

Kids @ CAM – At Home Family projects

Spotlight on Art History

Jackson Pollock

About the Artist:

Jackson Pollock (January 28, 1912 – August 11, 1956) was an American painter. He became famous for painting in the abstract expressionist style. His paintings are in museums all over the world, and his work is rated very highly. Pollock has been the subject of many movies because of his interesting life. Pollock was born in Cody, Wyoming. Pollock's most famous paintings were made by dripping and splashing paint on a large canvas. His nickname was Jack the Dripper. Because of the method, this style is often called *action painting*. Pollock was helped by his wife, artist Lee Krasner, and his style was very new at the time.

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ART AT HOME – Action Painting

What you'll need:

- Water shooter
- Washable tempura paint
- Old buckets/Tupperware/leak proof containers (for as many colors of paint as you will be using)
- Large scraps of cardboard
- Water
- An outdoor area and a tree to lean the cardboard against (this is NOT an indoor project)

This is a messy project, so make sure you are in clothes and shoes that are allowed to get painty. Also, the finished project may not fit in your house – this project is all about the fun of making it!

- Step 1. Water down your paint in buckets. You want a ratio of about 1-part paint, 3-parts water (though it's not an exact science, work as best you can with what you have). The watery paint needs to be high enough in the bucket for the water shooter to be able to load with paint.
- Step 2. Place your cardboard up against a tree or pole. Make sure there isn't anything behind it (you don't want to get paint on anything besides the cardboard.)
- Step 3. Place the buckets of watery paint about six feet away from the cardboard (you can adjust the distance once you've started).
- Step 4. Make sure no one is in between you and the cardboard (dogs, brothers or sister, etc.)
- Step 5. Load up your water shooter with watery paint, aim and shoot it at the cardboard!
- Step 6. Repeat Step 5 as many times as you want, or until you run out of watery paint.
- Step 7. Lay the cardboard flat when you are done to let it dry.
- Step 8. Help clean up your supplies and workspace.

Tips:

- Have fun trying out new angles and different distances from the cardboard. Jackson Pollock moved around while working on his paintings, you should too.
- If you want to experiment with how the paint will drip, turn the cardboard onto its side.
- Mix colors by having two people using two different colors shoot at the same spot at the same time.

Questions to ask one another:

- What type of mood do you think Jackson Pollock was in when he made this painting? What makes you think that?
- When you are making your painting, what does it sound like when the paint hits the cardboard? How can you change the sound it makes? What does it sound like now?
- When you look at your finished painting, what does it remind you of? Even though it's abstract, does it look like something to you?

FOLLOW UP PROJECT IDEA:

- Do this project again, but this time play music when you do. Maybe choose a few different songs to listen to while you make the painting and see if it changes the way that you work or the way you feel.

