

Trash Landscape

Create a beautiful landscape built on trash!

art + social studies

Best known for his monumental textured paintings, German artist Anselm Kiefer's encrusted surfaces confront themes of memory, history, identity, and culture. Through the addition of objects layered within his paintings, Kiefer's landscape paintings portray the post-war landscape of his time.

Born in 1945 Kiefer's work reflects on somber themes from the Holocaust and Nazi rule. The surfaces of his paintings are covered with as many layers of lead, broken glass, straw, and dried flowers, as they are with oil paint. With each layer built, the surface becomes thicker with an impasto effect, adding to the depth and turmoil of his imagery. The materials are not disguised, but rather, are meant to be seen and known for what they are within the painting.

In this lesson, students will explore the use of texture in painting while reflecting on the significance of our impact as humans on the landscape through our production of waste materials.

This modern take on Kiefer's war-torn landscapes uses found trash objects such as plasticware, wrappers, packing materials, plastic bags, etc. attached to canvas board and coated with black gesso. The objects collaged onto the canvas can be used in an illustrative way through their unique textures. To enhance this effect, color is added in the form of acrylic paint, and Chroma Molten Metals adds a luminosity to the finished piece.

GRADES 3-12

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

Preparation

1. Gather items such as soda tabs, bottle caps, packing materials, plastic bags, lids, wrappers, egg cartons, etc.



Materials (required)

Fredrix Value Series Cut Edge Canvas Panels, Black, pkg of 25, 8" x 10" (07026-2022); share one pack across class

Utrecht Artists' Acrylic Gesso, Black, 32 oz (02030-1007); share two across class

Aleene's Original Tacky Glue, (23884-1004); share one bottle among four students

Chroma Molten Metals Acrylics, (00688-); share five colors across class

Collected items such as soda tabs, packing materials, plastic bags, egg cartons, etc.

Optional Materials

Blickcrylic Student Acrylic Paints and Sets, assorted colors and sizes (00711-)

Blickcrylic Gel Medium, 64 oz (00711-1018)

Surebonder Low Temperature Glue Gun, (24736-1040)

Surebonder Standard Glue Sticks, 1 lb (23604-1001)



Ready to order materials?

Go to www.DickBlick.com/lesson-plans/trash-landscape to access a product bundle for your convenience.

Process

1. Using a pencil, sketch a basic composition directly onto the canvas panel. This will serve as a guide when selecting and placing objects, and will eventually be covered before painting, so there is no need to add too much detail.
2. Arrange items onto the panel. Continue to add and rearrange pieces — the more the better!

As a tip, students can think about using the existing shape of an object and what it will represent. For example, the plastic forks are used to create tree trunks and branches in image (A) below.

3. When satisfied with the placement of objects, use Aleene's Original Tacky Glue to permanently glue them in place. Some objects may be particularly hard to adhere due to their shape or material. In that case, hot glue may be needed.
4. Allow glue to fully dry. This may take up to 24 hours.
5. Apply a generous layer of Blick Artists' Acrylic Gesso in black. The black gesso will not only fully cover all objects, but it will also set the stage for a luminous glow when painted with Chroma Molten Metals Acrylics.
6. Allow the gesso to fully dry. This generally only takes a couple hours, but may take up to 24 hours.
7. Use acrylic paints and Chroma Molten Metals to finish the composition.



(A)

Options

- Allow objects to build in multiple layers, and let pieces extend from the edge of the canvas.
- Create a circular painting using a ready-made circular Fredrix Value Series Cut Edge Canvas Panel.



National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
Anchor Standard 2: Refine and complete artistic work.

Responding

Anchor Standard 8: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Connecting

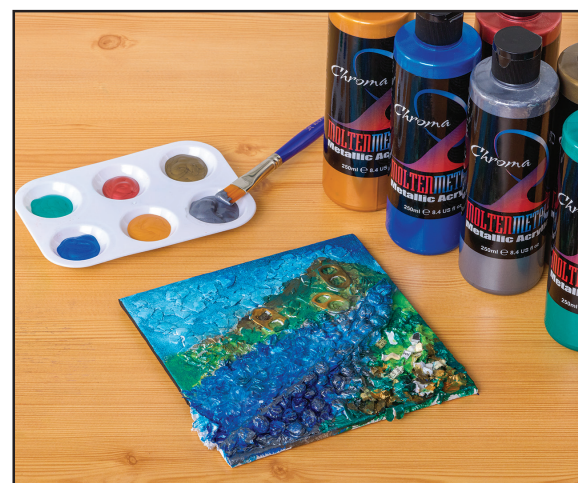
Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.



Step 1: Arrange found "trash" items on the canvas and glue them in place.



Step 2: Coat in the canvas black gesso, and cover all cracks and crevices in the added materials.



Step 3: Paint with Chroma Molten Metals Acrylics.

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