

CPD Recording: The Tiny Art School Movement: Spotlight

In this CPD session from 12/02/2025, the AccessArt team talks about the importance of artist educators stepping forward to inspire communities. We are joined by John and Sarah Gamble from [Art School Ilkley](#), and artist educator [Inbal Leitner](#), who share their inclusive and diverse offer to the art education community and their journey towards achieving this.

This session is part of the [Tiny Art School Movement](#), designed to celebrate and promote the notion of "Tiny Art Schools" across the UK. As part of this movement, we'll be sharing how artist educators are working with their audiences, using community centres, village halls, and private studio spaces as art education labs to build creative and economic communities of all sizes.

This session recording is suitable for artist educators running or interested in running their own Tiny Art School. We also welcome educators working in all settings, including EYFS, Primary and Secondary Schools, Health & Community Care, Home Education, Lifelong Learning, and Museum and Gallery Education.

The video below is available to full [AccessArt members](#). Please log in to access the video.



Creative Days Art Club

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Tiny Art Schools: The Little Makery

Tiny Art Schools: Creative Days

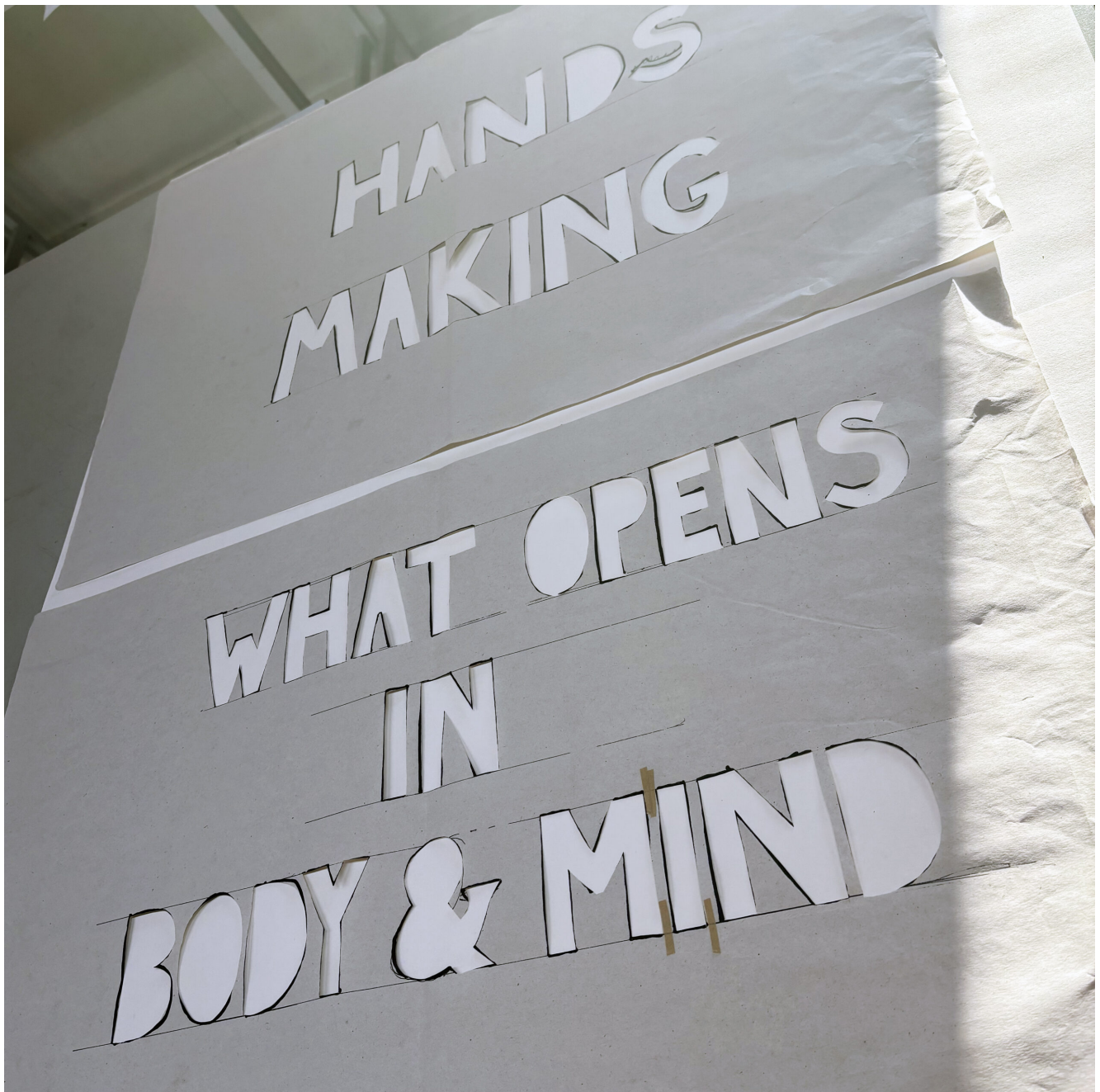
The AccessArt Lab Areas of Focus and Core Values

