

# ひろしま **hiroshima**

**Self Guided Secondary Education Program**  
**Exhibition Tour of ひろしま hiroshima by Ishiuchi Miyako**

## **Teacher's Notes**

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**Book your Education Program at 604 822 3825 or [bookings@moa.ubc.ca](mailto:bookings@moa.ubc.ca)**  
Museum of Anthropology, 6393 N.W. Marine Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z2

## Planning Your Visit

### Booking Information

Please access our online bookings guide, *Booking Education Programs: What You Need to Know*, available on the MOA website at [www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php](http://www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php).

### Class Guidelines and Requirements

Accompanying adults and teachers are responsible to supervise their group **at all times**.

### Program Description and Objectives

This self-guided tour of ひろしま *hiroshima* by Ishiuchi Miyako explores how artworks can tell different stories than traditional historical documentation. Key themes that will be explored include witnessing history, the artistic process, memory, and the body using the metaphor of scars as a permanent trace of a physical and/or emotional event. The tour focuses on a select group of works in the exhibition, drawing out the artist's intent and encouraging critical thinking and open-ended discussion with students.

### Curriculum Relevance

This program was developed to meet specific criteria from BC Curriculum Standards and Prescribed Learning Outcomes for grades 11 and 12 in the following subject areas: **Comparative Civilizations, History, Civic Studies, English Language Arts, Fine Arts, Literacy Foundations, Social Studies, and Visual Arts.**

Examples of specific learning outcomes covered in this program include: applying research skills, applying critical thinking skills, demonstrating historical empathy, drafting and composing strategies for communicating ideas, organizing and synthesizing ideas and information, describing how a specific work of art responds to historical and/or contemporary issues, and analyzing how materials, technologies, and processes contribute to creating meaning in art works.

## Self Guided Tour & Activities

This self-guided tour is approximately 50 minutes long, and includes both Museum and classroom activities. Suggestions for additional or pre- or post- visit activities are available in the “Additional Teacher Resources” section of this booklet.

1. **Exhibition Gallery Tour (20 min)**
2. **Activity 1: Printable worksheets (15 min)**
3. **Activity 2: Reflection activity (15 min)**
4. **Classroom discussion & activities (back at school)**

The program focuses on the following key themes:

- i. **Artistic Process:** How lighting and framing can communicate artistic intent.
- ii. **Memory & The Body:** How objects and scars can be physical markers of historic moments.
- iii. **Witnessing History:** How art allows present-day viewers to observe aspects of historic events.

### Instructions

Please bring with you:

1. Printed worksheets for students to use in Activity 1
2. Blank paper or journals for Activity 2

**Important Note:** Only **PENCILS** and **PENCIL-CRAYONS** are allowed in the galleries. No pens please! Clipboards are available at the Museum on a first come-first served basis.

## Self Guided Tour



### Exhibition Tour Stop 1: #41 (Slippers) Background

This exhibition features a collection of photographs by Japanese contemporary artist, Ishiuchi Miyako. First, we are going to spend some time looking at four objects, thinking about three key themes:

- i. **Artistic Process:** How lighting and framing can communicate artistic intent.
- ii. **Memory & The Body:** How objects and scars can be physical markers of historic moments.
- iii. **Witnessing History:** How art allows present-day viewers to observe aspects of historic events.

After a brief (approximately 15-20 minute) tour and general discussion of these themes, you will receive a worksheet that focuses on one theme. You will then have 15 minutes to complete a response on this worksheet. We will end the visit with a short creative activity. Please keep all of your responses on hand for a discussion.

Like this photograph of slippers you're looking at now, each photographic work depicts an object, or part of an object, that belonged to a person present during the atomic bombing of Hiroshima city at the end of World War II. Most of the objects' owners perished when the bomb exploded and these items are evidence of their lives. Each belonging was selected from a collection of 19,000 items stored at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, and was chosen specifically by the artist because it was once worn in intimate proximity to the human body. **Think about why the artist might have focused on the physical relationship between the object and owner.**



## Exhibition Tour Stop 2: #65 (Undergarment) Theme: Artistic Process

Take a look at this undergarment – an object which once had intimate physical contact with its owner. Think about the lighting in this image. **What process do you think the artist used to make this object appear transparent?**

For her artistic process, Ishiuchi Miyako photographed each object either against the light of a custom-built light-box or in the natural sunlight. Her intent was to bring these objects out of the dark basement of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and give them new life. Look closely at this photograph. Consider how the lighting highlights the texture of the fabric and details such as seams, tears and crinkles. Now step back and think about the shape of the object as a whole. **What effect do you think that this process of lighting has on your experience of viewing the object?**



