



TEACHER CURRICULUM GUIDE

SPRING 2005

MAGIC GARDENS



Magic Gardens
March 31 – September 5, 2005

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INTRODUCTION

Magic Gardens

Featuring Paintings by:
Tim Rollins and K.O.S. and students from the North Berkshire
School Union; Timothy Basil Ering; Emily Cheng

March 31 – September 5, 2005

EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

This is the garden of make-believe,
A magical garden of make-believe.
Where flowers chuckle and birds play tricks
And a magic tree grows lollipop sticks.

Lyrics from the title song of *The Magic Garden*, a children's television program (late 1970s-early 1980s).

Throughout the ages, artists have created images of magic gardens. Some are illustrations of make-believe places in which flowers come alive or have supernatural powers. Others are views of real spaces where plants produce interesting patterns and walkways such as a maze or a topiary garden, or a colorful flower and vegetable patch. The Kidspace *Magic Garden* features vibrant paintings by two individual artists and an artist group, each imagining various ways of using flowers and gardens for their magical properties.

In March 2005, conceptual artists **Tim Rollins and K.O.S.** (Kids of Survival) of New York City worked with the 4th – 8th grade students in the North Berkshire School Union to create flower paintings based on William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The students designed their own art works based on their responses to the special flower used by the play's mischievous character Puck. The liquid from this flower when placed on an individual's eyelid causes this person to fall in love with the next living creature encountered. The student art works were overlaid on text from Shakespeare's play, linking the beauty of the written word with the magic of painted flowers.

Children's book illustrator **Timothy Basil Ering** of Somerville, MA shares with us his interest in the storytelling property of flowers. Twenty-four original illustrations from his popular picture book *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone* are included in the exhibit. In this story, Ering tells how a young boy lives in a dark, despairing place called "Cementland," until the monster Frog Belly comes to life to help him build—through hope, perseverance, and a watchful eye—a colorful flower garden. *Magic Gardens* also includes a series of lush, mixed media flower paintings Ering specifically created for Kidspace.

Painter **Emily Cheng** of New York City shows us how nature's seasons affect the color and pattern of flowers in her large-scale paintings. Cheng's work is also influenced by various eastern and western cultures. She incorporates multiple styles from various periods within a single work of art. For example, in one flower painting Cheng might include elements of a European Renaissance style and others from a distant era of Chinese painting. While her work does not necessarily illustrate a specific story, it can be read for symbolic, cultural, and historic information on flowers.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Tim Rollins and Kids of Survival (K.O.S.)

Biography

Tim Rollins, born in Pittsfield, Maine, received a BFA from New York's School of Visual Arts. A conceptual artist who co-founded the artists' collective Group Material in 1979, he was also a special education teacher in Public School 52 in the South Bronx. He discovered that his students responded to visual and literary art, although many thought they would not be capable of understanding complex concepts such as in Shakespeare or Kafka. As a result, in 1982 Tim established the Art of Knowledge Workshops series for students with learning disabilities and then K.O.S., which stands for "Kids of Survival," the name the students chose for themselves. Tim continues to mentor international students of all abilities and also is the resident professor of art and education at Drexel University, Philadelphia.

Tim Rollins and K.O.S. have completed conceptual art projects that combine literary texts and painted images from Albany, New York to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from Mexico City, Mexico, to Munich, Germany. Subjects they have explored include Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Martin Luther

King's *I See The Promised Land*, Franz Kafka's *Amerika*, and Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Their work has been shown throughout the world and is in many museum collections including Williams College Museum of Art and the University of Virginia Art Museum. In addition to their work with the North Berkshire students for *Magic Gardens* at Kidspace, recent exhibitions include *The Creation (after Haydn)* at the Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Rockport, Maine (February 26 – April 10, 2005) and *On Music* at the Kreeger Museum, Washington D.C. (April 9 – July 30, 2005).

Artist Statement

For 25 years I have been making collaborative works of art with youth throughout the world. In my intensive workshops, kids and I produce paintings and works on paper inspired by classics of world literature and music. For our exhibition at Kidspace, area public school students and I were challenged to visualize a moment in William Shakespeare's great comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Focused on the scene when the free-spirited Puck finds a magic flower that has the power to make one fall madly in love with the first creature seen upon awakening from sleep, the young artists are asked to imagine and then paint this powerful, unique flower. These floral elements are then collaged onto actual pages taken from a volume of Shakespeare's comedy. Our group imagination creates a collective bouquet – a gift to our audience and a gift to ourselves.

--Tim Rollins, South Bronx, New York, 2005

Timothy Basil Ering

Biography

Timothy Basil Ering, born in Rodchester, Michigan, moved to Cape Cod when he was three. After high school, he joined the US Navy and served from 1984 to 1990. In 1990, he was accepted into the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California and graduated with a BFA in illustration in 1994. Tim started off his art career as a professional illustrator in California, creating art for magazines, newspapers, and music video production companies. In 1996 he moved back to Cape Cod and had his first gallery exhibition at the Provincetown Group Gallery, Provincetown, Massachusetts. He then packed his sea bag for a 5-month sailing adventure through the Caribbean with his father, during which he completed his first illustrated book *The Diary of Victor Frankenstein*, released fall

of 1997. In 1999, Tim moved to Somerville, Massachusetts. He exhibited paintings and constructions at a local alternative gallery space and continued to have illustrations published by New York book publishers. Tim's first pop-up children's picture book, *Sad Doggy* was released in 2001, and he showed new work in the Davis Gallery, Wellfleet, Massachusetts, in 2002. He became a highly praised author and illustrator when his picture book *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone* was released by Candlewick Press in 2003, the same year he illustrated Kate DiCamillo's *The Tale of Despereaux* (which won the Newberry Medal in 2004). *Frog Belly Rat Bone* won first place in the New York Book Show for children's picture books in 2004 and original illustrations were selected by The Society of Illustrators, New York, for its 45th annual illustration exhibition. His most recent illustrated picture book by Deborah Blumenthal, *Don't Let The Peas Touch*, was released in Fall 2004 by Arthur A. Levine Books of Scholastic Inc.