<< [Back to AccessArt Lab](#)

The AccessArt Lab provides AccessArt with the opportunity to focus on practical and pedagogical exploration of key areas of interest which have emerged over the last few years. The work in the AccessArt Lab will be guided by the areas of focus and core values described below.

[Find out about the in-person sessions](#) we will be running at the Lab to help facilitate these areas of focus.

Areas of Focus

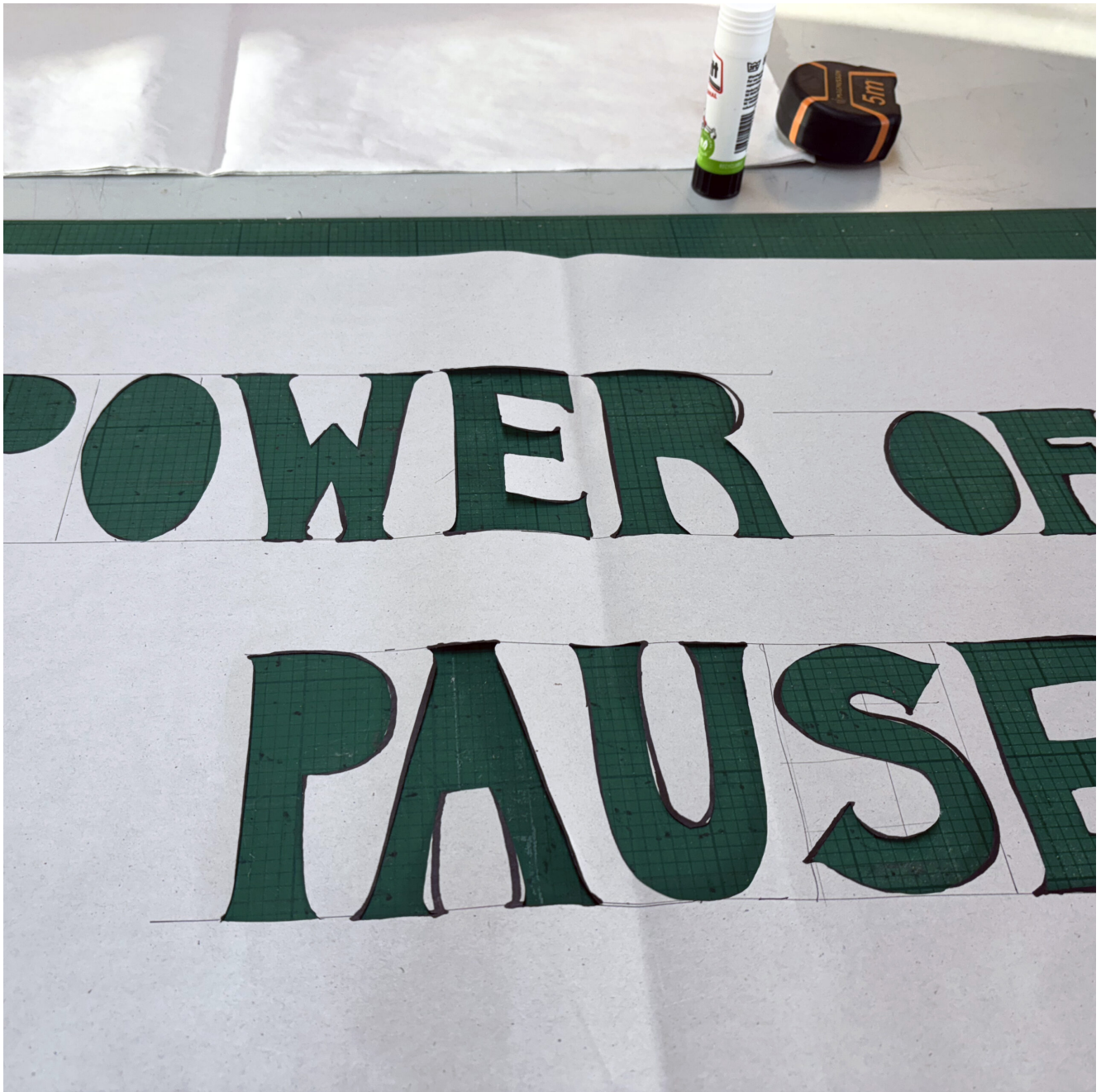


The AccessArt Lab will be exploring the following areas of focus. New areas will be allowed to evolve over time.

