



# Roger Shimomura

By Looking Back, We Look Forward

## Teacher Resource Sheet

*"Art has a way of exercising every part of what it is to be a human being, a feeling human being, from the intellectual to the emotional to the political"* –Roger Shimomura

February 08 to July 19, 2020

Wednesday 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Thursday – Sunday, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

### Quick Facts about the Artist

- Roger Shimomura was born in Seattle, Washington in 1939
- As a young child during World War II, he lived 2 years in the Minidoka Relocation Center in Hunt, Idaho, an internment/concentration camp set up by the US government
- He served in the Army with the First Cavalry Division in Fort Lewis, Washington and Korea
- He received a BA from the University of Washington, Seattle in 1961 and an MFA from Syracuse University, New York, in 1967
- He has won numerous awards and grants (30+) for his paintings, prints, and performances since 1999, including scholarship designations from the Seattle Urban League, the College Art Association's Distinguished Alumnus Award and the designation of United States Artist in 2011
- He was a featured guest on the Day of Remembrance at the National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C. in 2016
- He was a Professor of Art at the University of Kansas from 1969-2004 and founded the Shimomura Faculty Research Support Fund, an endowment to foster research in the Department of Art

### Artist's Historical Content

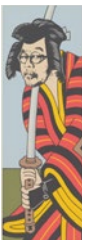
**World War II, Pacific theater:** This part of World War II included Japan, China, Korea, the Philippines and other islands and countries in Southeast Asia.

**Japanese internment camps:** On February 19, 1942 President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed United States presidential Executive Order 9066, which forced people of Japanese descent living in western states to move into isolated camps from 1942 to 1945.

**Pop art movement:** Mid-late 1950s American artistic style that blurred the lines between classical scholarly art, commercial advertising, and popular imagery. The attempt was to create commodified works of art using many sources of inspiration, including advertising and pop culture.

In 1976, Gerald Ford repealed Executive Order 9066.

In 1988, Congress issued a formal apology for the injustice by way of the Civil Liberties Act and offered redress to over 80,000 interned Japanese Americans.



### Suggested Guiding Questions

1. Share an example of how Shimomura depicts a stereotype and explain why this is so.
2. Why do you feel that Shimomura contrasts the styles of traditional Japanese ukiyo-e with modern Pop art?
3. If you or someone that you look up to was a superhero, what would be your/their superpower?
4. How do you think your family would handle being forcibly removed from your home and sent to an internment camp? What would you bring with you?
5. Can you think of other times in history when a group of people were forcibly removed from their homes and moved to a new location and/or incarcerated?

### Vocabulary

**Internment**

**ukiyo-e**

**Pop art**

**metaphor**

**Issei, Nisei, Sansei, Yonsei, Gosei**

**empathy**

For more information about the exhibition and associated programs: <https://jsma.uoregon.edu/Shimomura>



## Additional Resources

George Takei, Justin Eisinger, Steven Scott, and Harmony Becker. *They Called Us Enemy*. Marietta, GA: Top Shelf, 2019.

Roger Shimomura, Ben Ahlvers, Karin M Higa, Roger Daniels. *Shadows of Minidoka: Paintings and Collections of Roger Shimomura*. Lawrence, KS: Lawrence Arts Center, 2011.

## Links

Roger Shimomura: American Muse. Kansas City, MO: Sherry Leedy Contemporary Art, 2019.  
[https://issuu.com/sherryleedycontemporaryart/docs/roger\\_shimomura\\_american\\_muse\\_2019](https://issuu.com/sherryleedycontemporaryart/docs/roger_shimomura_american_muse_2019)

Art Talk with Roger Shimomura: Rebecca Sutton, National Endowment for the Arts, Art Works Blog, May 25, 2017.  
<https://www.arts.gov/art-works/2017/art-talk-roger-shimomura>. 12/31/19.

Densho Encyclopedia. Roger Shimomura,  
[http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Roger\\_Shimomura/](http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Roger_Shimomura/). 1/3/20.

Roger Shimomura. Memories of Minidoka: An Interview with Roger Shimomura. Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, Kansas State University, Apr 14, 2016.  
<https://youtu.be/ti0f7SPvh1c>. 1/3/20.

An American Diary: Artist Talk with Roger Shimomura at Smithsonian American Art Museum, August 20, 2015.  
<https://youtu.be/3iUwbKfH0Bk>