Artist Statement

At the start of my paintings, I like to paint fast and make mistakes. Mistakes can be the most beautiful parts of a painting. Sometimes I let my mistakes lead me through my painting. I rescue the beautiful mistakes, fix the ugly ones, I try to duplicate them, I learn from them. I expect from the beginning that my painting will change in unexpected ways.

Each painting is a new game. Adding something to the painting, subtracting something, or even saving something are all moves. Every move on a painting affects the next move. The object of the game is to (hopefully) finish with a unique piece of art. I learn something from every painting. One thing for sure, love and persistence will always bring wondrous rewards.

--Timothy Basil Ering, Somerville, Massachusetts, 2005

Emily Cheng

Biography

Emily Cheng has a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and has studied at the New York Studio School. She currently teaches Asian art history at the School of Visual Arts, New York, and junior painting at RISD. She is the recipient of fellowships from the New York Foundation of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. Emily also has completed an artist residency at Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, New York. Emily has had solo shows at museums and galleries in the United States and internationally including: Plum Blossom

Gallery, New York; Winston, Wachter Gallery, New York; Bravin Post Lee Gallery, New York; Schmidt Dean Gallery, Philadelphia; Hanart Gallery, Hong Kong; Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Philippines; Byron Cohen Gallery, Kansas City, Missouri; The Bronx Museum; and the Cincinnati Center of Contemporary Art. Her upcoming solo exhibition will open in September 2005 at the Ayala Museum in Manila, Philippines. Included in the numerous publications of Emily's reviews and articles are: *The New York Times*, *Art in America*, *Art Forum*, *Asian Art News*, *Arts Asia Pacific*, *The New Yorker*, *Boston Herald*, and *Flash Art*.

Artist Statement

My paintings are the product of my trying to create order and understanding of the world. I am interested in making icons for contemplation, and/or for celebration. I look at a lot of books and works of art in museums for visual artifacts that leave clues to other times, civilizations and philosophies. It could be a drape, a cloud design, or flower from as recent as the 18th century or as distant as 1000 B.C. When I look at these images, often very imaginative, they inspire me to explore what they mean, as well as understand why and how they can continue to communicate with such clarity. I take these images, usually fragments, and orchestrate them in a way to express different internal states, or sometimes states of wonder. The paintings are intended to inspire expansiveness and focus.

--Emily Cheng, New York, 2005

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MAGIC GARDENS PROGRAMS

TEACHER WORKSHOPS

We have found that by participating in teacher workshops, educators feel better prepared to incorporate the Kidspace curriculum into their busy schedules. There are four workshops planned for your school this spring, one of which will take place at your school, two at Williams College, and one at MASS MoCA. At these workshops we will review how to make connections between art and other subject areas including science and English language arts. We will also try-out projects outlined in this curriculum. The two teacher workshops at Williams College are part of the artist talk series at which you will get to meet Tim Rollins and Emily Cheng, and learn more about their artistic processes. Please mark the

workshop dates on your calendar (you can find the dates in Section 2 of this curriculum.)

KIDSPACE PROGRAMS

This curriculum provides you with classroom activities that you can do with your students before and after visits to Kidspace. It is broken down into two curriculums: one for Pre-K – 3rd grade and one for 4th – 8th grade. Activities can easily be adjusted to suit the needs and interests of your particular grade level. In certain cases, we offer different activities for the different grade levels.

Are You Already Doing Something Relating to Kidspace? We purposefully choose exhibition themes that easily relate to topics you are working on in school or that are included in the MA Learning Frameworks. This curriculum presents multi-disciplinary activities and a number of different approaches to studying storytelling, flowers, and magical spaces (gardens, for instance). You might already have in your curriculum projects that can easily tie into themes addressed at Kidspace. For instance, are you planning a unit on plants? Why not have your students explore how scientists study and organize plants, then compare to how an artist might do the same? Or will you be doing do a study of Shakespeare? Why not investigate how he told stories, creating his own language and patterns, and then have your students write a poem or short story using their own language (phrases)? There are many other ways to connect Kidspace to your existing curriculum and we encourage you to plan this before the beginning of the Kidspace semester. We will have time to discuss this further at our teacher workshops.

Each class will visit Kidspace. During your visit to Kidspace your students will work with Kidspace staff to explore the *Magic Gardens* exhibition. Students will then have the opportunity to create their own work of art using similar materials and processes to those used by Tim, Tim and Emily.

The artist residency program continues this year. Each class will have a visit with the Kidspace artist. In March, Tim Rollins will work with the 4th – 8th grade students in your classroom. Workshops will be 1 ½ hours and some classes have been combined to accommodate the artist's schedule. Please make sure to have adequate workspace for your students. The artwork they create will become part of the *Magic Gardens* exhibition, and therefore, the residency part of the Kidspace program will take place first, before your students visit the gallery.