- Exploration of Inhabiting “Spaces of Not-Knowing” – What does it feel like to be in spaces of not-knowing? What are the risks and benefits? What might be the outcomes? How can we enable these spaces?**

- **Exploration of Social Models of Learning – How can we embrace shared experiences and outcomes to discover more open, inclusive and diverse ways of thinking and acting?**
- **Re-Connection to Physical Senses, Body-Based Activities and Exploration of Resistant Forces – Whilst not turning our backs on digital, how can we better protect and appreciate time spent in the physical world? How can we build tolerance of what resistance feels like (in interaction with materials and ideas, and in communication between people), and how can we more positively manage our relationship to resistance?**
- **Teenage Enquiry-Based Learning – How can we devise a rich, diverse and adaptable curriculum to engage all teenagers?**

Core Values



The work undertaken in the Lab will be guided by the following principles:

- Awareness of the programming and messaging of our everyday lives and how this impacts upon our thought, action and wellbeing. Alongside this, an exploration of how we can explore a gentler, yet more physical way of thinking and acting, and the benefits this might

bring.

- **Permission for “Pause” – in all forms – space to think, space to act without outcome, space to play...**
- **Appreciation of “question” over “answer” – Where do we put the emphasis and how does it change our experience?**
- **An understanding that exploration of all areas of focus within the lab ultimate benefit others (people, communities and society) through accessible sharing of practice and ideas.**

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How tiny Art Schools grow



Tiny Art Schools: Art School Ilkley Part One

Tiny Art Schools: Art School Ilkley Part Two

Tiny Art Schools: Art School Ilkley Part Three

“When We Hold Art Education In Our Hands”

Recording of a presentation delivered by Paula Briggs, CEO and Creative Director of AccessArt, at the All Party Parliamentary Group for Art, Craft & Design Education on 17th December 2024.

CPD Recording: Improving Outcomes in Drawing

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all drawing resources



The AccessArt Lab at Stapleford Granary

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AccessArt has always advocated for the role artists can play in creating dynamic, engaging and relevant art education experiences for the whole community. We have seen through the [AccessArt](#)

[Primary Art Curriculum](#) how activities that were devised, trialled and tested in community settings, led by artists working with small groups, have then been very successfully transferred into more formal education settings. Artists bring to education an opening of what is possible, together with a depth of understanding and clarity of purpose. Artists help educators ask important and often challenging questions: What is the purpose of art education, and how can we best inspire and enable?

AccessArt has been at the forefront of this approach for 25 years, and we have helped thousands of schools, organisations and individual artist educators transform their practice. Our recently launched [Tiny Art School Movement](#) is helping to encourage artists to reflect upon their potential as educators and to work with local communities.

We opened the first ever AccessArt Lab as part of our continuing commitment to push the boundaries of what is possible when artists and educators from all settings work together. Led by [Paula Briggs](#), Creative Director of AccessArt and the AccessArt Lab, the studio at Stapleford Granary, Cambridge, provided a space for an ongoing creative (and practical) conversation between AccessArt and our audience.

“We are very excited about the potential of the

AccessArt Lab. We'll be using the space to devise and test new content, especially around the creation of resources for teenagers, and around how we nurture creative thinking for all. But over and above these key areas, we'll be exploring (and celebrating) what it is like for learners to enjoy being in a space of "not knowing." Too often, education focuses on the accumulation of precise and nameable knowledge, and then on measuring knowledge retention. Art provides a valuable alternative to this kind of thinking, providing opportunities to acknowledge there are other types of intelligence, and that there is real value in helping learners and teachers experience the benefits of operating in a space of play, feeling safe but inspired in the space of "not knowing... yet," and empowered by personal discovery.

As a predominantly [digital organisation with a national and international reach](#), the AccessArt Lab will provide an opportunity for us to engage with audiences in new ways, and of course everything we learn and create in the Lab will be shared with all our audiences via the AccessArt website. We are excited to see how this develops into what we hope will be a vibrant and meaningful creative conversation, helping our combined voice and expertise to be heard across all settings, and to help affect change."

