



Image taken by MOCA staff

Stargazing with Oil Pastels Activity Guide

Winter Holiday Programming:
Exploring Light and Shadow

Introduction

Stargazing with Oil Pastels explores the light of the night sky as represented through Native Art Department International's (NADI)'s *Double Gazebo*. Within an online conversation titled *Walk East for Sun Rise Walk West for Sunset: Star Knowledge*, NADI artists Maria Hupfield and Jason Lujan talk with astronomer Dr. Hilding Neilson to explore various relationships to the moon and stars. Oftentimes the light of day is seen as a positive force, but in many cultures it is the night—the depth of black—that speaks of opportunity. In this workshop participants are invited to explore the dichotomy between light and dark through the use of oil pastels. The activity will involve the layering of colours on thick cardstock paper. A final layer of matte black will create a base to carve into—illuminating the colours beneath.



Native Art Department
International,
Double Gazebo
(MOCA), 2021. Photo
taken by Toni
Hafkenschied.

Materials

Suggested

- Oil Pastels
- Cardstock Paper (any colour)
- Colouring Pencils
- Wood Skewer
- Popsicle Stick
- Ruler
- Exacto knife



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Replacements

For those without oil pastels you can also do this activity with wax crayons, solely, or wax crayons with black ink or black tempera paint. Colour the surface with your crayons as per the instructions and then coat with either a layer of black crayon or the ink/tempera paint then carve away your image.

Instructions

Stargazing with Oil Pastels

1. Choose 3-5 colours to coat your paper using either a thick layer of oil pastel or colouring pencils. The colours can be layered on top of each other and overlap. Use the lightest colour as the bottom base and the darkest colour last
2. Coat and cover the coloured page with a layer of black oil pastel.
3. Use your carving tool to carve into the oil pastel layers. If only using oil pastels, the depth carved into will determine which colour is shown beneath the black top coat

Note: If using colouring pencils you can mix oil pastel colours to produce chromatic blacks for the top layer.

Here are two common mixes: dark red or crimson and dark green or emerald; a deep blue and a reddish, dark brown.

Guiding Questions

- A. As you scratch away your drawing think of a time you've gazed into the night sky or a place that is important to you but may seem far away. Can you make this moment appear in the depth of the pastels?

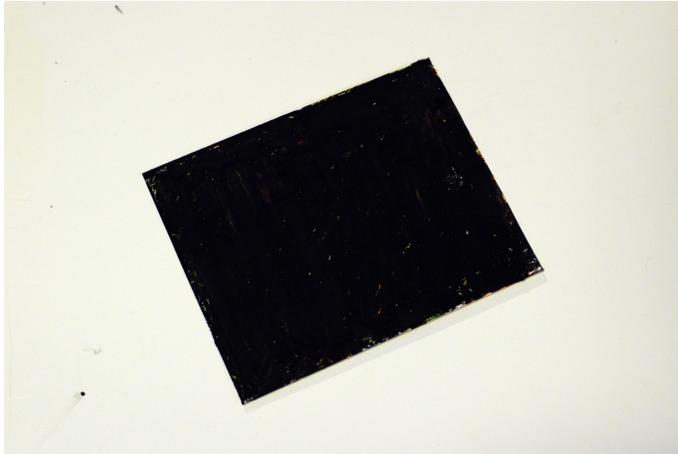


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- B. How do the various tools scratch the surface differently? Are there other objects you could use to carve, mark or mask the surface of your drawing?
- C. As you carve, consider the saying “every star tells a story,” what is the story hidden in your night sky depiction?



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