Art Education

Our goal: High-quality art education

Our vision is to provide high-quality, museum-based art education to children in Billings and the region. The YAM education team develops its own art curriculum, which is aligned with state and national art education standards. Every lesson is based on our permanent collection of artwork or current temporary exhibitions.

Education at the YAM includes touring the museum and teaching in our on-site studio as well as taking art to students in schools, after-school programs, and other educational settings. Our tours and studio teaching are grounded in Visual Thinking Strategies, an inquiry-based method designed to create connections between students and learning in museum settings.
Overview

Our art educational programming falls into these categories:

On-site Education
This programming includes museum tours and classes for young artists, two art camps, opportunities for family art-making with local artists, and YAM Teens. Our highly trained museum docents assist with and lead educational programming while they themselves benefit from ongoing training in museum education.

Young Artists’ Gallery
The Young Artists’ Gallery (YAG) is a year-round space at the YAM dedicated to showing the work of artists, aged pre-k through high school. YAG exhibitions feature the artwork of students who are our educational partners. Admission to this gallery is always free of charge. Stop by and enjoy the work of the region’s youngest artists.

Educational Outreach Partnerships
Through our educational partnerships with schools and local organizations, the YAM education staff and docents bring art education directly to young artists in Billings and the region.

Adult Education
Our adult programming taps talented teaching artists to share their practices and techniques with lifelong learners at the museum, and beyond.

Education Staff
Our art education team is highly trained and experienced, with degrees in the arts and education, as well as Montana teaching certification. Our passion is teaching young people how to observe, create, and connect with art. We craft educational curriculum that nurtures creativity, innovation, cultural awareness, decision-making skills, and critical thinking to promote a lifelong understanding and appreciation for art.

Docents
Docents are specially trained, highly committed volunteers who are integral to education at the YAM. Our outstanding core of docents reaches thousands of children and adults by leading tours, visiting schools, assisting in the studio, developing Senior Art Connections, and more.
On-Site Education

Our wide variety of high-quality educational programming at the museum is designed to engage children as artists and develop a lifelong relationship with art.

Tours and Art Activities: For all ages, with a concentration on children K-12. We use Visual Thinking Strategies to connect people with our exhibitions and to foster an understanding of art from the region and beyond.

Studio 2nd Saturday: These monthly two-hour classes include a docent-led tour of current exhibitions followed by a related art-making activity.

FAM at the YAM: The YAM offers this opportunity for the whole family to come together to make art with a local artist first Friday evenings.

Summer Art Studio: Students tour, explore and learn to create art using a variety of art media with a focus on a specific exhibition at each weekly class.

Summer Art Academy Camp: This is a unique chance to spend a week on the campus of Rocky Mountain College, learning from professional artists. Young artists, ages 8-14, choose from a wide-range of classes to create their own daily schedule of art instruction. Classes include visual arts as well as music, yoga, and dance.

YAM Camp: Growing artists spend a week at the YAM using the artwork in the museum to influence their own creations. YAM camp develops artistic skills though Visual Thinking Strategies. Every year this camp has a theme. Previous camps have explored themes such as “Art and Science” and “Student Artists Working with Professional Artists.”

YAM Teens: This free program provides local teens with opportunities to learn more about art, artists, and what it’s like to work at an art museum. YAM Teens create art, assist with the annual Art Auction, and collaborate on other projects.
Young Artists’ Gallery

The Young Artists’ Gallery (YAG) is a year-round space dedicated to showing the work of the community’s artists from Pre-K through high school. All YAG exhibitions feature the artwork of students who are affiliated with our educational outreach partners.

YAG Exhibitions
- Greybull Middle & High School
- Hardin 6th Grade
- Shepherd High School
- Billings Public Schools 8th Grade
- Billings Public Schools 5th Grade
- Explorers Academy (Head Start)
- Crow Agency 3rd-5th Grade

Children’s Collection

The Children’s Collection is an online exhibition of art selected by young people. Each school year during the Art Suitcase Program, Billings 4th and 5th grade students vote for their favorite two pieces from the museum’s permanent collection. The top choices join the Children’s Collection.
Educational Partnerships

Billings Public Schools
The YAM has partnered with Billings for over 40 years. Currently, we focus on 4th, 5th, 7th, and 8th grade students as well as professional development for educators. The Art Suitcase is a docent-led program that brings art into every Billings 4th and 5th grade classroom. Students view and discuss art and then vote for their favorite pieces, which are added to the YAM Children’s Collection on the website.

Every year, 5th grade and middle school art educators develop curriculum at the YAM based on current exhibitions. The teachers then return to their classrooms where students create the artwork which is exhibited in the Young Artists’ Gallery.

Crow Agency
Since 2003, Crow Agency School has been one of the YAM’s strongest educational outreach partners. Students from 3rd - 5th grades benefit from learning about art at their school with YAM art educators. Crow students also visit the museum twice a year. Near the end of the school year, students select their best artwork to be exhibited in the YAG.

