



ART | AT HOME



GLUE AND SALT ART

Lonnie Holley is an African American artist, musician, filmmaker and educator. He grew up in Alabama during the Jim Crow era, a time of legalized racial segregation and discrimination from just after the Civil War to the 1950s. He was the seventh of 27 children. He worked picking cotton, digging graves, picking up trash and cooking at Disney World before he began making art at 29 years old. Although Holley is most well known as a sculptor, he is also a painter. What do you notice about “Blue Jay”?

Holley is inspired by what he calls the African American tradition of making “what you can . . . with nothing.” There were no garbage trucks in the rural neighborhood where he grew up, so his neighbors buried their trash at the edge of their property. This was where he began looking for art materials. Inspired by Malcolm X, a civil rights activist, the artist says that he creates art “by any means necessary.” To this day, he carries a backpack with him just in case he finds something he can use. Holley might have been inspired to make “Blue Jay” by something he saw in his own yard or on a walk. Where might he have seen this animal? What kinds of things do you notice when you’re exploring outdoors?

Lonnie B. Holley (American, b. 1950), “Blue Jay,” 1994. Oil and watercolor on paper. Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; The Mullis Collection, Gift of Carl and Marian Mullis in honor of William Underwood Eiland. GMAA 2012.840.

For this activity you will need:



watercolor paints



paintbrush



heavy paper



glue



salt

To make your glue painting:

1. Head outside to find some inspiration. What kinds of shapes do you notice? Try observing the clouds, the plants and anything made by humans.
2. Look for animals! Are there birds or squirrels in the trees? Bugs flying around? A group of community cats in your backyard or neighborhood?
3. After you’ve gotten inspired outdoors, start your work of art by painting a watercolor background. Include the shapes, colors and patterns you saw. Let it dry.
4. Squeeze glue on the paper to draw an animal that inspired you.
5. Pour salt on the glue while it is still wet. Make sure all the parts of your glue drawing are totally covered in salt. Then, turn the paper over so that the extra salt falls off. Be careful! This part can be messy!
6. Once the glue dries, it’s time to paint your drawing again! Make sure your paintbrush is full of color and water, then gently touch it to the surface of the salt. The color will spread along the lines without getting on the paper. What do you notice about how the paint covers the salt crystals with color? Repeat until the whole outline is colored!



Once you’re finished, share with us!
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