
31 Creative Prompts from Modern and Contemporary Artists with Dawline-Jane

Chapter 1 - 31 Creative Prompts from Modern and Contemporary Artists

Overview

(upbeat music) - My name is Dawline-Jane Oni-Eseleh, and I'm a multidisciplinary visual artist. Over the next month, we'll use different art methods and perspectives from throughout modern and contemporary art history as a jumping off point to inspire different ways of seeing and creating. I really like looking at artists that are making work today or very close to our living time frame, because it offers a perspective that is very current and relatable. And in choosing artists that are varied in their backgrounds, we get different and fresh perspectives on how and what art-making looks like. We'll be using very accessible art materials, as well as household objects and things that you can find on a daily walk. Each day I'll talk about a different artist and parts of their practice that inspired me. I encourage you to look up their work and see what resonates with you, from pointillism to pop art, and drawing to building sculptural forms, we'll explore a wide variety of materials and techniques. (upbeat music)

Day 1 - Materials

- We're gonna be using a wide variety of materials for this class. When thinking about what we're gonna use, I really wanted to go with things that would be affordable, and family friendly, and budget conscious. As an educator, it's really important to me that people are able to get the most out of an art material, and kind of have the benefit of the best of its attributes. And when you're starting out, it's really a lot better to have something that is more affordable, so that it's less precious. And by that, I mean, you're less likely to spend, you know, to really dive into something, because you're afraid it's gonna be too expensive. So, I tested out a bunch of things, and here are some materials that I came up with. First and foremost, these Canva Art Boards, these planar art boards by Canson, I think are really great, because like the title suggests, you can take them out and about. It's got a really kinda sturdy board, and they come in a wide variety of textures. So I have the canvas and the watercolor art board here, and the canvas has, as you'd expect, a canvas texture, whereas the watercolor board is better for wet media. So it'll be accepting of those materials. Also, what's really great is it's sturdy, it stays in its binding, and so it's something that you can constantly refer to without it getting wrinkled or anything like that. Next up, we have some palette paper. So we're going to be using different types of paint, and rather than having to rinse out a palette, I like to use this palette paper. You can also feel free to use something like a vegetable tray, if you wanna reuse some common materials, and of course there are weller palettes, but this open palette style is great because you can mix in between, you don't have to worry about different wells, and it's gray-toned so that you can see the true color. It's not gonna interfere with kind of like a white background, or another color background. Of course, you can also use something like a waxed paper as a palette, but I like these. We're gonna be using different types of paper. I have black card stock, some plain colored paper. Also fabric, there's felt, and other quilting scraps. You could use old clothing that you repurpose for these projects, and of course with that, you're gonna wanna have a nice sharp pair of scissors that can be multipurpose, and a utility knife always comes in handy. Moving on to color, the foundation of what we're gonna do. I chose some gouache paint. Reeves is a really great entry level brand, because the color really tends to pop. One of my favorite tricks is to make a color chart of all of my materials. First, I make it in spectral order, ROYGBIV. So

that's red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. And that's something that's really just helpful for my brain to organize things, so I'll swatch it out. This is really helpful because that way, if I'm in the middle of a piece that I have a specific color in mind, there are no surprises. So, I like to be able to refer back to these as visual notes. The pad that I used for this is by Case for Making. And so it's a kind of a watercolor grid pad that has these raised, letter-pressed squares that are automatically perfect for creating those dividing lines. And so I will make a swatch for each type of color that I have, when I have the opportunity. Next up, we have Cray-Pas, the original oil pastel. These come in a wide variety of brands, I went with Sakura, because again, they kind of really invented the game. And, the thing you have to remember about oil pastels is that they don't dry. So, if you're stacking artwork or something, you'll have to use either wax paper in between it, there are spray fixatives, but depending on whether or not you wanna go into that, just remember that they are prone to smudging. Next up, we have some basic tools, things like pencils, and I have just a regular graphite pencil, this one is a very soft 7B, which means it's a very dark line. And then contrasting that I have a mechanical pencil, the benefits of either or being the soft B, 7B pencil is good for shading, and then the mechanical pencil is great because you don't need a pencil sharpener, you always get a soft crisp line that's really good when you're doing a light sketch work. I have some STABILO black pens, which come in various widths. One's really fine, one is more of a bullet point, and when you're mixing up with doing work that contrast different line heaviness, these really come in handy to switch up. My absolute favorite tools, brush pen, especially those with a nylon tip. You can really recreate the heaviness of using a Sumi ink, but it all comes in one barrel, you just have to give it a little squeeze when you're working. Definitely something that is great for loosening up and doing quick gestural sketches. Similarly, the Pilot Fineliner, which is a very basic pen, but there's something about this tip that's very versatile, and very inexpensive, so I always carry one of these around when I'm doing sketching on the go. And I also have a classic Sharpie here. Pencil sharpener for that pencil, and two different types eraser. One is a Gum eraser, and one is a white vinyl eraser. You can play around with different things that you like about certain erasers. I really like the white vinyl because it is a very crisp, precise way of erasing. I have some glue here. The Elmers Purple glue is really great because you're able to see where you're laying down glue, which is easy to lose track of in the heat of the moment. Similarly, we have the washable glue stick that has purple and goes clear, very handy. And some tacky glue. This is really great for fabric and heavier objects that you need to dry really quickly, and really heavily. Next up, brushes. So, I have this painter's brush, because when I am doing sketch work with a pencil, and I need to erase, instead of erasing with my fingers, which can leave oil residue on the paper, I like to use a brush to clear away the eraser scraps, that way, if you're doing a water color, the oil on your finger won't create a resist. And sometimes, you never know, there could be things on your hands that also leave a residue and dirt mark that you don't want. So, this is good to kind of clear away that. And a variety of brushes. So, it's good to have brushes that go from a wider to a finer tip. I usually go with a softer hair or synthetic bristle that is not stiff. So unlike this, which is, I believe boar, this is sometimes sable, which comes from an animal, or you can get really great synthetic sable, that is usually a nylon. These are great for absorbency, so it holds water when you're brushing, that means you get a nice long stroke, and they're really great, I like them (laughs). This is called a cat's tongue, which is really kind of one of my favorite brushes. Not only does it have a cute name, but it's very versatile in terms of getting a nice straight line, or kind of getting into corners. Round brushes are great, again, because you can do something in a fine point, and then widen that out. So you play with line weight. Flat brushes, essentials for doing hard lines. And then, these teeny tinies are good for touch up work, getting into

tight corners, and kind of following a line. We'll be using rulers for certain parts when you're plotting out your basic framework of what you're doing. And these oil pastels are different from the previous oil pastels, because they're water soluble, these activate with water. So, once you fill in a line or create a shape, you can take a brush that's loaded with water, and go over it, and it almost becomes like a heavy watercolor or gouache. In this way, you get to play around with color mixing, and creating washes. You can also dip these pastels straight into the water. It results in a very heavy mark once you put that onto the paper. These Twistable crayons, which are a crayon with a little bit less mess. These are heavier than regular wax crayons, so you get less of a burr, meaning there are less kind of bits of crayon on to your piece. Have a color swatch for these. As you can see with these, when I'm making these swatches, I try to start off going heavy to a little bit lighter so that I can get a feel of what it might look like in different circumstances, and these create kind of a very rich color that is really nice. Next, we have the Crayola colored pencils, and this is kind of one of those things that I've noticed with a lot of, especially young artists, it can be challenging to lay down color and realize that you might've made a mistake or gone astray, or maybe just want to draw into it with positive and negative space, and so these erasable colored pencils are great because they erase very cleanly, unlike regular pencils. It can be a little bit controversial for artists, who a lot of people believe that you shouldn't make erasures, but you know, in the real world it happens, and so, sometimes it's a good to have something that you can kind of roll back on something that you made. So I made this watch for these, I'm gonna pull these out. There's a nice range of colors in this line. This is the 24. So, there are many different colors within a color family to choose from. Also here, very similar to a colored pencil, and these Twistable crayons, are these blocks. They're called Crayola Color Sticks, and these are kind of very solid and ergonomic in the hand, so it's comfortable for laying down big areas of color. So, it's less precise than a pencil, or even the Twistables crayons. With this, if you needed to have a sharp edge after it got a little dull, my suggestion would be to kind of rub it against a piece of fine sandpaper to recreate one of the sharper edges, but it's a really great tool for laying down color. And as you can see, in this swatch, that richness really comes through because you can just go in and get a line in. And these are part of the same set, so this would be, again, a 24 pack that I rearranged the colors for more brights, and then more subdued in spectral order. Last but not least, we have markers. We're going to be working with a few different projects that'll involve doing quick sketches, where you wanna get your color set, so these markers are great for laying down that sketch work. I almost forgot the tape. This is really helpful for setting down your paper to your surface. This is artist's tape, which is durable and has a little bit of tack, but it's not gonna leave a residue. So this is a really handy tool to have. I know this looks like a lot of materials, but what I wanted to show is the range of options within a budget price range. These are tools that are really good to have on hand so that you can experiment with a wide variety of different styles without breaking the bank.

Day 2 - Josef Albers - geometric abstraction

- Today we're gonna talk about color. Color is one of the most foundational parts of artmaking, so it's a really great place to start. There are different types of color families that we are going to look at. By color family I mean groupings of color that interact in certain ways. For example, we're all familiar with primary colors. Primary colors are the most basic colors. They can not be created by mixing other colors. Secondary colors are colors that you get when you mix primary colors together. For example, red and blue make purple. Yellow and red make orange. And blue and yellow make green. So, the primaries mix together to create secondary colors. One of the artists that

inspired me to think about this is Josef Albers. He was an artist that pioneered the idea of the interaction of color. What that means is different ways that colors relate. And I think there was a famous example, where there was a dress that looked one way in one light and another way in another light. And that's the interaction of color. So, that when you put green and red together you get something called a vibration. So these colors start to interact in a certain way. Today I'd like to experiment with making collages that play around with the different ways that colors interact. I am going to start with some primary colors. One thing that I like to do to begin is to create some even squares. I am using the back of a pad as my cutting surface. And that way it gets a new life. I'll start by stacking these, taking my ruler. And this is a very rough cut. And by that I mean I'm not gonna measure out to make sure these are even. I'm really just using my eyes. And I'm going to take an X-ACTO knife. So fingers are gonna be behind here. And I'll just take this and start cutting. Let's see, sometimes you have to do a second pass because you don't cut all the way. But I'm trying to create an even pressure without it being too hard so that the ruler doesn't slip. I'm gonna put some of these aside. And I'll start with these surfaces. And I'll lay them out, maybe, yeah, I'll let it go there. And before I start to glue things down I like to lay them out first and see how it works out. I'll start cutting these into strips. I'm really going just on thoughts and kind of zoning out. I'm not doing something that's representational, meaning I won't be making a picture that is easily recognized. Some of these artists, like Josef Albers, created artwork called geometric abstraction. And they were playing around with the idea that art didn't have to be a bowl of fruit or a picture of the king. It could be just about color and the way that it works together. So, I'm gonna start laying some of these shapes down and seeing how I feel about them. And I have some extra blue, so I'll cut out some more geometric shapes freehand. Maybe I will do a rectangle and use that rectangle to create large triangles. Keeping my finger firmly behind the knife. And in this I'm using white as a color as well. I'll do the same with the yellow. This primary color scheme reminds me a little bit of the '80s. Color also follows fashion as we all know. So sometimes green is in, sometimes purple is the color that we're going with. I also brought in some pastel primaries because those are going to add a different feeling to this piece. So I might experiment with how that looks. I'll start with a pink. And sometimes what's fun to do is to lay the lighter color over the white, so it's almost like a transparency, but not really. I think I'm ready to start gluing. I'm not gonna move my whole collage off. Because I don't know about you, but I get often a little confused and forget how things were laid out. So I'm gonna make sure everything is glued to the edges. I want to make sure I lay down all of the pieces that are sticking up. This is kind of a cool way to kind of zone out as you're laying down pieces. In the middle of making pieces I think it's sometimes really important to kind of step back, and squint, and see different things that you can add, see what's missing. I'd like to explore a little bit of the idea of some of the pastels. And I want to add a lighter blue. So this time around I'm gonna make some freehand circles or circle-like shapes, depending on how well you make circles freehand. And if you don't feel comfortable using an X-ACTO knife you can also use scissors. It's important to remember to try to economize the space that you're using, so no spot is wasted. I'm going to use this negative space and turn that into a shape. I'm gonna make sure I have glue all the way to the edge. I'm gonna use this to help stick down these other shapes. So maybe this guy goes there and creates another shape within a shape. To push for balance I like to place a color onto opposite ends. So first I went to the blue side, and then I'm balancing it out by going to the yellow side. And squinting, maybe I can add one more color, and that is the pastel yellow. And I have rectangles, and lines, and circles. I'm gonna go with some squares. I like to cut on the wrong side so that I don't make a mark on the surface of the paper. And to continue to create movement within