The **Pre-k – 3rd grade** students will work with Tim Basil Ering in May following their visits to Kidspace to create magic boxes. These visits will be 1 hour (except for Pre-k which will be 45-minutes) and will also take place in your classroom.

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PROGRAM GOALS

- Contemporary art can be used to sharpen student visual literacy skills, which can be applied in many subject areas, including art, English language arts, science, and social studies.
- Creating their own works of art can help students to better understand artistic processes explored in museum exhibitions.
- Interactions with artists and their artwork help students to more fully understand the artistic problem-solving processes.
- Curriculum materials and teacher workshops can motivate classroom educators to make multiple curriculum connections to the subject of storytelling, flowers, and magical spaces.

LEARNER OUTCOMES

Through multiple activities focusing on contemporary art and storytelling, flowers, and magical spaces, students will:

- discuss their understanding of how an artist's selection of material influences meaning in works of art;
- recognize that symbols can be found in written stories as well as in paintings;
- compare their understanding of paintings to past Kidspace exhibitions featuring art of different mediums (sculpture, installations, photography);
- report how flowers can create magical environments and how extraordinary gardens can change perceptions of ordinary places;
- explain how different cultures use flowers for their magical and decorative properties in paintings, gardens, stories, and masks;
- illustrate their interpretations of magical spaces in artwork and in written and oral stories.

YOUR FEEDBACK AND SHARING WITH OTHERS

We will have an evaluation workshop with all of the teachers in your school (see your school's schedule in this curriculum), where you will be asked to complete an evaluation form. Meanwhile, we would appreciate hearing your thoughts

along the way. Drop us a note at kidspace@massmoca.org, or phone us at 413-664-4481 ext. 8131. **Your comments do make a difference.**

We hope that you will share your class projects with others in your school. Since each class in your school is involved with Kidspace, it would be interesting to see the different interpretations of the activities and the Kidspace experience. You might display your work throughout the school and meet with other classes to discuss the artists' work and Kidspace.

We look forward to a successful collaboration!

Laura Thompson, Ed.D.
Kidspace Director of Exhibitions and Education

Angela Roberts
Kidspace Assistant

MAGIC GARDENS

Pre-K – 3rd Grade Activities

OVERVIEW

In the classroom and at Kidspace, students in Pre-K – 3rd grade will examine flowers and plants as they are used to create magical places in gardens, artwork and stories. In the classroom they will view images of gardens found in nature and in artwork. They will transform their classrooms using magic seeds for plantings, and will read a story about a fantastical garden in *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone*.

At Kidspace, students will examine a flowered installation comprised of paintings by Tim Rollins and the NBSU 4th – 8th graders, Timothy Basil Ering, and Emily Cheng. Each artist uses different materials and techniques to tell a story with flowers and gardens. The students will use the exhibition and examples of various cultural masks as the inspiration for their own creations of flower masks, allowing them the opportunity to role-play as magic flowers.

At your school, Timothy Basil Ering will work with your students to create their own magic boxes. And as follow-up activities, your students can make a peace garden mural, role-play with their masks, and read other books about magic gardens.

ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Before Your Kidspace Program

1. Discussion: Introduction to Topic and to Kidspace Semester
2. Art: Looking At Gardens
3. Language Arts: *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone*
4. Science / Art: Magic Seeds

During Kidspace Visit

1. Guided Discussion
2. Art-Making Activity: Fantastical Flowered Faces (Masks)

Artist Residency at Your School

1. Preparing for Artist Residency
2. Art-Making Activity: Magic Boxes

After Your Kidspace Program

1. Art: Peace Garden Mural
2. Flower Masks on Parade in Peace Garden
3. Language Art: Stories About Magic Gardens

BEFORE YOUR KIDSPACE PROGRAM

Pre-K – 3rd Grade

Objectives

- Through a review of images and an introductory discussion on gardens in nature and artwork, students will understand how these places embody magical properties.
- By reading and acting out a fantastical story, students will understand that magical spaces can be found in text as well as in images.
- By creating magical classroom spaces (windowsill gardens), students will understand how to transform ordinary spaces and experiences into the extraordinary (a useful tool in storytelling).

1. Discussion: Introduction to Topic and to Kidspace Semester

To begin your Kidspace unit, ask your students to discuss gardens they have experienced. Suggested questions:

- What things do you find in gardens?
- How do gardens look in the different seasons?
- How does it feel to stand inside a garden in spring time?
- Who might live in a garden including real and imagined creatures?

Ask your students to discuss what they saw at Kidspace last year (*Wind Farm* exhibition of kinetic sculpture and photographs of wind turbines). Explain to your students that this year's Kidspace program focuses on gardens and the *Magic Gardens* exhibition features three artists' paintings of flowers. While last year, they studied sculpture and photography, this year's program will involve looking at paintings. Give your class an overview of the semester including classroom activities, the visit to Kidspace, and an artist residency with Timothy Basil Ering.

2. Art: Looking at Gardens

Now that your students are aware of gardens, talk about how artists represent them in their artwork. In the case of the *Magic Gardens* exhibition, the three artists created paintings of flowers that might be found in gardens, which have magical properties. For instance, Timothy Basil Ering's flower paintings from his *Frog Belly Rat Bone* book show us that magic seeds can form beautiful, colorful plants that change our view of depressing, dark places. The flowers that Tim Rollins and the North Berkshire School Union 4th – 8th graders created are illustrations of a magical flower used by a fairy in the Shakespearian play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Talk about how flowers and plants might have magical properties and brainstorm other stories where magic seeds grew special plants (such as *Jack in the Beanstalk* or *Carrot Seed*).