Greybull, WY, Middle and High Schools
Our partnership with Greybull, Wyoming, art students has been continually evolving since 2008. Every fall students tour the museum and create a piece of art. Our Museum Educator also visits them in the Spring. This results in one of the most popular exhibitions at the Young Artists’ Gallery.

Hardin 6th Grade
Since 2011, all Hardin 6th grade students have been visiting the YAM twice per year to create artwork and tour the museum. They also choose the work for their exhibitions as part of their visit to the YAM.
Youth Partial Hospitalization Program

YAM art educators typically visit twice a year to teach art, artmaking, and creative expression to a wide age range of students who participate in this program at Billings Clinic Psychiatric Center.

Professional Development Workshops

The YAM hosts workshops for art educators and classroom teachers to provide access to high-quality art education instruction and curriculum. This is a chance to develop ideas that teachers can bring into their classrooms.

Educational Partnerships

Explorers Academy (Head Start)

Roughly 350 preschool students from Billings, Lockwood, and Laurel visit the YAM annually to tour the artwork in our annual Yellowstone Art Auction and create art. The reception for their YAG exhibition typically draws hundreds of attendees, eager to view the work of the community’s youngest artists.

Shepherd High School

Since 2004, this partnership with advanced art students allows them to visit the YAM and begin an ongoing project based on our current exhibitions. Completed artwork is exhibited in the Young Artists’ Gallery.

United Way: CARE Academy and Discover Zone

The YAM has been partnering with these after-school programs since 2004. Our Museum Art Educator teaches and creates artwork with CARE Academy students at their schools. There is also the opportunity for students to visit the YAM for a tour and art activity. Discover Zone is a similar partnership that serves middle school. Since 2011, Discover Zone students have been visiting the museum twice annually for a day of touring, creating art, and critiquing their work.
Adult Education

Adult students learn how to use tools, materials and techniques in order to create their own individual art. We offer a variety of classes taught by local artists.

Art Classes 2018-2019

September- Brook Atherton: Fiber arts
November- Barb Garritson: Papermaking
January- Coila Evans: Oil Paint a self Portrait.
February- Jodi Lightner: Book Binding
April- Sara Mast: Wax on, Wax off
May- Nyd Kraushaar: Exploring Alcohol Inks with Yupo Paper

Montana Women’s Prison

This bimonthly art program is taught by professional artists at Montana Women’s Prison. Classes introduce diverse approaches to creating art and emphasize process, problem solving, and creative expression. Previous artists have included:
Renee Audette
Louis Habeck
Rachel Larson Long
Julie Pederson
Jim Baken
Susan Germer

Cooking Classes

November- Easy Appetizers and Cocktails.
January- Comfort Food
March- Hosting a Tea party
April- Cooking with Kids (ages 10-14)
Education Staff

YAM’S Education Staff is focused on museum-based learning for all ages. We craft curriculum that nurtures creativity, critical thinking, and innovation. Our highly trained and experienced team works closely with docents, artists, and educators throughout the region to provide high-quality art education to the community. Please feel free to contact us with any questions by calling 406-256-6804 or emailing us.

Mary Serbe, Education Director, education@artmuseum.org. Mary has a Master of Arts in Teaching, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and Montana Educator Certification. Mary leads the education department at the YAM.

Sally McIntosh, Adult Program Coordinator, adulted@artmuseum.org. Sally has deep connections with the Billings art community as an educator, gallery director, and retired owner of a local art and design company. Sally manages adult education programming and takes art classes to the Montana Women’s Prison.

Carrie Goe-Nettleton, Museum Art Educator, outreach@artmuseum.org. Carrie holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Montana Educator Certification. Carrie teaches art to Pre-K-12 students at the YAM and our offsite partnerships.

Jennifer Parry, Education Program Coordinator, artsuitcase@artmuseum.org. Jennifer has a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art with a minor in Art History. Jennifer is the contact person for all tours and classes.

Docents

The YAM has an outstanding corps of specially trained and deeply committed volunteers. Docents lead tours, assist in the art studio, bring art appreciation to local schools (Art Suitcase), help with the Young Artists’ Gallery, and develop new programs. These volunteers are integral to education at the YAM. Additionally, our Docents are part of the National Docent Symposium Council which meets every other year. They serve on this council and go through intensive training in Visual Thinking Strategies.

Senior Art Connections:
This docent developed program is designed for groups of seniors, including people with dementia, to create connections with the community through art. These tours are based on a successful model used at art museums throughout the world.
Thank You

Thanks to all our wonderful donors and partners who support all of the Education Department’s programs, tours, classes, and the young artists in the community!

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Greybull, Wyoming School District
Hardin School District
Head Start Exploreres Academy
Shepherd High School
United Way (CARE Academy, Discover Zone)

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Tim and Trish Matteson
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Gary and Melissa Oakland
Paul and Rachel Cox

In addition to supporters listed above, we thank all donors from the community who support art education at the YAM

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