

ART AT HOME - PIRATE SHIP



JOHN YOUNG

John Young is one of Australia's most senior Asian Australian artists and is known across the country and overseas. He was born in Hong Kong and moved to Australia to attend school when he was eleven years old. When John makes art, he often uses oil paints, digital prints and chalk.

At Bunjil Place Gallery, John's exhibition *Diaspora, Psyche* investigates what happens when people move from one location to another, also known as migration, and what happens when people from different cultures come together. The exhibition is full of large paintings and artworks made of blackboard paint, paper, and chalk. You can spend some time exploring the exhibition online [here](#).

ARTWORK INSPIRATION: I SAILED WITH WOMEN PIRATES

Inspired by a travelogue made by Finnish-American journalist and photographer Aleko E. Lilius in the 1930s, John Young's artwork *I Sailed with Women Pirates* (2017) shows the female pirates that sailed the South China seas in the late 18th and 19th Centuries.

Lilius joined several pirate fleets on expeditions and documented their lives at sea. The most powerful of these was Lai Choi San, a woman who commanded a fleet of 12 junk ships around Macau. Lilius reports that Lai Choi San travelled with a carved icon of the Goddess A-Ma, the patroness of all seafaring people.

The most successful pirate in history is believed to have been a woman by the name of Zheng Si Yao (also known as Ching Shih). In the first decade of the 19th Century, Zheng Si Yao commanded many pirate fleets made up of around 1,500 – 1,800 ships crewed by an estimated 80,000 sailors.

I Sailed with Women Pirates pays tribute to the powerful women who have shaped the culture of Southern China.

- Do you know of other famous women pirates of the world?
- Imagine you are a pirate, what kind of adventures would you go on? Would you explore new worlds? Or go on a treasure hunt?
- What kind of music or songs might a pirate like to listen to?

GLOSSARY

Travelogue: A book written about a person's travelling experience. It is usually written from the perspective of the person who travelled.

Fleet: A group of ships that sail together and are under the control of one person or organisation.

Junk Ship: A type of Chinese sailing ship.

Mast: A mast is a pole that rises vertically from a ship and supports the sails

ACTIVITY

Inspired by the stories of Lai Choi San, make your very own pirate ship using materials found at home.

MATERIALS:

- Egg carton
- Straw or wooden skewers
- Paint (acrylic or water colour). Coloured markers would also work
- White or coloured paper
- Glue stick
- Thread or string
- Your favourite small toy, like a figurine or Lego, to captain your pirate ship!

THINK BEFORE YOU MAKE

- Read through the instructions carefully and watch [this short video](#)
- How do you want to arrange/decorate your pirate ship?
- What story could you tell with your pirate ship?

START MAKING!

Follow the steps below or watch [this short video](#)

1. Take an egg carton and cut off the top, you will only need the base of the egg carton for this activity. Using paint or coloured markers, start by colouring the inside and outside of the egg carton base any desired colour.
2. Let it dry. Meanwhile take the coloured paper cut them into a trapezium shape, one small and one slightly bigger (watch the [video](#) for an example). Poke a skewer through the bottom and top edge of both pieces of paper. Make sure the skewer is positioned in the centre of both papers. Keeping the bigger paper at the bottom. Now, the mast of the ship is ready!
3. Make as many masts as you would like for your ship.
4. Make a flag to put on the top of the mast or anywhere on the ship you prefer. Get creative and design your own flag!
5. Take a strip of coloured paper and fold it in half length ways. Cut small triangles along the long edge to make a garland. Make sure you don't cut through the fold (watch the [video](#) for an example). Glue it to string/thread as shown in the [video](#).
6. Take a thin strip of another coloured paper and glue the short ends together to make a wheel/ circle.
7. Now it is the time to assemble your pirate ship. Start by gluing the wheel at the front of your painted ship.

8. To attach the masts, poke the mast skewers into the mounts of the carton one after the other. Tie one end of the triangle garland on the front mast and glue the other end to the ship.
9. Your pirate ship is ready for action!
10. Add your favourite figurine or toy to captain your pirate ship.

REFLECTION

- How would the adventures your ship goes on change the way your ship looks?
- Did this activity change your idea of what a pirate is?
- Now that you've made your pirate ship, is there anything you would change if you made another ship?
- How could you present your pirate ship to a friend or family member? Would you display it on a shelf like in a museum? Or would you create an ocean scene?

Share your pirate ship with us on social media #bunjilplace or email the Bunjil Place Education team a photo via bunjileducation@casey.vic.gov.au