

# Art Activity

Exploring Colors & Meanings: Create an Abstract Collage  
Inspired by Odili Donald Odita's Mural at VMFA



**Take & Make:** Create an Abstract Collage

**Ages:** 5+

**Collection:** Modern and Contemporary Art

**Subject Area:** Fine Arts, Visual Arts

**Activity Type:** Hands-On Activity



Work with your family or friends to create a work inspired by Odili Donald Odita's mural at VMFA!

## Odili Donald Odita at VMFA

From August 12 to September 22, 2020, VMFA hosted artist Odili Donald Odita, as the mural **Procession** was installed in VMFA's Atrium. *Procession* is a site-specific, commissioned work by Nigerian-born American artist Odili Donald Odita. Odita designed the mural to activate the Atrium space with color, line, and forms. Using acrylic and latex paint, acrylic soft gel medium, and varnish, assistants from the artist's studio in Philadelphia executed the painting based on the artist's plan.



The use of color to Odita is personal. According to his artist statement, Odita says:

***The colors I use are personal: they reflect the collection of visions from my travels locally and globally. This is also one of the hardest aspects of my work as I try to derive the colors intuitively, hand-mixing and coordinating them along the way. In my process, I cannot make a color twice – it can only appear to be the same.***

– Odili Donald Odita  
(Odilidonaldodita.com, Updated Jan. 2021)

Be inspired by Odili Donald Odita and create a work of your own! Consider what different colors and shapes can represent, or mean to you. Take inspiration from nature, your community, and your vision for the world before starting your abstract collage. Add different recycled materials to your work to add texture, depth, and color.

## Abstract Collage Materials:

- Paper base (this could be paper grocery bags cut open, poster board, watercolor paper, recycled paper, or any sheet of paper)
- Paint, markers, and/or crayons
- Paint brush (if using paint)
- Glue or tape
- Scissors
- Paper and pencil for sketching your design
- **OPTIONAL:** Recycled or natural materials (i.e. magazines, cardboard, string, flowers, leaves, buttons, etc.)

## Instructions:

1. Murals like Odili Odita's work at VMFA are typically created directly on a wall or ceiling surface. Since you might not want to paint directly on walls at your home, create a collage to decorate a space instead! For this project, you will use a paper base for your work.

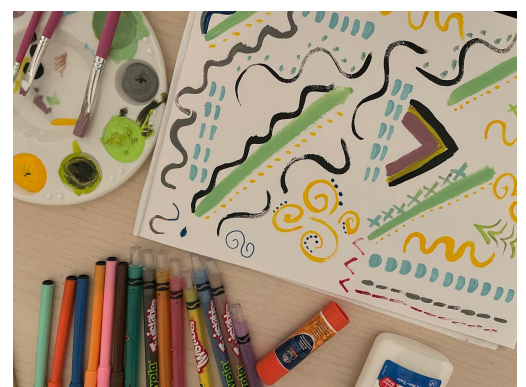
2. Before you get started, think about a place in your home, room, or yard for your collage. Once you have a place or space in mind, find a paper base for your work. You can use any paper you have at home - this may be a paper bag cut open, a large sheet of paper, poster board, or recycled paper. Make sure your base is a size that will fit in your selected location for display later.



3. Now that you have your base, it's time to consider colors, shapes, and how they work with the space you have chosen for your art work. Think about the following things:

- a. Do different colors make you feel different emotions? What emotion does the color orange bring to mind? How about blue? Select a few colors that reflect different emotions or feelings for you.
- b. Does the space you are creating this work for inspire any specific shapes or lines?

4. Once you have selected the colors, shapes, and lines you want to incorporate, select your markers, paints, or crayons. You may wish to sketch your ideas and designs on scrap paper first.



5. After sketching, use paint, markers, or crayons to begin creating the design on your paper base. If you have used paint, you will need to let your work dry before going to the next step.

6. You may choose to add recycled materials, natural objects, or found materials to your work. These can range from household items such as old newspapers, buttons or string to items you can find outside such as flowers and leaves. Consider different textures that might differ from your markers, crayons, paint, and paper base. Attach your items with glue or tape.
7. Hang your finished work in the space you selected that inspired you and enjoy!



## Explore at VMFA!



### ***Procession***, 2020

Artist: Odili Donald Odita, Nigerian, born 1966 (Artist)

Medium: Acrylic latex matte/flat wall paint, acrylic soft gel medium, varnish

Collection: Modern and Contemporary Art

Location: VMFA Atrium

Object Number: 2019.43