

# Pattern Recognition

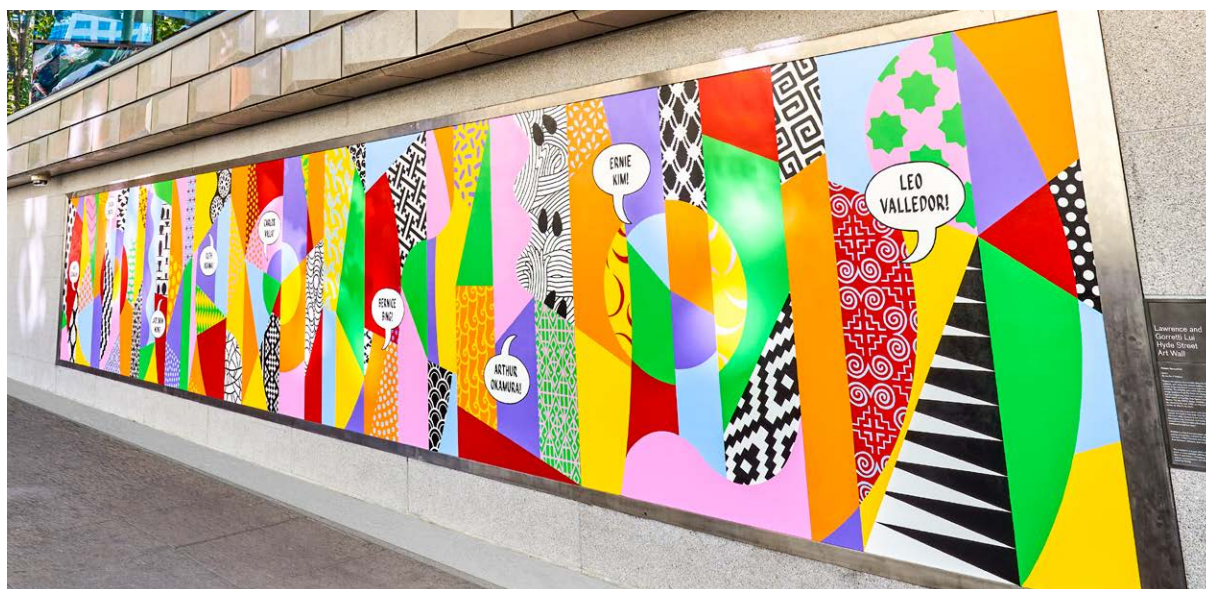
by Jenifer K Wofford

“*Pattern Recognition* incorporates cheerful bold colors, graphic patterns, and comic-strip speech bubbles as a way of paying tribute to the intertwined creative legacies of Asia and Asian America. The patterns and motifs reference various craft and design traditions from the Asian Art Museum collection as well as from neighboring Asian communities. As someone who lives a short walk away from the museum, I wanted the mural to feel both local and global. My hope is that this mural adds vibrance to the Civic Center area, as well as the neighboring Tenderloin and SoMa districts, by showcasing cultures and histories that reflect and empower the immigrant communities that live here.” — Jenifer K Wofford

In this packet, you will engage with Wofford’s mural, learn about different Asian cultures and identities, and celebrate Asian American artists from the San Francisco Bay Area. With what you’ve learned and researched, you will then create your own patterns in a digital collage art project.

## DURATION

Two class periods or more



*Pattern Recognition*, 2020, by Jenifer K Wofford (American). Acrylic on aluminum. Commissioned by the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, courtesy of the artist. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ① What does the title *Pattern Recognition* mean to you? What kind of patterns can you find in Wofford's mural? What kind of recognition is the mural trying to promote?
- ② What is the effect of having the artists' names in the speech bubbles? What types of art are speech bubbles normally used in? What is the mural "saying"?
- ③ What is the effect of placing patterns created by the named artists among patterns drawn from traditional Asian art?
- ④ Wofford says, "Nine [names] is too few" for a mural celebrating Asian American artists, and "there honestly should be way more names than that." Which other Asian American artists would you like to see added to the mural? Why?
- ⑤ If you were to create your own *Pattern Recognition* mural, what patterns and names would you include? From what cultures? Why?



