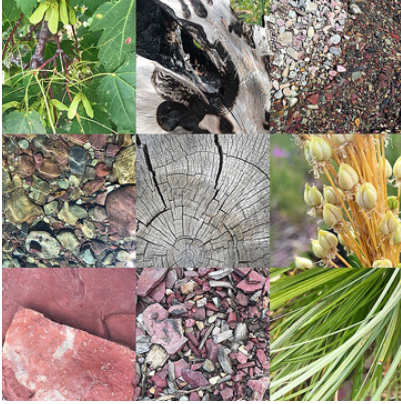


COMMON WEAL COMMUNITY ARTS

Artful Isolation Activities

Week One: Contemplative Photography

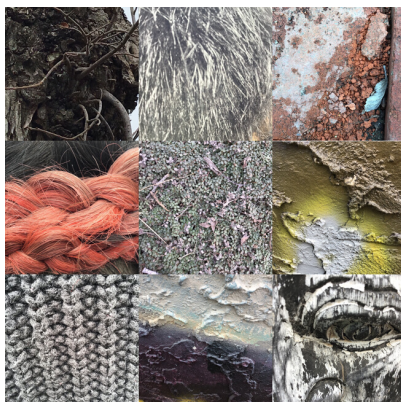


Explore your surroundings, capturing Miksang-inspired photos to share with friends and family.

What is Miksang? Miksang¹ is a form of contemplative photography that asks us to see our world in a new way. It means “good eye” in Tibetan. The practice of Miksang encourages us to see the world as it is without filtering our perceptions.

Why Miksang? Our Executive Director, Risa Payant, started a Miksang-inspired photography practice and she didn’t even know it! In 2018, while visiting Yellowstone National Park, she found herself drawn to the unique textures she was observing around her. The result was a detailed series of close-up photographs she shot with her phone. Since then, she’s taken similar photographs in locations around the world. In her own words, “Miksang photography gives me an excuse to slow down and focus on observing my surroundings, allowing me to experience familiar and unfamiliar places with reverence and notice things I may have otherwise walked right by.”

¹ <https://www.miksang.com/miksang/>

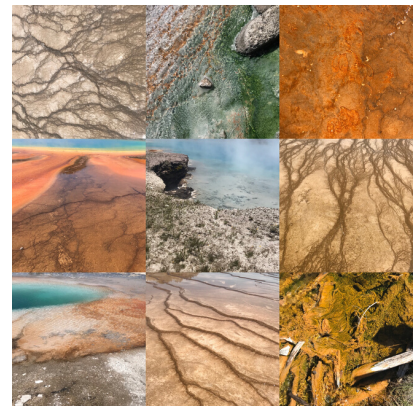


Suitable For: All Ages (note that we ones will need technical support and supervision).

What You'll Need: A device capable of taking photos (phone, tablet, camera, etc.).

Getting Ready:

- Look at the Miksang examples we've provided here and explore #miksang on your social media streams. Look at the galleries on the Miksang website. What do you notice? How have others approached this practice?
- What does it mean to be contemplative? How can we explore our surroundings in a purposeful manner? When we're on our photography walk, will we be moving fast or slow? Quiet or loud?
- Talk about various perspectives. On your walk, be sure to look up, down, ahead, and side to side. Take photos that play with angles, scale, distance, and more.
- Review the use of your devices. How do you take a photo? Use the zoom function? Focus?
- Determine the boundaries of your walk. This could include a single room in your home, a block in your neighbourhood, or a quiet trail outside of the city.



Activity: Set off on your contemplative walk. Move slowly and take time to notice your surroundings. Take as many photos as you like, trying to capture what you see without worrying about the final product. Don't look at your photos until you're finished with the activity.

Reflection:

- Give everyone 15-20 minutes to look at their photos and pick nine favourites.
- One by one, makers can follow this presentation process: 1) show favourite photos in silence; 2) invite your "audience" to give feedback; 3) offer your own reflections on the process on your photos.
- Discuss the activity together asking questions like "What was it like to move slowly through our neighbourhood?" or "What's similar about the photos you took today? What's different?" or "On your walk, did you see anything you've never noticed before?"
- Share your photos with us via Facebook or Instagram, tagging @skcommonweal and using the hashtags #cwmiksang and #cwneighbours. If you'd like to compile your photos the way we've presented them here, you can do so using a free phone app like piccollage or picstitch.