

Documentation and Definition

Fall 2013 Teacher Guide



James Prosek: The Spaces In Between

September 1, 2013–January 5, 2014

Flash Back - November 22, 1963

September 1, 2013–January 12, 2014

Natural Selections

September 7 - Ongoing Through Early Spring

the kids are all right

September 14, 2013–January 5, 2014

FREE GROUP VISIT HOURS BY APPOINTMENT:
Tuesday–Friday 8am–4pm

FREE PUBLIC MUSEUM HOURS:
Tuesday–Saturday 10am–5pm & Sunday 1pm–5pm

TEACHER RESOURCES, WORKSHOPS,
& EXHIBITION INFORMATION:
www.addisongallery.org

Addison Gallery of American Art
Phillips Academy, Andover, MA

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Jamie Kaplowitz, Education Associate & Museum Learning Specialist

To see the location of each exhibitions throughout the musuem, please [click on our gallery map here](http://tinyurl.com/gallerymapfall13) (<http://tinyurl.com/gallerymapfall13>)

James Prosek: The Spaces in Between

Taking inspiration from the long tradition of natural history painting from animal depictions on cave walls to the works of Albrecht Durer, William Blake, and John James Audubon, as well as contemporary influences as diverse as Lee Bontecou, Mark Dion, Martin Puryear, and Eero Saarinen, James Prosek’s work questions accepted notions of how we understand and interpret the natural world. Examining the ways in which we name and order nature, the systems we use to try to harness nature, our classifications and taxonomies, and the limitations of language in describing biological diversity, Prosek invites us to reflect on what these systems say about our culture, our priorities, and our values.

Ranging from the compellingly realistic to the inventively fanciful, the exhibition includes meticulously rendered paintings, monumental watercolors, and taxidermied specimens, many of them referencing the artist’s extensive travel, collecting trips, and biological expeditions to places as distant and diverse as Suriname and Kyrgyzstan. The exhibition also includes wall murals created especially for this installation.

Exquisitely crafted, frequently witty, and always thought-provoking, Prosek’s art invites viewers to engage with realms that science cannot quantify or solve—those spaces in between fact and folklore, science and myth, real and imagined.



fig. 1

“You can know the name of a bird in all the languages of the world, but when you’re finished, you’ll know absolutely nothing whatever about the bird... So let’s look at the bird and see what it’s doing—that’s what counts. I learned very early the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something.”

Richard Feynman (theoretical physicist)



fig. 2

Questions for Observation and Discussion:

- James Prosek is interested in the ways in which animals are identified and labeled, and how labels limit our understanding of the animal. What are *your* “labels”? (Examples: girl, boy, pianist, swimmer, the youngest child, etc.) How could these labels limit our understanding of you?
- Prosek developed a relationship with the environment by getting to know the animals that live in it. What other ways can we understand our surroundings?
- What is the relationship between humans, animals, and place?



fig. 3

Classroom Connections and Activity Ideas:

- After studying trout as a young boy, Prosek realized that there are many different types of trout that exist. What other things can you think of that have great variety within the category in which it has been placed?
- Study something that you love in your environment by sketching it. Did you see things you didn’t see before? Did it help develop your understanding of it better? How does this method of study compare to others, such as photography, notetaking, video, dissection, etc.?
- Creative Writing: Write a description from the point of view of a fish as it looks up from underneath the water. What can the fish see about us that we can’t see? Then write a description from the point of view of a fisherman who is looking down at the fish. How do these narratives compare? What can this comparison tell us about the spaces in between?

Natural Selections

This selection from the Addison Gallery's permanent collection is designed to complement the exhibition *James Prosek: The Spaces in Between* in which Prosek, 2013 Edward E. Elson artist-in-residence at the Addison, raises questions about how we recognize and interpret the natural world. Whether a treasured masterpiece or a lesser-known work, each object in *Natural Selections* has been chosen to evidence the artist's relation to the natural environment.

Nature imposes itself in small and grand ways in the works assembled here—a fragment of sylvan landscape or seascape glimpsed through the window behind the sitter, a panoramic landscape of grand intention spread across the canvas, a meticulously detailed segment of woods or bountiful garden or animal specimen. While the scientist offers us a structured framework and systematic ordering of natural phenomena, it is through the lens of the imaginative artist we learn to see and appreciate our natural world—light, land, sky, water, flora, fauna, and the cosmos in which we live.

