? Encourage discussion of color, form, texture, content, etc. How do these objects relate to the theme?
- How does the art invite response?
- What is your response to the art?

### ➤ **Discovering Sounds**

Artist and art historian Jeannene Przyblyski is also participating in the International Orange Project. She has produced K-BRIDGE, a virtual radio station that represents a collection of ideas, stories, and sound experiences suggested by the Golden Gate Bridge. She created three series of audio programs which will be presented both at the exhibition and on-line.

Invite students to create a sound recording on location in their classroom or campus. For older students, this activity can be taken off campus. Encourage students to brainstorm locations they are familiar with

where sound might suggest the experience of being there. Przyblyski's recording *Traveling Time: Stories of Duration and Distance*, evokes sensations of crossing over, under, across, and up the bridge:

*The California Report* Story (Audio): <http://www.californiareport.org/archive/R201205181630/a>

FOR-SITE Foundation Video: <http://www.international-orange.org/artist/jeannene-przyblyski/>

Ask students to consider things like what their school's hallway sounds like when the bell rings to dismiss for lunch? What might the cafeteria sound like during lunch, or 5 minutes before lunch is served? What does the playground sound like just as the bell rings and students leave the playground? What conversations do you hear? Ask students to think about how sound evokes the sense of location and time, feelings and memories.

Divide students into small groups and ask them to choose a location to record. Equipped with a recording device, ask them to record several minutes in the location at their chosen time of day. Depending on the age and skill of the student, invite editing, revising and processing the recorded media. Recording devices can be tape recorders, cell phones, video cameras or cameras. Sound editing software programs can be used for older students. Check out KQED's Audacity Educast to learn how to use this free online software: <http://education.kqed.org/edspace/2011/11/03/audacity-educast-series/>.

When the recordings are complete, share with the group and discuss if the recordings reflect or reveal the location. Ask the following questions to initiate discussion:

- Based on the sounds, where is the location?
- What elements of the recording create a sense of location?
- What memories or feelings are associated with the sounds?
- What was surprising, unexpected or unforeseen in the art making/sound recording process?
- What were the challenges in producing the recording?

### ➤ **Design a Paper Garment**

Paper artist Anandamayi Arnold is participating in the International Orange project by creating seven paper dresses based on "Fiesta Queens" from the opening of the bridge. Arnold has recreated and reinterpreted the original dresses to represent the neighboring counties that funded the bridge:

*The California Report* story (audio): <http://www.californiareport.org/archive/R201205181630/a>

FOR-SITE Foundation video: <http://www.international-orange.org/artist/anandamayi-arnold/>

Arnold is inspired by the idea of making something interesting, valuable, and/or useful out of materials that have little value or are not considered precious.

Invite students to design and create a garment from paper. Gather scraps of different types of paper, including crepe, tissue, scrapbook and wrapping. Ask students to first sketch their ideas, encouraging them to consider shape, style and details. Discuss terms such as gather, pleat, scrunch, edging, crimp and pucker. Discuss contrasting color, design and shape and how that might fit into their garment's design.

When the designs are complete, ask students to “shop” for their paper materials from the paper collected in the classroom. Using glue sticks, encourage students to build the garment off the paper. If available, older students may be able to design life-size garments on a dress mannequin.

After the garment-creating process is complete, invite students to discuss their designs with the group. Display the designs and invite other classes to a fashion show or exhibit of the projects.

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

KQED Video: In the Studio with Stephanie Syjuco  
<http://youtu.be/OwTFKjU6S2c>

Stephanie Syjuco’s Counterfeit Crochet project on KQED Spark  
<http://www.kqed.org/arts/programs/spark/profile.jsp?essid=22692>

KQED TV, Radio, and Web stories about the Golden Gate Bridge:  
<http://www.kqed.org/science/ggbridge75/>

International Orange on *The California Report*  
<http://www.californiareport.org/archive/R201205181630/a>

FOR-SITE Foundation’s International Orange Artists and Projects  
<http://www.international-orange.org/artists/>

FOR-SITE Foundation’s International Orange Stephanie Syjuco video  
<http://www.international-orange.org/artist/stephanie-syjuco/>

FOR-SITE Foundation’s International Orange Jeannene Przyblyski project  
<http://www.international-orange.org/artist/jeannene-przyblyski/>

FOR-SITE Foundation’s International Orange Anandamayi Arnold video  
<http://www.international-orange.org/artist/anandamayi-arnold/>

Stephanie Syjuco’s Website <http://www.stephaniesyjuco.com/>

### **The following KQED Spark documentaries, educator’s guides and articles may be used for compare/contrast purposes, and to extend leaning about contemporary art:**

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Stephanie Syjuco](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Michael Arcega](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [David Ireland](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Jonathon Keats](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Natalie Jeremijenko](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Paul Kos](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Seyed Alavi](#)

KQED Spark documentary about Conceptual artist [Thai Bui](#)

For more information about KQED’s Arts Education resources,  
visit [KQED.org/ArtsEd](http://KQED.org/ArtsEd), send an email to [ArtsEd@KQED.org](mailto:ArtsEd@KQED.org) or call 800.723.3566.