this I'm gonna think about strategically placing these so that it leads across the paper. Because when color is your subject and the interaction of it it's a good idea to create dynamic composition, something that leads the eye across the page. So the idea that these are kind of tumbling down appeals to me. Most of this is about the process of making and the exploration, and a little bit less about making something super perfect. And I can kind of fuss with this and go on and on. You can always add more later. Sometimes it's good to sit with something, let it breathe, let it simmer, and then see how you feel about it.

Day 3 - Frank Stella - geometric abstraction

- We're gonna look at color work and geometric abstraction, referencing the work of Frank Stella. Today's tools are gouache, a watercolor board, brushes, and a pencil. We are going to look at creating a picture using lines and geometric shapes. This is the type of project that can be really nice and meditative, as you choose different colors that will work together to create your piece. I'll start off by taking my ruler and mechanical pencil and creating some lines. I want these to be pretty straight, and one way I do that is just taking my ruler and measuring it against the bottom of my board and just starting from there. I think that what I'll do is go maybe half of that ruler spacing. So I'm gonna mark that out on my ruler so I'll know how to do that on my paper. So dividing that line in half, I'll keep working upwards. I'm trying to go really light on these lines because we're going to be adding paint. And this, even though this is an abstract piece, it naturally reminds me of the horizon because of the way that the lines are oriented. I like to get started on something and then kind of step back as I'm working. I work very intuitively. So depending on thoughts that I have while I'm building something, I'll think, "Oh, maybe I can add a little bit more lines. Maybe this can be thinner." And right now I'm stepping back and thinking that I want to have bigger spaces that aren't crowded with lines. So I'm continuing that, to create different shapes. So I have a big triangle, this kind of weird amorphous shape, which I think is really cool, and then smaller lines. And so I'm gonna let this sit and simmer for a second as I start to plan my colors. I have a color swatch that I created with the gouache paint, so that I have an idea of how it dries before I start to work. I put the colors in spectral order. Close enough. And then I added white to the colors in order to see how they lighten up. So this is my colors, and then the addition of white. Since it already is referencing something that's almost a landscape, I'm going to try and turn that on its ear. So I'm going to choose this greenish lemon yellow. I'm actually really obsessed with this lake blue, so I'm gonna put that in there. Maybe I'll put some green in as well because this lemon yellow has a greenish tint to it. Gouache is great because it's a type of color that can be used straight from the tube. It's almost like watercolor, but it is opaque. So it's going to have more coverage automatically than regular watercolor, which tends to be a little bit more transparent. One thing before I get started is I want to think about how I'm working. What I don't want is for my hand to drag across and smudge the colors. So I'm gonna start from the top and work my way down. I'm going to go with this line. I added a lot of water in there, so you'll see a variation of pure color and a little bit lighter. The next one, I'm going to use less to show that contrast in the smaller line. I wanna add some variation, so I'm going to darken this green by pulling some of the color out, and adding a touch of blue. I'm gonna use this for a thinner line over here on the side. I'll switch to a slightly larger brush to get this thicker line in here. And because there's so many greens in there, I'm gonna start to stick in my greenish yellow. Now I'm gonna step back and squint a little bit to see how these transitions work. And while that's drying, I'm gonna move on to this larger field and get this done, so that as everything else is being worked on, this will be drying. And I think for that, I'm going to add some

crimson, the opposite of green. I'm gonna pull out my biggest brush here. Get that nice and loaded up with paint. And you see I'm kind of shifting it and turning it in my hands, both sides, so that the brush is loaded evenly. And I'm gonna fill in this field. I like to hit the big open spaces first, where I can get nice and wide with my brushstroke. And then as I go in, slow it down. I could use a smaller brush to touch up these lines, but what I'm gonna do is use the very edge of my brush to fill it in. That's one of the great things about using different shaped brushes. With this, you can really go wide, but then also use the tip to fill in fine lines. While this is drying, I'm going to leave these and start to work on the center. Medium yellow is calling to me. Oh, that's ochre. How do I feel about that? Well, I'll leave that off to the side and then go with my medium yellow. So this is a small, square brush, a flat, that I can go wider with and also use to make very delicate and precise lines with. I like these types of projects because you can kind of get lost in color choices, and ideas, and just the shapes themselves. I often step back and kind of squint and think, "What's next?" And I think I might build some oranges out of the crimson and the warm yellow, to create a very dark orange. And I don't want it to bleed into one another, so I'll skip going right directly next to it until it dries up a little bit. I think I wanna go darker next time, so I'm going to continue on the red side that I mixed yellow into, and put that next to each other. And that's actually not bleeding too much because it's already started to dry. I kinda like the way that looks. And between these two, I'm going to mix this darker yellow with the lighter one. The idea that I'm developing is kind of a little gradient. Oh, yeah, that looks great. And on this side, I'm gonna go back to dark. So I already have mixes happening on my palette and I'm going to run with it and see how it works. This is fairly close to the original crimson, but it still has a touch of yellow in it. I wanna go darker still with this next transition into this darker red. So I'm gonna add a touch of the blue that I have already on my palette, and see what that does. It's important to remember too, that these are explorations of what the medium can do. So I wanna see what gouache does, but then I also want to see how these colors react with one another. Ooh, purple. And then I'll add more blue to this color that I mixed to take it even more into the purple zone. And now that that started to come together in a way that I didn't expect, what I will do as I step back and squint is turn it upside down. Turning something upside down literally changes the perspective, and so you start to see different relationships that you might not notice. As I was flipping this, I saw an arrow. So maybe instead of two separate colors, that might be one color. I'm gonna let that color dry, and then work from here down, and do this last. So now it's that ochre that was on my palette's time to shine. And there was a little bit of blue on my brush that just becomes part of the color story. I added a lot of water here at the top, and I'm gonna try and take advantage of that by seeing how far I can drag it down without reloading from my palette. This'll thin out the layer and help it dry a little bit quicker. This really changed the atmosphere. So what I think I'm gonna do is bring it back up to brights again by adding a little white. And just like with the other mixes, I'm going to do it as a gradient. So I'll start by adding a little touch of white and seeing how it feels to bring it up to a lighter pastel. The next color goes even lighter with more white, which also makes things a little bit more opaque. And as I was working, I started to notice this like funky space pyramid vibe. So I'm going to move this back here to fill in this space, to make some of the colors pop. I'm gonna go with pure black in here just to clean it up because there are so many different types of color. Cool, warm, and purple. (chuckles) So for this big space, I wanna make sure I get a nice big brush and fill in the space. And it just immediately made things a little bit more dramatic and bold. And it's easier, rather than reaching around, to physically turn your piece so that you can get to every crevice. I wanna make sure I go right to the edge on this and take out any white gaps. Now I'm going to go in with a smaller, back to my trusty flat brush, to do this smaller

area so that I can get more control and more precision. I'm widening the line that I originally created to cover the spots that were a little bit oopsie. So now I still have a palette full of color and I wanna make sure that I'm using some of these. So I think I'll add in some blue. And every time you start to see some drag marks where the color kind of starts to drag across your textured paper, it's a good idea to add just a touch of water so that it flows. And in my final two spots, to bring things together, I'm going to reference some of the greens. So I'll add a little bit of green into the blue and that'll kind of tie it together. And I'll round it out with the addition of yellow into this green, blue combination. I like this little thing. The blue is bleeding into this green, I'm not mad at that. And we've created a piece that uses geometric abstraction and interaction of color.

Day 4 - Nina Chanel Abney - pop art

- Now that we've explored color and geometric abstraction, let's take a look at some more figurative collage work. We're going to create some collages inspired by abstract expressionism, but kind of moving more towards pop and almost like popular culture inspired. So I have some colored paper pieces. These are all scraps and I like to repurpose my scraps, because there's always more life that can come from it. So after other projects I collect them in a Ziploc bag, so that I can use them for other pieces. This is inspired by a contemporary artist named Nina Chanel Abney. She works with work that talks a lot about race and culture and also news, current events, but in a playful and dynamic way. So I'm going to leave some of my abstracted shapes and create something that has figures in it. So I chose some colored paper with different skin tones, as well as my scraps. So let's get started. I'll start out by sketching some face shapes. And actually it's a good idea to stack these. I can do one shape and then cut through it, so that I can do multiples. So I'll lightly sketch a profile onto my piece. I want to maximize the use of the material. I'll just grab some scissors and cut through these three pieces. Now I have three faces in profile that are almost in conversation. I'm gonna put those there as I start to plan out some of the other layers of color. And again, I like to start laying out things before I glue. There are all sorts of shapes that you can create. It doesn't have to be a cut line. It can be something that's cut with your hands and torn to create action. And maybe I'll add a larger piece that I can layer color onto. I like the way this naturally creates a landscape, so I'm gonna go ahead and start gluing that down. And I start by placing it on the edge, so that it lines up, and then gluing it all the way down. Now I'm gonna put my kind of hills in here, which reminds me of my hometown. While that's placed there and I'm thinking about landscape I might add in the big, bright, orange sun. So although this is a figurative work, I'm going to add some more fantasy elements, so that it's still abstracted and poppy and alive. And when I'm creating a composition I like to add a color in three places, so that my end result becomes more unified. So I'm adding these orange pieces into the center on this edge here. Now I'm gonna look for some more fun pieces. Oh, I like this shape. Let's see. That kind of fits nicely over there. The scrap pile yields so many fun surprises. I like this lake blue. So I will put that in as a lake in my imaginary landscape. And in terms of pop culture, I think a lot about ecology in building this piece. So I want to reference my environment, some great memories, but almost surreal. Now I wanna think about adding some of my people. I think I'm gonna put this one here right here on top. And maybe this person here, since this so closely matches my own skin tone and this is so self-referential, I thought that might be nice to put myself into the landscape. And then finally, I'm gonna put this figure here. Now, as I said, this felt like a conversation, so maybe I'll add some speech bubbles in. And I've been doing free-hand cutting, but I think that I will draw this one on and I'll kind of use the back of the paper. And that kind of works. So what I'm gonna do is take advantage of already having cut this

piece and I'm going to use it as a template. And I'm gonna layer this with another color, so that I cut up these two at one time and add to my three person conversation. Ready to glue those down. Three people in dialogue. So as I take a little distance and look at this piece I see a lot of secondary colors, which is great if that's the way I wanna go, but I think that I want to make sure that all of the colors are represented. So I'm going to look for a couple more primaries. So we got blue, we got red. I need maybe some yellow. Let's see what the scrap pile yields. Let's, oh, that's the same color. I'm gonna use it anyway for my rule of threes. So I'm going to place this a couple more places to add a little balance to the composition and maybe some jagged lines. Sometimes I'll use the back of my finger, so that my front fingers don't get too sticky. Put this guy upside down here. I'm gonna add a darker color. I think I'll cut some circles. I'm gonna turn this circle into a spiral by just following that curve, so that it really pops. When you're making a collage it doesn't have to be super flat and 2D. You can let it leap off the page if you'd like. This little spring. And some bright red squares, And there we have a fun and funky collage that uses the figure and talks to color and pop imagery.

