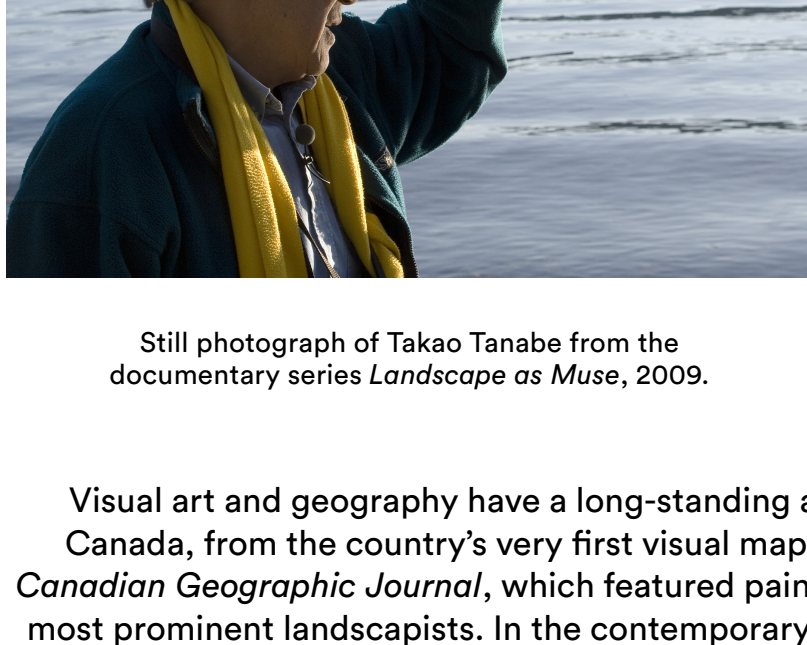
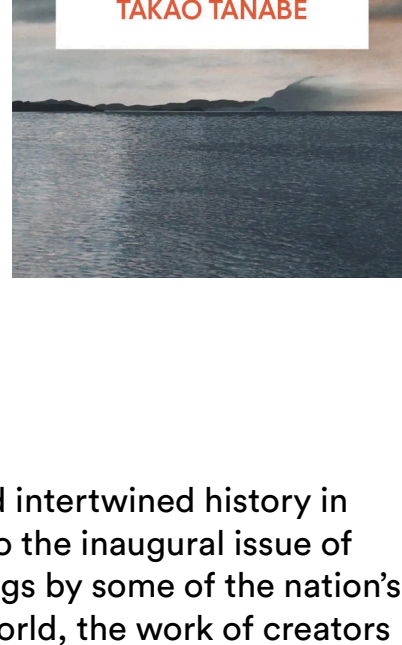


ART AND THE FORCES OF NATURE THE YOUNG GEOGRAPHER'S TOOLKIT

Inspire your students with ACI's latest educational resource, focused on the work of beloved landscape painter Takao Tanabe



Still photograph of Takao Tanabe from the documentary series *Landscape as Muse*, 2009.



LEARN ABOUT
TOPOGRAPHY
through the art of
TAKAO TANABE

Visual art and geography have a long-standing and intertwined history in Canada, from the country's very first visual maps to the inaugural issue of *Canadian Geographic Journal*, which featured paintings by some of the nation's most prominent landscapists. In the contemporary world, the work of creators like Takao Tanabe (b.1926) continues to generate new ways of seeing the land and its most striking features. Simplified and subtle paintings of the prairies and richly layered atmospheric vistas of the Pacific Coast are what Tanabe is best known for, and his oeuvres invite endless introspection on how such familiar environments have been shaped over time by the dynamism of nature. In recognition of this special relationship between Canadian art and the physical sciences, this month we are spotlighting our newest Teacher Resource Guide focused on the study of topography, inspired by Tanabe's masterful creations. We hope it will serve as a critical resource for young geographers discovering the world around them.

Download our newest [Teacher Resource Guide](#).

