



Second Grade Print

Monday Washing Day, 1972

By Miyuki Tanobe (1939-)

(Ta - no - ba)

Technique: Nihonga (Japanese method)

Size: 11 ½" x 8 ¾"

Collection: private collection Art Genre: Urban landscape

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆The students will be introduced to the art of Miyuki Tanobe.
- ◆The students will define the term "Nihonga".
- ◆The students will analyze the students use of space in the composition.
- ◆The students will create their own personal neighborhood scene.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Miyuki Tanobe is a Japanese-Canadian artist who paints stories of places where people live. Her narrative style and painting technique are a traditional Japanese way of working called Nihonga.

Miyuki Tanobe was born in Morioka, Japan and received her formal training as a *Nihonga* painter at the Guedai University of Fine Arts in Tokyo. Unhappy with the traditional roles of both women and artists in Japan, Tanobe decided to leave her native land permanently in 1963. She moved to France to continue her art education; then, following a brief return to her homeland, Tanobe emigrated to Montreal, Quebec in 1971.

Tanobe's art is more than mere a snapshot representations of street scenes. She intentionally combines events from different times, alters perspectives and creates images that show specific culture, architecture and history that are the essence of a place. Since moving to Canada, Tanobe has painted many lively immigrant neighborhoods in Montreal, Toronto, and in New York City.

ABOUT THE ART:

In *Monday, Washing Day*, Tanobe depicts the bustle of a Montreal East End back alley on washing day. A group of children play joyfully on a small patch of grass, heedless of their mothers' toils, while the latter take a brief rest from their labors, all the while keeping a watchful eye on their charges. Details in the painting such as the weather-worn brickwork, the ram-shackled metal sheds, and the crooked posts holding up the clotheslines all testify to Tanobe's masterful depiction of the urban environment, especially of Montreal's working class neighborhoods.

*Biographical text from: Briere, M. (1988). *Art image grade two*. Champlain, NY: Art Image Publications, Inc.

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR DISCUSSION:

Subject Matter

- Do these children live in the city or the country? How can you tell?
- What are the children doing?
- What do you see hanging on the clotheslines? (laundry day for the neighborhood)
- Tanobe creates detailed paintings. What other interesting things do you spot in this painting?
- What types of games do you play in your neighborhood?

Elements of Art

- Discuss Tanobe's use of color (intensity, layering, contrast). Refer to the CUSD Art Masterpiece Manual for additional information.
- Discuss the texture (implied/actual) in Tanobe's artwork.

Art Terms

Nihonga - "Japanese-style paintings" is a term used to describe paintings that have been made in accordance with Japanese traditional artistic conventions, techniques and materials. While based on traditions over a thousand years old, the term was coined in the Meiji period, to distinguish such works from Western-style paintings.

Nihonga are typically executed on Japanese paper or silk, using brushes. The paintings can be either monochrome or polychrome. If monochrome, typically Chinese ink made from soot mixed with a glue from fishbone or animal hide is used. If polychrome, the pigments are derived from natural ingredients: minerals, shells, corals, and even semi-precious stones like malachite, azurite or cinnabar. In both cases, water is used; hence Nihonga is actually a water based medium. Gofun, cured oyster, clam or scallop shell is an important material used in nihonga.

Initially, Nihonga were produced for hanging scrolls, hand scrolls or folding screens. However, most are now produced on paper stretched onto wood panels, suitable for framing. Nihonga paintings do not need to be put under glass. They are archival for thousands of years.

PROJECT:

The students will create a neighborhood scene using the wax-resist method. Have the students use crayons to color the main subject matter (i.e. children playing, houses, trees, etc.). *For the wax-resist method to be effective, the students must color on a very thick, heavy coating of the crayons.* Then the students should use various colors of the watercolors to paint over the scene. The paint can be applied right over the crayon (wax resist). In contrast to the thick crayon layer, the watercolor paints should be light. The students should use a lot of water to keep the paint from being too dark or heavy. The entire paper should be painted when completed. Remind the students that the painting portion of the project is not for adding details, that is what the crayons are for. But instead, to add a colorful wash to their piece. Students should sign their work. The artwork can be displayed or saved in the students' portfolios.

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ 9 x 12 white drawing paper or construction paper
- ✓ Watercolor paints
- ✓ Brushes
- ✓ Plastic water cups (or bring disposable cups for easy clean up)
- ✓ Crayons
- ✓ Paper towels
- ✓ Newspaper (optional - provided by each art guide)
- ✓ Garbage sack (optional – for easier clean up)