



Unit Two



The “Four To Know” project is an elementary curriculum designed by Riverside County Office of Education VAPA, to introduce students to four intriguing and engaging artists, past and present. They are a diverse group of two men and two women, who have collectively created art that is autobiographical, political, cultural and social justice oriented. By learning about them as people, and the work they produce, we will understand the role of art in making meaning out of life, utilizing the artistic processes of **relating** and **connecting**. After studying artwork created from a variety of mediums, our learning experience will also culminate with an art project that is both individually representative and collaboratively oriented.

Cindy Sherman – Autobiographical - Photography



Cynthia Morris Sherman is an American artist whose work consists primarily of photographic self-portraits, depicting herself in many different contexts and as various imagined characters. Her breakthrough work is often considered to be a series of 70 black-and-white photographs of herself in many of the roles of women in performance media, especially movies. In the 1980s, Sherman used color film and large prints, and focused more on costume, lighting and facial expression.



Diego Rivera – Social Justice - Painting



Diego María de la Concepción Juan Nepomuceno Estanislao de la Rivera y Barrientos Acosta y Rodríguez, known as **Diego Rivera**; (December 8, 1886 – November 24, 1957), was a prominent Mexican painter. His large frescoes helped establish the mural movement in Mexican and international art. Between 1922 and 1953, Rivera painted murals in, among other places, Mexico City, Chapingo, and Cuernavaca, Mexico; and San Francisco, Detroit, and New York City, United States. In 1931, a retrospective exhibition of his works was held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.



Faith Ringgold – Cultural - Quilting



Faith Ringgold is a political painter, mixed media sculptor, writer, performance artist, and civil rights activist. She is famous for her narrative quilts and her determination to depict the struggles Black people deal with in the US. Back in the 1960s, Ringgold created *American People*, a series that is focused on the civil rights movement from the black woman's perspective. Her art is often inspired by African culture.



Ai Wei Wei – Political - Ceramics



Ai Weiwei (艾未未) is a Chinese contemporary artist and activist. Ai grew up in the far north-west of China, where he lived under harsh conditions due to his father's exile. As an activist, he has been openly critical of the Chinese Government's stance on democracy and human rights. He investigated government corruption and cover-ups, in particular the Sichuan schools corruption scandal following the collapse of "tofu-dreg schools" in the 2008 Sichuan earthquake. In 2011, Ai Weiwei was arrested at Beijing Capital International Airport on 3 April, for "economic crimes." He was detained for 81 days without charge. Ai Weiwei emerged as a vital instigator in Chinese cultural development, an architect of Chinese modernism, and one of the nation's most vocal political commentators.



Art Lesson

Homage to Ai Wei Wei's Sunflower Seeds

Materials: Large stone for each student, assorted acrylic paints, paint brush, water cup, paper towel, paper plate, and mirror

Directions: Students will be looking at their eye, and then painting it on the rock. Care should be taken to study their eye for a few minutes, paying attention to its shape and color, the eyelids and eyelashes, and any and all unique and distinguishing features. Teachers may draw a sample eye and pupil shape on the board, for guidance. When all rocks have been painted and dried, students should make a spiral from the rocks and to a gallery walk, observing the other artworks and how their unique creating finds a place in the larger group.