## Exhibition Tour Stop 3: #82 (Glasses) Theme: Memory and The Body

Like the slippers and undergarment we just looked at, this pair of glasses would have been worn against the human body. In addition, glasses, like clothing, are often a fashion accessory that communicates something about an individual's personality. **What do your clothes or belongings communicate about your personality?**

This artist has a history of photographing human scars. She focuses on the concept of scars as permanent marks that tell stories about a personal or historic event. In this sense, the concept of a “scar” can become metaphorical. For example, a tattoo, a criminal record, or a digital profile might be considered a personal “scar.” **How are photographs of the objects you see in this exhibition different from, or similar to, photographs of scars?**



## Exhibition Tour Stop 4 (FINAL STOP): #5 (Dress) Theme: Witnessing History

Read this quote from artist Ishiuchi Miyako about this dress:

*“When I encountered it, I thought ‘I can imagine myself in this dress.’ It felt very real to me. If I had been in Hiroshima in 1945 and been of an age to wear it, it could have been me.”*

This quote is coming from a person who, like yourselves, was not alive when the atomic bomb hit Hiroshima city. Though there have been many different artworks and cultural or peace movements in the 66 years since the bombing, Ishiuchi is concerned with communicating to today’s younger generations who were not necessarily alive during the war. **Why do you think it is important that these objects continue to be remembered?**

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**Self-Guided Tour - STUDENT WORKSHEET**



**#88 (Wristwatch)**

**Theme: Memory and the Body**

Find the photo of this watch which was donated by Okimoto, S. Like the other belongings featured in artist Ishiuchi Miyako's photographs, this watch once had an intimate physical connection to a human body.

Consider the metaphor of a scar – a permanent mark which tells a personal story about a moment or event in the past. **Can these objects function like scars?**

Write your response below, comparing the similarities or differences between this wristwatch and a physical scar or mark that is on your body. Think about the passage of time, the role of memory, and the idea of healing.

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**Self-Guided Tour - STUDENT WORKSHEET**



**#9 (Dress)**

**Theme: Artistic Process (Light)**

Think about the particular process the artist chose to light and frame these belongings. **What do you think the difference is between having an exhibition of these photographs of these objects, versus having the real objects travel here to be shown?** Write your response below, focusing on three main points.

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**Self-Guided Tour - STUDENT WORKSHEET**



**#11 (Dress)**

**Theme: Memory and the Body**

Look at the fashionably bright colors and pattern on this dress. Because of their intimate physical and personal connection to people, some writers have considered these types of objects – undergarments and accessories – to function as a “second skin.” **Could this be described as a portrait? Of whom? Why or why not?** Write your response below.

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**#44 and #47 (Baby's Dress)**

**Theme: Artistic Process (Framing)**

Compare these two different photographs of the same baby's dress (full view and cropped close up). **How does this deliberate framing guide your experience as a viewer?** Write your response below.

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**#7 (dress) and #86 (Rings)**

**Theme: Artist Process (Scale)**

Consider the different sizes of these two photographs. The artist once said that she could imagine herself in a dress like this. **Does the scale of her photographs help you to imagine yourself in the dress, or owning these belongings? Why or why not? Write your response below.**

## Activity 2

Give students ten minutes to create a response to any work in the exhibition they choose. Ask them to write the title, and include a description of the piece. Responses can be in one of the following formats:

1. **as a drawing**
2. **as a haiku poem**
3. **as a narrative description**

Please refer to the Extended Teacher Resource Bibliography section of this resource package for a detailed list of resources (books, website links, and films) that are suitable for classroom activities and/or homework assignments and additional support for teachers.

## Additional Teacher Resources

### Exhibition Overview: ひろしま *hiroshima* by Ishiuchi Miyako.

ひろしま *hiroshima* is comprised of large- and small-scale photographs by the Japanese contemporary artist, Ishiuchi Miyako. In an effort to face the collective trauma of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Ishiuchi took as her subject a collection of 19,000 items held by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum—personal effects of the victims as well as other objects that survived the bombing—and which are on display or preserved in storage. From this collection she selected items that had been in direct contact with their owners' bodies, carefully taking them out into the natural light and photographing them on a light box. This exhibition features 48 of the resulting photographs, which vary in scale from 1.5 metres to 33 cm high, and which are placed by the artist at varying heights in groups, singly, or in series, as an installation conceived specifically for the Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver. Also included in the exhibition is video work entitled “Strings of time ひろしま *hiroshima*”) 2009, 12 min 12 secs).