Day 5 - Faith Ringgold - narrative textile art butterfly

- Today, we're going to draw inspiration from contemporary artist, Faith Ringgold. She creates story quotes that speak about her life and experience. Part of my creative practice is walking around my neighborhood and taking photographs that I use for reference in my own work. This gives me a stronger connection to some of the things that I create. So I have a butterfly picture. That was one of those once in a lifetime takes when I was out in my walk. And I am going to use this to create a piece of fabric artwork. So I have selected some fabrics that mirror some of the texture and color that I see in this photograph. Just like with other collages, I will cut shapes and lay them down in a way that mirrors what we see here. First step is to work on the butterfly wing. I like these lines because it very closely mirrors the lines in the wing. So I lay this aside for a second and using my trusty table saving recycled piece of cardboard, I'm going to lay this down, really examine the shape of the wing and sketch that out on this piece of fabric. Don't worry about using a dark colored marker to sketch out the shape. You could always cut on the inside of the line so that you don't work that into your piece. Because this isn't symmetrical, I am not going to lay this on, I'm going to try my best to look at the different shaped wings and sketch those in separately. Now that I have the shapes sketched out, I am going to cut them and do a little test avoiding that black line. It's a good idea to have a separate pair of scissors for your fabric and paper so that they stay sharp when you're doing fabric work. I'm going to hold these scraps aside 'cause I never know what I'm going to use them for. And looking at my image, I'll place this on this brown felt. I chose brown because of some of the darker shadows in my source image, but you can go lighter. Green might also be fun. Those look pretty good. I am going to use some of this polka dark fabric as the outside of my wing. So I'll lay this template over and just cut it a little bit larger for the outline of the butterfly wing. I'm going to take this a step further and follow this line. So I'll cut this apart and separate them just a little bit so that I start to see an echo of that vein. I'm not a hundred percent sure butterfly anatomy but I think that's kind of where their two wings meet. Here we are, okay. Butterfly, putting this scrap here. And it's almost as if this negative space really echoes the body. So maybe what I will do to accentuate that is get some green and start building some of the leaves around it. I'm going to cut out many leaf shapes at a time by folding layers of fabric into some leafy shapes. This is how a butterfly story is coming together pretty quickly. I put these aside in case I need to add them in later. There's lots of grass in here. And I think I will add in a shape that suggests the butterfly's body using some of this. The more I spend time with this picture the more I appreciate some of these

textures, I'm really dig in this for right here. Let's stick that in and in the head and using this in scraps if I can cut this in half to create antennae. Where'd the head go, oh, it stuck to my finger. Here we go, move this little one up. I can always trim some of the excess that comes off. So now that I've gotten that set, I'm going to start tacking some of this down as I work on the flowers to round it out. So I'm going to get my tacky glue. This stuff is great. It dries with a nice heavy bond and I'm just going to do a little dab so that it's not super soggy. If I need to move anything around this will make it easier to pull up. Once it's all set. If I were making a full quilt I could always use a simple embroidery stitch over the edges to create a fuller composition. This would also be great to use with older fabric, sew clothes or even pieces of existing quilts that have lived their life and are no longer usable so that their story can continue. What I like about this glue is that it's so heavy that it really stays put so you don't have to worry about wet glue, running all over the place, which is really great if you're doing this in groups. And it's the kind of activity that you can do with both younger and older people. So I'm going to pull up the stray thread, maybe give it a little trim. And now that I have that tacked down in a place so that it doesn't shift, I am going to add some other final details like this beautiful red flower that this butterfly is chopping on. Oh, wow! It's kind of matches my shirt right now. Okay, so going to create some pedals, and even though this is floral fabric, I could just like slap it on there. It's kind of fun to be a little bit cheeky using flowers to create flowers. So I'm going to cut these into pedals. Maybe just a couple more fully formed flower chips. I see something kind of resembling a cup shape. So that's what I'm going to cut out. And as always, what I'll do is fold some of these in half so that I can get multiple cuts at a time. I believe that will fit nicely on there. So I'm going to use that as my template. So now we're making sure that our friend is well fed. So here we have a little fabric collage that tells a story of a butterfly's lunch.

Day 6 - Lorna Simpson - surrealistic mixed media peacock

- Today we're going to add some mixed media elements into our collage work to create surrealistic dreamlike imagery. As I referenced earlier, I like to use images that I take myself. So this peacock picture is actually something that I took at a local park that was overrun with these beautiful birds. I am going to use this image as the base of today's collage work. I wanna get as close as possible, so I'm using an X-Acto knife. So now I've freed my peacock. I have cut around most of these. I didn't wanna get too close in when I was pulling it free so that some of these fine details didn't break apart. But now that I've gotten the chunkiest stuff out, I'm gonna go in and clean it up a little bit. I have a pretty hard edge here, so I'm just cleaning. I'm softening that up. I was inspired by contemporary artist Lorna Simpson, who uses preexisting photographic and magazine pieces mixed with watercolor to create this mix of realism and dreamy, flowing watercolor scapes in her work. Now that I have my peacock, I am going to go ahead and set this down with a glue stick. And I'm gonna bring this over to the edge because this whole part is going to be embellished with gouache effect. So now that I have my peacock glued down firmly, I'm gonna start thinking about the colors that I'm using. I glued this down to the Canson Plein Air Watercolor Board because I'll be able to create some nice flowing effects, and it's sturdy and won't buckle up. So it won't lift and turn as I'm painting. I like using gouache because I can play around with how dense it is. So some of the opacity will come through, and if I add more water, I can make it lighter. One good thing to remember, sometimes, if you haven't opened up a tube of watercolor or gouache is that sometimes, the binder, which is the kind of material that helps hold the color together, and the pigment will separate. So you wanna give the tube a little knead, make sure that cap is firmly on so that you don't have a gooey surprise. But you wanna try and mix it together so that the binder doesn't come out, which

will be a clear liquid. And then what that will do is dry out your tubes a little bit more quickly. So, I am adding on to the beauty that is this peacock's tail. So I'm adding a little green. And remember, with paint, you can always add more to your palette, but you can't scoop it back. So I try to be a little bit conservative when putting the tube color on the palette, especially if we're thinking about economy. And this is excellent because it kind of shows you what I was talking about. That's that clear binder, which is usually gum arabic. Sometimes it's honey. And so you wanna kind of knead that tube beforehand. So gonna knead it, and with the next pass, it should be mostly color. It's not terrible. I just need to remember to mix it up really nicely so that those two elements of binder and pigment are integrated. So as I add these dreamlike, flowing elements to my piece, I'm not 100% concerned with realism. So I'm not exactly going to mirror this peacock's tail. I'm going to take that beautiful element and expand upon it. So one thing that sticks out about peacocks is just how really true to themselves they are. They don't care if they look like they're showboating. They're just doing their thing. So I'm gonna exaggerate that. And I'm adding a lot of water because what I want my result to be is not so much sharp, but I really want it to bleed. So I'll show you a little example. I really wetted down this line here. If I add that, you see how it spreads? I'll do it again. Really, with these boards, you can really be generous with the amount of water that you're using because it's not gonna bow and buckle. So I'm adding just pure water lines, and when I introduce color, it immediately starts spreading down the line and blending with some of the other colors. And then there are these wonderful shapes that look like eyes. So I'm gonna get really loose with my brush work and let one thing flow into another, just like a dream. Based on reality, but a little extra. Now I'm mixing that emerald green that had separated from its binder. If I didn't mix it and I painted it on, I might have some spots that don't necessarily dry correctly. So I wanna make sure that is well integrated. And I chose a limited color palette so that when they mix, it won't turn out muddy. It's just kind of a simple pure way, and that's kind of a cool thing that's happening there. There's water coming in, it's diluting some of the pigment and just getting really fun and weird and taking on a life of its own and even crossing the paper a little bit. And because I don't want my peacock floating in outer space, I'm just gonna add a little hint of ground that mirrors those beautiful feathers in back. And there we have a very simple and loose way of going with the flow.

Day 7 - Wangechi Mutu - surrealistic collage

- We're gonna take surrealism one step further by creating out of this world imagery that features a human form. Let's start by gathering our source materials. It's a good idea to flip through magazines and find different faces. I also included some of my handy self-made source material so that I can add a more personal element into this. This project is inspired by contemporary artist Wangechi Mutu, who often uses forms of people that are very larger than life, some might say a little bit spooky. They tend to exaggerate different features of people, mismatched eyes, long hair that swirls and curls. So in looking for some of these source images, I selected different things that would kind of become unsettling when matched together. I'm gonna start by cutting out some of the spaces. They do not have to be super exact cuts. I'm gonna then borrow and marry different elements. And as always, I like to start right in with placing objects down and seeing how I feel about the placements before I start gluing. It's kind of interesting to take apart faces in this way. But the key to this project is to look at various textures and tones, and also being a little bit unsettling in your choices. It might also be fun to create your own poses and use your own work as a source image for these faces. In looking through the images of these models' faces, I'm looking for features that change directions, that have different scale, that I can kind of place on the figure. So I'm gonna

experiment by adding this mouth. Already looks a little sinister, and we have a lot of dark in there, so I'm going to add some more color and texture to really kind of play around with different shapes inside of this. Working this way is an interesting play on the idea of high fashion. You're taking something that is already pretty conceptual and turning it into something that's almost creepy in its juxtapositions. So, as I look at this, I think it might be a good idea to start gluing things down. I don't want to get too far into it and then have to glue it down and lose some of the placements and movements that I've started, so I'll get my trusty friend, the glue stick. This type of exercise is really great because it forces you to look at things in a different way and to deconstruct and reconstruct images. It's actually fun when things move around, because then you start to see new possibilities. I might even leave this mouth hanging out on the side here. I like it so much. Just the simple addition of some of these lighter textural elements brightened up the composition. So I'm gonna continue to push that further, and I'll grab this. I'll take advantage of some of these natural cuts that are inside. Whenever I see a straight edge like this, I like to put it against a straight edge in the piece. So it'll fit there. I don't want to cover my mouth, so I'm gonna cut this here. Even though sometimes these collages can look haphazard, there's a certain process to thoughtfully considering where each piece will go as you're building. And for the board, I'm continuing to use the watercolor board. There's also a mixed media board that you can use, but I like the fact that these are all the same size, so I could easily photograph them or scan them to play around with digitally, or just have to look back on. They'll all store together. And I didn't even use all of my fun pieces. Let's see, I'm gonna continue to add more texture. I'm again taking advantage of some of the natural edges that are created, and I'll cut out this matching piece on this side so that I can use this texture because I really like it. I still want to play around with her face and hair, and maybe instead of hair, I will use more of this spongy texture that I used, a sponge, and create hair with it. I tried to imagine what the shape of the head was like, and so I'll put that hat, looks a little cheesy. This red is calling to me, so I'm gonna add this in as a pop of color. And I don't get too fussy if things rip while I'm cutting and gluing, it just adds to the texture of the overall piece, and it's actually really not that noticeable. And there we have a creepy little collage that's surreal and dreamy.

