ART ACTIVITY

SCULPTURES: A FAMILY AFFAIR

Artspace Studio Artist (Studio 204), Kelly Sheppard Murray shares prompts for families to create art together using what they have on hand, and learn how Kelly’s art making prompts relate to her own art practice. For more inspiration, see Kelly’s artwork at kellysheppardmurray.com or @kellysheppardmurray_art.

Prompt 1:
1. Find a bunch of odd pieces (old or broken toy pieces, bottle caps, dried up markers, straws, plastic or costume jewelry, etc).
2. Find a piece of cardboard, wood or whatever semi-rigid surface you can find.
3. Once you have a good quantity of pieces (or whatever is available), use white glue (elmers) or hot glue (little ones may want a big kid or parent’s help) and glue them to the cardboard/wood.
4. Let the glue dry/cool then paint everything a single color, using any craft paint, house paint or acrylic paint.
5. By painting the different shapes all one color, they are unified into a cohesive whole.

How this relate to Kelly’s work: “I use hot wax, called encaustic, to coat the forms I create. This makes all the parts fit together and transforms the shapes into rounded natural forms. They are inspired by nature but are not an exact duplicate of anything in nature.”

Do you want your piece to look like a mushroom, a sea urchin, a jelly fish a seed pod?

Prompt 2:
1. If you don’t have paint, then gather a lot of pieces – 20, 30, 60 or more – small or large (consider using any listed items or anything that you have on hand).
2. Then arrange them in a rainbow gradient (see at right) or other pleasing color combination.
3. Tack them up onto the wall to create your arrangement.
4. Work together with everyone in the family to arrange the pieces.

How this relate to Kelly’s work: “As I was doing a sculpture a day in the year after my Artspace Residency, I began to make arrangements of the pieces by hanging them on the wall. Each installation became a new color arrangement - from monochromatic (all one color), to rainbow to random. Having a large grouping of cheerful colors and interesting shapes can be fun in creating and also enjoyable to look at. I have shown groupings with as few as 3, 4 or 5 pieces or as many as 400 – the more pieces the more fun the arrangements can become. The act of discovery is the fun part with each new arrangement. Something else I discovered is that the arrangements and this process gets me to look at shapes, colors and forms with fresh new eyes. If we are stuck at home, or have limited art supplies on hand, we can still find a way to look at what we do have and use these things in fresh new ways.”

What color arrangements can you make with your found objects? Have fun!