

ARTS LEARNING LAB @ HOME

Transform & Translate



OVERVIEW

For this workshop we will be building drawings from the everyday world around us! We will discover the surfaces and objects that make up our environment, from leaves and palms to floor tiles and drying racks, which we will then translate into drawings through a technique called rubbing, or “frottage.” It will be a process of discovery, experimentation, play, and collage.

OBJECTIVES

1. Participants investigate the formal element of art, texture.
2. Participants create meaning in their art by exploring natural and constructed objects and environments.
3. Participants experiment with materials and the principles of design to create a reflective collage.

RELEVANT CALIFORNIA ART STANDARDS SUGGESTED FOR GRADES 1-6, CAN BE MODIFIED FOR ANY GRADE LEVEL

1.2 Artists and designers shape artistic investigations, following or breaking with traditions in pursuit of creative art-making goals.

2.VA:Cr1.2 Make art or design with various art materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity.

6.VA:Cr1.2 Formulate an artistic investigation of personally relevant content for creating art.

2.1 Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and art-making approaches.

2.VA:Cr2.1 Experiment with various materials and tools to explore personal interests in a work of art or design.

2.3 People create and interact with objects, places, and design, and this defines, shapes, enhances, and empowers their lives.

K.VA:Cr2.3 Create art that represents natural and constructed environments.

2.VA:Cr2.3 Repurpose found objects to make a new artwork or design.

MATERIALS

- Tracing Paper
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Glue

VOCABULARY

- Texture: an element of art that refers to the surface quality of an object, how it may feel and look.
- Abstraction: art that is not representative of an object or reality. The art form seeks to provide intangible and emotional experiences.
- Rubbings: a reproduction of the texture of a surface created by placing a piece of paper or similar material over the subject and then rubbing the paper with something to deposit marks, also called “frottage.”
- Collage: a technique in art that uses pieces of paper, photographs, fabric and other ephemera arranged and affixed down onto a supporting surface.
- Tone: the relative lightness or darkness of a color.
- Variety: one of the principles of design. Relates to the varying use of different elements (color, shape, tone, etc.) in creating complex arrangements and compositions.
- Color Scheme: an arrangement of colors designed for different aesthetic effects, a combination of colors pleasing to the eye.

INTRODUCTION

Artist Trevor Amery opens the workshop with an introduction to his artistic practices. His creative interests draw inspiration from nature, complex environments, and the process of experimentation. His recent work investigates the notion of time and nature by creating sculptures of trees that act as climate archives recording atmospheric changes in the environment beyond human perception.

Trevor Amery discusses the concept of abstraction as being a primary focus for this workshop. Abstraction in art can mean many different things. Partial abstraction begins to deconstruct objects into formal elements such as line and shape while maintaining some visual representation to an actual object. Full abstraction in art visually depicts nonrepresentational imagery with no real counterpart in material reality. Trevor Amery emphasizes the use of simple abstract forms as a goal for this workshop.

STEP 1

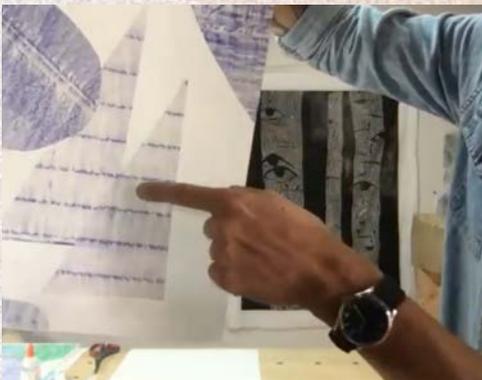
Trevor Amery explains the concept of a texture library. The elements of art are considered the building blocks of visual art. They are line, shape, color, tone, texture, and space. The focus of this workshop is texture or the surface quality and feeling of an object. Trevor Amery provides examples of his collected textures and the variety of built and natural objects he uses. The process of finding and collecting textures allows artists to explore and investigate interesting elements to be used for collage purposes. Furthermore, the recording of textures in the environment overtime becomes a form of archiving that in itself tells a story of our relationship to place. In this workshop you are encouraged to explore your own environment in search of interesting and significant textures.

Workshop Description



STEP 2

Trevor Amery demonstrates the process of making texture rubblings and shapes them into elements for a collage. First a piece of paper is laid over the surface of an object. A crayon is rubbed over the paper creating marks that reveal the surface quality of the selected object. The section of paper with the recorded texture is then cut into a basic shape such as a triangle, oval, and a variety of organic curved shapes. The cut out shapes are then arranged and glued to the surface of a large piece of paper to create a unique texture based collage. Trevor Amery encourages participants to approach this process as a form of intentional play. Often people can overthink their approach during the art-making process. However, spontaneous playful mark making has many benefits that enhance the wellbeing of participants of any age level.