Day 8 - Kara Walker - paper silhouettes

- We're gonna strip collaging down to its barest elements, using black and white, inspired by the artwork and silhouettes of Kara Walker. We are going to take a look at creating some silhouettes using source imagery that I've created. Any time that you're out and about is a great time to collect images for work. I shot this at a concert, so it was a very far distance, but I wanted to capture the imagery of this performer in motion. And so, at various times, I tried to capture her motion. I'm gonna use this motion to create silhouettes for our final piece. We're stripping down the basic elements of the human form, and I'll start by cutting these forms out. These will act as our templates for creating silhouettes. And I switch between using an X-Acto knife and scissors. Honestly, it's about what you're most comfortable with. Sometimes it's easier for me to use an X-Acto knife like a pen, and sometimes it's more simple to dive right in with scissors, especially when there are no intricate cuts to be made. And in my classic economizing way, as I lay these down, I'm going to try and get as many forms on one sheet of paper as possible, so I don't have a lot of extra paper. I'm gonna extend this out to the next page, place this figure here, close to the edge, so I get all this paper to work with at a later time, and start using these as templates. For the first one, I'm gonna bring it as close to the edge as is comfortable, put that to the side for a moment, and then take a white pencil, and trace it. The obvious benefit of this being that it shows up very clearly, and we can

always either cut over the line, so the white doesn't show, or just reverse it on the other side. So that's cutting it really close. To me, that's super satisfying. Have these two shapes, and I'm going to move on to the last one, bringing it right to the edge so that I can use the rest of this paper. And now it's time to cut. I'm gonna refer back to my original source as I cut this out. The fact that motion blurs the figure a little bit makes this a little bit thicker than life, but we can always take a look and compare the two, and see if there's anything we need to cut. As I lay one on top of the other, I see if there's any decisions I can make to clean it up. I think I might go in and make some of this stuff a little bit more precise. It's interesting to note, once we cut down these silhouettes, how the forms are so amorphous. There's a clear shape when you were looking at the photograph, but once you're stripping down the elements, it becomes more abstracted. Stripping these images to their barest black and white elements forces you to take a look at how foreshortened things could be, which really helps with drawing. So, sometimes when you're drawing what you see, you would probably be tempted to make this a lot longer, when it actuality, it's very foreshortened, because it's in the back. I'm gonna put these dancers off to the side here, and then start to think about placing them on my paper. I flipped these around because there are still some white showing. And I wanna start playing around with how these interact. I'll probably put that up there. Gonna grab my glue stick, and start laying things down. These silhouettes are a great way of exploring positive and negative space, and motion.

Day 9 - Henry Taylor - loose, figurative painting

- Today, we're gonna get into some loose, gestural figure work inspired by California artist, Henry Taylor. We are going to start by using our Canson Plein Air board. I chose the canvas texture for this, so that it will closely mirror a stretched canvas. We're also gonna use our Portfolio water soluble oil pastels. These are great, because not only can you draw with them, but then you can use water to activate them and create a flow. I have a source image that has some really great diagonal lines, as well as two figures, actually three figures, that kind of gets smaller as we go into our horizon point. To get started I'm gonna look at my source image and I really want to get loose and honor this way that the child is standing, this pose of looking into the horizon. I'm going to start with the horizon point to establish where that is. And I'm gonna go right in with a pastel and lay that in. I'm just getting a close approximation of what that looks like. I'm laying these colors right next to each other. I'm getting some of the atmosphere in first and I'll add that figure in a little bit later. For now I want to establish the environment. You don't have to worry about filling in lines with these, because we are going to go in with water. And because this is a loose study, I'm really not concerned with perfection. When I talk about working loosely what I'm looking at is the overall blocks of color in the painting. Instead of the horizon starting in the center, it's kind of in this top third, if we break it into one, two, three places. So I established the horizon and this gradient from brown to blue, the sandbar, and then I went back into the sky. Now that I have that set I'm going to start looking at the figure, starting from his hair. I'm doing an overall gesture of the way he's standing. He's not quite turned fully, so I'm trying to get that twist, the idea of a twist in there. And I will most likely go in with my brush once I set the water in and clean up some of the areas. One of the great things about working on these boards is you'll see that you can pull up color, because it's not as absorbent as a watercolor board. It's pre-primed, so that means you don't have to add gesso to this, it's ready to start painting. As you'll see, I've laid my figure in, and now I'm going to add the water. I'm gonna choose some of the lighter values that are reflected by the sky and add darker values as I see fit once I have added our water. I'll choose a sky blue. And I'm going to kind of

imitate some of the wave patterns, so I don't have to work so hard once I start to use brushes and water. And it's a good idea to always reference your picture, so that you're keeping it pretty authentic. But remember, this isn't the type of project that should be fussed over. Our goal is to really loosen ourselves up and pay attention to some of the movements that are happening. And one thing I'm noticing is there's a little bit of a lean, so I'm going to correct this here by adding color back in to straighten it out. Now, it's my favorite part. I'm gonna grab a brush and I think that for this large patch of sky I'm going to use a larger flat bristle brush. So I'm gonna dip it in water, 'cause it's a little bit drier than our synthetic hair brushes. And I'm going to dab that out on a paper towel. And now I'm gonna go in and really fill in some of that sky. This sky only has one cloud, so I'm trying to get this to be as flat as possible. And I'm going in one direction instead of back and forth. This board really takes a beating, so you can almost dig into it and it's not going to come apart. And I'm taking it all the way to the horizon. So you saw, I had left a white gap between the blue and the black point. I'm gonna blend this in loosely where the earth meets the sky. Because this board is so durable, I'm going to be able to pull out some of the blue. So just by dipping my brush into water, drying it off a little bit, I'm gonna go in and pull out some of that white for the cloud. I'm gonna go in and work on some of this water, so that when I want to continue to work on my figures, this'll be somewhat dry. One of the things you'll find about working with a bristle brush is because it's natural hair it has a tendency to shed sometimes, so you'll have some bristles in there. You can pull them out. But we're not going to fuss too much. Using a larger brush rather than a smaller brush really forces you to get bolder with your movements and less precious. You might hear artists talk a lot about being precious. And what that simply means, at least to me, is getting too specific about work, holding it too closely, and being afraid to take bold moves. And so we're just gonna barrel through it. And I'm working off the page to help take some of these bristles out. I'm gonna give this larger brush a rest. Go in with some of the smaller, finer details. And I'm gonna continue on with another flat. This softer synthetic flat tends to be a little bit more flexible. So you're getting a softer blend rather than the brushy kind of thick stroke of the bristle brush. So this is good for softening out details. Gonna take a look back at my picture. So that's laid in and I'm going to let that dry a little bit, so that we can continue to add the figure. And if it's still a little wet I can know it's blot with a piece of paper towel. Now to get into the primary figure. I'm taking a moment to really look at my source photograph before I start in. And I'm following the movement that's happening in the drape of his sweatshirt. And while that's setting a little bit, I'm gonna go in and add some of those darker waves I was talking about. I think I'm gonna start with a middle gray and then move on to a darker color, but I'm gonna catch some of these highlights. And you wanna make sure that you're carrying this through, because the figure is really only standing in one part, so the rest should be a somewhat consistent looking line. I'm gonna grab my big bristle again, dry it out a bit, and then go in with those waves and try to drag them across. And since this is the same water I'm gonna add in some of that gray as well here to differentiate it from the sky. One of the cool things about these oil pastels is you can dip them directly into your water and it gets a nice dark tone. So I'm gonna do that into my water jar and add some of these rocks. And again, I'm kind of just hinting at the different rocks. And every time it starts to drag and not bleed together I'm going in and adding more water. That needs a darker mid-tone, so I'm gonna go in with this brown. To finish it off I'm gonna go back in with a brush that's a little drier and experiment with pulling out some more highlights. Adding darker. And actually there's a little bird in the sky that I'm gonna pull out. Trying to get at some of these hair highlights. We can tell that the sun is coming in from this direction, because of that bright highlight there. I'm adding water to this to reactivate it and then I'm going to use a dry flat brush to

pull some of that color out. See if I can dry it up a little bit more. There we go. I'm gonna use my flat brush directly onto the pastel to pull up some color, getting it nice and saturated, so it's not too watery. And I'm going to put that figure in there. Just gonna go a little bit darker by mixing in some black. And then we have an even smaller figure there, so I'm gonna dot them in with the remainder of the black on my brush. And there we have a very simple, quick, and loose figure study.

Day 10 - Georgia O'Keeffe - abstract painting

- Artist Georgia O'Keeffe is famous for her closeups of natural objects like flowers and skulls. Today we're going to be inspired by her work and do some closeups of flowers from my neighborhood. For today's project we are going to use our Plein Air canvas board. We're gonna use Cray-Pas and a source photo. I chose a photo from one of my neighborhood walks. This lily was in bloom and it was completely beautiful. So I cropped out some of the extra details and really focused on the center for this particular exercise. I also have some paper towels here. That is going to be our tool instead of a brush to smudge our drawing. It's important that you try to avoid using your fingers. You really don't want to have oily finger residue. No matter how much you wash your hands, everyone has a little bit of oil on their fingers. In your final work that interferes with the longevity of your piece. And so it'll start to yellow and really show its age sooner rather than later. I am going to start by blocking out some of the shapes that I see in my source photo. We have some green leaves poking through on this background. So I'm actually going to use green as the color for sketching this out. So I'll take this lighter green, 'cause it will blend in a little bit more easily with the center. My source image starts from a central point and radiates out, but it's not in the center of the page. It's a little bit off to the side, so that's where my starting point is going to be. I'm looking at the base of the flower, but then I'm extending out the petals, very loosely, just trying to get the overall shape. And then bringing this right to the edge of the page. Next up, I'm going to go in with some of the pink that I see in the flower, just to establish where that some of the leaves overlap. Again, I'm following the outline of some of the petals. And maybe noting where the color starts to change from white to deep fuchsia. And I'm being very loose and gestural with my mark-making. I like to go from light to dark when I'm coloring things in, because it's easier to add colors to make it darker than it is to pull it off, to make it lighter. And I'm gonna avoid using white, instead going with the white of the paper. And I'm gonna pick up my green again and go into a little bit greater detail with some of these petals. Now that I have that in, I'm gonna take a look and see if there's anything else I can add to establish before I start blending. I'm gonna go with these little pollen spikes here, and just block those in. Because I plan on smudging, I'm really just keeping it loose and open rather than filling them in. This is kind of more over here. And then we have this stamen here. So I'm going to outline that lightly in a darker brown and then hint at the shape. Next up, I'm gonna start blending. I'm going to follow the direction that I see the plant moving in, always radiating out from the center here. And after I'm done blending I'll see how many details I'd like to add. But let's see, just gonna ball this up and just start pulling it out. And you see that color is really rich and travels far. So there's really no need to overwork it when you're blocking out the preliminary pieces because you don't want to start with an overworked piece. And I'm not super worried about creating sharp edges by this petal, because I'm gonna fill the darker color in after I'm done and that will most likely cover that petal. So I'm always radiating out. (paper scratching) It's good to stop every once in a while and squint your eyes. See what's blending together and refer back to your reference photo. In looking at that, I had the idea that I was going to start hinting at some of these pieces here. So I'm bringing the green to where it almost comes right around it. And now it's time to add a few of these