We have provided you with overhead projector transparencies and CD-Rom with images of actual gardens and flower paintings by artists (check them out at your school's main office). Show your students these images and talk about how these real and painted spaces look magical. Suggested questions:

- What are the different things that make up these gardens?
- How do you think it would feel to stand in this garden?
- Who might live in this garden (real or imagined creatures)?
- How do you think this garden was created?
- How is this garden similar/different from the other gardens we have seen?
- Where would this garden be located? What information in the image might tell you that?
- What season is this garden growing in?
- What parts of this garden make it look special or magical?
- What kinds of activities do you think take place in this garden (real or pretend)?

IMAGE LIST

1. Residential Garden
2. Herb Garden
3. Tulip Garden – Netherlands
4. Butchart Gardens – British Colombia
5. Topiary Garden
6. Restoration of a Topiary Garden – Columbus, Ohio
7. Clinton Community Garden – Hells Kitchen, New York City
8. Butterfly Maze
9. Longleat House Maze - Britain
10. Claude Monet – *Water Lilies and Japanese Bridge*
11. Monet's Garden at Giverny
12. Boy and Girl Fountain
13. Tim Rollins – *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
14. Emily Cheng – *Lotus Tangle, Summer*
15. Timothy Basil Ering – *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone*

3. Language Arts: The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone

This activity demonstrates how to use performing arts (storytelling) to support language arts activities. Students will explore a magic garden in Timothy Basil Ering's *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone* and then act out different scenes in the story. Each school has been provided with 3 copies of the Frog Belly book (except for Savoy which will have 2 copies). Check out a copy of the book at your main office and read to or with your class. Discuss the elements of the story that seem magical (mysterious, fairytale-like, unreal, fantastical). For instance, talk about how Frog Belly came into being or how the seeds transformed "Cementland" into a beautiful garden.

Then, using some of the storytelling techniques reviewed with performer Lisa Lipkin at the March 9 teacher workshop, have your students expand upon different parts of the story. One idea is to have them invent a "junk garden." Have your students pretend to be the boy in Cementland as he searches through piles of junk for special treasures. They don't need props to act this scene out, just their imaginations. Your students can pretend that they are standing among a pile of garbage among which they might find hidden treasures. What kinds of

things can they imagine are around them? Have each student say they see something special in the garbage pile that could be used to create a special garden (i.e.; a paper bag might make a nice gardening hat, or an old tv set as a planter). Each student should say what they see, pretend to pick it up (act out if it is heavy or light), and pretend to show their classmates how they would change the object for use in their magic garden.

DRAWING EXTENSION: (Materials: markers or crayons, paper). If time allows following your story time, have your students complete drawings that depict the details in the extended story you made up together. For instance, you might have them draw a picture of their invented junk garden.

4. Science / Art: Magic Seeds

(Materials: clear large containers (take-out soup containers, soda cups), potting soil, magic seeds, markers and paper)

Have your students create a magic garden for your classroom windowsill. Each class has been provided with packets of magic seeds similar to the ones in the Frog Belly book. You will need to provide clear large containers and potting soil. Have your students plant a few of the seeds from their packet (they can take home the rest of the packet if they would like to plant them there), and decide where on the windowsill would be a good place to have their plant grow. They need to consider lighting and space.

Ask them to imagine what kind of plant will grow from these seeds (we crossed out the type on the seed package to keep it a surprise for your students, but for your information, the seeds should produce Lilliput Zinnias). Have them do a drawing of what their plants might look like and how they will transform the windowsill from an ordinary space to something extraordinary. They might imagine that the windowsill will look like a colorful garden instead of a place to store books and other school supplies.

Each day have your students examine their plants for growth activity. If planted in a clear container, they should be able to see the establishment of a root system in the dirt, as well as the eventual flower. If you are doing a unit on plants, this would be a good time to talk about the different parts that make up flowers—stems, leaves, petals, stamen, roots, etc.

DURING YOUR KIDSPACE VISIT

Pre-K – 3rd Grade

A series of questions will be used to help guide your students in their exploration of *Magic Gardens*. They will be asked to respond to these questions using the artwork as a source of both information and inspiration. Each question builds upon another so that students can make connections among the work on view. For instance, they might be asked the following questions:

- What do you think is going on in this painting?
- What kind of materials did the artist use to create the work? Why do you think the artist chose to use these materials?
- When looked at together, how does the artist's work tell us a story?
- What do you think the artist was inspired by?
- What details are important to the story the artist is trying to tell us?
- How does this artist's piece relate to the last artist's work we looked at?
- Does this flower look realistic? Have you seen something like it in nature?
- How did the artist make the flower look like it has magical properties? It color? Shape? Lines?
- Imagine the place where this flower grows. What does it look like? What else is surrounding the flowers? How do people relate to the flower?

These guided discussions serve two purposes: to build students' visual literacy skills and to increase their knowledge of the various ways in which artists represent flowers in their artwork. Visual literacy skills include thinking critically about what one sees, forming opinions and interpretations about artwork, and expressing in words these observations and opinions.

Following the guided discussions, students will have the opportunity to reflect on the artists' art-making processes. We will talk about what the artists needed to do in order to create their works of art. In particular, we will discuss how Emily Cheng was influenced by various cultures' works of art and incorporated many elements from other works of art into her flowers. Students will then look at masks made by various cultures that use flowers as decorative motifs as well as for their magical qualities. Then students will create their own flowered masks using collage materials. To conclude the program, students will share their masks with their classmates, and you might use them to do some role-playing back in the classroom.