## ACTIVITIES

- ① Explore the Google Arts & Culture [online exhibit](#) on *Pattern Recognition*. Watch Jenifer Wofford's interview to learn more about the inspirations behind *Pattern Recognition*. Why is it important that this mural is on an outer wall of the museum? What is the mural's message to the community around the museum?
- ② Learn more about the artists named on Wofford's mural by exploring these [teacher packets](#). Are there patterns to their experiences as Asian Americans? At the same time, what's unique about each of their stories?
- ③ Using Wofford's legend for *Pattern Recognition* (next page), research one of the traditional Asian designs in the mural and its cultural significance. Share what you learn with a friend who researched a different pattern. Compare notes—what do your chosen patterns have in common? What's different?
- ④ Writing prompt: If the exclamations in the mural's speech bubbles were replaced by questions, what might those questions be?
- ⑤ [Create your own collage](#) using speech bubbles and patterns drawn from objects in the Asian Art Museum collection referenced in *Pattern Recognition* (next page). After finishing your collage, reflect: What is your collage "saying" to the viewer?  
Duration: 30 minutes or more





**LEGEND FOR PANELS 1, 2, 3 (Left to Right)**

**PANEL 1 Kay Sekimachi**

- ① **Black-and-white circles:** Lidded dish, China/Indonesia. *Asian Art Museum*
- ② **Black-and-white pattern:** decorative motif adapted from Lidded offering container, Thailand. *Asian Art Museum*
- ③ **Red/pink pattern:** adapted from Kay Sekimachi weaving.
- ④ **Orange/blue triangles:** tapa cloth pattern, Toradja people, Indonesia.



**PANEL 2 Chiura Obata**

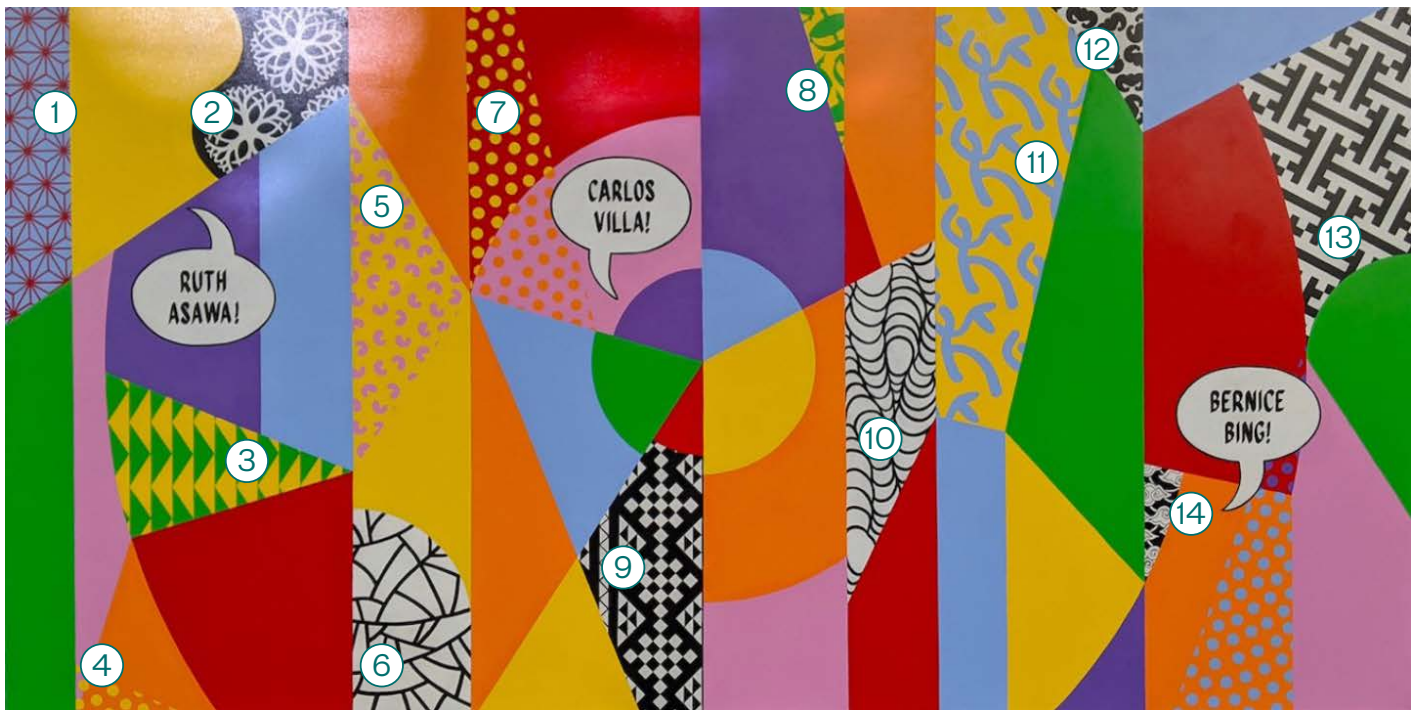
- ⑤ **Yellow oval shapes:** Oval inkstick, China. *Asian Art Museum*
- ⑥ **Black-and-white zigzag:** adapted from weaving, Atayal people, Taiwan.
- ⑦ **Black-and-white clouds:** detail of Chiura Obata painting, "Topaz War Relocation Center by Moonlight," 1943.
- ⑧ **Red/blue geometric pattern:** *tupik* pattern, Cham people, Vietnam.
- ⑨ **Pink/green curving pattern:** Court collar with five dragons, China. *Asian Art Museum*