— The Art Canada Institute Education Team

AVENUES TO EXPLORE

Observational Methods



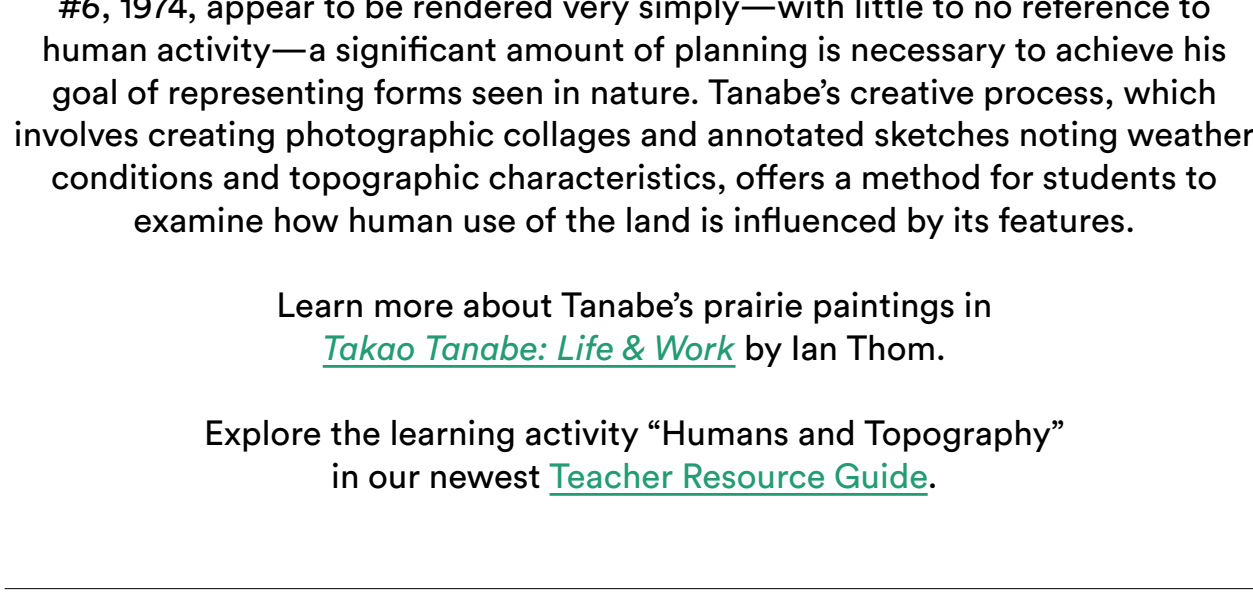
Takao Tanabe, *Gorge*, 1962.

Upon his graduation from the Winnipeg School of Art in 1949, Takao Tanabe began travelling extensively, absorbing emerging trends in abstract art. After twenty years, he turned more directly to the landscape, applying the techniques and methods he learned from studying non-representational paintings to this new subject matter. Some of the artist's early works, such as *Gorge*, 1962, resemble topographical maps, with an aerial viewpoint adopted and shapes of bold colour evoking the natural forms the artist observed during stays in Canada, the United States, and Europe. They encourage new ways of seeing and can serve as a point of inspiration for lessons focused on visually representing the features of an area.

Learn more about Tanabe's early landscape works in [Takao Tanabe: Life & Work](#) by Ian Thom.

Explore the learning activity "Topographical Mapping" in our newest [Teacher Resource Guide](#).

Uses of the Land



Takao Tanabe, *The Land #6*, 1974.

At various times in his life, Takao Tanabe hitchhiked across the Canadian Prairies, stopping along the way to sketch and photograph the vistas that caught his attention. While the artist's paintings of this region, like *The Land #6*, 1974, appear to be rendered very simply—with little to no reference to human activity—a significant amount of work is necessary to achieve his goal of representing forms seen in nature. Tanabe's creative process, which involves creating photographic collages and annotated sketches noting weather conditions and topographic characteristics, offers a method for students to examine how human use of the land is influenced by its features.

Learn more about Tanabe's prairie paintings in [Takao Tanabe: Life & Work](#) by Ian Thom.

Explore the learning activity "Humans and Topography" in our newest [Teacher Resource Guide](#).

