



Noyes
Museum of Art
STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

Lesson Plan: #NoyesArtatHome

Konopka “Found Objects” Collage Project

Overview:

Joseph Stanley Konopka (1932 – 2013) was an American artist, born in Philadelphia, and lived in Glen Ridge, New Jersey. Konopka was a painter and scenic artist, and began his career at NBC-TV in 1952. He painted and designed sets and props for many television programs, including Late Night with David Letterman, and Late Night with Conan O'Brien. Konopka was the vice president of the Associated Artists of New Jersey from 1976 to 1985, and was also a landscape and portrait painter. Konopka's collage (pictured right) and several of his paintings are in the Noyes Museum's Permanent Collection.

Project Description: Create a collage using found objects* from around the house! Gather movie tickets, newspapers, magazines, stamps, photos, beach tags - anything small you can find! Create and focus on a theme.

***Definition: a found object** is a natural or man-made object, or fragment of an object, that is found (or sometimes bought) by an artist and kept because of some intrinsic interest the artist sees in it.
tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/f/found-object

Supplies:

8.5 x 11" piece of sturdy white cardstock or colored construction paper
Found objects (at least 15 to 30)
Glue stick or craft glue

Steps:

1. Take a look at Joseph Konopka's artwork, *Miss America #4* (see above.) This is a **collage** or artwork made by attaching various materials such as photographs, pieces of paper or fabric on to a



Joseph Konopka, *Miss America #4*,
circa 1974 – 1997, collage
2002.00.015

© Collection of the Noyes Museum of Art
of Stockton University

background. The word “collage” comes from the French term “papiers collés” (or découpage), used to describe techniques of gluing cut-out paper onto various surfaces. It has been used as an artist’s technique for many years and made a come-back in the early twentieth century. **Collage** can also include other media such as drawing and painting, and three-dimensional elements.

2. First, gather materials, or “found objects” for your collage. Search around your house to find small papers, objects, and mementos. This is a great way to recycle things you would normally throw away! Movie ticket stubs, stamps, photos, pictures from greeting cards, anything! Supplement what you have found with pictures from newspapers and magazines. Make a copy of old photographs, such as family photos, so that you can keep the original.
3. Once you have gathered your objects, take a look at what you have found.
 - Are there any similarities or a **theme** to all of the objects?

A **theme** is a main idea or an underlying meaning of a work. The artist Joseph Konopka chose the Miss America Pageant as a **theme**. The pageant took place in Atlantic City, New Jersey from 1921 to 2005, and again in 2013. This artwork contains the front page from The Press of Atlantic City newspaper, a piece of paper that reads “Steel Pier,” a 1981 pageant button, and many other pieces of Atlantic City memorabilia.

- Set aside any objects that are not related to your **theme**. Can you make a second collage with these leftover elements?
 - The Konopka piece above has at least 25 objects! Did you gather enough objects for your **themed collage**? If not, you may have to search again or print a few from online.
4. Take your **themed** objects and arrange them into a **composition** on your background. A **composition** is the arrangement of elements in a work of art. Figure out the placement of your objects.
 - Which ones will overlap?
 - Are there any photos you want to cut out to remove the background?
 - Is there a **focal point** in your piece? A **focal point** is the center of interest. In Konopka’s piece, the **focal point** is the black and white photo of the woman. Not only is this image on top, but it is also the **focal point** because the human brain is drawn to recognize and focus on faces!

Arrange your items before gluing them down. Experiment with different arrangements and see which you like best.

5. Carefully begin gluing the pieces down to a sturdy piece of paper. One approach is to start with the top image and place any pieces under it by lifting the corner and gluing the areas that overlap. If you continue with this method, gradually all of the pieces will be connected. Then, glue the final arrangement to the sturdy background paper.
6. Finally, add any three-dimensional pieces, such as buttons, pins, or dried flowers.
7. Look at your finished piece. What do you like about it and what would you change?

Share pictures of your artwork with us!

Post your pictures using the hashtag **#NoyesArtatHome**.

We are posting work by community artists on our Noyes Museum social media pages.

The Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton University · <http://www.noyesmuseum.org> · (609) 626-3420

The Noyes Arts Garage of Stockton University · www.artsgarageac.com · (609) 626-3805

Check us out on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube

