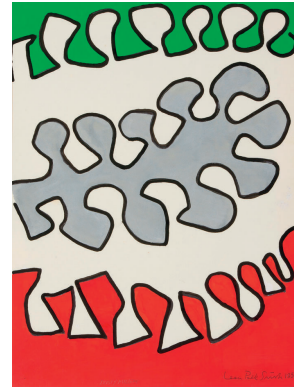


STRIPPING THINGS Down

Simplifying objects from everyday life was a key principle of Leon Polk Smith's approach to making abstract art as we can see in the below example. Here he took inspiration from the Dusty Miller plant and through a process of simplification, transformed it into an abstract artwork.



Leon Polk Smith (American, 1906-1996) *Dusty Miller*, 1955, gouache on paper, 23 3/4 x 17 7/8 inches. Gift of Leon Polk Smith Foundation, 2015.011.406

Leon Polk Smith (American, 1906-1996) *Dusty Miller*, 1953, gouache on paper, 18 x 14 inches. Gift of Leon Polk Smith Foundation, 2015.011.203

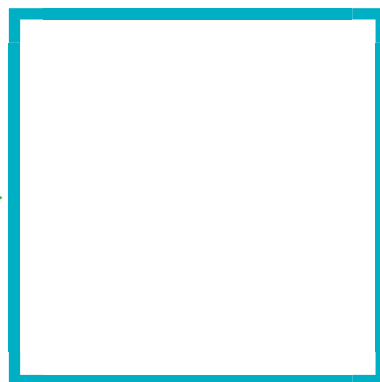
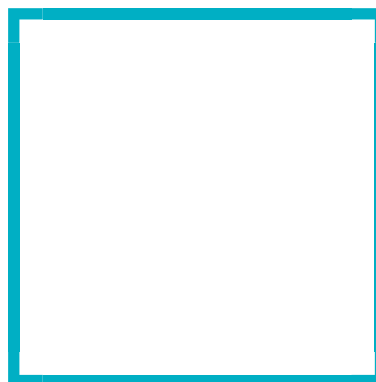
Instructions

In this activity we'll simplify an everyday object and turn it into an abstract artwork, but first we must understand what Simplifying means.

Simplifying in Art

Imagine you're telling a story, but instead of using many words, you want to tell it in just a few. You'll pick out the most important parts and skip the tiny details. That's kind of what artists do when they use "simplifying" in art! "Simplifying" means taking something with a lot of details and making it simpler. It's like drawing a smiley face to represent a person instead of a detailed portrait. By leaving out some details, artists can focus on the big idea or emotion they want to show.

CREATE YOUR OWN SIMPLIFIED ARTWORK



Pick an everyday object and make a detailed sketch.

Redraw and reduce the amount of details by smoothing out your lines.

Redraw your smoothed drawing and reduce the details to basics.

LEON POLK SMITH

AFFINITIES IN ART AND DESIGN

In this exhibition, we look at the similarities between Leon Polk Smith's abstract artworks and industrial design objects from our George Kravis Collection. **Shape** and **Contour** are two of the elements that help to demonstrate the relationship between Smith's abstract art and the design objects on display. Let's take a moment to explore how shapes are made.

Let's Learn!

In this activity, we'll make two types of shapes: **Organic** and **Rectilinear**. Firstly, we must understand the difference between **Organic Shapes** and **Rectilinear Shapes**.

Organic Shapes in Art

Have you ever looked at clouds in the sky and thought they looked like animals or other things? These kinds of shapes are called "**organic shapes**" in art.

Organic shapes are shapes that look like things from nature, like plants, animals, and even our own bodies. They are usually curvy and flowing, not like the straight lines of squares and rectangles.

Rectilinear Shapes in Art

When you think of shapes like squares, rectangles, and triangles, what do they all have in common? Straight lines, right? These shapes with straight lines and angles are called "**rectilinear shapes**" in art.

"**Rectilinear**" might sound like a big word, but if we break it down, "recti-" means "straight" and "-linear" means "lines." So, **rectilinear** shapes are shapes made up of straight lines and sharp corners.

Let's Look!

Now that we know what **Organic** and **Rectilinear** Shapes look like let's try to spot some examples. Below are three objects featured in this exhibition. Using a pencil, draw a circle around all the **Organic Shapes** you can find. Then draw a square around all the **Rectilinear Shapes** you can find. How many **Organic Shapes** can you circle? How many **Rectilinear Shapes** can you square?



Frank O. Gehry, 1929, *Wiggle Side Chair*, 1992-2008, Cardboard/Fiberboard. OSU Museum of Art, George R. Kravis II, 2018.016.028



Leon Polk Smith (American, 1906-1996) Untitled, 1960, acrylic on paper, 18 3/4 inches. Gift of Leon Polk Smith Foundation, 2015.011.567.



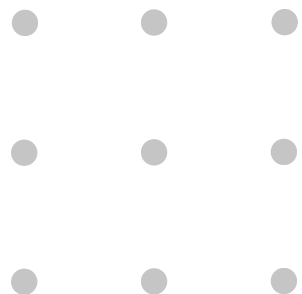
Designed by Ettore Sottsass (Italian, 1917-2007) Hsing Vase, designed ca. 1973, ceramic, [Made by Alessio Sarri (Italian, 20th century)] 7 x 7 x 4 inches. Gift of George R. Kravis II, 2018.016.179.1-3.



Leon Polk Smith (American, 1906-1996) Untitled, 1960, torn paper, 7 x 7 1/2 inches. Gift of Leon Polk Smith Foundation, 2015.011.573.

Now let's draw some Organic and Rectilinear Shapes!

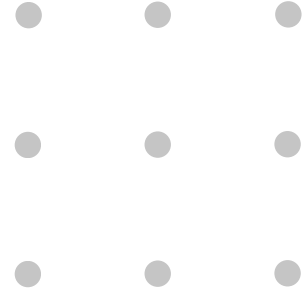
ORGANIC



Instructions

Using the above dots, start at the top left dot and draw a curved line that connects with at least one dot in the middle and two dots at the bottom. Then, without lifting your pencil, continue your curved line back to the starting dot at the top left. You've just made an Organic Shape!

RECTILINEAR



Instructions

Using the above dots, start at the top left dot and draw a straight line that connects with at least one dot in the middle and two dots at the bottom. Then, without lifting your pencil continue your line back to the starting dot at the top left. You've just made a Rectilinear Shape!

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

George R. Kravis II Collection

Like Leon Polk Smith, many of the designers featured in this exhibition used their imaginations, coupled with inspiration from nature and popular culture, to rethink and reinvision everyday objects. From tables and chairs to lamps and typewriters, these designers challenged themselves to think differently about the relationship between form and function.

Instructions

In this activity, we'll challenge ourselves to think differently and creatively about how we can reimagine an everyday object or invent something completely new.

Using the space provided, pick an object, like a chair or a phone, and challenge yourself to see it differently. Ask yourself why this object looks like this and how this object functions. Is there another way to envision this object?

After you've drafted your design, use the lines below to craft a sentence describing what it does and why you made your design choices.

WHAT DOES IT DO?



Verner Panton (Danish, 1826-1998) K3 / Heart Cone Chair, designed 1958/1959, [Made by Vitra, Weil am Rhein, Germany] wool upholstery, foam rubber, steel, stainless steel, and plastic 36 x 40 x 28 3/4 inches. Gift of George R. Kravis II Collection, 2018.016.048.

DESIGN YOUR OWN