

Mola Art



Global Links



Mola Art is made by the Kuna Women from Panama. In the Kuna native language 'mola' means shirt or clothing. They are used as decorations on clothing or furniture or wall hangings. They are used as panels on the front and back of their traditional dress which is known as one of the most decorative clothing items from the area. The images used are chosen from nature and reflect the local environment.

These artworks can become incredibly intricate depending on the amount of layering and variety of colours and shapes that are used. This makes it a great activity that can suit a range of abilities and ages.

Many countries and cultures have famous traditional textiles, often with bright and intricate patterns. The printing of traditional shapes and colours occurs through weaving, such as the Scottish Tartans or stamping, such as Batik from Indonesia. Designs globally often contain influences of other countries due to its history, including colonisation. African wax prints are actually a Dutch creation inspired by Batik design.

The embellishment of cloth, using sewing, embroidery or even small mirrors sewn into clothing can be found in a vast array of designs, colours and countries globally.



Vocabulary

Art (n)



Arte

Colours (n)



Colores

Layer (v)



Poner en capas

Curriculum Links

Art

Art

Mola Art



Thick cardboard for your stencil



Different colours of construction paper or thin cardboard, A3 size ideal



Glue sticks



Scissors



A pencil

Optional:



Animal Stencils such as sealife stencils, Australian animals or plastic animal stencils

Mola Art video:





Share your activity images with us!

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Method

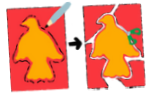
Layer One

- 1 Choose your animal or bird for the artwork 
- 2 Draw a simple stencil outline on A4 cardboard in either landscape or portrait. Free hand sketch it or use a stencil template to copy, making it bigger to fit inside the A4 paper. It should not fill the whole paper. Cut out your stencil
- 3 Choose a piece of coloured card (for your animal or bird). Place the stencil on the paper, trace around it and carefully cut out the shape. 


Layer Four

- 7 Stick your three coloured animal onto a final main backing coloured card piece.
- 8 Next use different colours to cut out simple large shapes to paste inside the animal that represent eyes, wings, hands, feet, etc.
- 9 Use other colours to cut out smaller shapes to paste inside the animal shape. Use a variety of shapes to make it look interesting. 

Layer Two

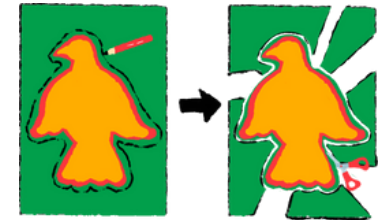
- 4 Choose another piece of coloured card which contrasts with the first piece. Stick the animal/bird shape you've just cut out onto this card.
- 5 Sketch around the outside of the stencil shape, around 2 cms from the shape to create a 'larger' version of the animal. Cut out around this shape. You now have an animal/bird of one colour, and an outside 'halo' of another colour. 

Background

- 10 Draw some different large shapes from the edges of layer four and cut out.
- 11 Choose a final piece of card to glue the artwork onto. Choose a colour that looks good showing through the shapes. 
- 12 Finally finish by cutting a variety of smaller shapes to glue onto the background around the animal. Consider colour choice and balance

Layer Three

- 6 Repeat this process again by sticking the two coloured animal shape onto a third contrasting colour, sketching an outline of 2 cms or so around it, then cutting this out.



Optional

- 13 Cut out more shapes from the final artwork around the edges to create more layers. Fill them by glueing large scraps of paper behind to fill the spaces. You can make the artwork as simple or complicated as you wish.



Explore!

Identify native animals, plants or birds from your country. Create designs using Mola art with these national icons to create a cross cultural piece of artwork.