### Exhibitions by Ishiuchi Miyako leading up to ひろしま *hiroshima*

Two major bodies of work by Ishiuchi Miyako have informed her approach to photographing ひろしま *hiroshima*: her series of photographs of human scars featured in her exhibitions *Scars* (1997) and *Innocence* (2007), and her photographic series of her late mother's personal belongings in *Mother's* (2007).

For Ishiuchi, scars represent past traumas and “the accumulation of an individual's lifetime.” She has photographed scars on women's bodies for ten years, framing each scar as her primary subject. These portraits of scars tell individual stories of traumatic or painful events, but they also demonstrate the body's ability to heal over time. About ひろしま *hiroshima*, she says “These things ...left behind, although a few of their owners are still alive, are slightly different from wounds and scars. It is difficult for a human being to survive for even one hundred years, but these objects have been bestowed with a longer existence. As parts of the largest scar the world has known, they will outlive us all, and never grow old.” For ひろしま *hiroshima*, Ishiuchi selected clothing and objects that had direct contact with their owners' bodies before or during the bomb. In this way, Ishiuchi's intimate photographs of scars as portraits – which are simultaneously personal and universal in their reference to pain and healing – appear to have informed her intimate approach to the objects and clothing that were so intimately connected to the victims of the atomic bomb.

This intimate approach is strongly apparent in her photographic series *Mother's* (2007), where Ishiuchi shifts her focus from the human body to material belongings such as lingerie and partly used lipstick. Like the objects she selected to photograph in ひろしま *hiroshima*, the objects photographed in *Mother's* all had close contact with her mother's body – the lace slip and red lipstick functioning almost as a second skin. Also in this series, Ishiuchi photographed pieces of her mother's lace underwear hanging in a window and lit by natural light, a precursor to the custom-built lightbox she used to photograph some of the personal effects featured in ひろしま *hiroshima*. In Ishiuchi's words, “The light box was inspired by the way I photographed the *Mother's* series.” For Ishiuchi, the personal belongings in *Mother's* and ひろしま *hiroshima* carry remnants of their owner's identity, their texture, colour, and form remaining expressive and alive.

**The Exhibition Title: “ひろしま *hiroshima*”**

Ishiuchi Miyako deliberately selected the softer hiragana characters historically used by Japanese women, as opposed to the more masculine and rigid katakana letters in the current Japanese writing system. This decision comes from her intent to distance her photographs from the dominant images of the brutal history of WWII and the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Ishiuchi shifts our focus to a selection of personal and intimate belongings that tell the stories of ordinary individuals affected by this tragic event. Attempts to move the discussion about Hiroshima toward an anti-war and pro-peace emphasis “is completely obvious,” she says. “But I wanted to set aside those worn-out clichés and focus on the average people who cared about fashion and wore nice clothes. If you look closely you can see bloodstains and evidence of irradiation; you just have to look carefully.” The result is a tension between the objects’ beauty or individuality, and the weight of history that they carry.

**Photographing ひろしま *hiroshima***

Ishiuchi Miyako writes: “The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum houses over 19,000 personal effects left behind by those who perished in the bomb. From those, I chose to photograph selected objects that had directly touched their bodies. Most humans are rarely granted a lifetime spanning one century. These objects are afforded a much longer existence, beyond our lifetimes, into worlds beyond. They will survive to testify to a profound trauma, one which will never belong to the past.”

To photograph, some of these objects Ishiuchi brought a custom-built light box from Tokyo to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. She explains, “Against the light I’m hoping I can see what’s behind them, that’s why I’m using the light box. At least that’s what I hope. Against the light the objects look sad about being stored away. I’d like to free them from just being ‘tragic’ artifacts of the atomic bomb, giving them breathing room.” Some other objects were photographed in natural sunlight near a window.

While photographing the objects, Ishiuchi recalls that “I thought about the way that the cloth had been woven, cut and sewn together, the appearance of the garment when it was worn on that fateful morning. The objects that remained in the city after being subjected to a military and scientific experiment do not speak, they merely exist, but despite the horror of the details, I found myself overwhelmed by the bright colors and textures of these high-quality clothes.”

For more information about Ishiuchi Miyako and her works, please refer to the Extended Teacher Resource Bibliography.

**Finding the Right Distance in ひろしま *hiroshima***

According to Ishiuchi, “Others have photographed the things left behind in Hiroshima, but I create a unique distance between my subjects and me. I’m always gauging that distance. You can’t photograph without distance. I’m sure there’s something unique about the way I find the right distance from my subjects.”