ARTIST RESIDENCY

Pre-K – 3rd Grade

Your students will have the opportunity to work with Timothy Basil Ering in your classroom for a one-hour session (45 minutes for Pre-K students).

We recommend that you prepare your students ahead of time for this exciting piece of the Kidspace program. Please review the art that your students viewed at the Kidspace gallery. Ask them to create a list of any questions that they might have for the artist, such as: why did he decide to paint using many different types of materials or how did he become interested in being an illustrator and author? Inform students that they will have the opportunity to ask the artist some of these questions and that they will also work on an art project with the artist.

Tim will bring a special box of props that your students can investigate together. These props relate to Tim's *Frog Belly Rat Bone* story. Following this discussion, your students will create a magic box that shows their impressions of the two worlds in Frog Belly: a dark, depressed world on the outside, and a beautiful, flowery world on the inside.

AFTER YOUR KIDSPACE PROGRAM

Pre-K – 3rd Grade

Objectives

- Students will further explore magical stories by creating a classroom peace garden mural and role-playing with their flower masks they made at Kidspace.
- Students will continue to investigate magical gardens in a reading and discussion activity.

1. Art: Peace Garden Mural

(Supplies: Mural paper, markers, colored paper, glue, scissors)

Continuing your study of gardens and magical places, we recommend that you create a peace garden mural. First, discuss what kinds of things might be shown in a peace garden. Suggested questions:

- What would make a garden seem peaceful?
- What elements from nature and human-made objects would be included in a peaceful garden (i.e.; ponds, bird nests, flowering bushes, etc.)
- What kinds of things would people and animals do in the garden?
- What season would the peace garden best grow in?

Have your students work together on creating a mural depicting their view of a peaceful garden. You can use markers and draw directly on the mural paper, and/or have each student draw a piece of the mural on colored paper that they cut-out and glue on the mural paper. Hang the completed mural in your classroom or the hallway of your school

2. Storytelling: Flower Masks on Parade in Peace Garden

Using their flower masks made at Kidspace, have your students role-play as flowers in front of their peace garden mural. Ask them to pretend they are flowers dancing in the garden, helping to make people feel peaceful and happy. What kinds of things would they say to each other? Have them make up a story about life in a peaceful garden.

You can also teach them a flower song that they can sing using the masks as props and the mural as a backdrop to their performance. This is a particularly good activity for Pre-K / K students. Suggested songs:

(<http://www.preschooleducation.com/sflower.shtml>)

Sung to: "The Farmer In The Dell"

The farmer plants the seeds

The farmer plants the seeds

Hi, Ho and Cherry O

The farmer plants the seeds

The rain begins to fall

The sun begins to shine

The plants begin to grow

The buds all open up

The flowers smile at me

I'm a Little Flower Pot, Original Author Unknown

Sung to: "I'm a Little Teapot"

I'm a little flower pot mom put out (point to self)

If you take care of me, I will sprout. (nod head, point to self)

3. Language Arts: Stories About Magic Gardens

When you water me, I will grow (make sprinkling motions w/ right hand)
Into a pretty flower, don't you know! (raise left hand slowly up from floor, make wide circle with hands or arms)
Continue reading stories that take place in magic gardens and compare to stories told by the artists in the Kidspace *Magic Garden*. After reading to or with your students, discuss the illustrations and text. Have your students recall different parts of the story and imagine what it would be like to experience these magic gardens. Suggested books:

- *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss (Harper Collins Publishers, 1945). A boy plants a carrot seed and waits for it to grow.
- *Flower Garden* by Eve Bunting (First Voyager Books, 1994). A girl and her father create a window box as a birthday gift for her mother. Rhyming book.
- *Jack and the Beanstalk* retold and illustrated by Steven Kellogg (William Morrow & Co., 1991).

MAGICAL PLACES

4th – 8th Grade Activities

OVERVIEW

In the classroom and at Kidspace, students in 4th – 8th grade will examine flowers and plants as they are used to create magical places in gardens, artwork and stories. In the classroom they will view images of gardens found in nature and in artwork. They will transform their classrooms using magic seeds for plantings, and will read a story about a fantastical garden in *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone*.

At Kidspace, students will examine a flowered installation comprised of paintings by Tim Rollins and the NBSU 4th – 8th graders, Timothy Basil Ering, and Emily Cheng. Each artist uses different materials and techniques to tell a story with flowers and gardens. The students will use the exhibition and examples of various cultural elements as the inspiration for their own creations of flower paintings.

ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Before Your Kidspace Program

1. Discussion: Introduction to Topic and to Kidspace Semester
2. Art: Looking At Gardens
3. Science/Language Arts: Magic Seeds

During Your Kidspace Visit

1. Guided Discussion
2. Art-Making Activity: Inspired Flowers (Paintings)

Artist Residency at Your School with Tim Rollins

1. Preparing for Artist Residency
2. Art Making Activity: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

After Your Kidspace Program

1. Language Arts: Storytelling in Film
2. Language Arts/Art: A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words
3. Language Arts: Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*

BEFORE YOUR KIDSPACE PROGRAM

4th – 8th Grade

Objectives

- Through an introductory discussion on gardens in nature and artwork, students will understand how these places embody magical properties.
- By reviewing images that show different types of gardens, students will be better prepared to discuss what they see during their field trip.
- Using Magic Seeds, students will observe the life cycle of a plant and the response to its environment by recording the data from their experiment in a journal in pictures and text.