Questions for Observation and Discussion:

- How and what do artists document?
- What do the choices that an artist makes in documenting his or her environment tell us about their perspective, understanding, or feeling about the world around them?
- What role do images play in shaping our relationship to the land and environment?
- How can artists use their work to broaden the oftentimes limiting definitions of the natural world?

Classroom Connections and Activity Ideas:

- Write a personal narrative of a time you felt connected to nature. Where were you?
- Describe a setting by focusing on one aspect: light, land, sky, water, flora, fauna, or the cosmos. Then describe the same setting by focusing on another aspect. How do the descriptions of place compare? Read the descriptions written by a friend or classmate. Would you imagine the same location based on each description?
- Develop your observation skills by studying your immediate environment. (Examples: your classroom, your bedroom, the view outside your window, etc.) What methods of study will you use? How do observations through notetaking compare to documentation by sketching or photography?



fig. 4



fig. 5



fig. 6

fig. 1: © James Prosek, *Spoonbill*, 2006, watercolor, graphite, and colored-pencil on paper, 18 x 24 in. (45.72 x 60.96 cm), courtesy of the artist and Waqas Wajahat, New York fig. 2: © James Prosek, *Flying Fox with Prussian Firearm: The Fox Hunt*, 2009, watercolor, gouache, colored pencil, and graphite on tea-stained paper, 44 7/8 x 48 7/8 in., courtesy of the artist and Waqas Wajahat, New York; fig. 3: © James Prosek, *Flying Fox with Lady's Slippers*, 2011, taxidermied red fox, sea duck wings, handmade flowers and moss, 17 x 16 1/2 in. (43.18 x 41.91 cm), private collection, New York fig. 4: Alvan Fisher, *Covered Wagons in the Rockies*, 1837, oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in. (76.2 x 63.5 cm), Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, museum purchase, 1959.11; fig. 5: Asher Brown Durand, *Study of a Wood Interior*, c. 1855, oil on canvas mounted on panel, 16 3/4 x 24 in. (42.55 x 60.96 cm), Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, gift of Mrs. Frederic F. Durand, 1932.1; fig. 6: Maria Oakey Dewing, *A Bed of Poppies*, 1909, oil on canvas, 25 1/8 x 30 1/8 in. (63.82 x 76.52 cm), Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, gift of anonymous donor, 1931.2

the kids are all right

Featuring photography and video created in the last 10 years by 38 established and emerging artists, *the kids are all right* explores with sensitive yet radical openness the notion of family in the 21st century. The photographers in *the kids are all right* actively collaborate with their subjects when making their work, most often by involving them in the creation of each of the photographed scenarios. Gaining their subjects' trust, they simultaneously and self-consciously reveal the subjectivity of the process, often including themselves in the pictures or adding narratives in the form of writing or video.

The platform of open-mindedness, combined with vibrant collaboration, results in intimate and illuminating portraits of families that reject irony and judgment in favor of affirmation and acceptance. The family units depicted in this exhibition are accepted as is, in whatever form they come—natural or found. The artists take no critical position, rather they affirm with poignancy and humor the ever-shifting notion of the contemporary family.



fig. 7

Questions for Observation and Discussion:

- How would you define family? How does the dictionary define family? How would you define family after viewing the photographs in *the kids are all right*? How might this definition evolve?
- Who do you consider a part of your family? Are there people who are not related to you who you would consider a part of your family? Do you have more than one family? How is a class, a sports team, or a group of friends also a family?
- What is the role of place in the identity of a family? How is your home, your daily routines, or your memories significant?

Classroom Connections and Activity Ideas:

- Explore the idea of family as it relates to the character relationships in a book that you may be studying. How would you describe that family? How does that compare to the families represented in *the kids are all right*?
- Bring in photographs of your family or families. Write or discuss why you consider them your family. Compare the different types of families of your classmates. What is similar/different about them?
- Make a family portrait. Consider the following as you construct pose, clothing, setting, and lighting: What story do you want to tell? Who will be in your photograph? How can they help you, as collaborators, to make your image?
- Creative writing: Write simile or metaphor poems about families. For example: *Family is... Families are like...*



fig. 8



fig. 9

PHOTOGRAPHY & WRITING PROJECTS

Exhibitions such as *the kids are all right* can inspire Photography & Writing Projects, complementing language arts, art, math, social studies, local history, science, literature, and health and identity.

See page 7 of this guide for more information.

Flash Back—November 22, 1963

Presented on the fiftieth anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's assassination, *Flash Back—November 22, 1963* investigates the lasting impact of a painful episode in American history at the same time that it explores the power of the media through art works that appropriate, manipulate, and at times distort images that document the time.

