EDUCATOR’S GUIDE

Explore post-1960s Art & the Art of Collecting

The Alaska Classics gallery on the museum's main floor has been renamed the Collections Gallery with a series of new exhibits planned. The first, Vogel 50x50, features artwork from the collection of Dorothy and Herbert Vogel, a librarian and postal worker who amassed one of the most important contemporary art collections in the country.

The collection consists primarily of minimalist, post-minimalist, and conceptual art. It has been called one of the most important post-1960s art collections in the United States. The Vogels stored their entire collection in their small Manhattan apartment. Although the works were featured in several exhibitions over the years, the couple astounded the art world when they donated everything to the National Gallery of Art.

As government workers themselves, the Vogels said they liked the idea of sharing their prized pieces with the American people.

Before your visit:

This exhibit is not only about art but also about a story. A story of a couple surrounded by art, cats, and turtles; a story of incomparable love for art and the art of collecting.

Learn more about the Vogels’ story and the art of collecting here. (vogel5050.org/#about)
Preview the 50 artworks exhibited at UAMN [here](vogel5050.org/#institutions/2).

Watch the PBS documentary *Herb and Dorothy* by filmmaker Megumi Sasaki. The museum will offer free showings of the film in the auditorium on the second Saturday of each month at 10:30 a.m.

Learn more about the PBS documentary [online](pbs.org/independentlens/herb-and-dorothy/).

**During your visit:**

Three activity sheets are available to guide you at the museum. Two different versions of a *Vogel 50x50 Scavenger Hunt (K-12)*

*Vogel 50x50: Art Exploration (Grade 7-12)*

Download them [here](uaf.edu/museum/education/educators/activities-resources/special-exhibit-resources/).

**Themes you can explore with your class before and after your visit:**

**The Art of Collecting**

**Suggested Discussion (before or after your visit):**

Museums are all about collections. But aren’t we all collectors to some extent? When does collecting cross the line into hoarding? What do you collect? How do you take care of your collection? How and where do you display it? What does your collection mean to you? How or where do you grow your collection? Could you imagine getting rid of your collection? Why? Would you rather donate it, like the Vogels did, or sell it?

**Suggested Activity (after your visit):**

Get inspired by the Vogel collection and make a special collection exhibit in your class. Choose a theme together and let everyone bring one or two related objects. Create a title for your exhibit. Think about ways to organize the display (size, color, shape, story, etc.). Write labels including what each
object is and why each student chose it, where it comes from, and/or any related stories. Have the students organize an opening and invite parents or other classmates to visit your exhibit!

Post-1960s Art

This exhibit showcases post-1960s artwork from different art movements. Art movements can be confusing, as they often overlap. Art reflects the time and place in which it was created. The name of an art movement denotes common themes in artistic style, philosophical aims, or collaborative efforts among artists. It does not always imply a close-knit group of artists working together, but more frequently encompasses those working across time and space in the pursuit of similar goals.

You can find a brief description of three movements found in the Vogel Collection at the end of this guide. We suggest having students focus on their physical and emotional responses to this kind of art.

Make sure students understand that post-1960s art is not about understanding or “liking” the art but about the experience one has in front of it. There are no right or wrong responses. It is all about the feelings, the sensations, and students’ own interpretations.

Suggested Discussion (before your visit):

Use the three pictures featured at the end of this guide. For each one, ask the students the following questions. Use Arctic Winter before Happy 1980 and Schenevus (general information about the artists available at the end of this guide):

- What do you see?
- What makes you say so?
- What else do you see?
- How does this work make you feel?
- How is it similar to or different from the other works?
- Do you like it or not?
Suggested Discussion & Activity (after your visit):

Discuss:
What did you think about what you saw?
How was it similar to or different from what you expected?

Create:
Choose a theme (e.g., art and words, art and design, art and society, art and math, bright and pale) and create abstract artwork.

Explore More

The museum is offering contemporary art exploration workshops for kids and adults in February and March. If you are interested in hosting a workshop in your class, contact UA-museumlearn@alaska.edu for fees and scheduling.