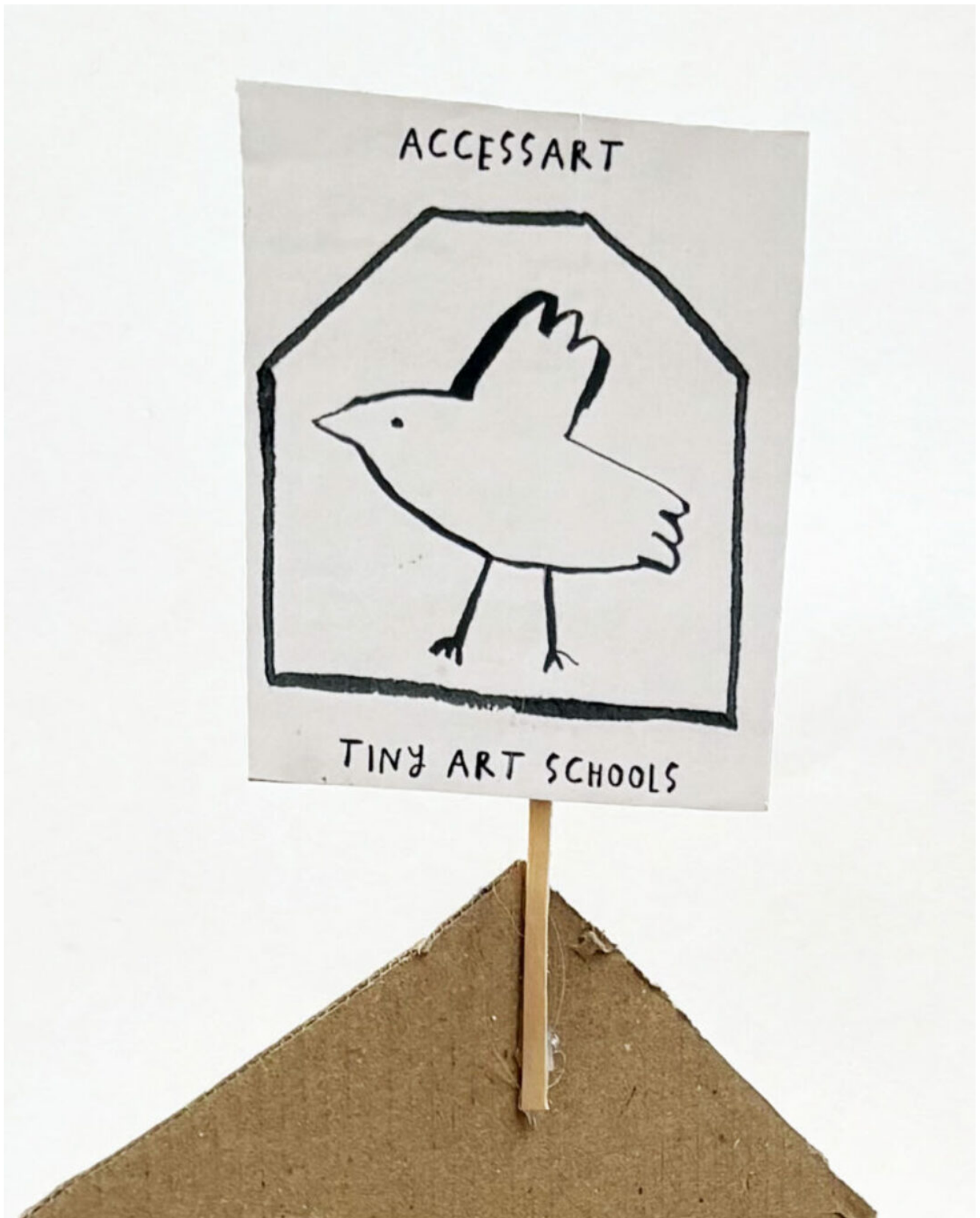
What Opens
in the
Body and
the Mind?

Hands
Making:



SPACE of UNKNOWING

Staying in a space



[Stapleford Granary](#) is an Arts Centre whose aim is to foster cultural understanding through education.

The venue offers music, art, education & conversation in a beautiful 19th century farm complex, situated at the foot of the Gog Magog Downs, just 5 miles from the centre of Cambridge.

Please note the [AccessArt registered office and all contact details remain as detailed here.](#)

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AccessArt Lab Areas of Focus & Core Values



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Talking Points: An Introduction to Shape

A collection of sources and imagery to introduce shape.