darker pieces. It's actually a purple. So I'm going to blend a hint of blue in with the existing pink color. And I'm gonna sneak a peek at how that worked by using another piece of towel to blend them together. So I blended them both with the crayon itself and now I'm going back in with a paper towel. Could use a little bit more pink. And now a little actual purple to round it out. The beauty of Georgia O'Keeffe's work is that it comes right off of the page. So that's a little bit of the action that I'm trying to reproduce, bringing things out to the edge. And it's okay to add unexpected colors into shadows instead of black. Things like a deep purple or blue add depth to the piece without overwhelming it. (paper scratching) Now to make this pop, I'm gonna start adding in some of the darker areas, and I'm gonna start with this green. I'm keeping it really loose and adding little pops of green, always checking my source photo. I'm gonna blend this together. I really want to make sure that I am noting that this is an active background, so there are leaves underneath. And so I'm leaving it, again, very loose and open, and radiating out from the center. (paper scratching) I'm gonna add a touch of brown to deepen in some of these shadows, but very lightly, because I don't want to overwhelm it. I'm just kind of slowly building. The idea is to really have these petals pop out at you. Now I'm just going in and softening up some of those stems. I missed one tiny little piece of leaf separation. I want very little white space to show where the leaves are. And that helps to bring the white up to the surface of your picture. I'm cleaning up those remaining parts that I added. And there we have our closeup of a flower inspired by Georgia O'Keeffe.

Day 11 - Wayne Thiebaud - figurative pop painted lemons

- Today's subject matter is one of my personal favorites, food. We're gonna look at the work of artist Wayne Thiebaud and use that as our jumping point for today's prompt. For our materials today we're going to use a canvas board, water soluble oil pastels and a source photo. I also have some brushes and a trusty jar of water. I'm gonna start by blocking out these forms. I'm loosely getting the form down and I'm not super concerned about these little burrs that are sticking up from my pastel. I'm going to integrate that once I start to add water. Next I'm gonna go in and add kind of a touch of green because these aren't bright yellow lemons. I'm just kinda loosely going in section by section. The idea with these sketches is really just to get the impression. So I'm going really loosely and very quickly when building out these shapes and I'm going to go in and add in some yellow so that those two colors will blend together. One important concept from Wayne Thiebaud's work is his use of shadows. So we have some very distinct shadows in these lemon slices. I'm going to go and add these in first as gray and then that darker wedge there following the shape of the lemon. And I'm not filling them all the way because the water is gonna do that job and I'll add a hint of shadow. This is a little purple. Now the fun part. I'm gonna grab a flat kind of stiff bristle brush, get it nice and loaded up with water and I'm just gonna start filling in some of those spaces. Really going in the direction of the fruit skin. I'm moving quickly, keeping it loose. Not blending all the way so that we can keep that lightness and highlight. And adding water when it starts to drag a little bit. And I'm always looking back at my reference photo, making sure that I'm staying fairly close to the source. For the shadows I'm going to choose a stiffer brush, my big bristle. I'm dabbing it off on a paper towel so it's not too wet. And then I'm scrubbing in those shadows. I'm keeping the pressure fairly light on this. I don't want the bristles to spread out and interrupt the work that I did on the lemons so I'm using the edge of the brush. And then I'll take my smaller flat and go in a little more. I'm gonna take this brush and rub it along the gray pastel to pick up a little bit more color. And that's our quick lemon study inspired by Wayne Thiebaud.

Day 12 - Yayoi Kusama - pointillism persimmons

- Today we're gonna take a look at the work of Yayoi Kusama who uses dots in her images to create fantastical works of art. Our materials for this prompt will be a watercolor board, some reference pictures. I'm going to go with a still-life type of scene. So I took some photographs of some persimmons from my friend's yard, and this is gonna be a mixed media work. So we have some regular drawing markers. We have one of these nylon brush tips that I absolutely love. We have a little gouache, and all-purpose paint. And for our actual mark making, we're going to be using corks to create dots. And we're gonna fill in with a brush. I'm gonna start by drawing out some of these persimmon shapes. And what I wanna do is really get a nice round outline of the shape. I'm gonna put this big one right in the center. I'm creating a composition that leads the viewer right across the page. I want it to be dynamic. I'm gonna let that sit for a little bit, and I'm gonna go in with the ultramarine gouache and fill in the background. I know I need a lotta paint, so I'm gonna put a healthy, maybe quarter size to start. And since I wanna fill in a large area, I'm gonna go right in with this big flat brush, get nice and loaded up with paint and then just start working. Taking it right up to the edge. I'm really filling in the void that these would otherwise be floating in by adding this blue. Yayoi's work is very rich and colorful and pop inspired, as well as some nods to pointillism, which is a type of artwork where people just use dots instead of brushstrokes. And you can turn the brush on its side to fill in these tighter areas. I'm gonna go in and start adding some dots into the body of the fruit. I like persimmons because they have these soft, round juicy parts and I think that dots are going to really add to the circularness of these fruits. I'm going to go in and add some circles. There are a couple of ways that we're going to do this. You can do some regular circles and dots. And I'm playing with scale using larger and smaller dots. To push that a little bit further, I'm going to take some of this paint and use a cork to create other circles. We're going to fill in all of these little spaces. I've completed all of the orange and added green into the blossom and part of the persimmon. And now that the background is dry, I want to add some more highlights to continue along with the dot theme. So I think I'm gonna add a little bit of white to bring unity to the whole composition. I'm gonna clean off one of these corks and use the larger circle for my background. The beauty of this is that you can just kind of re-align stuff if it's too light. So I'm just lining up the cork with some of the other dots if I wanna bring them forward. But I think it's fun to have them coming out with different weights. And I'm gonna have some of these dots going off the page. And our finished study adds some pop to pointillism.

Day 13 - Yvonne Audette - abstract expressionism

- We're gonna look at the work of the abstract expressionists. Abstract expressionism was a movement of art that came from pure abstraction and started to look at movement and music as its inspiration. There's a lot of layering and colors and shapes that are inspired by different sounds. Different types of music create different types of feelings. There are songs that are very dark and moody. There are songs that are bright and upbeat. We're gonna listen to some music and see what types of feelings it inspires within us. What do you notice with the tempo changes? What colors are you visualizing? Let's find out. (gentle piano music) (upbeat inspirational music) (gentle piano music) (upbeat inspirational music) That song was called "Born to Be Epic" which was very true to title. There were crescendos and uplifts. That was really fun to do. I started out with some of the lower and slower parts where I started to make these marks. And then you'll notice some builds. So there were some swirly moments and also things that started to come down a little bit. And then there were also parts of this song that kind of ended abruptly. So you'll see where those marks

dropped. Overall, the colors that I chose were very bright and light and just uplifting. There were no dark moments of that song. Really just dramatic moments that you'll see noted in some of those other colors. This project was inspired by contemporary abstract painter Yvonne Audette. I love the way that she uses multilayered elements to create active and expressive pieces. You can choose any type of music that you would like to create your own abstract expressionist work.

Day 14 - Hung Liu - figurative painting self portrait

- In my own creative practice, I use a lot of personal photo references including family albums, to talk about history and memory. That's why I'm so inspired by Bay Area artist Hung Liu's painting. She activates this space using drips and other memory laden colors to create powerful works of art. For this project, I'm going to use a self portrait as my reference picture, a canvas panel so that we can use that rich canvas texture, some water soluble oil pastels, my palette, assorted brushes and a spray bottle to create controlled drips. First, I start out by sketching out the face in a color that uses the highlights. I always like to build up from lighter to darker parts. And so I start by doing a basic sketch of the face. If you create some stray lines that don't feel like how you want the final painting to be, don't worry about it. The great thing about these panels is the seal really allows you to continue to lift things up, especially when using these pastels. So you don't have to worry about having something permanently down until you're ready. And I will add in my glasses a little bit later. I'm not gonna work it into the face. I wanna make sure that anatomically, my eyes are in the right spot. And sometimes the glasses can kind of cover that, at least for me. Next I'm hinting in some darker values. Just a few touches here and there. I'm constantly referring back to my source image to keep it authentic. Now that I've blocked that in, I'm going to take a flat brush. This is a smaller one and I'm gonna start working these lines together. I'm working very gesturally. So that's quick blocking work doing some of the extra work that we started when we were drawing. In a face, there is never just one color. You're looking at undertones. You might hear words like warm or cool applied to things like makeup. And there are undertones in your face that are warm and cool. So sometimes you might have a golden complexion. Sometimes it goes more towards olive and sometimes it's pink. It really all depends. So those are things you're gonna reference as you put in your highlights and lowlights. There's something special about every face. Little wrinkles and birthmarks. The way the eyes are set in the head is unique for everyone. So when you're making a likeness, it's important to take a look at some of those special features. Next I'm going to add in the hair. I'm going to take my brush and working along the same lines that I built up by drawing, I'm gonna follow those with my paintbrush and start to add a hint of the beads by creating some rounded shapes. The idea with this is not necessarily to create a perfect likeness. I'm creating something that's fixed in time. A memory, an impression. My shoulder is right here by my mouth. And I'm gonna fill that in there. I'm noticing where things meet and looking at wrinkles in my shirt. Next, I'll add in some of these golden beads. And I'll do one pass of a fine brush. This time I'm loading it up with a lot of water so that it gets nice and wet. See a lot of middle values still in my face. I'm gonna start filling those in with a darker color. This is a little bit dull. So I'm using my brush and I'm going to draw in the darkness around my eyes, my eyebrows and you want to avoid doing a straight line. These are hairs, so dab them in in the direction that they grow. Now that that is set, I'm gonna go in with some additional color in the shirt. So I did the wrinkly parts and I'm just creating a brief hint of this shirt color. I didn't go all the way to the bottom because here we're going to do a fun part. I'm gonna spray this with water. Let it moisten a little bit. And then move it around to try to get some drips and bleeds going. I'm gonna force that along a little bit, by using the brush to blend

and move the color. You're gonna get this extra soggy, get those drips moving. I'm gonna add more water to the top so that where my braids are, it really starts to bleed and then let that drip a little bit. I'm going to take the pastels and start adding in my glasses. Little bit extra water because I really want these drips to happen. Tilting it just a little bit and seeing what I can make. Ooh, there we go. And just like that we have a drippy self portrait that connotes memory and the passage of time.