ENJOY YOUR VISIT!
Arctic Winter, Ted Lambert
Happy 1980, Edda Renouf
Schenevus, Stewart Hitch
General information about the artists

Ted Lambert

American, 1905–1960

Ted Lambert was born and raised in the Chicago area. He moved to Alaska in 1925 and went to work as a miner near McCarthy. He worked as a miner, musher, and mail carrier. Lambert left Alaska in 1931 to study art for a year at the American Academy of Art in Chicago, then moved to Seattle, where he began a mentorship under Eustace Ziegler, with whom he traveled. Lambert settled down in Fairbanks, where he stayed for twenty years and solidified his reputation as one of the premier Alaskan artists.

Edda Renouf

American, born 1943

Edda Renouf, an American born in Mexico City, moved to the United States to study at Sarah Lawrence College in the early 1960s. She settled in New York City in 1968 to pursue her MFA at Columbia University, studying under the abstract expressionist painter Richard Pousette-Dart. In 1974, Renouf was introduced to the Vogels through Richard Tuttle. Renouf lived and worked in New York City until 1991, when she moved France. Her first solo exhibition was in 1972 at a prestigious gallery in Paris, Yvon Lambert, and she has continued to exhibit throughout Europe. Renouf has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, and her work is included in the permanent collections of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Museum of Modern Art, New York, among others.

Stewart Hitch

American, 1940–2002

Born in Lincoln, Nebraska, Hitch received his Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts degrees at the University of Nebraska. By 1968 he had moved to New York City and begun to develop a personal style that fused geometric abstraction with saturated stained color. His first solo show was in 1975 at the Robert Freidus Gallery, and he participated in Barbara Rose’s 1979 exhibition *American Painting: The Eighties* at Grey Art Gallery, New York University. Hitch received grants from the Gottlieb Foundation, the Tiffany Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Hitch absorbed influences from graffiti and Abstract Expressionism. For years his paintings featured a central starburst shape related to the stretcher bars of the canvas.
General information about post-1960s art movements

Minimialism
Minimialist art emerged in New York in the early 1960s as a reaction to the spontaneous, highly emotional, and personal art of Abstract Expressionism. Minimialist artists sought to pare objects down to essential forms. Organic shapes and the artist’s brushstrokes were replaced with cubes and grids. Industrial materials such as metal, glass, and even neon lights were used. The works from this movement were often designed by the artist, but manufactured or assembled by others -- thus further removing the subjective hand of the artist from the piece. Minimialist work was not about self-expression. In fact, artists frequently insisted on the lack of any hidden meaning in their work and encouraged a superficial reading of the piece. Minimalist art often blurs boundaries between painting and sculpture, and thus requires a physical rather than emotional reaction from the viewer.

Post-minimalism
Post-minimialist art came about in the early 1970s as a response to minimalism. Like minimalism, post-minimalism values simplicity and organization. Unlike minimalism, it turns away from impersonal, industrial materials in favor of simpler materials and everyday objects with a hand-made feel. While minimalism attempted to remove any sign of the artist’s individual expression, post-minimalism re-introduced a human element by incorporating imperfections, emotion, and an appreciation for the unique qualities of the material. Post-minimalist art often involves the human body, either that of the artist or of the viewer, in ways that can be uncomfortably intimate. Artists of this movement also endeavored to expand definitions of art to include non-traditional exhibition spaces, resulting in experiments in performance art, site-specific art, and land art.

Conceptual Art
Conceptual art is a loose movement that values ideas over the creation of objects. The term conceptual art has been used to describe a network of artists working in the 1960s and 1970s who used performance, installations, and street art to create art that completely rejected conventional standards of art-making. Conceptualists claimed that the articulation of an idea, whether or not it ever resulted in a material form, was sufficient to be considered art. This is an extremely intellectual type of artistic production and one that sought to remove itself from the world of gallery exhibitions and sellable art. The ephemeral concept or original thought of the artist, things that do not often translate to the art market, were the most important aspects of the movement. Conceptual artists also questioned fundamental concepts of the Western aesthetic tradition, such as beauty, rarity, and skill, as measures of art’s value.