She finds distance in time by insisting that “I am not shooting the past; I’m shooting the present time, right now.” As a result, her photographs present her subjective and emotional interaction with each object that focuses on “the time and space when I encountered them,” so that the “terrible history behind why they survived” becomes a secondary level of interpretation. She explains “I want to liberate them from such excruciating circumstances. Hiroshima is a very restrictive place in many ways.” Of one dress belonging to Harada Atsuko, Ishiuchi turned “her thoughts to this young girl, determined to be fashionable in the middle of a war,” admitting that “I was just stunned to see that these colors survived the atomic bomb”

For Ishiuchi, using the light box is one method to distance her photographs of these objects from the history of the atomic bomb. She says, “I take these small items out into the natural light and allow them to return to something approaching their original, forgotten form” as personal belongings from ordinary people caught in the middle of a war. She also says: “The relics filled me with a thousand emotions... I visualize the beautiful young women who wore them, and it is with these thoughts in mind that the exhibition came to life.”

Similarly, Ishiuchi’s decision to use the softer, feminine *hiragana* characters instead of masculine and rigid *katakana* letters in the exhibition title reinforce her attempt to distance this exhibition from a history of representation of nuclear warfare characterized by images of mushroom clouds and de-personalized aerial views. The feminine undertones in the exhibition title help shift the focus from the brutality of the bombing, to the individuals who were affected by it. She says, “I thought about the way that the cloth had been woven, cut and sewn together, the appearance of the garment when it was worn on that fateful morning. The objects that remained in the city after being subjected to a military and scientific experiment do not speak, they merely exist, but despite the horror of the details, I found myself overwhelmed by the bright colors and textures of these high-quality clothes.”

### **Artist Biography**

Born in 1947 in Gunma Prefecture, Japan, Miyako Ishiuchi started photographing in the late 1970s and has become one of the leading Japanese artists working in photographic media. In 2005 her solo exhibition represented Japan at the Venice Biennale. Her subject matter is based directly on the representation of the human body and its accessories, and her subjects are often directly connected to her personal history: “1-9-4-7” focused on the hands and feet of women born in the same year as herself; “Mother’s 2000-2005, Traces of the Future” focused on the intimate elements of her mother’s presence and memory. Since the 1980s she has been photographing scar tissue: indexical renderings of physical wounding and life narratives on the body. For her, photography becomes a medium of remembrance and monumentalizing, and an active agent of memory making. She exhibits internationally and her work is held in public collections in Canada and around the world. This exhibition of ひろしま *hiroshima* Ishiuchi Miyako at the Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver will be the first time this work has been shown outside Japan.

## Multimedia Resource List

These resources have been selected for their clarity, quality and relevance for teachers preparing to visit ひろしま **hiroshima** by Ishiuchi Miyako exhibition at MOA from October 13, 2011 to February 12, 2012. This bibliographic reference has been organized according to the following categories:

Online Resources

Books: Children, Teen, Adult

Resources for Peace Education

Recommended Films

### Online Resources:

Japan Society website: About Japan: A Teacher's Resource

Explore video, interviews, articles and teachers' toolkits with literary guides and suggestions for teaching materials. Find original resources categorized by themes such as transportation, economics, popular culture, postwar and imperial japan, and download lesson plans created for elementary and secondary levels about Japanese architecture, cuisine, festivals, economics, popular culture, the postwar environment, contemporary art and more.

[http://aboutjapan.japansociety.org/content.cfm/from\\_hiroshima\\_to\\_new\\_york](http://aboutjapan.japansociety.org/content.cfm/from_hiroshima_to_new_york)

### **Global Art Project: Art For Peace**

Explore a gallery of peace art made by people of all ages from around the world, and use this website to encourage your students to create artwork that expresses their vision of global peace and goodwill that can be displayed at your school or in your local community. Using this website, The Global Art Project organizes an international exchange on April 23-30 biennially, resulting in thousands of people sending messages of peace around the world at one time. Register for your class' artworks to join the movement, or document your participation at your school, in your local community, or online.

<http://www.globalartproject.org/about/projectdescription.html>

### Children & Teen books:

**Yep, Lawrence.** *Hiroshima: A Novella.* New York: Scholastic Inc, 1995.

This novella combines engaging narrative techniques with historical facts to provide a brief but thorough account of events in WWII leading up to, and after the bombing of Hiroshima city. The author includes information about the chemistry of atomic warfare, the ostracization of hibakusha (survivors of the atomic bomb) within Japan, post-war reconciliation efforts between Japan and America, and the continued production of atomic weapons across the world. An excellent resource for discussion of nuclear warfare, local and global efforts towards peace and reconciliation, and the role of museums and cultural centers in publicly remembering historic events to educate and prepare for the future. Strongly recommended pre-visit reading for classes visiting the exhibition.

