

#AFKfromhome

District Artist in Residence – Janet Wang

## COLLAGRAPH PRINTING



*re:orientation*

Pattern detail, 1 of 3

Egg tempera paintings digitized

2016

Janet Wang

Today we're going to be **material detectives**, and look for different sources of art supplies, as well as finding and creating patterns!

To the left is a detail from a pattern I created in 2016. This pattern looks like the type of decorative imagery you would find on wallpapers, fabrics and other household object from the 1700s till now.

To make all of these separate paintings and drawings work together, I **repeated curving shapes and lines**, and kept the colours bright and flat.

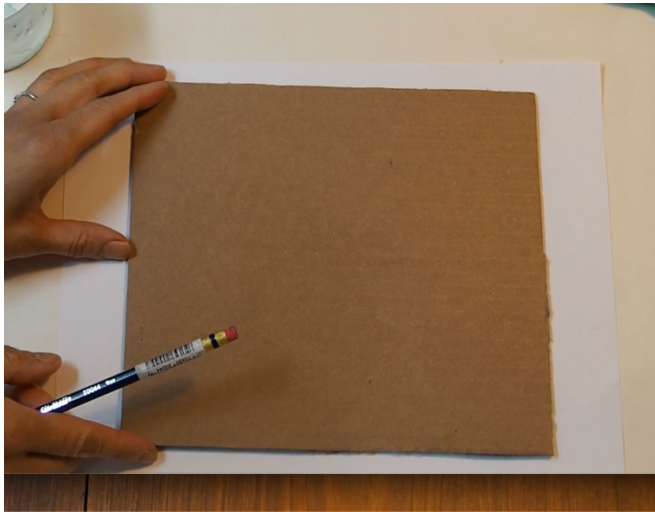
I love playing with **making old things new, and new things familiar**. **How can we look at materials around our house differently today?**



For our first step, let's gather some different supplies. Today, you will need:

- **1 -3 pieces of cardboard**
- **1 or 2 flat pieces of Styrofoam**
- **Pencil or pen**
- **Scissors**
- **White glue**
- **A paint brush**
- **And some paint!**
- **Paper**

I used a bright red acrylic paint for my paint. A thicker paint works best – poster paint (tempera) is a great one to use. Acrylics and



some paints will stain, so work with newspaper or more cardboard laid out under your station.

I've also had luck making paints out of some spices (and they smell good!). Turmeric, cinnamon, coffee grounds – the colours will be more earthy, and can stain, so ask someone to help you experiment. You can use these with water, and I also make my own paint out of these powders and egg yolk.

**Cut a rectangle or square out of one of your larger pieces of cardboard as your collagraph plate. I measured mine so it was smaller than my printing paper.**

I like using a thicker piece for this as we'll be handling this cardboard plate quite a bit. *Collagraph* is a style of printing that uses cut-outs and raised shapes glued on to the plate. These shapes will become our POSITIVE shapes, the ones that will print on to our paper. The space between the shapes will be the NEGATIVE space, or the pathways between your shapes on the paper.



Next, we are going to cut out smaller shapes. You can choose to use thin cardboard (from a cereal box, for example) or flat Styrofoam pieces. Use a pencil or pen to mark the CONTOUR shape (the outline).

If you are working with the styrofoam, you can also add smaller lines and details *on* the shape.

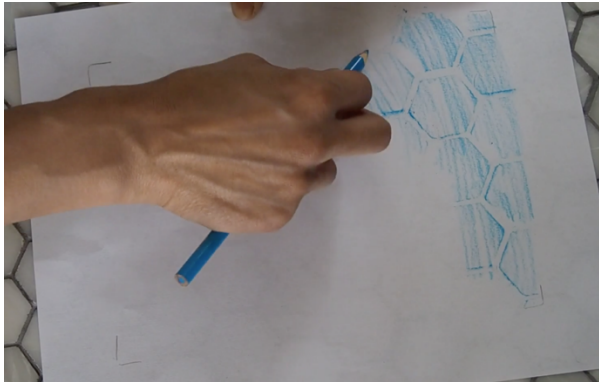
Just like the contour drawings, take your time cutting out the shapes. If I try to get my scissors around each outline in one go, I'll end up bending my shape. I like to carve out chunks of the negative space first, and then do the details last.



I cut around 8-10 pieces in a variety of leaf shapes. You can choose whatever repeated shapes you see outside your windows. Cars and buses? Bikes and kids running by? Hearts and clouds?

I made my leaves, squiggles and triangles into different sizes. Next, **play around with arranging these on to your cardboard plate from step 1.**

I used white glue and my paintbrush to coat the back of each shape, and then pressed these gently on to the plate in my pattern.



While we are **waiting for the glue to dry** (about 15-20 minutes), take your paper and go look for patterns around your house. If you place your paper over top of a tiled floor, or a wood board outside, and then rub a pencil crayon on top, you will get a rubbing of the texture on your paper. I did this in an opposite colour to the paint I was planning to use – a light, cool blue.



Now we can start to experiment with our printing. Use a few scrap pieces of paper to test out your printing first. Use a bigger or wider brush to get the paint on quickly and evenly. If the paint is too thick, we'll lose some of our definition. If it's too thin, the shapes may smear easily. My first few attempts didn't work out very well : ( ....however, keep trying and experiment with all of the different materials and ask your detective questions?

*Does cardboard leave a clearer shape?*

*On which material does the paint dry faster on?*

*Does the Styrofoam wiggle around too much?*



Art is not about things being perfect right away. It's probably not been perfect doing your schoolwork or your drawings each time. What we can do is **try things differently each time** – add more water to your paint, less water, paint faster, paint slower, or press harder or lighter.

Once you're happy with how your test print is, try to print onto your paper rubbing.

**We'd love to see your patterns and prints – please share on Instagram with the #AFKfromhome or to [AFKinfo@sd44.ca](mailto:AFKinfo@sd44.ca).**

It's been such a pleasure to connect with everyone via video. Keep an eye out for our collaborative drawing coming out soon!