

VIRTUAL FAMILY OPEN STUDIOS- Quilting With Scratchboard

PROJECT TITLE: Patterns in Nature- Revealing the Designs Around Us

THEME: *Material Pulses: Seven Viewpoints* (A Cannon Art Gallery Exhibit) & artist Barb Wills

AGE RANGE: All Ages

INSPIRATION ARTWORKS: Barb Wills' *Land Marks #70, #71, #72*



ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Barb Wills is an internationally acclaimed contemporary fiber artist with quilts shown in museums and galleries in Europe, Asia, and the United States. Wills' career before entering the fine art world, was as a hi-tech engineer. Her time working in the engineering field encouraged and rewarded experimentation and problem-solving and she learned that most break-throughs came after much hard work and failures. These are the lessons that Wills feels translated into her second career as an artist.

Barb Wills' quilts are subtle and feature toned down color palettes. She uses original woodcuts (inspired by Japanese woodcuts) to handprint onto fabric, then cuts & reconfigures them into a quilt. Wills is inspired by nature: forests, mountains, rocks, trails, trees, sky. She limits "pre-planning" & "sketches in her mind". Barb Wills feels that her multi-layering process allows viewers to "look closely...see and feel the beauty of a place...experience a peaceful moment of discovery".

Barb Wills' thoughts on her art:

"I see the world around me as shapes, patterns, lines, and layers."

"I use a limited palette as I want to give viewers a place to look at the lines and shapes and marks and find a moment of quiet contemplation as an escape from our hyper-stimulated, fast-paced world."

ART PROJECT INTRODUCTION:

In this art project, the participant will be etching a textural “quilt” on black scratchboard using a traditional scratch-art tool. Sources of inspiration are close-up textures and patterns from nature and the magnificent quilts of Barb Wills. Golden designs will reveal themselves as participants etch lines, shapes, and patterns into the black scratchboard using the scratch-art tool. Each individual participant will create their own scratchboard “quilt” and once all family members complete their quilt, they can be creatively displayed together creating a larger “quilt” with “pieces” from each family member.

QUILTING IN THE ARTS- Brief History

Creating quilts from pieces of worn garments, using them as blankets to keep families warm, has been a tradition for centuries. Branching off this tradition, was the creation of special quilts that commemorated life events or told important stories. These ideas of quilts as vessels for expression, storytelling, and abstraction evolved during the 20th century into the use of quilts in the fine art world and the world of contemporary fiber arts. Famous artists who utilize quilts as their canvases are Faith Ringgold and Nancy Crow, and there are many contemporary artists continuing the tradition of quilt-making with creative twists such as Sanford Biggers, and Sherri Lynn Wood.

PROMPT QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever worked with scratchboard before? Used a scratch-art tool?
2. How can you think about drawing on scratchboard differently than drawing with a pencil? What is different about the process of revealing lines after you have made them?
3. When you look closely at objects all around you in the world, do you see the lines, shapes, and patterns they are made of? How does looking very closely change your perspective?
4. Have you seen a quilt in person before? Have you been able to look closely to see the lines that form the edges of the fabric shapes, the tiny stitching lines and the many patterns of the fabrics? How can you include these ideas on a scratchboard “quilt”?

ART PROJECT MATERIALS (provided in Art Kit):

- Black Scratchboard (8.5”x11”)
- Scratch-Art Tool in a Velvet Pouch
- Ruler
- Sheet of 12X18 Newsprint Paper
- Sheet of Copy Paper
- Small piece of Black Scratchboard (4.25”x5.5”)
- Foam Brush
- Nature Patterns Inspiration Sheet
- Hatching, Cross-hatching & Pattern Information Sheet

ART MAKING INSTRUCTIONS:

Make sure your hands are clean and dry before touching the scratchboard. Any grease or moisture will create areas where the black cannot be penetrated and the etching will not work. Use the sheet of white copy paper under your hand and arm, on top of the scratchboard throughout the art-making process, to protect the black area.