Day 15 - Makeda Bizuneh - patterns, abstraction

- Artists will often use patterns in their work. Thinking about the way that those are structured is one of the first steps to creating a whole composition. Artists like Makeda Bizuneh create different worlds within their paintings. Today we are going to look at creating a pattern using the image of our own homes. For this project, we'll be using a watercolor board, acrylic paint in a very small color family, I chose greens and blues, which are some of my favorite colors, an assortment of brushes, we're keeping these small, so some rounds and flats in size two or four, of course, some water, and paper towels for our brushes. Let's begin. I'm gonna start by creating a house that I'll use to repeat in different colors. For this work it's a good idea to make sure your brush is nice and wet so that the acrylic paint doesn't dry. You want it to flow almost like ink. I'm creating some simple roofed homes. And I'm gonna space these out. The great thing about working wet is that you don't have to reload your brush. You can just keep going. I'm alternating in between, and I'm gonna go back in and fill in with other colors. I think of this as building a little neighborhood on a hillside. I'm not going in any particular order using the paint palette that I chose. I'm trying to integrate different colors into each line. Choosing a limited color palette allows you to create a uniform composition fairly easily because all of the colors have a commonality. In a way, this feels like abstraction because although it is a recognizable image, you still start to get into a flow where the shape loses almost all meaning as you get lost in creating it. And there you have it. Using a simple form, you can create a composition that's unified, especially when you use a smaller and simple palette.

Day 16 - Takashi Murakami - pop art clouds

- Artist Takashi Murakami is well known for his whimsical and slightly sinister take on pop art. We're gonna create a picture that thinks about nature in a cutesy, yet devilish way. For this prompt, we are going to use a watercolor board and some markers. Let's begin. First, I'm gonna start with my black markers. This one is a little bit thick, and this is a fine point. This will help to create a variation in line width when creating my character. A lot of the work that we're looking at today is inspired by nature, but also a little bit spooky. So I'm going to think up a little character. And one of my favorite natural elements is puffy, fluffy clouds. So I'm going to make an impish cloud. Looks like my marker is not so dark. I'm gonna switch it up. Ah, that's more like it. That little gray guy will be our anomaly. And one of the things we're looking at today is foreground and background. And the way that we're going to show that is making things smaller and larger, and having some things poke out from behind another thing. So as I build my fluffy-wuffies, I'm going to hide them behind each other. Using a black outline really emphasizes the cartoonish element of this work. And if you'll notice, I'm building one thing on top of the other, and really varying my sizes. I'm gonna do a freestanding little guy here. Oop. I'm filling all of the gaps, so it looks like a very dense layer of clouds. How do we make this creepy and cute? By adding in facial features, and that's where the color comes in. Angry eyebrows. Beep. When I make these, I do in fact imagine each one having a little signature sound. Mrow, a little frowny face. Meh? Hey. What? Wink. Angry wink. Hey. This guy's a little awkward. And

you can keep building and building until you have your own goofy little gang.

Day 17 - Milton Glaser - graphic towers

- Graphic designer Milton Glaser is most well known for his iconic I Love New York poster. With just three elements, he created an image that withstood the test of time. For today's prompt, we are going to look at things that stand out about our own city. Iconic images that will translate into something that stands the test of time. Our material that we'll use, this is a 9 by 12 watercolor board, I have a couple of source images, one that I took of the Transamerica Pyramid, and one that I drew that was a full frontal view, and some brush markers and assorted colors. I've sorted out the gray tones and the colors so that I can easily access each. Of course we're gonna also use a small ruler so that I can map out different blocks. First, I'm going to divide this picture plane into four quadrants. We each have a unique landmark in our town that makes it stand out. It's something that every time we think about, we can think of home. In the San Francisco Bay area, one of those is definitely the Transamerica Pyramid. It stands out in the horizon and it's a way to welcome visitors and locals alike. I have a couple of different views and what I want to do in each one of these rectangles is create a different sense of life in the San Francisco Bay area. When I think of these four squares, one of the easiest ways to divide that up will be by season. We don't have dramatic seasons here, but there are different things that mark each season. I'm gonna start by drawing a picture of the Transamerica Pyramid in each one of these rectangles. I'm gonna use my trusty nylon brush pen. I usually don't go anywhere without a sketchpad and some brush pens so that I can sketch things on the go. So I'm using my sketchbook as a visual reference. And maybe I'll use my photograph for a different view. These drawings are gonna be very illustrative and light. I'm not trying to create a photo realistic building, more like the idea of it. That's the good thing about choosing a iconic piece of architecture from your town. Even the slightest image of it will be recognizable for people who live there. All of the ink is in the barrel of this pen, so I'm just gonna give it a gentle squeeze to get the ink flowing again. I don't wanna squeeze too hard because then there'll be ink on the page. I'm not gonna draw all the windows in on these until I decide what features I'm going to add to create a seasonal image. I'm gonna start thinking in terms of weather and while we don't have dramatic things like snow, we do have a lovely rainy season when everything turns lush and green. Remember the goal in this is to be simple. So I'm adding in just a few key features that connote rain and greenness Next up is when the poppy start to come in. So I'm actually gonna hang on to this green brush pen and throw in some poppy stems. And seeing those poppies out always reminds me of a warm sunny day. So I'll put the sun in there. Sometimes it gets cold. So I'm gonna dress it up in a scarf, especially in San Francisco. There are parts of the Bay where it can be really warm and somewhere it's 20 degrees difference. So I'm gonna put our Transamerica building in a scarf. And maybe some earmuffs, why not? And finally, borrowing a little inspiration from Milton Glaser, I'm gonna show a little bit of California love by placing a heart right in the center. What's special about your hometown?

Day 18 - Chuck Close - abstract realism self portrait

- Artists employ a wide range of tricks and tools to create portraits. One of the most longstanding ones is using a grid to make sure that all of the proportions are correct. Today we're gonna take a look at the work of artist Chuck Close and his way of gridding out portraits. The easiest way to develop a practice of creating great portraits is to work on pictures of yourself. You're always with yourself and you're always taking a look at your face and so it's very easy to get familiar with how

you look. Also, no one but you can get mad if it doesn't quite turn out the way you plan. I'm gonna show you a way to grid out and proportionally create a portrait. I started out with this reference self-portrait of my face, full-frontal, with no teeth. I find teeth a little bit hard. And so I then gridded this out. So the size of this image is eight by eight and I broke it up into two-inch squares. Then I labeled the grid going one, two, three, four and then A, B, C, D, and created a grid on an 8 by 10 inch piece of mixed media board, going in one inch on each side so that I had an eight by eight surface area to work with. One of the things that makes this so much easier than you may be used to starting out a portrait is that you really start to see how far things go. For example, in this image in square one A, there's only really a little, tiny portion of hair and some background and that's it. You can start to see where eyes are placed in relationship to the top of the head and the mouth is a lot further than sometimes we tend to think it is. So for this exercise, we are going to take a look at sketching out some areas of this face. I'm gonna begin by taking a look at my grid and starting right in the one A spot. So I am only drawing what I see in each part of the grid. I'm starting with just the outlines. And sometimes, even though I'm looking at it, it feels hard to believe that things are where they say they are. If I just block this out, I will be able to really focus in on this B 3 square. And I'm really almost using this like a blind contour, so keeping my eye on the gridded source image. I'm not letting my hand go off the paper and I'm following what I see. And this is the type of exercise where you really have to trust your eyes. It's right there in the grid, what is proportionate and what isn't. And you can simply go back and correct for any mistakes that you make. I can already see a little bit where I've lost my way, but that's okay. I'm just gonna go back in and complete that sketchy little line there. Once you've blocked out the area of your face, you can start to go in and add details, checking back and taking a look to make sure that everything is included in the grid. And this creates the foundation for a very proportionate portrait.

Day 19 - Otobong Nkanga - illustrative painting

- Let's take a look at creating some illustrative portraiture work that weaves in mapping and a little bit of fantasy. I'm inspired by the work of Otobong Nkanga in creating a piece of work that encapsulates the things that happen in the course of one day. I'm gonna start by sketching out myself as the central figure in this piece. You'll notice that I don't have a reference picture and that's because I really want to create something that's a little bit whimsical and less centered around an exact replication of what I look like. And I'm sketching this out lightly with a mechanical pencil. (speaking faintly) Started to put myself in some of my favorite puffy-sleeved dresses. And when it's a little cooler out, I can often be found wearing some high socks. It's a little stumpy. I've blocked myself out as central figure and I'm playing around with the proportions. This is a fantasy drawing, so it doesn't have to be 100% accurate. And I'm gonna start to image some of the things that I come across in the course of my day. There are things like drawing, which is a part of my daily practice, and there's a beautiful fuchsia bush that I pass each day that becomes something I look forward to, so I'm gonna hint at that and I'm going to really throw it in when I add color. There are meals. I think this is a sandwich day. There are phone calls. And while I no longer use a phone that looks like this, for the sake of this illustration, I'm gonna put in a corded phone with a pigtail. As this is a map, I am going to later add some lines that connects all of these elements. Before I do that, I'm going to block in the background so that that's drying while I add the other elements. And I'm gonna make my background a pale blue. I'll mix it together with a small brush first so that I get a quick uniform color and maybe a little extra white, because I have a large surface area to get filled. I'm not gonna mix this all the way through, so I get the appearance of some clouds. And I'll go in with the whiter

brush to fill in the background area. Now that I have the large area filled, I'm gonna go in with a smaller brush to get the tighter details. You can use gouache paint as either a thicker opaque paint or a thinner transparent paint. You just don't want to get it too heavy and thick, because it'll crack, especially if it's a traditional gouache and not something like an acrylic gouache, which is a polymer base that will be less prone to cracking. I'm gonna move on to my central figure. The paint in the face has dried. I'm going to go in and add the detail of my glasses, but no other facial features. And I'm just gonna sneak in a little bit closer for some of the spots that are white gaps. Now it's time to add in some of the other background pieces like that fuchsia bush I was talking about. I'm adding white to the existing color on my palette and just a very small kiss of blue to hopefully create a bright fuchsia. Looks like it needs just a touch of white. I'm gonna hint at the plate that it sits on by outlining this in blue with another ring of blue right around the rim. I'm gonna put a pickle on my plate. I tried to go around and fit in some of the existing color on my palette into the drawing so that I economize those materials. I'm gonna tint this golden yellow, classic phone beige. Just gonna bring this a little bit closer. The addition of white makes a color more opaque and so it's a really great tool to cover up pencil lines. And to bring some of these elements together, I'm going to create some mapping lines. So I'm using the black that I have and drawing lines to connect each part. Connecting the dots to illustrate my day.