1. Discussion: Introduction to Topic and Kidspace Semester

To begin your Kidspace unit, ask your students to discuss gardens they have experienced. Suggested questions:

- ≈ What things are contained in gardens?
- ≈ How do they look in the different seasons?
- ≈ How does it feel to stand inside a garden in full bloom?
- ≈ Who might live in a garden including real and imagined creatures?

Ask your students to discuss what they saw at Kidspace last year (*Wind Farm* exhibition of kinetic sculpture and photographs of wind turbines). Explain to your students that this year's Kidspace program focuses on gardens and the *Magic Gardens* exhibition features three artists' paintings of flowers. While last year, they studied sculpture and photography, this year's program will involve looking at paintings. Give your class an overview of the semester including classroom activities, the visit to Kidspace, and an artist residency with Tim Rollins.

2. Art: Looking at Gardens

Now that your students are aware of gardens, talk about how artists represent them in their artwork. In the case of the *Magic Gardens* exhibition, the three artists created paintings of flowers that might be found in gardens which have magical properties. For instance, Timothy Basil Ering's flower paintings from his *Frog Belly Rat Bone* book show us that magic seeds can create beautiful, colorful plants that change our view of depressing, dark places. Or the flowers that Tim Rollins

and the North Berkshire School Union 4th – 8th graders created are illustrations of a magical flower used by a fairy in the Shakespearean play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Talk about how flowers and plants might have magical properties and brainstorm other stories where magic seeds grew special plants (such as *Jack in the Beanstalk* or *Carrot Seed*).

We have provided you with overhead projector transparencies and CD-ROMs with images of actual gardens and flower paintings by artists (check them out at your school's main office). Show your students these images and talk about how these real and painted spaces look magical. Suggested questions:

- ≈ What are the different elements that make up these gardens?
- ≈ How do you think it would feel to stand in this garden?
- ≈ Who might live in this garden (real or imagined creatures)?
- ≈ How was this garden created?
- ≈ How is this garden similar/different from the other gardens we have seen?
- ≈ Where would this garden be located? What information in the image might tell you that?
- ≈ What season is this garden growing in?
- ≈ What parts of this garden make it look special or magical?
- ≈ What kinds of activities do you think take place in this garden (real or pretend)?

IMAGE LIST

1. Residential Garden
2. Herb Garden
3. Tulip Garden – Netherlands
4. Butchart Gardens – British Colombia
5. Topiary Garden
6. Restoration of a Topiary Garden – Columbus, Ohio
7. Clinton Community Garden – Hells Kitchen, New York City
8. Butterfly Maze
9. Longleat House Maze - Britain
10. Claude Monet – *Water Lilies and Japanese Bridge*
11. Monet's Garden at Giverny
12. Boy and Girl Fountain
13. Tim Rollins – *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
14. Emily Cheng – *Lotus Tangle, Summer*
15. Timothy Basil Ering – *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone*

3. Science/Language Arts: Magic Seeds

(Materials: *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone*, magic seeds, containers for planting, potting soil, journal)

In *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone* by Timothy Basil Ering, students explore a magic garden. Each school has been provided with 3 copies of the Frog Belly book (except for Savoy which will have 2 copies). Check out a copy of the book at your main office and read it with your class. Discuss the elements of the story that seem magical (mysterious, fairytale-like, unreal, fantastical). For instance, talk about how Frog Belly came into being or how the seeds transformed “Cementland” into a beautiful garden.

SCIENCE

Have your students create a magic garden for your classroom. Each class has been provided with packets of magic seeds similar to the ones used in the Frog Belly story. Ask your students to keep a journal and use the scientific method to chart the growth of their plant. Have your students identify and recognize the stages in the life cycle of their growing plant from a seedling to a full size flower. Ask them to theorize what they think their plant will eventually look like. (We have crossed out the type of plant on the seed package to keep it a surprise for your students, but for your information, the seeds should produce Lilliput Zinnias.)

Scientific Method

- Initial Observation
- State a purpose for your experiment
- Make a hypothesis
- Test your hypothesis (experiment)
- Record your data and observations
- Make your conclusion

Along with the text, have your students draw illustrations. First they should draw what they imagine the plant will eventually look like to correlate with their experiment’s hypothesis. Then, as the plant growth progresses, have your students draw different parts of the plant such as the roots, buds, and leaves. Have them note next to their drawings the day, time, and weather, which all can influence the growth of the plant.

Your students should daily examine and record data on their magic seed growth. Periodically, discuss what they see happening with the growth of their magic seeds. Once the plant has grown, ask your students to see if they can classify their plant based on observed characteristics (e.g.; color of flower, shape of leaves, etc.).

What if nothing happens?

It is important to remember that not all experiments go as planned, but your students will still learn something from the process of experimentation. Science experiments are valuable to understanding the world around us. If a student's plant should happen to die or not grow at all, have them review their journal entries. Ask him/her to give examples of how changes in the environment may have affected the life of the plant.

