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Lichtenstein Pop-Art Resist

Create a graphic and colorful resist with a nod to Pop Artist Roy Lichtenstein!

(art + histoy)

Roy Lichtenstein's work from the 1960s shocked the world because it looked like images from comic books. He had originally worked in cubism and was making paintings that were in the Abstract Expressionist genre when, in 1961, his young son challenged him by pointing to a Mickey Mouse comic book and saying, "I bet you can't paint as good as that, eh, dad?" Lichtenstein ultimately became instrumental in creating the Pop Art style, with paintings that adopted the techniques and look of cartoons and comic books.

The first time his new work was exhibited, it was heavily criticized by art critics. Life magazine even published an article titled "Is He the Worst Artist in the U.S.?" Lichtenstein was also called a copycat by many as his works closely resembled the original comic book images. With time, however, he was considered one of the greatest artists of the Pop Art movement. The record for the highest auction price for a Roy Lichtenstein work is held by the 1963 painting, "Woman with Flowered Hat," which sold for $56.1 million in May 2013.

One major distinguishing characteristic of Lichtenstein's work is the dot pattern on the canvas. He was really painting digital pixels before there were pixels. Lichtenstein didn't paint each and every dot by hand. Instead, he used various kinds of stencils with perforated dot patterns. He'd brush his paint across the top of the stencil, and the colors dropped through as perfect circles. In doing so, he was elevating commercial images from comics and ads into art. These days, we can't go anywhere without seeing pop art. Lichtenstein helped bring pop art into design and larger culture, proving that it wasn't just a gimmick.

Using a resist made from acrylic paint mixed with gloss medium along with rubbing and texture plates creates a composition with Lichtenstein flair. Add a pop of bright color with liquid watercolors to bring it to life.

GRADES 5-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. View examples of works done by Lichtenstein such as "Look Mickey," "Woman With a Flowered Hat," "Sunrise," and "Drowning Girl."
2. Mix gloss medium with black acrylic paint and distribute containers across the classroom.

Materials (required)

Blick Studio Newsprint Pads, 50 sheets, 12" x 18" (10311-1046); need one sheet per student

Bee Paper Aquabee Manga Artist Pads, 30 sheets, 11" x 14" (12437-1005); need one sheet per student

Blick Acrylic Gloss Medium, Pint (00623-1036); need one

Blick Studio Acrylics, 8 oz, Ivory Black (01637-2252); share three tubes across class

Blick Liquid Watercolors, 8 oz (00369-); share at least five bright colors across class

Shade-Tex Rubbing Plates, (22809-); share two sets across class. Suggest Architecture (22809-1004) and Textile (22809-1005)

Optional Materials

Roylco Rubbing Plate Sets, (61112-)

Richeson Rubbing Plates, (62108-)

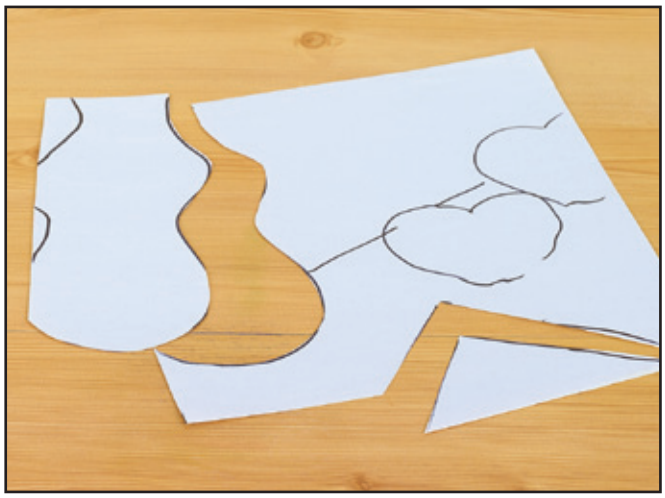
Process

1. On newsprint, sketch a rough composition for the final resist. Distinguish major background areas. The newsprint will be used to mask areas when doing the resist patterning. For example, if a still life is the subject matter, you might sketch in a table, vase, and background wall. Then the newsprint will be cut apart into these sections.
2. On the manga paper, begin by brushing on any black outlines of the composition using the gloss medium and black acrylic mixture. Thick lines can be used, and tools can be used to scratch through the resist to add detail or texture. Allow to dry.
3. Brush the black resist onto a texture plate, and "stamp" the pattern onto the paper. Use the newsprint to shield areas that should not receive the patterned resist. Complete all of the texture plate resist stamping in this step. Allow to dry.
4. Finally, add bright, pop art color by brushing bright washes of Blick Watercolor on top of the resist. The gloss medium mixed with acrylic will resist the watercolor and retain its glossy look.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Connecting

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.



Step 1: *Sketch the composition onto newsprint and cut the main areas apart.*

Step 2: *On manga paper, add black resist with a brush and with texture plates, using the newsprint pieces as a mask where necessary. Allow to dry.*

Step 3: *Add bright pop art color with washes of Blick Liquid Watercolor.*

Watch the Lesson at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YtFLooP3TI&feature=youtu.be