

CALIFORNIA ARTISTS

Projects for Kids

Richard Diebenkorn

Richard Diebenkorn (1922-1993) loved to draw from the time he was a very young boy. He carried his love of drawing into his paintings, changing & shifting the outlines of shapes as he refined his images. Diebenkorn is one of the most influential painters of his time, leaving behind abstract & figurative paintings, drawings & prints that reflect the art of the era with integrity, intelligence & beauty.

Figure Drawings

Starting in the 1950's Richard Diebenkorn met weekly with artist friends to draw from live models, sketching the angles & shapes of the poses with clear, descriptive lines. At that time, it was considered old fashioned to draw realistically since many artists were making abstract artworks of colorful shapes. The friends drew anyway, later adding these figures to their paintings, a surprising change.

- ◆ Pose your teacher or friend in a comfortable visible spot.
- ◆ Before drawing, look at the shapes & lines of the pose, background & clothes.
- ◆ Draw the outside edge of your model. Make your line curve as the shapes change. Look at the model, not your paper. Add details.
- ◆ Next time, choose a new pose or a different model.



Student artwork by Taylor W., grade 5



Richard Diebenkorn, 1922-1993, *Untitled (for Gilda)*, 1964
black ink on wove paper, 43.4 x 35.7 cm (sheet)
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Gift of Wayne and Betty Jean Thiebaud, 1994.184.1



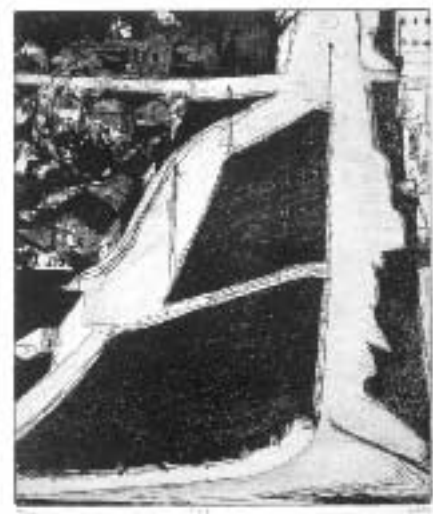
Richard Diebenkorn, 1922-1993, *Blue Loop*, 1980
color spit bite aquatint and soft ground etching, 38 x 30.4 cm (image)
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Crown Point Press Archive,
Gift of Crown Point Press 1991.28.635

Abstraction

Richard Diebenkorn tried to simplify his paintings. He was interested in shapes you see when you look at people, buildings or trees. He painted these pictures over & over again, taking out details until often only shapes remained. Though his pictures started with images, sometimes they became abstract echoes of the original picture, painted in shimmering colors & flat shapes. Search "Diebenkorn" at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco site to see more of his artwork:

www.famsf.org/fam/about/index.asp

- ◆ Draw part of your room on dark construction paper with simple lines. Erase some lines & add new ones. Simplify your drawing.
- ◆ Draw with glue over the main lines of your drawing. Let dry.
- ◆ Fill the shapes with colored chalk, layering colors into rich hues.
- ◆ Display your abstract artwork.



Richard Diebenkorn, 1922-1993, *#33 from 41 Etchings*, 1965
Aquatint, hard ground etching, and drypoint
Sheet: 451 x 375 mm (17 3/4 x 14 3/4 in.); Image: 298 x 248 mm (11 3/4 x 9 3/4 in.)
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Anderson Graphic Arts Collection, gift of the Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson Charitable Foundation, 1996.74.76.33



Student artwork by Maria B.

Paintings Change

In art school Richard Diebenkorn had to make several drawings of the same picture. He liked this process of redoing his idea, which brought surprises & changes to his pictures. Diebenkorn started with an idea & then painted over parts of it, changed others, reversed colors, layered paint & barely covered lines. His final picture no longer looked like how it started. He painted many pictures about the beach, light & sky of California this way. Learn more about the artist at: <http://www.sfmoma.org/voices/index.html>

- ◆ Try watching your own art change. Work from a photo or sketch from outdoors.
- ◆ Use colored chalk to draw the scene with simple lines. Put the photo away & get ideas only from your drawing
- ◆ Make changes. Erase some lines & add new ones. Simplify. Use tempera paint or chalk colors for your picture. Paint sections. Let dry, then add other layers.
- ◆ Consider the picture lines, shapes, colors, & feeling. Change things that help your design. Stop when your painting tells you it is done.



Student artwork by Nicole K., grade 4

Look in the Mercury News

- ◆ Look up the meanings of "abstract." Find examples in the newspaper of at least two different definitions.
- ◆ Buildings have many lines & angles. Search the real estate section for ideas for your abstract paintings.

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230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View, CA
650.917.6800 | www.arts4all.org

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