Workshop Description

STEP 3

Following the demonstrations and discussion of texture, rubbings, and collage, take 10 minutes to create your own texture library. Trevor Amery describes this process as a “hunting” phase. The goal is to connect with and explore our immediate environments in search of interesting textures and surfaces that we may overlook in our day to day lives. As you record your textures spread the crayon with varying degrees of pressure to capture different tones of lightness or darkness in their rubbings. Consider the element of color to create a dynamic color scheme. The use of different colors and tones will create a look of variety in your final collage.

STEP 4

After collecting a range of textures, spend several minutes considering what shapes you will create to make your cut outs. These shapes will act as another visual element to explore in your final collage. Play with the arrangement of your textured shapes. Trevor Amery describes collage making as an additive process. As you build your collage think in terms of mixing, remixing, and adding one element at a time. Glue down each element using any adhesive you may have. When finished you can always come back to your collage another day and continue the additive process. Share your unique collage with others and describe the environments and textures you were able to record.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are the elements of art?
- How do artists use the element of texture?
- How does recording textures tell a story?

SUGGESTED FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

Trevor Amery discusses the act of recording textures in the environment as a form of archiving. He also describes his own interest in the concept of time and how organisms, like trees, act as recorders of time. Turn your newfound skill of texture rubbing into a fun time capsule archive. Pick 5 locations significant to you on a personal, social, and cultural level. Take a crayon or charcoal and a piece of paper to each location and record the texture of the environment and surfaces. The spaces whether at a park, a friend's house, your school, or any other location will tell a story of your relationship to that place. Like trees, as things around us change, we act as witnesses that record the shifting world around us.

RELATED RESOURCES

- Elements of Art description by the J. Paul Getty-
http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/elements_art.pdf
- Principles of Design description by the J. Paul Getty-
https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/principles_design.pdf

ACCESS AND EQUITY

Teachers and parents can consider their role in modifying workshop instructions in the following ways:

- When recruiting, interest provide as many opportunities for choice as possible. Allow for open interpretation of workshop concepts such as texture and collage. Build participants individual strengths and prior knowledge. Create an environment of experimentation in which risk taking is valued. Respond positively as all participants need to feel comfortable about taking creative chances.
- Scaffold tasks from simple to complex as needed. Build confidence as participants experiment with the act of rubbing. As they develop familiarity with the concept of texture, they introduce the concept of shape and model different approaches such as cutting out geometric shapes versus organic shapes. Finally demonstrate the variety and options in making final collage arrangements. Participants are more willing to sustain effort if they see others fully engaging in the workshop process.
- Provide analogies for difficult concepts like abstraction, time, and archives that participants can connect with in their own personal life experiences. For example Trevor Amery provides a visual example of a sculpture he made using a log from a tree being cut down in San Diego. The artist goes on to describe how the use of that log now acts as a memory for him solidifying his relationship to place and time through art.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Trevor Amery received his BFA from MICA, MFA from UC San Diego, and attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2013. He is a recipient of a Fulbright fellowship to Hungary, a Santo Foundation Individual Artist Award, and residencies at the Fountainhead, Arteles Creative Center, Teton Artlab, and Bemis Center for Contemporary Art. He represented the U.S. at the Kathmandu International Art Festival and has exhibited at such venues as Jackson Hole Center for the Arts, the Skanzen Museum, Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (UMOCA), Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Moore College, and Gallery Protocol. He lives and works in San Diego as an artist, educator, designer, and fabricator.

ABOUT ARTS LEARNING LAB AND 18TH STREET ARTS CENTER

Arts Learning Lab @ Home is a series of live online arts classes for kids and families schooling from home. These hands-on artmaking workshops (which are posted as on-demand videos after each workshop) are led by professional artists in residence at 18th Street as well as members of our national and international artist community. The workshops are taught in both English and Spanish for those teachers that are bilingual, and are live translated in both English and Spanish. The workshops cover a range of fun, hands-on, and participatory ideas that connect with larger social issues.

You can visit more lessons at <http://18thstreet.org/allathome>

Founded in 1988, 18th Street Arts Center is one of the top 20 artist residency programs in the US, and the largest in Southern California. Conceived as a radical think tank in the shape of an artist community, 18th Street supports artists from around the globe to imagine, research, and develop significant, meaningful new artworks and share them with the public to foster radical imagination, empathy, and positive social change.