THE BUTTERFLY SERIES
Curriculum and Activities Guide

Ways to Engage with this Exhibition
Below are suggestions for curriculum ideas or ways to engage with this exhibition. Each suggestion follows the inquiry model or thinking pattern used at the University of Wyoming Art Museum: observe, question, explore, create and reflect. The engagement ideas range in time from 30 minutes up to multiple class periods or sessions. Pressed for time? Flip to the end of this document to see quick ideas for interacting with the works of art. If you have questions or need more ideas please contact the University of Wyoming Artmobile Educator, Sarita Talusani Keller at artmobile@uwyo.edu.

Curriculum Connections: Nature Field Journal
[15 minutes – 45 minutes+]
First, create a nature field journal. To do so, simply fold 3-5 sheets of paper in half and staple down the center seam.

Observe
Slowly and carefully, look at each butterfly image. Spend 5 minutes sketching one butterfly from the exhibition in your field journal.
Question
What markings and characteristics makes each butterfly unique? How might markings and colors aid in the survival of butterflies? The designs on a butterfly’s wings mirror each other. What other examples of symmetry are found in the natural world? Record any questions, observations, and insights in your field journal.

Explore
Step outside for a scavenger hunt. Look for insects and plants that display symmetry. Can’t find any insects? Try looking under rocks or on leaves and plants. Make sketches in your journal. Record any distinctive colors and patterns. Remember to note the approximate size and location of your specimen. Is it bigger than your hand? Smaller than your thumb? What kinds of plants and insects are nearby? Write down your observations and any questions you have about your specimens.

Use a library or computer to research your nature specimens. Record your findings in your journal. Write the common names and Latin names next to your drawings and any other interesting facts you discover. See if you can find the answers to some of your questions too!

Gerald Lang and Jennifer Anne Tucker, Actias Luna (Luna Moth), 2016, Digital scan, 10-5/8 x 9 inches, Gift of the artists
Create
Invent your own butterfly. Imagine you are a scientist and have found a rare undiscovered butterfly or moth. **Draw your discovery on the Draw Your Butterfly card.** Include distinctive characteristics, colors, and markings. You discovered the butterfly, so you get to name it! Choose an imaginative name and write it next to your picture. Write down the size and location where you found this creature. Create your own exhibition by displaying all the cards together.

Reflect
Observe the world around you. What creatures live in your environment? What makes these creatures special? Make a field journal at home and record creatures, plants, and habitats around your home. Explore other natural spaces in your community and see what creatures and plants you discover. What do they have in common? What makes them unique?

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Gerald Lang and Jennifer Anne Tucker, *Batesia hypochlora* (Painted Beauty butterfly), 2016, Digital scan, 9 x 11-7/8 inches, Gift of the artists

Gerald Lang and Jennifer Anne Tucker, *Agraulis vanilla* (Gulf Fritillary butterfly), 2016, Digital scan, 9 x 12-1/16 inches, Gift of the artists
Curriculum Connections: Collecting

[30 minutes-2 hour activity]

Observe
Look at all of the images in “The Butterfly Series: From the Collection of Jordan W. Finkelstein, MD, MSc.” Choose one image to investigate deeply for 5 minutes. Using a pencil and paper, record your observations. Take visual notes by sketching the image and writing down descriptive words. Record any questions you have about the image.

Question
The title of the exhibition lets us know the images are from the butterfly collection of Dr. Jordan Finkelstein. What is a collection? Why do we collect things? Why do you think he collected these particular butterflies? How do you think these images were made? Why would he choose to have his specimens scanned and printed?

Read the essay “Chasing Butterflies: The Profile of a Collector” By Jordan Finkelstein, M.D.

Explore
Break into groups. Decide on a readily available item your group can collect [ex. pine cones, rocks, keys, paper clips, book marks, books, etc...]. Create a simple set of rules or criteria for what you will include or exclude from your collection, such as color, shape or texture, and even age of object. Collect and decide how to display items in a mock exhibition.
Create

In the essay, “Chasing Butterflies: The Profile of a Collector”, Dr. Finkelstein shares how and why he started collecting butterflies and moths. Think of items you collect at home. How did you start collecting? What rules do you have for collecting? Create a drawing of what you collect and write a journal entry about how you started your collection. List the criteria you chose for your collection.

Reflect

What was the first item that went into your collection? What is your most prized possession? How do you display and care for your collection? How does collecting make you feel? Why is it important to collect?
Curriculum Connections: Quick and Easy Ideas

- **Create your own butterfly or moth** using the [Draw Your Own Butterfly postcard](#). Give your butterfly an imaginative name. Record any interesting facts about where you “found” your butterfly. Display with other postcards to make an exhibition of a butterfly collection.

- **Make a butterfly collage.** Trace the outline of a butterfly on black construction paper. Glue scraps of colorful patterned papers to fill your butterfly outline.

- **Create a symmetrical butterfly wing pattern.** Fold a sheet of paper in half and open back up. Design a butterfly wing on one half using pencil. Fold the paper together again. Trace the wing design from the backside to create a mirror image of your wing design. Open the paper back up and color to make a symmetrical pair of wings.

- **Change the habitat or context.** Create an origami butterfly or draw a winged insect on paper and cut out. On another sheet of paper, draw or collage a natural habitat for the insect. Place the butterfly or insect on top of the natural habitat. Then try placing it on a black sheet of construction paper. How does changing the background affect context? How can context shape our perceptions?
• **Show and Tell.** Read the essay about collecting by Dr. Finkelstein and share about something you collect. How did you start collecting? How does collecting make you feel? What is the most interesting item in your collection? How did you acquire it?

• **DIY Museum Exhibition.** Take photos of individual items in your personal collection using a plain background, so each piece stands out. Print them separately and hang on a wall at home. Give your exhibition a title and create museum labels for your images with information you think is important.

• **Digital Show and Tell.** [We suggest age-appropriate supports and supervision for social media use.] Post one item daily from your personal collection. This could be a drawing, or the actual object. Include text of a description, interesting fact or story about how the item came into your collection. Tag the University of Wyoming Art Museum @uwyoartmuseum.
Helpful Resources

- WyoBio :: Identification
  https://wyobio.org/resources/identification/

- Insect Identification
  https://www.insectidentification.org/insects-by-type-and-region.asp?thisState=wyoming&thisType=Butterfly%20or%20Moth

- Wyoming Naturalist
  http://wyomingnaturalist.com/index.html

- Teacher and Student Resources from US Forest Service
  https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/Monarch_Butterfly/teacherandstudent/index.shtml

- A Lesson in Origami: How to Fold an Origami Butterfly
  https://www.pbs.org/video/broad-and-high-web-exclusive-lesson-origami/