

Mixed Media Art

By Caponi Art Park

Project Overview:

Recommended for ages 5+

The process of making art is always an experiment. Take a look outside. What do you see? Using their own experiences with nature, participants will create mixed media artwork inspired by the outdoors. Participants will engage with a variety of materials they already have on hand, and manipulate them to create a fantastic piece of mixed media art. Get creative with the materials you choose to use! In the end, participants will find that really anything in your home can be made into interesting artwork!

Supply List:

- Heavyweight paper, cardboard, or a piece of wood-anything sturdy enough to hold several layers of art supplies. It should be relatively large.
- Paint (Tempera, or acrylic will work best, but really any paint you have laying around will work)
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons.
- Collage paper (This is really ANY scrap or extra paper product you have around your house. It's a bonus if it's colorful, or has a pattern, image or words on it. Get creative!)
- Miscellaneous decorating items, such as seeds and beans, feathers, beads, glitters, natural elements, string. Use anything you want to add some flare to your artwork.
- Glue-this can be glue stick, liquid glue, hot glue (with parents assistance). Double sided-tape would also work.

Instructions:

- First, participants should use their drawing utensil (marker, crayon, pencils), to draw the first layer of their mixed media artwork. Encourage participants to think about the natural world, and to turn that into inspiration for their artwork.
- Participants should take their time drawing their first layer and think about how they will build upon it with the other materials they will use.
- Once the drawing portion has been completed, participants should begin to lay their collage materials down. The collage materials can be used to fill in their drawings, or can be layered on top of their drawings.

- Collage materials should be built up, and do not necessarily need to cover the entire piece of cardboard or paper. Participants are encouraged to use a wide variety of collage materials that, ideally, range in size and color. Ripped paper creates an interesting look, but participants may also choose to cut their collage materials with scissors. Collage materials can be adhered to the artwork with any type of glue or tape.
- Next, participants should apply the next layer of their mixed media art, using paint. Acrylic or Tempera paint works best, but watercolor paints will work if any portion of the first two layers are very light in color.
- The final layer of their mixed media art is found objects, such as beads, seeds, feathers or glitter. This can be really anything small and lightweight you can find around your house. This layer is meant to add texture to the artwork, so think about that when you are looking around for things to add.
- In addition, encourage students to use the objects available to them from outdoors to create different layers and textures on their artwork.
- Any of the layers that we recommend adding can be skipped if you do not have that particular material, or if the participant does not want to add it to their artwork.

Discussion Questions:

- What type of materials did you add to your mixed media art that make it unique? Why?
- How did you use abstraction in your mixed media art?
- How did you experiment with the materials you were given to create a mixed media artwork?
- How did you incorporate the natural world into your mixed media art?

Short Lesson for Mixed Media Art Workshop:

- Mixed media is a term which has sometimes been applied to art that is concerned with exploring new ideas.
- It is sometimes used virtually synonymously with 'avant-garde', but 'experimental' usually suggests a desire to extend the boundaries of the art in terms of materials or techniques, like not using a paintbrush or abstraction. 'Avant-garde' can include new ideas expressed through very typical techniques.
- In 1923 Picasso said 'I can hardly understand the importance given to the word research in connection with modern painting. In my opinion to search means nothing in painting. To find, is the thing'

- Monet is said to take a “scientific” approach to nature in his paintings, meaning his approach to nature is very meticulous, but not realistic; it is abstracted (like your paintings will be!)



- As you can see here, Monet is very careful in the details he puts into his paintings of nature, but it is not true to life. This is called abstraction.
- Mixed media artwork is when there is more than one type of medium added to the artwork, such as painting and newspaper clippings.