LANGUAGE ARTS / ART

Similar to your students who are experimenting and working through a process in this activity, so did Timothy Basil Ering when he wrote *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone*. Discuss the different kinds of research that he might have conducted for the development of this book. Tim experimented with both illustrations and text. If your students are older(in 7th or 8th grade) you can present it to them as a project in which they are conducting research about how a children's book author effectively creates an enchanting story for young readers. Discuss the following questions with your students:

- What research do you think Timothy Basil Ering did to help him create *The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone*?
- How do you think that Tim's research relates to the research you are doing with your magic seeds experiment?
- How many drawings do you think he made before he decided on the final 24 images that you saw in the book?
- Where do you think his inspiration came from for the idea of this book?

Emily Cheng, another artist in the *Magic Gardens* exhibition, also conducts research before beginning a new painting. For example, in one flower painting Emily might include elements of a European Renaissance style and others from a distant era of Chinese painting. She conducts research on other cultures' paintings and eventually she will include in her own paintings some of their icons, colors, shapes, and designs. Your students will have a chance to try out this technique when at Kidspace. Meanwhile, you might mention to your students that artists, illustrators, and authors, as well as scientists do research before setting out to solve a problem or create a new work.

DURING YOUR KIDSPACE VISIT

4th – 8th Grade

A series of questions will be used to help guide your students in their exploration of *Magic Gardens*. They will be asked to respond to these questions using the artwork as a source of both information and inspiration. Each question builds upon another so that students can make connections among the work on view. For instance, they might be asked the following questions when standing in front of one work of art:

- What do you think is going on in this painting?
- What kind of materials did the artist use to create the work? Why do you think that the artist chose to use these materials?
- When looked at together, how does the artist's work tell us a story?
- What do you think the artist was inspired by?
- What details are important to the story the artist is trying to tell us?
- How does the artist's piece relate to the last artist's work we looked at?
- Does this flower look realistic? Have you seen something like it in nature?
- How did the artist make the flower look like it has magical properties? Its color? Shape? Lines?
- Imagine the place where this flower grows. What does it look like? What else is surrounding the flowers? How do people relate to the flower?

These guided discussions serve two purposes: to build students' visual literacy skills and to increase their knowledge of the various ways in which artists incorporated flowers into their artwork. Visual literacy skills include thinking critically about what one sees, forming opinions and interpretations about artwork, and expressing in words these observations and opinions.

Following the guided discussions, students will have the opportunity to reflect on the artists' art-making processes. We will talk about what the artist needed to do in order to create their works of art. In particular, we will discuss how Emily Cheng is influenced by various cultures' works of art and incorporates many elements from other works of art into her flowers. Students will then look at a selection of artwork by other artists, and choose three elements from them to incorporate into their own flower watercolor paintings. To conclude the program, students will share their paintings with their classmates.

ARTIST RESIDENCY

4th – 8th Grade

Your students will have the opportunity to work with renowned conceptual artist Tim Rollins in your school's classroom for a 1 ½ hour session. This residency will take place the week of March 14 -17, before the public opening of *Magic Gardens*.

We recommend that you prepare you students ahead of time for this exciting piece of the Kidspace program. Please review your visit to MASS MoCA for the *Shakespeare in Action* performance. Talk about how the performers interpreted scenes from Shakespeare's plays and note that the students will have the opportunity to create their own interpretations of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Tim. Mention that they will collaborate on this art project with Tim which will hang in the *Magic Gardens* exhibition and end up in Tim's collection.

AFTER YOUR KIDSPACE PROGRAM

4th – 8th Grade

Objectives

- Students will further explore storytelling in a variety of formats.
- Students will continue their magic seeds experiment, collecting data and forming conclusions about the final product.
- Through reading and drawing, students will continue to identify how authors and artists create imagery in their text and illustrations.

1. Language Arts: Storytelling in Film

Continue exploring how stories can be told about fantastical gardens and magical places by reviewing films. The following films are stories that relate to the themes discussed during Kidspace program.

- *Edward Scissorhands*, 1990, directed by Tim Burton, starring Johnny Depp and Winona Ryder
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1999, starring Kevin Kline, Michelle Pfeiffer and Calista Flockheart
- *The Secret Garden*, 1993, directed by Agnieszka Holland
- *Labyrinth*, 1986, directed by Jim Henson, starring David Bowie and Jennifer Connelly

Questions to discuss with your students after viewing a film:

- In what way does this film relate to what you saw at Kidspace?
- What do you think inspired the director to make this film?
- What are the magical properties of this film?
- How are flowers and plants used to create a mood or used as special props?

2. Language Arts/Art: A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

As discussed during your artist residency and Kidspace visit, artists and authors use flowers as storytelling devices. They often point to one key element of the story. For instance, in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Puck, a main character, uses a magical flower throughout the play. Thus, the flower can be pulled out as an important storytelling element. Have your students identify the important elements in one of the following passages or poems. Ask your students to close their eyes and imagine as you read out loud to them.

Make copies of the Shakespeare passage or one of the two poems provided so your students can re-read text. As a group, discuss with your students:

- What are the important elements in this passage or poem?
- Which element stands out to you as being the most important and why?
- How do you imagine the story would seem if this element was missing?

The Winter's Tale

Shakespeare

Act 4, scene 3, lines 1-4

“When daffodils begin to peer,
With heigh! the doxy over the dale,
Why, then comes in the sweet o’ the year;
For the red blood reigns in the winter’s pale.”