Geologic Activity



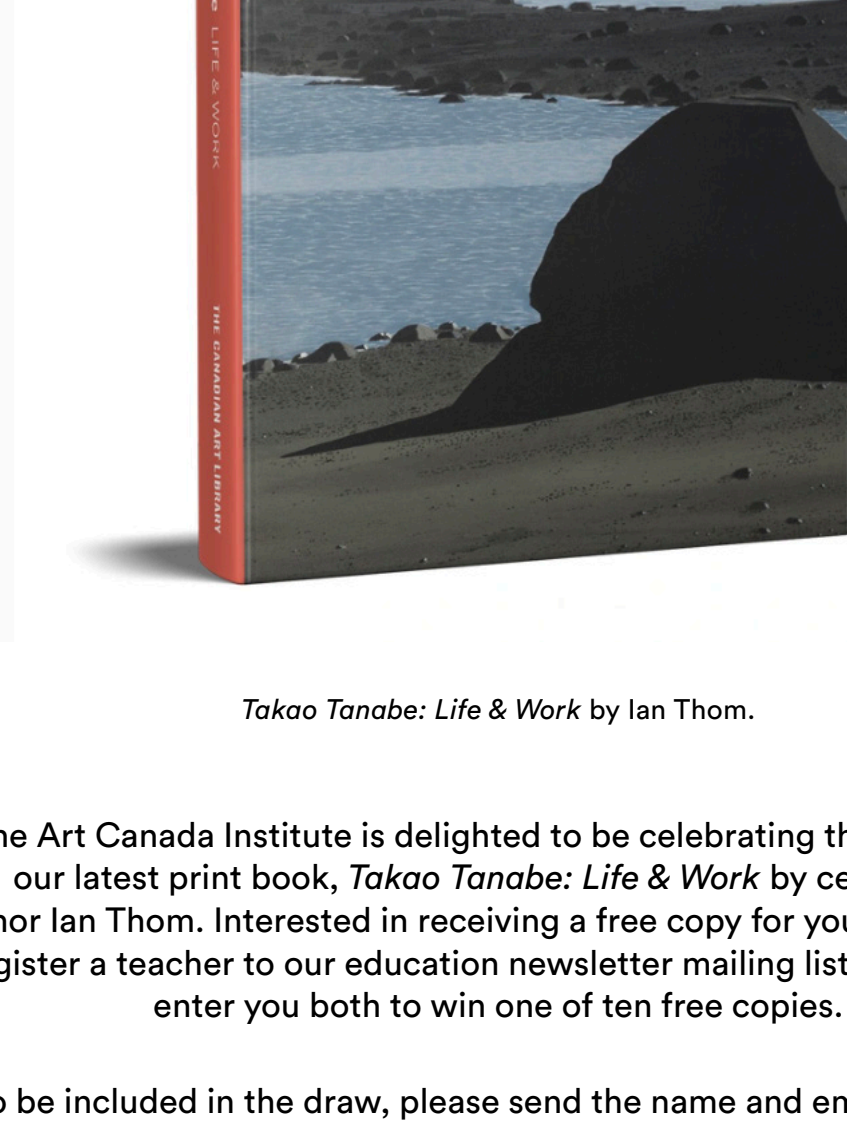
Takao Tanabe, *Sunset 4/86: Crossing the Gulf*, 1986.

In addition to Tanabe's groundbreaking paintings of the Canadian prairies, the artist has also been celebrated for a series of later works depicting the misty, grey environments of the Pacific Coast. *Sunset 4/86: Crossing the Gulf*, 1986, is a striking example of his evocative approach to depicting the vistas surrounding Vancouver Island—where he has resided since the 1980s. Capturing the atmospheric qualities of these milieus, Tanabe's West Coast works prompt insightful observations into the forces of geology that can create a specific landscape, and how geologic actions can influence topography.

Read more about this celebrated painter's works featuring the Pacific Coast in [Takao Tanabe: Life & Work](#) by Ian Thom.

Explore the learning activity "Geological History" in our newest [Teacher Resource Guide](#).

BOOK GIVEAWAY



Takao Tanabe: Life & Work by Ian Thom.

The Art Canada Institute is delighted to be celebrating the launch of our latest print book, *Takao Tanabe: Life & Work* by celebrated author Ian Thom. Interested in receiving a free copy for your classroom? Register a teacher to our education newsletter mailing list, and we will enter you both to win one of ten free copies.

To be included in the draw, please send the name and email address of your referee to: education@aci-iac.ca

As a bilingual organization, we are proud to offer our materials in both French and English, including this newsletter. Use the sign up links below to receive emails in your preferred language.

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About the Art Canada Institute

Launched in 2013, the Art Canada Institute is the only national institution whose mandate is to promote the study of an inclusive multi-vocal Canadian art history to as broad an audience as possible, in both English and French, within Canada and internationally. The ACI works with more than fifty of Canada's leading art historians, curators, and visual culture experts who are dedicated to the creation of authoritative original content on the people, themes, and topics that have defined Canadian art history.

We are creating a central digital resource to tell the world about Canada's most important works of art and where they are located. By functioning as an online art museum, a [digital library](#), and an interactive Canadian art encyclopedia, the ACI is an indispensable resource on Canada's visual heritage.

Visit us at aci-iac.ca

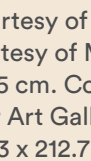
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