

Art Cart

Karl Wirsum inspired symmetry art



Karl Wirsum, *First Quarter of Moon Dog*, 1966. Oil on canvas in blue artist's painted frame, 38 1/2 x 25 1/2 inches. Collection of the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art.

Karl Wirsum is an artist from Chicago. Wirsum's iconic style involves a process of free association and can be recognized for its flatness of form, dynamic lines, bold coloration, and refrain from painterly expression. In addition to finding inspiration in Mesoamerican art and artifacts, Wirsum has been greatly influenced by graphic comic book illustrations as well as toys made by his father, who worked as a machinist.

Art vocabulary

free association: the mental process by which one word or image may spontaneously suggest another without any apparent connection

symmetrical: made up of exactly similar parts; identical on both sides

TURN OVER FOR INSTRUCTIONS

MATERIALS

- 9x12 paper
- black marker
- colored pencil set
- scissors

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Start by placing the piece of paper on a table portrait style and fold the paper in half the long way (hotdog style).
2. Move the paper so it is in a horizontal position, with the fold along the bottom edge.
3. Write your name across the paper.
4. Use scissors to loosely cut around the top of the letters.
5. Recycle the paper scraps and unfold the paper. Notice that you have a unique shape that is symmetrical! This means that it looks the same on each side.
6. Use the marker to draw a creature, face, monster, or animal on your specially shaped paper. Take inspiration from your own name!
7. Once you have added details like eyes, arms, clothes, and anything else you want, use the colored pencils to add color.

Find video instructions at: www.mmoca.org/learn/for-kids

TRY THIS!

Draw your ideas in pencil first to see where you like the different parts of your creature

Do this project again if you have more paper at home, but try it with someone else's name, or another word you like. See how different letters change the shape

Practice using the colored pencils by coloring softly or pressing hard to get different effects

Visit MMoCA to see work by Karl Wirsum on view in the main galleries through October 11, 2020.

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