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ALL AUDIENCES

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An Introduction to Shape

Shape is used throughout art for lots of reasons; shapes can be vehicles for colour, convey emotion, and lead the eye on a journey around the page.

Different types of shapes can be categorised as 'geometric', 'organic' and 'intuitive'.

Geometric shapes, like squares and triangles, are mainly found in manmade objects, for example, houses. You would often find 'organic' shapes in nature, for example, in leaves or shells. In 2-dimensional artwork, artists also create shapes 'intuitively' to represent a 'thing'.

Artists use shapes to communicate a certain message or convey an emotion.

- What emotion do you associate with certain shapes, for example, a triangle, circle or square?

- Do you feel different when you look at organic shapes compared to geometric shapes?

Artworks consist of lines and shapes built together with colour in a certain composition, whether it's an abstract or figurative piece.

- Some people would define shape through line. What do you think?
- When does a line become a shape?

When you look at an artwork, consider the shape and also the space around the shape (negative and positive space). These are shapes in themselves.

- How do the shapes sit in the composition?
- What is your eye drawn to? Why do you think this is?

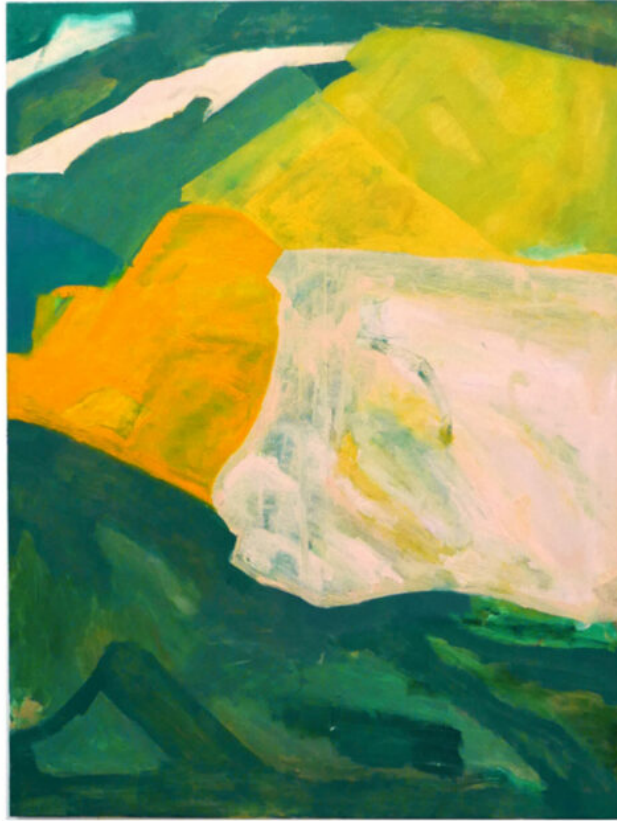
Discuss the artwork below, considering some of the statements and questions above.



Abstract Landscape (1915- 1916) painting in high resolution by Henry Lyman Sayen. Original from the Smithsonian Institution.