**PANEL 3 Jade Snow Wong**

- ⑩ **Black-and-white curving lines:** The bodhisattva Maitreya, Pakistan. *Asian Art Museum*
- ⑪ **Red/yellow pattern:** Bauhinia flower, adapted from flag, Hong Kong.
- ⑫ **Black-and-white woven pattern:** adapted from *t'nalak* weaving, T'boli people, Philippines.
- ⑬ **Black-and-white vase silhouettes:** various Jade Snow Wong ceramics in museum's "treasure wall" cabinet. *Asian Art Museum*
- ⑭ **Yellow/orange shapes:** Lamp in the form of eight-petaled lotus dish, Thailand. *Asian Art Museum*
- ⑮ **Blue/purple circles:** Bowl with leaf-like decoration, Iran. *Asian Art Museum*

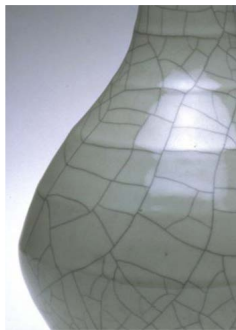




**LEGEND FOR PANELS 4, 5, 6 (Left to Right)**

**PANEL 4 Ruth Asawa**

- ① **Red/blue pattern:** traditional *asanoha* hemp leaf pattern, Japan.
- ② **Black-and-white pattern:** adapted from Ruth Asawa tied wire branching form sculptures.
- ③ **Green/yellow triangle pattern:** *tatala* boat motif, Tao/Yami people, Taiwan.
- ④ **Yellow circles:** Bowl, Northern Thailand. *Asian Art Museum*
- ⑤ **Pink shapes on yellow:** Comma-shaped jewel (*gobeun-ok*), Korea. *Asian Art Museum*
- ⑥ **Black-and-white crackle pattern:** Vase with raised grooves in Song Style, China. *Asian Art Museum*



**PANEL 5 Carlos Villa**

- ⑦ **Yellow/orange circles:** Coin of the Kushan king Vasudeva, Northwest India/Pakistan, ancient region of Gandhara. *Asian Art Museum*

- ⑧ **Green/yellow pattern:** traditional *wau* kites, Malaysia.
- ⑨ **Black-and-white geometric pattern:** mother-of-pearl inlay, Maranao people, Philippines.
- ⑩ **Black-and-white looping pattern:** motif adapted from multiple Carlos Villa paintings.



**PANEL 6 Bernice Bing**

- ⑪ **Blue/yellow pattern:** motif adapted from Bernice Bing painting.
- ⑫ **Black-and-white bat pattern:** traditional ornamental motif, bat chest, Korea.
- ⑬ **Black-and-white swastika pattern:** Panel with five bats surrounding the character for longevity, China. *Asian Art Museum*
- ⑭ **Black-and-white cloud pattern:** traditional *megamendung* batik cloud motif, Indonesia.





**LEGEND FOR PANELS 7, 8, 9 (Left to Right)**

**PANEL 7 Arthur Okamura**

- ① **Purple oval shapes:** Oval inkstick, China. Asian Art Museum
- ② **Black-and-white squiggle/hoof pattern:** adapted from Arthur Okamura's "Ox Herding" prints.
- ③ **Black-and-white scale pattern:** traditional seigaha wave pattern, Japan.
- ④ **Yellow/orange pattern:** Head of a Lion sculpture, India. Asian Art Museum
- ⑤ **Pink/green geometric pattern:** traditional weaving, Yakan people, Philippines.



**PANEL 8 Ernie Kim**

- ⑥ **Blue shapes on orange:** *boteh* motif extracted from Wall hanging with trees, peacocks, tigers, and other animals, India. Asian Art Museum
- ⑦ **Black-and-white pattern:** Bone apron (*sanmudras*), Tibet. Asian Art Museum
- ⑧ **Red/pink ribbon pattern on yellow:** adapted from ceramic vase by Ernie Kim.