LESSON PLAN

Step 1:

Take both black scratchboards and the newsprint out of your Art Kit. Prepare your art-making area by unfolding the newsprint and spreading it out to completely cover your work surface. Place the large and small piece of scratchboard on top of the newsprint. (The scratch art process produces quite a bit of black dust so you'll want to catch as much dust as possible on this newsprint under your scratchboard). Have all your art-making tools at hand: copy paper, ruler, scratch-art tool, and foam brush. Place your Nature Patterns Inspiration Sheet and Hatching, Cross-hatching & Pattern Information Sheet where you can see them. **(FIG.1)**

Step 2:

Begin to familiarize yourself with the scratch-art tool and the scratchboard etching process by practicing on the small piece of scratchboard. Use the copy paper underneath your hand to protect your scratchboard. Hold the scratch-art tool like a pencil, but note that you must only use forward strokes to create lines. Going backwards will catch the tool on the scratchboard and won't give you a smooth line. Experiment with using the tip of the tool to create fine, thin lines and angling the tool downward to use the broader edge of the tool which creates thicker lines **(FIG.2)** Refer to your Inspiration and Information Sheets and practice creating different lines, dots, patterns, and shapes on the small piece of scratchboard. Use the foam brush to gently brush the black lint off of the scratchboard onto your newsprint.

Step 3:

Envision how you want to compose the spaces in your quilt and begin working on your large black scratchboard. Use the ruler and the scratch-art tool to make lines and segmented areas on the large scratchboard creating a two-dimensional "quilt" **(FIG.3)**. During this part of the process try to keep your fingers on the ruler, to keep your ruler in place, while you are drawing your lines. Avoid touching the black scratchboard as much as possible. (You may scrape the plastic ruler with your scratch-art tool and that is normal. Just use the foam brush to brush away the plastic threads.) As the artist, you will choose whether to create abstract geometric shapes **(FIG.4)**, use shapes from quilting patterns **(FIG.5)**, create borders **(FIG.6)**, or use organic shapes **(FIG.7)**.

Step 4:

Place the white copy paper beneath your hands while you are etching, and begin filling in the segments of the large scratchboard with lines, patterns and images from nature either from your Inspiration Sheet or from the world around you. They can be very abstracted- be creative and don't worry about making anything look realistic! **(FIG.8 A,B,C)**

Consider composition, how patterns work together and against each other, and the effects of thin and thick lines. Balance the positive and negative spaces by leaving some areas solid black or solid gold **(FIG. 9)**, think about how to create points of visual interest with details.

Use the foam brush throughout the art process to gently clean away the black dust and expose the gold beneath the surface.

Fill in the various areas of the scratchboard to work with your composition **(FIG.10 A,B,C)**.

Brush as much of the black dust off of your scratchboard as possible and gather the dust into the middle fold line of your newsprint. Carefully fold up the newsprint to catch all of the dust and throw it away in the garbage, then recycle the newsprint.

LESSON PLAN

Step 5:

When everyone in your group (if applicable) has finished their artworks, come up with a creative way to display the collection together of all the “quilts” done by the family. Seeing them together conveys the impression of a larger “quilt”. Enjoy seeing the art you have all created!

POST-PROMPT QUESTIONS:

1. What was the experience of “revealing” lines like? How did it feel to trust your hand and the tool to create lines and images by etching into a surface rather than drawing on top of a surface?
2. How does your artwork relate to Barb Wills’ artwork in the exhibit?
3. What are other ways you can create quilts in the future? Sewing? Fabric? Paper? Collage? Other possibilities?
4. What is your favorite thing about your art project? Why? Did you get a chance to try a type of artmaking that you have never done before? Would you like to do more scratch-art in the future?
5. Did this experience inspire you to continue looking at nature closely, noticing all the lines, shapes, and patterns in our world?

ART SAMPLE PHOTOS:

