

BLANTON

ART WHERE YOU ARE STUDIO



Joan Mitchell Melted Crayon Art

Image: (left) Joan Mitchell, *Rock Bottom*, 1960-1961, Oil on canvas, 78 in. x 68 in., Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Gift of Mari and James A. Michener, 1991.



MATERIALS

- Cardboard or newspaper for work surface
- Blank canvas (any size)
- Heat gun or hairdryer
- Hot glue gun
- Crayons

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Reflect

To create your Joan Mitchell-inspired work of art, first recall a memory and feeling you have towards a particular place and time that you spent out in nature.

Step 2: Visualize

Once you've chosen your landscape, visualize it. Think about the colors that come to mind. From the box of crayons, select the colors you'd like to use to recreate this memory and the feelings it evokes. Remove the paper wrappers from the crayons and if you'd like, break the crayons down to a variety of sizes.

Tip: Set crayons in warm (not boiling!) water for five minutes to help remove crayon wrappers.

Step 3: Arrange

With newspaper or cardboard underneath, set your canvas down on a flat surface. Lay out the crayon pieces in your desired composition on top of the canvas. When you're happy with how they're set, carefully glue them in place with the glue gun. We recommend an adult doing this step to protect little fingers from the hot glue.

Step 4: Create

Use your hairdryer to melt the crayons. Begin by focusing on one area of the canvas at a time. Experiment with the air settings, as if they were each a different type of paint stroke producing thick or thin marks and runny drips and paint strokes. Carefully move your canvas around, tilting it gently towards one side or slowly rotating it.

How will you know when you're done? You'll just feel it! Let dry for at least 10–15 minutes to ensure the melted crayons have completely cooled and hardened.

There you have it — your own Joan Mitchell-inspired work of art! What will you title your remembered landscape?

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- [Joan Mitchell Foundation](#)
- [Joan Mitchell on How to Be an Artist](#)
- [The Art Story: Joan Mitchell](#)

Watch

- [PBS Chicago Tonight: Joan Mitchell](#)
- [Women Artists and Postwar Abstraction](#)
- [Joan Mitchell in 60 seconds](#)

Reflect

What words would you use to describe the mood or feeling you get from your painting?

Describe some of the physical motions you see made by the variety of mark-making?

What were the signs that helped you decide that your painting was finished?