

Pouncet Pendant

This wearable art piece recalls a time when good scents were equated with good health

(art + history; art + health)

Before it was discovered that pandemics spread through contagions, it was commonly believed that foul odors carried plague and by avoiding nasty smells one could avoid illness. Miasma (translated as "bad air") was a belief commonly held since early Greece, as it was noted that plagues spread in areas where there was already sickness, poor living conditions, pollution and filth; areas that were also foul-smelling.

To ward away illness, it was believed the air could be "cleansed" with incense, fragrant wood, tobacco, botanicals and anything that would counter bad odor. Aromatics were worn, ingested, placed in homes and burned in public areas. People carried small bags or bouquets of fragrant items that they could quickly hold to their noses. Later, small jewelry items were designed to hold perfumed oils, vinegars or waxes. Known as a vinaigrette, pomador or pouncet, these were usually box-like pendants worn about the neck or waist that featured holes for releasing the scent and a means of opening for refilling.

In modern times, aromatics are an important part of most cultures and, in the western world, are still associated with emotional and physical well-being. In this project, a box-like, wearable pendant can be designed to hold a piece of oil-infused felt. Colorful, sparkling beads decorate the front, while the backside forms an open pouch to make it easy to replenish and enjoy the scent. It's a pleasurable, artistic treat for the senses!

GRADES 3-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed

Preparation

- Sort bead colors into a well palette or small muffin tin. For more space and extra security, use a sectioned storage box.



Materials (required)

Blick Mini Canvas, 2" x 2", package of 6, White (07197-1402) or Black (07197-2402); one per student

John Bead Czech Glass Seed Beads, 22 g tube, assorted colors (63842-) share a minimum of four across class

Roylco Paper Mesh, 7" x 10" package of 24 sheets (01391-1001); one sheet per class

Nylon Jewelry Cord, 1/16" X 25-yd spool, Black (60616-2025) or White (60616-1025); share one spool across class

Aleene's Quick Dry Tacky Glue, 4 oz (23884-1104); share six bottles across class

Sculpture House Duron Plastic Sculpting Tool Set, set of 12 (30322-1009); share two sets across class

Roylco Felt Shapes, package of 500 (65308-1500); share one bag across class

Country Lane Essential Oils, 0.5 oz, assorted fragrances (81523-); share a minimum of one across class

Beadsmith Bead Storage Boxes, 1" x 3", pkg of 20 (73565-1004)

Materials (optional):

John Bead Czech Glass Bead Mix, 100g (80644-)

Prang Washable Fine Line Markers Class Pack of 144 (21267-1449)

Canson Foundations Graph Pad, 4" x 4" grid, 40 sheets, 20 lb (10636-24850)

Saral Transfer Paper 12-1/2" x 12-ft roll, White (12917-1012) or Graphite (12917-2612)

Blick Mini Easel, 5" high (50360-1001)

John Bead Gold Eye Beading Needles, size 10, package of 7 (73546-1002)

Beadalon 7 Bead Stringing Wire, 0.015" dia x 30 ft roll, assorted colors (60636-)



Process

1. Plan a design on paper or graph paper for the front of the mini canvas. Use colored pencils or markers to plan color placement of beads. Copy the design to the mini canvas using transfer paper.
2. Select a single color portion of the design to begin with and fill that area with glue. Glue can be squeezed directly from the bottle or applied with a brush or small tool for greater accuracy. For best results, use a heavy-body tacky glue and not a soft-body glue that will spread out.
3. Pinch a few beads of the color planned for that area and sprinkle them into the glue. Tap gently with fingers to form a single layer. Beads can also be guided into place with a plastic tool.
4. Move to another portion of the design, preferably not adjacent to the area just completed. Repeat the process of filling with glue then adding beads until the design is complete. If desired, cover the entire design with a coat of glue when the design is complete. Set the canvas aside to dry.
5. Design a hanger, based on what the intended use of the pendant will be. To hang around the neck, cut a cord or lacing 24" to 30" in length. Attach by gluing the loose ends to the left and right sides of the canvas. The pendant could be designed with a shorter length of cord to hang as an ornament or attach with a clip to a bag, backpack or belt loop. To enjoy as a desk enhancement, place on a mini easel.
6. Once glue has dried, create a backing that will turn it into a pouch. Cut a piece of burlap, paper mesh, or fabric so that it is 1/4" wider than the mini canvas. It can be the same height or created long at the bottom to make fringe. Run a line of glue along the sides and bottom of the canvas (leave the top open). Set the backing material on top of the glue, "pinching" it in so that the sides align and don't hang over. This will form a pouch that is accessible at the top side.
7. Place a few drops of aromatic oils onto a felt shape and insert the felt into the pouch. Enjoy the benefits of aromatherapy!

Options

- Beads can also be stitched onto the canvas using a beading needle. Stitchable area is limited to open area between stretcher bars.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Responding

Anchor Standard 8: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Connecting

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.



Step 1: Create a design on graph paper, then transfer it to mini canvas surface.



Step 2: Fill a section of the design with glue, and add colorful seed beads. Repeat until design is complete.



Step 3: Glue burlap or paper mesh to the back side to create a pouch. Insert a felt shape infused with aromatic oils and enjoy!

