



MUSEUM FROM HOME

Edition 5 | April 27, 2020

Shapes, Shapes and More Shapes!

Look!

Do you think you could recreate this painting? Why or why not?

Do the lines or shapes remind you of anything?

If you had to give this artwork a mood, what would it be?

Learn!

What type of art is this? It is abstract art. Lazzell's *Untitled Study* (above) is an abstract depiction of a still life. It is an example of modern art where artists experiment with line, shape, color and pattern without trying to represent a person or object the way you would see them in real life. Artist Arshile Gorky once said, "Abstraction allows man to see with his mind what he cannot see physically with his eyes."



Blanche Lazzell, *Untitled Study*, 1924, gouache on paper, 9 ¼ x 8 ¼ in. Clara S. Peck Fund. 2019.2.1

Blanche Lazzell was an early American modernist artist. Her work incorporates different elements of the modernism movement such as cubism and abstraction. During the early years of the 20th century, artists were fascinated with the idea of creating a new type of visual language. That means they chose

to move away from recreating images from real life. Part of what led to this interest in experimentation was the invention of photography. There seemed to be less point in spending hours recreating what could be seen, especially when a camera could do it quicker and better. This is when artists became interested in depicting what could not be seen like emotional and psychological states.

Lazzell's career was developing during this time. She studied art at West Virginia University and received a degree in art history and fine arts in 1905. She went on to study art in New York City and Europe with notable artists including Georgia O'Keeffe. She was active in the modernist art colony at Provincetown, Massachusetts and was one of the founding members of the Provincetown Printers, a group of artists who experimented with a white-line woodcut technique. Lazzell excelled in wood block printing.

Have you not heard of Blanche Lazzell before? Unfortunately, women artists historically have not been recognized for their talent and contributions to the art world as much as men have. Be sure to visit The Rockwell Museum's [eMuseum digital collection](#) to see more [celebrated women artists' work](#) and our [collection of modern art](#).

DO!

View some short videos and learn more about abstract art.

[Art is for everyone! What is abstract art?](#)

[Steve Martin on how to look at abstract art/MoMA BBC](#)

[The Case for Abstraction/The Art Assignment/PBS](#)

Abstract Art Project!



Maria B. Davis, *Hiding Amidst the Reeds*, 2006.



<https://artprojectsforkids.org>

This project can be adapted for all ages.*

Materials:

- Paper (the heavier the weight the better) pencil, ruler, different sized jar lids (not too large)
 - Colored pencils, crayons, markers or paint
1. Think about different shapes and pattern you want to draw on your paper.
 2. Use the ruler and a pencil to draw straight lines over the paper, connecting them to form triangles, squares and rectangles that overlap and cover the entire paper. If curved shapes are desired, use a compass or different sized jar lids to create circles, half-moon shapes or crescents.
 3. After the design is created, use colored pencils, crayons, markers or paints to block in the patterns so that no shape has the same color as the area next to it.
 4. Choose a color scheme. Each individual block of color can be either one color or even a blend of more than one. Shading can also be used, by coloring or painting the outside edges of a particular shape a darker shade and lightening the color by adding white as you get closer to the center of the shape.

Reference: Bright Hub Education