Among the works included in this exhibition is Andy Warhol's *Flash—November 22, 1963*, a portfolio in the Addison's collection from which the exhibition borrows its name, that presents a fragmented narrative comprised of disjointed snapshots spanning events from the Kennedy campaign to Lee Harvey Oswald's arrest. Other paintings, prints, photographs, and video by artists Lutz Bacher, Wayne Gonzales, Marisol, Tina Mion, Edward Paschke, and T.R. Uthco and Ant Farm, similarly underscore the media's role in shaping what we see and how we see it while also challenging our own collective memory of this calamitous series of events.

Questions for Observation and Discussion:

- What major events have you experienced? How did the media influence your understanding of it?
- What is the media's role in documenting events today and how have they documented events from the past shaping what and how we, and future generations, understand these events?
- How can artists help the public understand or heal after tragic events?

Classroom Connections and Activity Ideas:

- Interview adults who may remember John F. Kennedy's assassination. What do they remember about it? How did they learn about it? How do they remember the media covering the story?
- Research and print or photocopy documents that narrate a historic event. (Examples: newspaper articles, photojournalism, textbook passages, etc.) How is the story told? What perspective is the story told from? Retell this historical event by manipulating or distorting these documents through collage, painting, etc. How do you want your audience to react to this event? Whose perspective(s) will be included in your retelling?
- Curate a mini-exhibition that tells the story of a notorious or famous figure in history using fictional interviews and reappropriated images. What voices do you want to be heard? What perspectives do you want to be included? What are the important things that you would want people to know? How will you communicate this information?
- Andy Warhol's portfolio *Flash—November 22, 1963* includes news bulletin-style texts, describing the events of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Describe a historical event through a series of tweets, 140-character phrases that describe the event and narrative. How does this mode of communication compare to the way in which a newspaper article would tell the story?



fig. 10



fig. 11



fig. 12

fig. 7: Lisa Lindvay, *Dinner*, 2009; archival inkjet print, 32 x 40 in., Courtesy of the artist; fig. 8: Lucas Foglia, *Rita and Cora Aiming, Tennessee*, 2007; digital C-print on aluminum, 19.5 x 26 in., Courtesy of the artist; fig. 9: Aron Gent, *Last Hand of the Night* (from "The Suze" Project), 2006; archival pigment print, 30 x 40 in., Courtesy Reuben Kincaid; fig. 10: Andy Warhol, *Flash—November 22, 1963*, 1968, Published by Racolin Press, Edition 25/200, screenprint with Teletype text, purchased as the gift of David Winton, 2002.17.5, Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, © 2013 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; fig. 11: Andy Warhol, *Flash—November 22, 1963*, 1968, Published by Racolin Press, Edition 25/200, screenprint with Teletype text, purchased as the gift of David Winton, 2002.17.8, Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, © 2013 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; fig. 12: Wayne Gonzales, *Self-Portrait in Green*, 2001, acrylic on canvas, 74 x 60 in., ©Wayne Gonzales. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York.

CLASS VISITS TO THE ADDISON

Admission is always **free**. Two classes (*or up to 50 students*) at a time can be scheduled for Tuesday – Friday, 9:00am – 4:00 pm. Guided visits generally run between 1 – 1.5 hours depending on student age and class size and can also include time for student writing or sketching in the galleries.

- The Addison supports a **co-teaching philosophy** where our education staff's knowledge of the artworks combine with the teacher's objectives and expectations for the visit, as well as incorporating students' knowledge and experiences.
- We will work with you to plan and co-facilitate a visit that will be **inquiry-based** and **engages students in close looking and discussion**. Teachers are welcome to stop by our office, call, or email to learn more about our exhibitions and artworks and the ways in which they connect to your course topics.
- The Addison education staff collaborates with educators to create and support **long-term projects** inspired by exhibitions, collection themes, museum practice, or particular artists. Addison staff works with teachers to develop and support collaborative, creative, cross-disciplinary projects that meet multiple social and academic objectives.