Day 20 - Toyin Ojih Odutola - contemporary painting

- There are so many different ways of making a mark on paper. And when I look at the artist Toyin Odutola's work, I see so many swirls and multi-directional lines, and it really gets me thinking about all the different ways that you can create a face texture, and so that is what we'll be doing today. I'm gonna dive right in and start sketching out the face. I'm using the Crayola erasable pencil to lay it down and I'm using a soft peach, so that it'll fade out into the rest of our picture. I'm gonna try to get in various texture. And so when I'm planning this, I think about all of the different pieces that are gonna fall in. Gotten in my foundational drawing. And now it's time to start to work in some texture. I'm gonna start out strong and using one of these Crayola color sticks, I'm gonna go right in and start adding some directional lines. I'm using the side of this stick to create an almost scaly texture that cascades downward. That's feeling a little bit powdered wig, so I'm gonna go in with some other colors and I'm actually gonna snap this stick in half. This way I can really use the side of it to create additional texture and get into otherwise tight places. I'm gonna sit with that for a moment, think about adding some additional low lights, but for now I'm gonna dust this off and continue to go into the face. I'm gonna add some circles for rosy cheeks and keep them really tight. And soften that with a blush color. And then mirror this in the lips. And for these lines, I'm gonna use very tight swirls that are almost a little bit like the hair. Switching media, I'm gonna go with one of my brush pens and create some circles for the eyes. Adding pupils. And then a matching color of brush pen to delineate where the eyes are and darken those in just a little bit. This is all about adding texture and so every element that I add in creates a little bit more texture. I want to soften up the whole overall look, so I'm trying to go in and follow these lines, almost like hatching. I'm gonna tone some of this down by going in darker in some places. So continuing on with the texture light built in the hair, a little bit closer to the roots. And adding some more lines to go into the face and add a little bit more color. As you start to build, you'll see where you need to add shadows. I'm gonna continue with the sticks and add more shape, more texture, and just a little bit more shadow. The top lip always tends to be just a little bit darker with a highlight in between. In building this portrait, I want to make sure that pencil is constantly in motion. So wherever I can, I'm adding more directional lines to make a

series of different textures. And with our erasable pencil, you can bring in a series of different textures by applying color, but then also removing color. We've created a richly textured portrait with a wide variety of line.

Day 21 - Andy Goldsworthy - land art

- One of my favorite activities is taking a walk through nature. I love to keep mementos of my time at the beach or in the forest by collecting small rocks and little fallen leaves. Some artists use nature as their art materials. Artists like Andrew Goldsworthy, create temporary installations using natural materials. Today, we're gonna recreate that at home. You can collect natural materials from various sources. Things like small pebbles and rocks will last pretty much forever. Dried leaves will stay fresh and somewhat flat in between the pages of books. And you can even collect things like kitchen scraps. These onions and garlic skins create wonderful, colorful compositions. And since they're already dry, you don't have to worry about mold or other discoloration. A lot of these works were designed to be temporary. So using fresh flowers are a really great idea if you want to capture something temporary or fleeting. But if you want to have it last a little bit longer, I would suggest finding a nice solid surface and using a glue that will dry slowly. Something like a tacky glue, as opposed to a hot glue, because the hot glue might have the objects fall off. But if you're just keeping them for a little while, you can always document them using a camera. I'm gonna start by choosing some colors and arranging them in groupings. And really just looking at different shapes. And this is a very meditative practice. So it's something that you can, maybe put on a little soft music to remember your time and just start building. (soft crunching) It's really cool to take note of some of the natural color gradations and work with those when creating your scene. I like to match each of my actions to balance it out. So every time I lay something down, I'm going to put the same thing in kind of the opposite direction as I'm building my composition. And I'm gonna balance it out with some green. And I just love how the colors of all of these different materials really go together. These little dried leaves can be so delicate. I think I'm just gonna use some of this moss as a frame. I wish you could smell this, it's gorgeous. It reminds me of being in the forest. A colorful composition using nature as your paintbrush.

Day 22 - Louise Bourgeois - surrealist spider sculpture

- You can use regular at-home materials to create works of art. Today we're gonna be looking at an artist who creates larger than life sculptures. This artist's name is Louise Bourgeois. One of her most famous pieces is a giant spider that towers over reality. We're gonna be using aluminum foil to recreate little, tiny spiders. We're gonna use regular household tinfoil. I precut some pieces of foil so that I can easily grab it and add when necessary. First, I'm just gonna fold this over and start forming. I'm just getting these nice and tight. I think I have enough legs to get started. I'm wrapping them around each other so that they form a tight center. I wanna make sure my eight legged friend has all the right parts. These are little pieces of fantasy that I image all spiders to have. And now I'm going to move it around in different directions to make it stand. Now that we've made our little eight legged friend, you can even make some other characters for them to interact with. Grrr.

Day 23 - Maren Hassinger - minimalist wire flower sculptures

- Inspired by minimalist sculptor, Maren Hassinger, we're gonna create some sculptures that are inspired by nature with a little twist. All we need is some wire and a pair of scissors. This wire cuts pretty well with a snip of a pair of scissors. And you can double the amount of material that you're

working with. I'm gonna start by creating some loops and twisting all the way down the base. And that'll create a sturdy foundation. I'm gonna incorporate a couple of loops so that my sculpture will have a base to stand on. Then I'm gonna take this wire and fold it over again, connect it to the original, and twist this wire around. I'm trying to create the form of a flower. So I have my petals but it's almost like a flower from a different planet. I wanna make sure that my sculpture has a solid leg to stand on. So I'm going to wrap this around, and pull it through, twist around this petal, and then use this extra wire to create a little bit of a wider base because it was looking a little top heavy. Let's give this a shot. Voila. If we continue this way we can create a whole forest of tiny wire flowers.

Day 24 - Judith Scott - sculpture

- We're gonna take a look at the work of Judith Scott who created wrapped sculptures with hidden surprises inside. This is a great way of using extra material like bubble wrap, fabric, filler, or even pieces of fabric like T-shirts or old quilts. I got this filler from the inside of a cold insulation bag. Rather than putting it in the recycling or the trash, I'm gonna give it a new life. First, because this is so thick, I'm gonna start off by cutting it in half. I want to create some long forms, so I'm gonna fold these with the idea that I'll join them together. So I'll start with some purple string, and I'm simply just gonna start wrapping, not even tying a knot. I'm pulling this a little tight. When you choose your yarn or string or twine, make sure that it's able to withstand a little bit of gentle or hard pressure. Now I'm going to wrap this around and join it together. This is a project that really thinks about layering and obscuring what's underneath. I'm doing loose wrapping just to get this started, but I'll go over and over again using other types of yarn. A hidden secret about Judith Scott's work is that she would often hide little toys and other surprises inside of her work, almost like a cocoon. So I'm gonna stuff in these wine corks. Almost like a snake that swallowed a tasty meal. Now that that's in tightly, I'll cut and connect another type of yarn. Join these together and continue wrapping. You don't want to pull too hard once you've gotten your knot so that you don't pull things apart. And we'll continue this way down the length of this tube. I took that blue yarn right to the edge, and then I started to double back creating that layer that I was talking about, adding more colors and taking it all the way to the end. Now that I have this tightly wrapped here, I'm gonna connect these two pieces. So I'll stick that inside. Make sure it's nice and tight, just like we did with our center piece, and continue to wrap. If I were you, I would not do this around any kitty cats. With these ends securely joined, I'm gonna cut this yarn, leaving a tail so that I can make a knot, and hide it in there a little bit. This is just the beginning of our journey with this piece. You can continue to wrap and wrap and even add on different extensions to create your own soft sculpture.

Day 25 - El Anatsui - upcycling, found object sculpture

- Artist El Anatsui makes a comment on ecology and recycling by using manufactured goods to create large scale installations. Today, we're gonna do this on a little bit of a smaller scale. I gathered some recycled materials for this. I have a piece of fabric that came in a shipment. Some soda can tabs that I added spray paint to and bottle caps that I spray painted as well. And I also have this plastic bottle cap. I'm gonna start laying these out in a color order, and I'm gonna repeat that pattern. Now that I have everything just where I want it, I'm gonna start laying down the glue. I'm gonna use my tacky glue, and I'm just going to go in and add a few dots to get everything in place. With everything glued down, I can use this now as a wall hanging by adding other pieces to create that El Anatsui look.

Day 26 - Wolfgang Tillmans - contemporary photography

- Taking photographs of things around us is a part of everyday life now, but in the '80s and '90s, Wolfgang Tillmans was pioneering the idea of creating photographs based on everyday life. A lot of his work seemed natural and unstaged, but in fact, he put a lotta things in place so that it was just so. I'm gonna show you a few tricks to turn your regular everyday still life photography into works of art. I often gather different recyclable materials for later use in various art projects. I found some bubble wrap with a really cool metallic texture and some translucent paper that I'm gonna work on as my base for taking photographs. I also have some jar lights. And my trick is to buy these things directly after a holiday. That way, the prices are much lower. I also have scissors and some still life objects. I'm gonna use my artist tape to secure my background to the table. I'll take this off so you can see the magic of this textured surface. So on its own, you can see that this picks up light beautifully. I'm gonna do a few experiments and see how it looks to put my flowers on that surface. I'm gonna cut just the tips right off. Maybe I'll leave a few stems but cut off some leaves. I wanna make it look like these have just fallen into place. I really like the way that the red shows up against the silver background, so I'm gonna go in and add some rose petals to play up that feature. I'm gonna add a little bit more purple to balance out that composition. Now that I have that set up, I'm gonna pick up my camera and take a look at what I see in my viewfinder. (camera beeping) I'm gonna get in really close, almost like an abstract painting, and take my shot. (camera clicking) (camera clicking) What I'm doing is really zeroing in on the way that the light interplays with the reflective surface. (camera clicking) I'm gonna go right in close. (camera clicking) I set my camera to autofocus, and so it's going in macro. You can also play around with soft, impressionable light (camera clicking) and blurs. (camera clicking) (camera clicking) This exercise is about getting creative. I'm gonna move on to another background. So we looked at some sharp bright light. Now I'm gonna diffuse the light a little bit by putting translucent vellum over my highly reflective surface. Now that that's in, I'm going to put my jar lights under for a starry effect. Looks like we may need to secure that down with some artist tape. I'm gonna leave one corner untaped so that if I need to adjust the lights, it's a lot easier. Let's turn these on and see where they're placed, ooh. That looks a little bit like a constellation. I like the way it's clustered in there, and I'm gonna play around with that when laying down some more flowers. They hydrangeas already look like stars, so I'm gonna pull them out of the bundle and lay them in between the lights. I think I need to cut those apart. These are so gorgeous, they smell like summer. Now to grab my camera and see what I can find. (camera beeping) Again, I'm getting in really close (camera clicking) and focusing in. (camera clicking) (camera clicking) (camera clicking) I'm keeping these level, but I'm gonna go overhead so I can play up the starry effect. Let's see how that looks. (camera clicking) Every time I move my camera, (camera clicking) the lights shifts just a little bit. (camera clicking) Now it's time to switch up my background. I wanna keep working with reflection, so I'm gonna use a piece of gold poster board. Now that that's relatively flat, I'm gonna highlight this gold tone by using some yellow flowers. The overhead light is really playing up some very subtle shadows that I'm gonna try to capture once I have my camera in place. I'm gonna force this carnation flat just by pressing it down a little bit so that it spreads out. It's not gonna lay flat completely, but I'm gonna have it facing me and push some of these other flowers out just a little bit from my perspective. I'm going in and taking the shot. (camera clicking) (camera clicking) (camera clicking) Beautiful. With some inventive backgrounds and a few snips, you can take a regular bouquet of flowers and turn it into a masterpiece.