A Dream Within a Dream

By Edgar Allan Poe

Take this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow-
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less gone?
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand-
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep- while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is all that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

The Garden

By Shel Silverstein

From: *Where the Sidewalk Ends*

Ol' man Simon, planted a diamond,
Grew hisself a garden the likes of none.
Sprouts all growin', comin' up glowin',
Fruit of jewels all shinin' in the sun.
Colors of the rainbow,
See the sun and rain grow
Sapphires and rubies on ivory vines,
Grapes of jade, just
Ripenin' in the shade, just
Ready for the squeezin' into green jade wine.
Pure gold corn there,
Blowin' in the warm air,
Ol' crow nibblin' on the amnythyst seeds.
In between the diamonds, ol' man Simon
Crawls about pullin' out platinum weeds.
Pink pearl berries,
All you can carry,
Put 'em in a bushel and
Haul 'em into town.
Up in the tree there's
Opal nuts and gold pears –
Hurry quick, grab a stick
And shake some down.
Take a silver tater,
Emerald tomater,
Fresh plump coral melons
Hangin' in reach.
Ol' man Simon,
Diggin' in his diamonds,
Stops and rests and dreams about
One...real...peach.

Other reading suggestions:

- Poems by Robert Frost
- Poems by Emily Dickenson
- *Red Flowers For You*, by Shel Silverstein, Falling Up
- *The Oak and the Rose*, by Shel Silverstein, A Light in the Attic
- *Floradora Doe*, by Jack Prelutsky, The New Kid on the Block
- *Othello*, by Shakespeare (Iago is largely associated with plants, but instead of using them in a magical way, he uses them to create chaos, similar to Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*)

ART

(Materials: markers or paint, paper, scissors, glue)

After your discussion, have students illustrate the important element they found in the text. You can make copies of the text and have them then overlay the element on the text, similar to the project they worked on with Tim Rollins.

3. Language Arts: Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*

One of Shakespeare's last plays, *The Winter's Tale*, relates the changes of the seasons with the events in our lives. Cycles in nature are created through tragedy (winter) and comedy (summer). The play links pairs of opposite such as birth and death, and guilt and innocence with corresponding seasons.

Have your students read all or parts of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. Discuss how this play is related to the artwork of all three artists in the *Magic Gardens* exhibition. Suggested questions:

- How does this play relate to the work you did with Tim Rollins during the artist residency?
- How does this play relate to the work of Timothy Basil Ering?
- How are the three artists influenced by other artists work or other cultures? How is Shakespeare influenced by other cultures?

Compare how Shakespeare uses elements from other cultures in his writing to the paintings of Emily Cheng. (Both Emily and Shakespeare incorporate into their work ideas, themes, and references from other cultures' practices (i.e.; religion, art, literature, mythology). Have your students identify cultural elements within *The Winter's Tale* play. For instance, read lines 111 – 128, Act IV, scene 4 spoken by Perdita. In these lines Perdita speaks of the effects of the seasons on flowers and their growth cycle. Perdita calls to the Roman goddess Proserpina (or Persephone in Greek myths) for flowers such as daffodils to bloom, and spring to begin. Proserpina lives half of the year underground, and brings spring with her every year on her return to the earth.

LANGUAGE ARTS EXTENSION: What Flower Are You?

Artists, poets, and writers throughout time have used flowers and gardens as a metaphor in their work. Review the following phrases with your students and determine the meaning of each one.

Metaphors

- The sound of flowers blooming is sweet music.
- Teachers are stepping stones to learning.
- Students are budding flowers.
- Relationships are cultivated like flowers or vegetables.
- Love is like a flower.

Have your students conduct research on the different types of flowers for their symbolic meanings. For instance, a red rose can symbolize love; a yellow rose can mean friendship; daisies can symbolize innocence and gentleness. Have them determine which flower best describes a feeling they have towards someone, and have them write a metaphoric poem including the flower. In this activity, a garden can be used as a metaphor for the world that holds many different types of flowers within it. Even though some of the flowers may *look* alike, each flower is different.

MAGIC GARDENS LEARNING STANDARDS

Arts

Students will:

- Use a variety of materials and media and understand how to use them to produce different visual effects (MA Standard 1.1).
- Expand their repertoire of 2D and 3D art processes, techniques, and materials with a focus on the range of effects possible within each medium. (MA Standard 1.5)
- Identify patterns and symmetrical forms and shapes in the environment and artwork (MA Standard 2.5)
- Define and identify occurrences of balance, rhythm, repetition, variety, and emphasis (MA Standard 2.6)
- Create artwork from imagination to tell a story or embody an idea or fantasy (MA Standard 3.3)
- Interpret the meanings of artistic works by explaining how the subject matter and/or form reflect the events, ideas, religions and customs of people living at a particular time in history (MA Standard 6.3)
- Investigate how artists create their work (MA Standard 7.1)
- Identify and describe examples of how artists make innovative uses of technologies and inventions. (MA Standard 9.3)
- Apply their knowledge of the arts to the study of the English language arts, history and social science, and science and technology (MA Standard 10).

Science/Technology

Students will:

- Identify and explain how symbols and icons are used to communicate a message (MA Standard Technology / Engineering Strand 4 #3.4).
- Classify plants according to their physical characteristics (MA Standard Biology Grades 3 – 5 Strand 2 #1).
- Recognize that plants will go through a predictable life cycle that includes birth, growth, development, reproduction, and death (MA Standard Biology Grades 3 – 5 Strand 2 #3).

English Language Arts

Students will:

- Pose questions [about works of art and literature], listen to the ideas of others, and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions and interviews in order to acquire new knowledge. (derived from MA Standard 2) .
- Understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly in reading and writing (MA Standard 4).
- Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed (MA Standard 9).

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