



Transforming the Ordinary - Ruth Asawa

Student Work Inspired by Ruth Asawa

**Rooftop Alternative School
Julia Morgan Program - Spring 2004**

Rooftop and Julia Morgan Center for the Arts
SPRING '04 CULMINATING EVENT

RUTH ASAWA
Transforming the Ordinary

FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 2004
Rooftop School, Burnett Campus

Introduction

Ms. Cruz's Kindergarten Class
The Garden as Inspiration

Mr. Lane's & Ms. Vaughn's 1st Grade Class
"Fortune Teller" Folding and Making Observations

Ms. Beaulieu's 2nd Grade Class
Body Weaving and Sharing of Weaving

Ms. Callaway's 2nd Grade Class
Reflection Weaving and What We've Learned About Art

Ms. Worrell's 2nd Grade Class
Frozen Statues and Sharing of Wire Art

Mr. Pringle's 3rd Grade Class
"Folding, Twisting, Weaving, Stacking" Dance

Ms. Toupin's 3rd Grade Class
Ruth Asawa — A Biography

Ms. Henry's 5th Grade Class
Mr. Mattson's 5th Grade Class
Asawa's Art as Inspiration — Poetry and Art

Dedication Ceremony

Acknowledgements

Spring 2004 Work of Art: Ruth Asawa's Grand Hyatt Fountain at Union Square,
Origami Fountains at Japantown and Tied-Wire Sculpture at the Oakland Museum

Julia Morgan Teaching Artists: Dave Maier & Rica Anderson



“I believe in the lasting joy that making art can bring to all of us.”

— RUTH ASAWA —

A painting is merely paint on a surface. Sculpture is only materials assembled in space. Art merely exists until the viewer chooses to take the time to engage with it, to look closely, to find their own connections to another person’s idea.

This Spring of 2004 the Julia Morgan program has focused on the art of Ruth Asawa, sculptor and arts advocate. Our students have been asked, “How does Ruth Asawa transform the ordinary in her public works at Union Square, Japantown and the Oakland Museum?” Classes have visited Japantown and Union Square, receiving the hospitality of the communities served by Ruth’s art. Our children have come to feel a deep connection to the art that has been the focus of their study, and they have learned that they too have the ability to positively effect their surroundings. Our young artists have been hard at work (and play) with paper, wire, and baker’s dough, creating their own works, which they will gift to the Rooftop community, in tribute to Ruth Asawa and her family. They have come to be inspired by Ruth’s art and life.

Our goal with the student study of Ruth Asawa has been to encourage our students to be open to the possibilities of art. It is all too easy to say, “I don’t like it” or “I like it.” We want to encourage students to notice more and to understand that art has the ability to bring you to places, connect you to others, and to bring you to greater self-understanding.

It was a common occurrence for adults on the field trips to comment, “I’ve walked by this place a million times and I’ve never ever noticed this. I had no idea!” As parents, we can encourage our children to be aware and open to the world around them. Riches are there for all who choose to stop, look and listen.

I recently overheard a conversation between two kindergarten students, the morning after a family arts workshop focusing on Ruth. One girl held a small lump of baker’s clay and expressed her enthusiasm for the newly introduced medium. “It’s baker’s dough! See this! I’m the only one in the world who can make this flower!” With 4 cups flour, 1 cup salt, and 1-1/2 cups water, this student was transformed.

And so it is that decades later, Ruth Asawa continues to work her magic at Rooftop.

— Andi Wong, Rooftop Art Coordinator

Student art dedicated to Ruth Asawa and the Asawa-Lanier family:

Kindergarten Family Crest Mosaic — Tiles created by Kindergarten class of 2004, to be installed near the play structure under Room 5's windows.

Nature Tile Mosaic — Tiles created by Mr. Pringle's 3rd grade class to be installed under windows near teacher parking lot entrance.

Butterflies — Water bottles transformed! — Kindergarten and 1st grade classes, Ms. Beaulieu's 2nd grade class, installed throughout the building.

"What I've Learned at Rooftop" Mosaic — Ms. Worrell's 2nd grade class, to be installed at the bottom of the stairwell near book room door.

Garden Entrance — Ms. Cruz's Kindergarten class

Weavings — Ms. Beaulieu and Ms. Callaway's 2nd grade classes

Tie-Dyed Tibetan flags — Ms. Whitcomb's 4th grade class, to be installed at top of driveway and near main building entrance from playground.

Solar-dyed Mandalas — Ms. Henry & Mr. Mattson's 5th grade classes, to be installed at the Mayeda Campus

"San Francisco" — Mr. Mattson's 5th grade class pen-and-ink with watercolor drawings, to be installed at the Mayeda Campus.

"My Favorite Things Fountain" — Ceramic fountain created by Ms. Henry's 5th grade class, to be installed at the Mayeda Campus.

"For Aiko Cuneo" display case dedication plaque — Created by the Rooftop staff, parents and children during Family Art Night.

Burnett Classroom Baker's Dough Art — Dough art of all kinds, including Native American Indian tribes, Rancho/Missions, Rooftop Spirit, Classroom number signs.

Mayeda/8th Grade Baker's Dough Art — The 8th grade is creating at baker's dough project to be installed at the Mayeda Campus.

Family Baker's Dough Murals — Created by staff, parents and children of Rooftop working collaboratively at the Kindergarten Art Fair and Family Art Night, to be installed over the bulletin board near downstairs entrance to playground.

Mayeda/8th Grade Baker's Dough Art — 8th grade baker's dough project to be installed at the Mayeda Campus.

"RUTH ASAWA: Transforming the Ordinary" — A publication of the Asawa-inspired student work created by Rooftop students will be gifted to the libraries at both campuses.

"Transforming the Ordinary" is made possible by a generous grant from the Reach A Star Foundation.

KinderstArt is sponsored by a First Five Parent Action Grant from the San Francisco Children's and Families Commission.

Ruth Asawa and teaching artists Dave Maier and Rica Anderson
at Rooftop's Julia Morgan Spring 2004 Culminating Event.