**Kogawa, Joy. *Naomi's Road*. London: Oxford University Press, 1986.**

This autobiographical children's novel explores the author's experience of Japanese internment in Canada during WWII, from the perspective of her six-year-old self. This is a good introduction to the violence of racism and an opportunity for teachers to discuss themes including humanity, morality, race and discrimination.

**Coerr, Eleanor. *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977.**

This book follows the protagonist, Sadako, and her hope that folding one thousand paper cranes will convince the gods to help her recover from leukemia. The author explains that after her death, Sadako's statue was erected in Hiroshima Peace Park as a way of remembering the children that died after the bombing and supporting the dream of "Peace in the world." This book is a good resource for discussing the effects of nuclear war, and the importance of public opportunities to remember past events and promote peace for the future.

### **Teacher Resources:**

**Ishiuchi, Miyako. ひろしま *hiroshima* (exhibition catalogue). Tokyo: Shueisha, 2008.**

This exhibition catalogue includes a brief note from artist Miyako Ishiuchi and reproductions of photographs featured in the exhibition.

**Seiko, Sato. "The Body of Ishiuchi Miyako, 1988-2008." *Infinity*<sup>∞</sup> (Tokyo: Kyuryudo Art-Publishing) 2009. P 132 – 137.**

This article provides an introduction to Ishiuchi Miyako's *Mother's* series and its connection with ひろしま *hiroshima* by Ishiuchi Miyako.

**Kobayashi, Mika. "Ishiuchi Miyako: The Traces of Absent Bodies." *Foam: International Photography Magazine* #25. 2010.**

Online access to this article at: [http://issuu.com/foam-magazine/docs/25\\_traces](http://issuu.com/foam-magazine/docs/25_traces)

This article offers a comparative analysis between Ishiuchi's *Mother's* series and ひろしま *hiroshima* by Ishiuchi Miyako.

**Shino, Kuraishi. "Her Alter Ego and Mine: *Mother's* and the Other Photographic Series of Ishiuchi Miyako." *Infinity*<sup>∞</sup> (Tokyo: Kyuryudo Art-Publishing) 2009. P 139-145.**

This article provides background information on the thematic developments of Ishiuchi's major exhibitions.

**Yoko, Hayashi-Hibino. "Representing the Loss of Loved Ones: Ishiuchi Miyako's *Mother's* and ひろしま *hiroshima*." *Infinity*<sup>∞</sup> (Tokyo: Kyuryudo Art-Publishing) 2009. P 146-153.**

This article provides an overview of major exhibitions by Ishiuchi Miyako, and an analysis of the exhibition.

**Resources for Peace Education:**

Lehman, Barbara A., Evelyn B. Freeman and Patricia L. Scharer. Reading Globally, K-8: *Connecting Students to the World through Literature*. California: Corwin, 2010. This book is divided into two parts: 1) Infusing Global Literature Throughout the Curriculum, and 2) Issues Teachers Face. Chapter highlights include “Incorporating the (Literary) Framework Across the Curriculum” and a chapter about the arts, including a section devoted to “Art and Artists.” This book also includes a chapter devoted to “Frequently Asked Questions about Global Children’s Literature”, including selecting quality books, working with parents, and curriculum integration.

**Recommended Films:**

**ANPO: Art X War. Director: Linda Hoaglund. 89 min.**

This film depicts resistance to U.S. military bases in Japan through a collage of paintings, photographs and films by Japan’s foremost contemporary artists. “ANPO” is the Japanese shorthand for the U.S.- Japan Mutual Security Treaty. The treaty permits the continued presence of 90 U.S. military bases in Japan, an oppressive presence that has disrupted Japanese life for decades. More information and teacher resources at [www.lhoaglund.com](http://www.lhoaglund.com).

**Cultures of Resistance, Director: Lara Lee. 73 min.**

This film explores how art and creativity can be used as ammunition in the battle for peace and justice. Featured are Medellín poets for peace, Capoeira masters from Brazil, Niger Delta militants, Iranian graffiti artists, women’s movement leaders in Rwanda, Lebanon’s refugee filmmakers, US political pranksters, indigenous Kayapó activists from the Xingu River, Israeli dissidents, hip-hop artists from Palestine, and many more. More information at <http://www.culturesofresistance.org/>.

**Amandla! A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony. 103 min.**

Through a chronological history of the South African liberation struggle, this documentary cites examples of the way that music was used in the fight for freedom. Songs united those who were being oppressed and gave those fighting a way to express their plight. The music consoled those incarcerated, and created an effective underground form of communication inside the prisons. 103 min.