Day 27 - Cindy Sherman - contemporary photography

- Most artists try to add a little bit of themselves into every artwork that they create. Others try to keep their identities a well-guarded secret. Today, we're gonna look at photographer, Cindy Sherman, who uses a lot of disguises and backdrops to create characters that tell their own story. Her true identity was so mysterious that for a long time, people didn't even know what she actually looked like. I set up a very simple backdrop so that we can do some funny and goofy selfies that create a mini character. I've set up a little section of fun props. I have wigs headbands. I also have a cell phone because we're using selfies, I thought the cell phone would be the best tool and a tabletop tripod. This one has an attachment for cell phones. I've often been described as a little bit of a space cadet. I thought that I would use a spacey background for our fun selfie. I'm gonna put these aside and set up my tripod. A tripod is a great tool to have so that you can go hands-free. This way you can set your timer, step away and use action with your body. Of course, like traditional selfies, you can always just use your hands. I'm gonna choose a wig. I think I'm feeling purple. Don't worry, guys. It's still gonna be me. How do I look? Gonna top this off with this spooky spidery headband. One of my tricks is to go a couple of days after a holiday. That way I'm getting 60, 70, 80% off of all of the things that I need for my disguise closet. Secure that on. Hm, not bad. Selfie time. Let's take one with a tripod. I'm gonna set this up and this is at the perfect height to meet my face. And this just snaps right on. Wonderful. I am going to set this for a few seconds delay. I think three should be enough. That way I can set the shutter and fade into the action. You ready? Let's do this. My camera fires off multiple shots so that I can choose which one I'd like. I'm gonna do one more pose. Are you ready? That was fun. Now I'm going to do one a little bit closer up and handheld. (shutter clicking) That one was space librarian. Art isn't always serious. You can have fun, let loose, and even dive into somebody else's life. Who will you be? That was ridiculous. - [Producer] That was ridiculous.

Day 28 - Wayne White - contemporary painting, pop art

- Contemporary painter Wayne White repurposes tacky, thrift store paintings, and adds text to create a unique work of art. Today, we're gonna do the same. In place of our thrift store painting, I took a piece of funky tie dye paper and glued it onto a Canson mixed media board. Wayne White generally uses turns of phrase that mirror the paintings that he uses. When I look at this, I think of the far out and groovy 60s, so I'm gonna use the text far out on top of here. I'm gonna simply freehand draw these words on, but I'm gonna try to make it very clean and very direct font. Next, I'll grab my Gouache colors. I'm going to go with sky blue with maybe just a little touch of black so that it doesn't fade into the background. I don't want my text color to be tie dye, so I'm making sure this is well mixed. I want this to be very opaque. So I'm using this color full strength. I'm gonna draw in a drop shadow, and that's gonna help the wording to pop off the page just a little bit and look three dimensional. I'm adding in a couple of lines as if these were actual blocks. And since I'm mirroring the colors of my background, I'm going to mix in a little of this blue with a red to make a purple. I'm gonna use a smaller flat brush so I can get those details in. And I don't have to worry about smudging this because it's already dry. I made that a little thick, so I'm gonna go back in and extend that edge of the T just a little bit. Out of sight.

Day 29 - Mimi Pond - cartoons, graphic storytelling

- There are so many different ways to tell a story. Visually, cartoonists will often marry words and pictures to create slices of life that talk about things around us. Today we're gonna look at artist

Mimi Pond who often injects humor into her cartooning. Today, I'm gonna tell a story about taking the train. I already gridded out my board into four panels in which should tell my story. I'm going to look at ways that I can connect them to create a unified board. First, I'm gonna start by sketching the tracks. In brainstorming my idea, I already decided that my panels are going to be connected like train cars. So I'm gonna sketch that in. Even though I've already sketched in my different panel lines, I'm gonna break convention by crossing that border and connecting the cars of my train. Since this is a cartoon, I'm even going to defy physics by bending the car a little. I'm going light and sketchy, but I'm going to go in and mark everything in with a black pen after I finished. Now I'm blocking in my text panels. Instead of a traditional thought bubble, I'm going to mimic the idea of a train track by using the board that tells destination as my speech bubble. I have so many memories of going out to meet with friends and to and from work and checking out some of the different commuters that go along with me. Sketching in some of the dancers that often hang from the railings upside down mid-dance. Love the way they defy gravity. I thought I was gonna put a door there, but instead I'm gonna put a window. It's all right if your pencil lines are a little bit rough because what you're going to do is erase these lines once it's time to ink. When plotting out my comic, I took a look at the composition and used the unusual layout to tell a story. I love the train, places to go, people to see. Even when things are upside down, I always find my way home. And that takes us from the first panel to the fourth. Now that I've got those basic lines in, I'm gonna start cleaning them up and then inking. I'm using a Sharpie pen because it's bleed proof so that when I add my single color, the colors won't shift and bleed. With that inked and blocked in, I'm going to erase my lines. A cool thing about Mimi Pond's cartoons is that she uses a single color with different lights and darks. I'm gonna choose ultra marine because it's a little bit translucent. I'm drying off my brush to create more opaque color. And finally, I'm going to add in some of my characters. I chose to illustrate a day in the life taking the train, but you don't have to do that. You can think about a trip to the grocery store or a day at work, or even a funny story that a relative has told you. There are all sorts of ways to tell a story using visual language.

Day 30 - Marjane Satrapi - graphic cartoon cats

- With graphic storytelling, artists use pictures to create a story and rely less on using words and dialogue. In the case of graphic artist, Marjane Satrapi, her bold black and white images often speak louder than words. I take a lot of photographs, and on my way to work, I was met by this friendly cat. I talked to it, but it did not talk to me. So I took pictures of our interaction that tell the story of the desire to be pet. We started off with a stare down and things quickly escalated. In figuring out how to tell this story, I am going to use this comic to create a dynamic black and white picture of our interaction. I'm gonna use my water soluble oil pastel to block in the cat. I want this interaction to be very bold, and so I'm putting the cat right here on top. I'm going to exaggerate some of the details, like this tail. The main action that happened without words, is the cat physically reaching out to touch me. So I'm gonna block that in nice and large. I'll emphasize that tail to connect. I can work on fine tuning details once I go in with water. Because of the angle, I'm not really seeing this ear, so I'm going to make it stand out, exaggerating it just a little so that the focus is back on that ear. I like this view, but I don't really see anything. Because we're going in with black and white, it'll be very hard to distinguish some of these shapes. So I'm going to lay this aside and probably use a view where the cat's eyes can clearly be seen. For now, as I'm thinking about that, sometimes it's helpful for me to go ahead and do other parts and then come back to it later. So that's what I'm going to do. I'm gonna lay this down and start inking. I want there to be no subtlety, just a very stark black

and white. I will fill this in, and if I need to, go in with some black wash. I'm elongating the cat's face, so that it becomes more distinguished from its body. To really set in the contrast, I'm gonna go in and add some black wash. Because this is more comic than realist, I'm not referring so closely to my original source images, rather I'm adding some additional embellishments to help the story along. As I worked through blocking that in, I started to think about some of the ideas behind black cats and some of the superstitions. It's supposed to be bad luck for a black cat to cross your path, but this kitty was super cute and friendly. And so I really want to put that warmth into my story. I'm gonna use this picture to show the final result, the much desired pets. I'm going to add this right here into this corner. Since I have my brush out, I'll add a little water and draw it directly. This time, I am looking very close to my source image so that I can block out this hand, a little bit more realistically. Drawing your hand can be challenging, but I'm going section by section and drawing what I see. The contrast of the line with the very graphic black shapes, will make this shape a lot clearer. With ample sources to work from and a bold, clear message, you can use a picture to tell a thousand words.

Day 31 - Alexandra Dvornikova - illustration, nature, folklore

- Folklore is some of the oldest form of storytelling that we as humans have. These are stories that are told generation after generation and serve as the foundational myths of various cultures. Artists like Alexandra Dvornikova use folklore to illustrate different ideas and show a dreamy other world. Today we'll create a folklore of our own. I started out by toning a water color board so that I can sketch on top of it. I used a mixture of black and ultramarine to create a tone that would be like the night sky with a soft moon in the center. My tale is one that fascinates me. I've always had my head in the clouds and I love the stories behind the various constellations. I thought of the big dipper and the bears Ursa Major and Ursa Minor and that's what I'll illustrate today. And I'm gonna go in and start sketching the figures at the bottom. Those would be our bear friends, Ursa Minor, the smaller bear and Ursa Major, the mommy bear. Sometimes I really enjoy working on toned paper because instead of fighting this idea of the white blank space that I have to work around, I already have something that brings the picture together. It's just a little bit more forgiving once I start laying in my characters. I'm gonna put them in an environment so that they're not floating in space. Now that I have that mapped in, I'm going to just go in and start coloring in some of this background to make it pop. As I think about the placement of my constellation. Having a pre-toned background works well to establish the darkness of the scene. I blended in two greens, and I'm gonna go a little bit darker underneath to imply a shadow. And because the moonlight is directly above, I'm gonna make this area a little bit lighter. My goal is to really play up the fantasy and mythology of this scene. Now that I have the landscape established, I'm gonna work around the moon. I want the moon to be very bright and full. I'm gonna clean up that amorphous shape and make it more round and darken some of the edges to make that stand out a little bit more. As that's drying, I'll go back into the bear and then add the constellation. Instead of a pencil, I'm gonna use my brush to sketch it in. The moon doesn't have to be a perfect circle, but it should just be a little bit closer than it is now. There's a certain glow to full moon nights that I wanna make sure ends up in this picture. So I'm doing some wide bold strokes, but I'm not gonna fully darken it. That'll undo some of that beautiful tone work that was laid down already. I'll throw in a few trees where the earth meets the sky. And I'll do that in black. This is just a hint of the forest in the background. I'm moving my flat brush back and forward to do the peaks and a little bit of the branches of the trees. I wanna make sure I give them a nice dense forest to call home. I'll use a brush with a nice thin tip to accentuate the fur in the bears. As

I'm laying this down, I'm not doing a full wash and keeping the fur in motion. And I'm following the contour of the body. To keep this from looking so flat, I'm gonna go ahead and add some highlights and then also deeper tones. So I will add a little ochre to create a little bit more texture. I'll mix that in with the brown that's already on my brush so that it's not a shock. And now, I'll mix that color in with a little black to create shadows, especially in the parts where there are creases, like to distinguish between the feet and the head and body. I love these small round brushes because you can get very delicate with the details. You have a fun little bleed there. I hope it stays once this gets dried because, interestingly enough, it adds a little extra texture and I wanna make baby bear look extra cute so I'm putting its eyes and making 'em a little bit bigger. Cute. That's starting to bleed a little bit too much for my liking as well as here. So I'm gonna get a little piece of the paper towel that I always keep next to my brushes. And I'm gonna try to pull that out. So rather than going straight, flat down, I'm simply gonna let it hover and flow into the paper towel to pull up the extra moisture. I'm gonna let that set up just a moment and go back if I feel it's necessary, I'd like to add in my constellation, but since they're stars, I'm going to put it off to the side, not so close to the moon. So I used my oil pastel. I decided to use the oil pastel rather than gouache because I thought that it would end up being more opaque. And less thick than using the tube gouache. I'm gonna see how this works out as it dries, but it's nice to go in and add the layers. And I'm gonna take a little artistic license and have this stretch across the sky. To make this a little bit bolder without going in and re-darkening the soft light of the sky, I'm going to fully wet the tip of this pastel and dive right in. So I'm wetting the tip, getting some of the excess water off. So it doesn't drip and puddle. I'm gonna clean this up a little bit, using my trusty brush. Now that this bear is dry. I'm gonna go in just a little bit closer to the eyes with some brown. And there we have a peaceful nighttime scene that's reminiscent of old time stories. In the course of our month together, we've looked at a wide variety of artists and artistic styles. We've gone from pure abstraction and color relationships through concept, composition, building, tactile work, and fantasy. I'd like to encourage you to explore other artists that you might be interested in and take some of their concepts and create your own ideas. This is the work of the artist, to take an idea, problem solve, make mistakes, and make it your own.