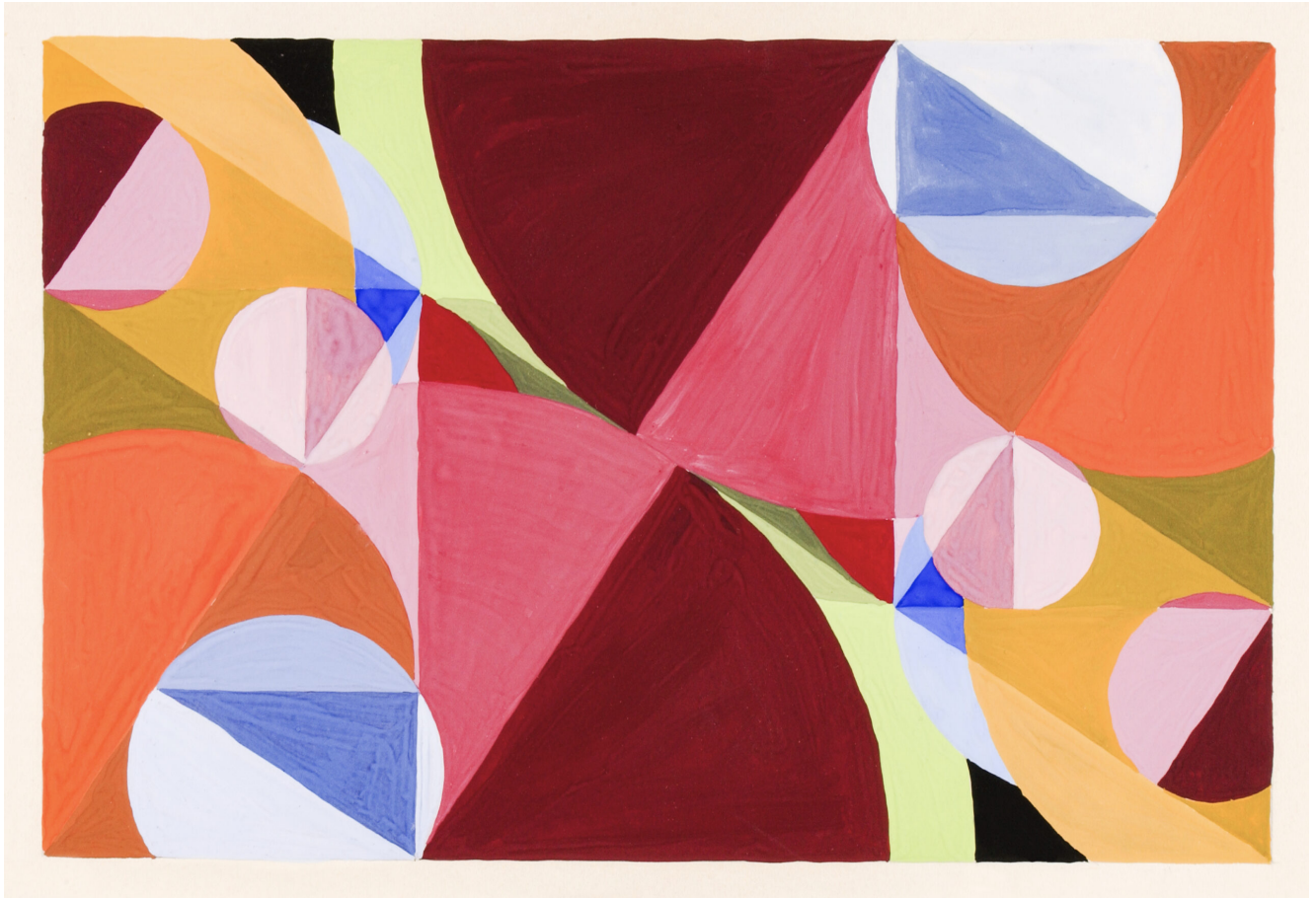
Artist Unkown, Still Life with Guitar, Original public domain image from Saint Louis Art Museum



Landscape by Joe Gamble



Polypodium vulgare, British by Anna Atkins and Anne Dixon, Original public domain image from Getty Museum



Area Broken by Perpendiculars (ca.1934) painting in high resolution by Joseph Schillinger. Original from The Smithsonian Institution.



Monoprint by Claire Harrup

Questions to Ask Children

Describe the shapes you can see? Consider the edges, angles, colours etc.

How do the shapes connect with each other?

Do any of these artworks use negative space? What shapes can you spot?

Shapes can give the illusion of something being there. In Claire Harrup's monoprint, what can you see?

Where is your eye drawn to? What journey does it take and do you think it's intentional?

What do you notice about the overall composition of the piece? How do the shapes and colours impact your opinion and overall feeling?

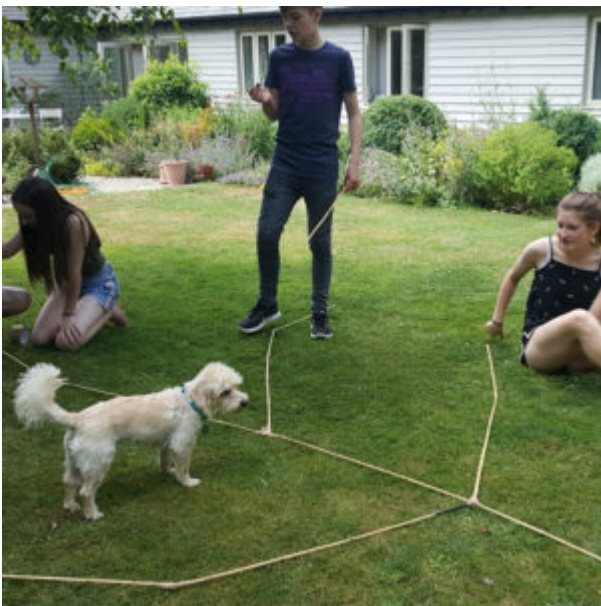
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**Improving Outcomes: Gestural
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