- ⑨ **Black-and-white geometric pattern:** *matmata* weave, Bontoc people, Philippines.

**PANEL 9 Leo Valledor**

- ⑩ **Black-and-white "S" pattern:** *leiwen* thunder motif, Ritual wine vessel (yayi jia), China. Asian Art Museum
- ⑪ **Green/pink pattern:** Star-shaped tile with inscription from the Qur'an, Iran. Asian Art Museum
- ⑫ **Blue/red pattern:** Snail motif, Hmong people, Vietnam/Laos/Thailand/Burma/ Southern China.
- ⑬ **Black-and-white zigzag pattern:** adapted from Leo Valledor's "Echo" painting.



- ⑭ **Black-and-white circles:** Plate with dragons, China. Asian Art Museum



## IMAGE CREDITS

Lidded dish, approx. 1500–1600. China and Indonesia. Blue and white porcelain with gold overlay. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of Francesca M. Bacon*, 1988.13. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Lidded offering container, 1800–1925. Thailand. Lacquered wood and bamboo with mother-of-pearl. *Asian Art Museum, Gift from Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's Southeast Asian Art Collection*, 2006.27.105.a-b. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Oval Inkstick. China, Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Ink painted with multicolor lacquers and gold. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B67M4. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Court collar with five dragons, approx. 1850–1900. China, Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Embroidered silk and brocade with gold couching. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of Shozo Sato on behalf of A. D. Moore*, 2004.86. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

The bodhisattva Maitreya, approx. 200–350. Pakistan; former kingdom of Gandhara. Stone (schist). *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B60S597. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Bowl, 1975, by Jade Snow Wong (American, 1922–2006). Stoneware. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of the artist's family*, 2018.14. © The Jade Snow Wong Family. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Lamp in the form of eight-petaled lotus, approx. 1375–1525. Thailand; Si Satchanalai. High-fired ceramic with celadon glaze. *Asian Art Museum, The James and Elaine Connell Collection of Thai Ceramics*, 1990.110. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Bowl with leaf-like decoration, approx. 1350–1450. Iran, Timurid period (1370–1506). Glazed fritware with underglaze painting. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B60P1913. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Bowl, approx. 1400–1550. Thailand; Si Satchanalai. Glazed high-fired ceramic. *Asian Art Museum, The James and Elaine Connell Collection of Thai Ceramics*. 1990.108. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Comma-shaped jewel (*gobeun-ok*). Korea; ancient kingdom of Silla, Three Kingdoms period. Jade and stones, 57–668 BCE. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of Namkoong Ryun*, F2002.32.1. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Vase with raised grooves in Song Style, approx. 1723–1735. China; Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province, Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). Porcelain with crackled glaze. *Asian Art*

*Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B60P2280. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Coin of the Kushan king Vasudeva, approx. 163–200. Northwest India/Pakistan; ancient region of Gandhara. Gold. *Asian Art Museum, Acquisition made possible in part by the Society for Asian Art*, F1999.38.1. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Panel with five bats surrounding the character for longevity (one of a pair), approx. 1900–1949. China. Nephrite with relief and openwork decoration. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B60J832. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Coin of the Sasanian Emperor Bahram II, 276–293. Iran. Silver alloy. *Asian Art Museum, Acquisition made possible in part by the Society for Asian Art*, F1999.38.10. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Oval Inkstick. China, Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Ink painted with multicolor lacquers and gold. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B67M4. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Head of a lion, approx. 700–900. India. Sandstone. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B71S8. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Wall hanging with trees, peacocks, tigers, and other animals, dated 1892–1893. India; probably Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh state. Cotton. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of Dr. Stephen A. Sherwin and Merrill Randol Sherwin*, 2007.76. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Bone apron (*sanmudras*), 1700–1800. Tibet. Human bone. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B60M101. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Ritual wine vessel (*Yayi jia*), approx. 1300–1050 BCE. China; Henan province, Shang dynasty (approx. 1600–1050 BCE). Bronze. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B61B11+. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Star-shaped tile with inscription from the Qur'an, approx. 1200–1300. Iran, Ilkhanid period (1256–1353). Glazed fritware with underglaze painting. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B60P2033. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Plate with dragons. China; Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province. Reign of the Kangxi emperor (1662–1722). Porcelain with underglaze red decoration. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection*, B60P1122. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.