

Best of Summer Arts III: “Color & Form” (Sculpture)

Lesson Plan Objective:

This lesson plan is our third and final installment of the Best of Summer Arts series, in collaboration with Rona Lesser and inspired by the 2016 exhibition *Matthew Ronay*, and the 2012 exhibition *Tony Feher*. Keeping in mind Ronay’s use of color, and Feher’s often use of everyday objects in his work, we are going to make homemade playdough to create the primary and secondary colors, and observe the colors in their different states. You can then use the play dough to make your own fantastic creatures and world, and to create different hues of color.

Approximate Time:
1 Hour+

Skill Level:
Difficult

Parental Supervision:
Required



Image: Matthew Ronay, *Organ/Organelle*, 2014. Installation view at Blaffer Art Museum, Photo: Nash Baker Photography.

Art Materials:

- Flour
- Salt
- Water
- Measuring cups and spoons (you can choose to have 3 paper bowls for easier cleaning)
- Food coloring
- Forks or other to mix ingredients
- Plastic sealing bags to store for another day
- Wax paper, freeze paper, or aluminum foil taped to work surface (masking tape)
- 6 clear plastic clear cups, or glasses
- Rolling pin, skewers to draw textures
- Latex throw away gloves
- **Playdough recipe:** ½ cup of flour, 1/3 cup of salt, 1 tbsp oil, 1/3 cup of water, food coloring

Instructions & Extension

1. The colors red, yellow and blue are called primary colors because we cannot mix them, and they are the foundation for the mixture of all other colors. When you mix two primary colors you create secondary colors. With this information in mind, add around a 2/3 cup of water to 3 clear plastic cups, and add yellow to one, red to another, and blue to the third. Mix thoroughly, and put enough to create better deeper colors.
2. In one of the other 3 cups mix a small amount of the yellow and red water together. What color did you create? Observe the colors as mixes of food coloring and water similar to Tony Feher’s work, as seen in his creation piece. *(Instruction continues on following page.)*

3. Repeat the above instructions in the 2nd cup with yellow and blue. Now what color did you create?
4. Repeat the process one last time in the last cup adding blue and red. What color did you make? You have now created the 3 secondary colors: green, orange, and purple.
5. Now we are ready to make the different color playdough. You could use the colors you mixed for the secondary colored playdough, but we are going to leave those in the cups and mix using the primary colors of the playdough we create as it seems to make better color mixtures.
6. **Playdough instructions:**
 - a. Mix 1 cup of flour with 1/3 cup of salt in the 1st bowl
 - b. Add one tbsp. oil and 1/3 cup of red colored water.
 - c. Mix with a fork or spoon and then your hands. You can coat your hands with some flour if the mixture seems too wet to work with
 - d. Put a little extra flour on the surface and place the dough on the surface. Knead until smooth and all mixed together. You can add more food coloring if the coloring isn't strong enough.
 - e. Be sure to knead each color well until blended and not sticky or too dry.
7. Create the other three secondary colors by taking a piece of each primary color and mixing with the second primary colors. Begin with yellow and red, using a bit more yellow than red. Knead together until well mixed. The ending result should be orange.
8. Repeat the above instruction with the combinations yellow and blue, as well as, blue and red. Use a bit more yellow than blue, and more red than blue to create the intended colors. The resulting colors should be green and purple.
9. **Extension:** Now it is time for having fun creating your imaginary organic shapes or nature based shapes. Use your imagination, and remember the manner in which Matthew Ronay uses vibrant, technicolor to bring his sculptures to life. Think about creatures in the sea, or what cells in our body might look like. Mix more colors to your preference, but most importantly, have fun!



Image: Matthew Ronay, *Birthing Excreting Purple Cleft Ovoids*, 2014, Basswood, oak, dye, gouache, steel, plastic, cotton, 32 x 36 x 22 inches.



Image: Tony Feher, *June*, 2012, 3 clear plastic vessels, 2 with white plastic caps, one with green plastic screw cap, water, watercolor, and liquid soap, 22 x 12 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches.