

ELMHURST ART MUSEUM

ART, EDUCATION & ARCHITECTURE

Art + The Everyday



Paula Crown, *SOLO TOGETHER*, 2017, painted plaster
Courtesy of PAHC/ studio



Jim Hodges, *A Diary of Flowers (Carolyn)*, 1992, Ink on 73
paper napkins with straight pins, 43 x 69 in.

For centuries, artists have used a creative process to explore, understand, and to respond to the world around them. Through this exploration, artists push the limits of materials and begin to understand the relationships we have with physical objects. This curiosity often extends beyond the usual paint and clay, and into materials you can find in your own home.

Ephemera refers to any object or materials that was created to serve a temporary purpose and not be preserved or retained. Things like newspapers, magazines, postcards, and even leaves and twigs can be considered ephemeral. Although not meant to be kept, we have a tendency of collecting ephemeral material that has some sort of significance to us. Whether it be your name in the newspaper, or a postcard from your grandmother, we hang on to these disposable materials because we see emotional value in them.

This activity challenges participants to discover their own personal connection to everyday material and explore the work of artists using ephemera in their work. These projects encourage you to consider ephemeral objects in your own life that you are somehow connected with, and discover their potential for creating something profound.

Check out our website for more information and images of ephemeral art that has been at the Elmhurst Art Museum. Share your creations and tag us on social media! #MuseumFromHome

Sincerely,

Joseph Hladik, Director of Education & Grants Administrator



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In the activity you will:

- Experiment with household materials
- Study the work of artists using ephemeral materials in their work
- Learn about potential and limits of everyday materials
- Create your own artwork that reflects something significant in your life
- Challenge your creativity



You will need:

Part 1:

- Paper
 - watercolor paper is preferred
- Liquid material
 - Something like coffee, tea, or juice
- Paper ephemera
 - Newspapers, magazines, postcards...
- Paintbrush/painting tool
- Scissors
- Glue stick

Part 2:

- Salvaged/obsolete electronics, toys, other materials
- Glue
- Wire
- Scissors/wire cutters



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INSTRUCTIONS

Activity 1: 2D

Paint a self-portrait using unconventional materials like coffee, tea, or juice.

- When choosing your medium, think about what you already have in your home.
- How will you paint yourself?
 - Think about things you are feeling or thinking about during this shelter-in-place
 - Are you happy? Scared? Inspired? Productive? Lazy?
 - What are you doing in this scene?
 - Are you in your kitchen? Reading a book? Building a fort?
- Experiment with tones, using them like watercolors
 - Adding water will dilute your material, giving lighter tones, whereas less water will give you deeper tones
 - Try letting it dry and layering on top to achieve deeper tones



Chocolate syrup painting from a Family Day Workshop. 2017.

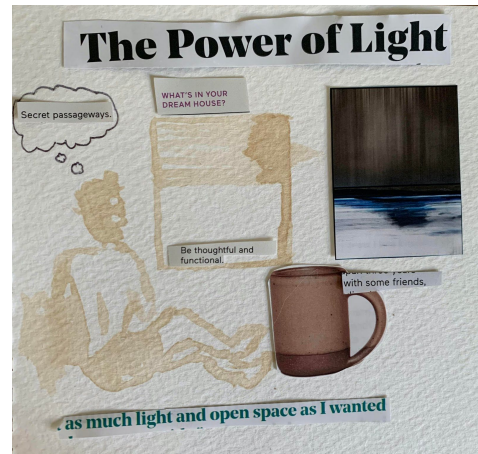


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After you've painted your initial image, collect other ephemeral materials made of paper.

- Look for images and text that you find interesting and cut them out.
- Using a glue stick, create a collage that communicates your connection to the material
 - If you chose coffee, why?
 - If you used a collection of old fashion magazines, why do you collect them?



Examples:



Vik Muniz, *Individuals*, 1998, cibachrome, ed. 3/3, 60" x 48", (photograph of chocolate syrup)

This piece was included in EAM's 2017 exhibition *The Human Touch*.



Eleanor King Hookham, *Water Tower Place*, artist proof No. 4, 1976, ink and coffee on paper

Eleanor King Hookham was instrumental in founding EAM. Some of her works are included in our permanent collection.



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Activity 2: 3D

Create an original 3D portrait of yourself using salvaged materials. Assemble it using discarded materials such as: technology parts and recycled items.

Step 1: Collect salvaged materials to construct your portrait

- Think about what materials you keep around the house that are interesting or have some sort of meaning to you
 - Broken electronics, old toys, and other household materials are a great start!



Step 2: Create the composition for your figure

- Draw or sketch your ideas
- It will help to play with the materials and test what limitations they may have
- What materials do you find interesting?
- Which objects have personality?



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Step 3: With the supervision or help from a parent, use a glue gun or wire to assemble your assemblage sculpture.

- What does your creation tell us about you?
- Why did you choose these materials?



Examples:



Michelle Grabner, *Untitled (egg carton)*, 2017, iron and glass, 12 x 12 x 3 in. Courtesy of the Artist and James Cohan, New York.

This piece was included in the 2018 exhibition, *IN THIS HOUSE*.



Alex Chitty, *they will bloom without you (perfume bottle)*, 2017, steel I-beams, objects, fasteners, cast brass

9 x 12 x 9 in. Courtesy of the artist and PATRON Gallery. Chicago. Photo: Robert Chase Heishman

This piece was included in the 2017 exhibition, *they will bloom without you*.