FIG.1

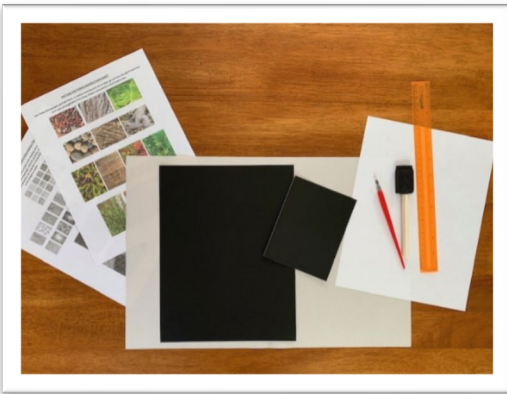


FIG.2



FIG.3

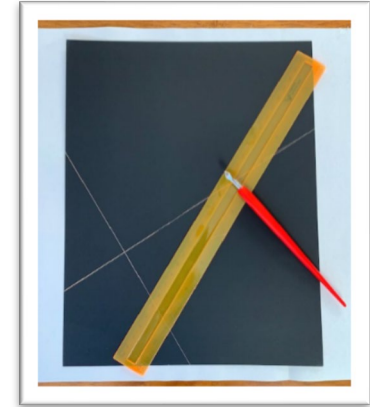


FIG.4

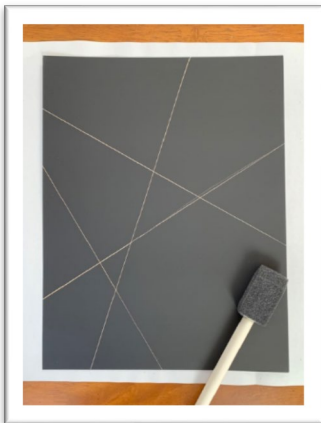
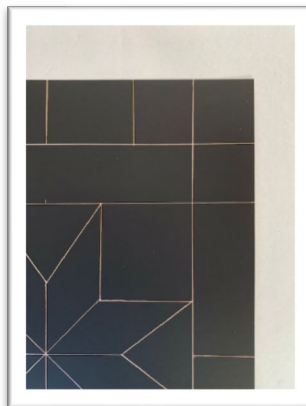


FIG.5



FIG.6



LESSON PLAN

FIG. 7

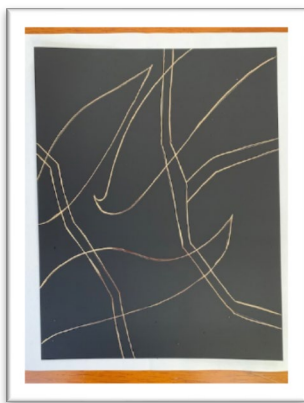


FIG. 8 A

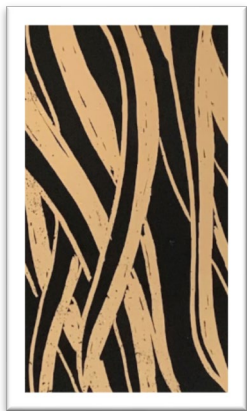


FIG. 8 B

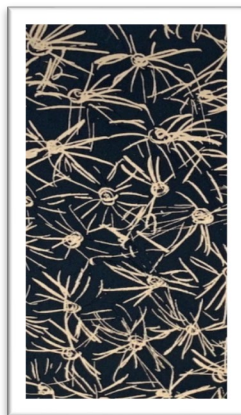


FIG. 8 C

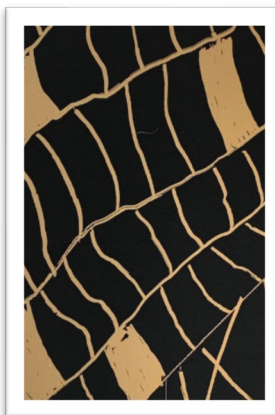


FIG. 9



FIG. 10 A

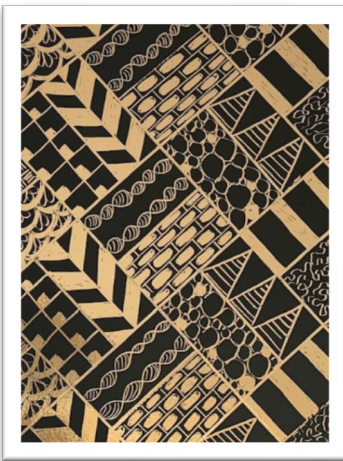
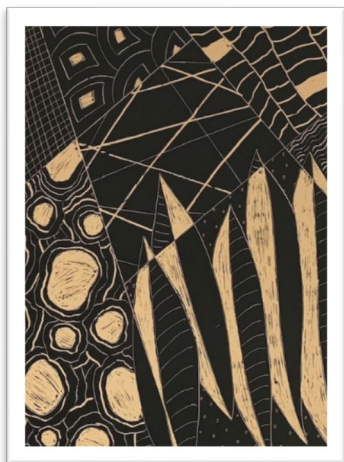


FIG. 10 B

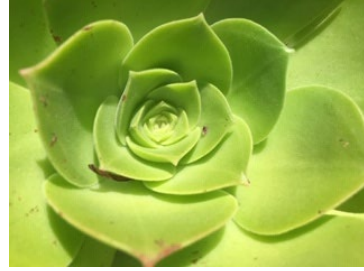


FIG. 10 C



NATURE PATTERNS INSPIRATION SHEET

Use these photographs as inspiration, or before starting your art project, go out into the world and take your own photographs of the lines, shapes, and patterns that inspire you!



Hatching, Cross-Hatching & Pattern Information Sheet

Hatching & Cross-Hatching are artistic techniques used to create tonal, shading and textural effects with the use of lines. The primary concept of hatching and cross-hatching is that the quantity, thickness, and spacing of lines emphasizes form. Lines can be oriented in any direction, can overlap or be parallel, can be closely spaced or separate, or be straight or wavy.