WHY VISIT THE ADDISON

- Every visit to the Addison helps students with their **critical and higher order thinking skills** along with **twenty first century skills** as they look closely at and discuss works of art. Students will be invited to think creatively and globally and will be able to develop their visual and media literacy skills.
- Our activities and discussions **support visual and hands-on learning**.
- Our work supports the **Common Core Standards for College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening**, for all grade levels.
- Students open their minds to **multiple perspectives** and are introduced to ideas and images they may not have been exposed to before.
- Themes and ideas from our exhibitions can serve as **inspiration for classroom connections** and can be aligned to support the Common Core Standards across subject areas.

upcoming grant opportunities for busing

[The Big Yellow Bus Grant](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/programs/bigyellow.asp) (<http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/programs/bigyellow.asp>) helps provide busses to cultural institutions and events, like the Addison. Applications are based on a rolling deadline, starting on September 25th.

[Target Field Trip Grants](https://targetfieldtripgrants.target.com/) (<https://targetfieldtripgrants.target.com/>) also provide funding for field trips. Applications are due September 30th.

[Local Massachusetts Cultural Council Grants](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/applications/lccapp.asp) (<http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/applications/lccapp.asp>) can alleviate the costs for arts related projects done in collaboration with the Addison. Applications are due October 15th, 2013.

PHOTOGRAPHY & WRITING PROJECTS

For over fifteen years, teachers in local schools and beyond have taken advantage of the Addison Photography & Writing Program. In addition to guiding museum visits for students, the Addison coordinates long-term, collaborative photography and writing projects with teachers, schools, and organizations. The program, developed by Addison education staff along with teachers and administrators, involves museum visits, classroom work, and student picture-making and writing; and can also include professional development, artist residencies, and publication and exhibition of student work.

The program responds to curriculum standards, lending itself to complementing language arts, art, math, social studies, local history, science, literature, and health and identity. Usually designed around themes from Addison exhibitions but not limited to these, each project takes on its own theme and character as it is adapted to meet the curriculum needs and specific interests of you and your students.

Inspired by the work of artist/educator Wendy Ewald, the Addison's Photography & Writing Program emphasizes the use of students' own photographs to inspire autobiographical, descriptive, creative, and expository writing, as well as to enhance self expression, visual literacy, and connection to others and the community.

Please contact us if you are interested in doing a Photography & Writing Project with your students!

COVER IMAGES:

James Prosek, *Parrotfish Nocturne*, 2012, watercolor, gouache, colored pencil, and graphite on paper, 19 x 24 in. (48.26 x 60.96 cm), courtesy of the artist and Waqas Wajahat, New York

Andy Warhol, *Flash-November 22, 1963 (colophon)*, 1968, Published by Racolin Press, Edition 25/200, screenprint with Teletype text, purchased as the gift of David Winton, 2002.17.11, Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, © 2013 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Martin Johnson Heade, *Apple Blossoms and Hummingbird*, 1871, oil on board, 14 x 18 1/16 in. (35.56 x 45.88 cm), Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, museum purchase, 1945.4

Julie Mack, *Self-Portrait with Family in Minivan, Michigan*, 2007; chromogenic color print, 30 x 40 in., Courtesy of Laurence Miller Gallery, N.Y.

FURTHER RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

James Prosek: The Spaces In Between
and *Natural Selections*

[Audobon Website](http://www.audubon.org/) (http://www.audubon.org/)

[Harvard Museum of Natural History](http://www.hmn.harvard.edu/) (http://www.hmn.harvard.edu/)

[James Prosek's Website](http://troutsite.com/) (http://troutsite.com/)

Includes information about Prosek's music, articles, books, and documentaries.

Moncrieff Cochran Sanctuary

The Bird Sanctuary is located near the Addison, at the end of Chapel Avenue. The entrance is marked by a stone gate and is open each day from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Peterson, Roger Tory and Virginia Maria. **Audobon's Birds of America**. New York, NY: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1981.

Prosek, James. **a good day's fishing**. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2004.

Prosek, James. **Bird, Butterfly, Eel**. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2009.

Prosek, James. **The Day My Mother Left**. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2007.

Prosek, James. **Joe and Me: An Education in Fishing and Friendship**. New York, NY: Perennial, 1997.

Flash Back

[John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum](http://www.jfklibrary.org/) (http://www.jfklibrary.org/)

Rubin, Susan Goldman. **Andy Warhol Pop Art Painter**. New York, NY: Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2006.

the kids are all right

the kids are all right, 2012. John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI.

Walls, Jeannette. **The Glass Castle: A Memoir**. New York, NY: Scribner, 2006.

[The Addison Gallery's Online Database](http://accessaddison.andover.edu/) (http://accessaddison.andover.edu/) features nearly all of the 17,000 works in the Addison collection and offers downloadable jpgs for class presentations and projects. You can search for images related to virtually any topic that you are studying in your classroom.