

GEOMETRIC ABSTRACTION

#NBMAAatHome

Inspired by the abstract painting, *Abstraction with Red Circle*, by female artist Esphyr Slobodkina in the Museum's permanent collection, play around with shapes on a piece of paper and see all the different arrangements you can come up with. Once you glue down your final work, try our poetry prompt to write about a color you used in your artwork!

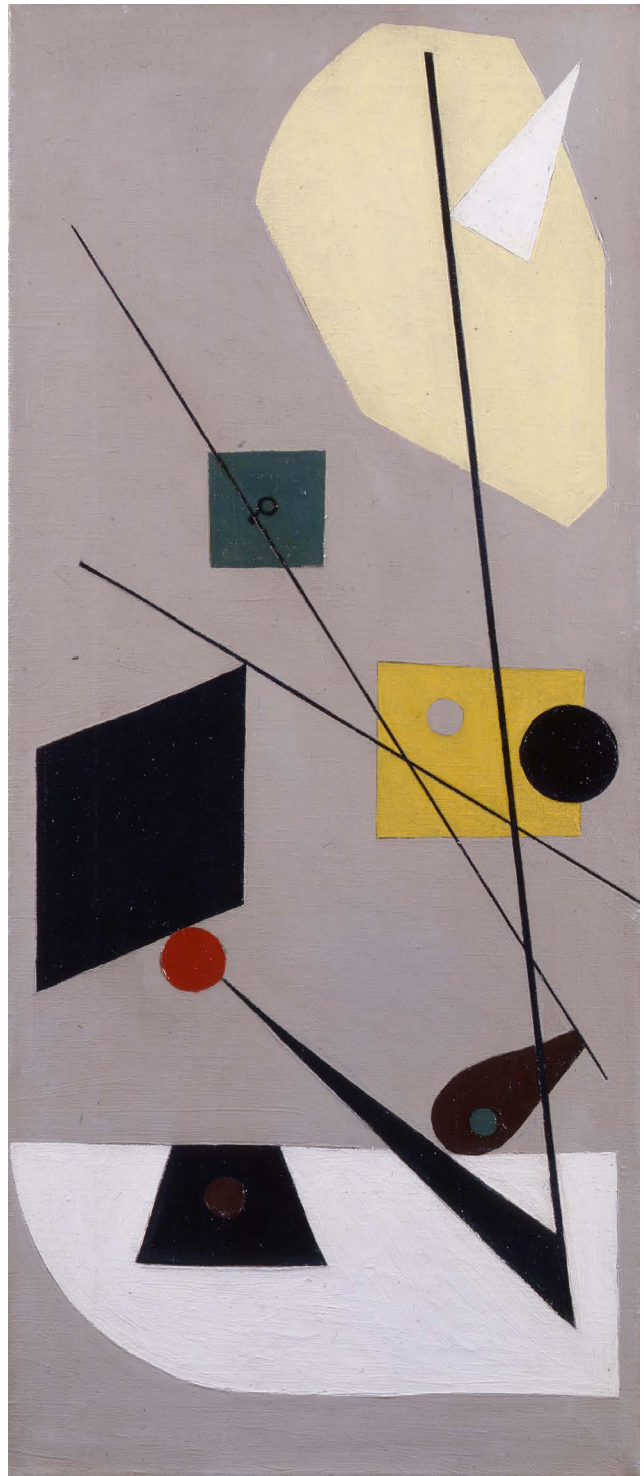
1. Look at the painting by Slobodkina with a family member and ask each other these questions:

- What colors and shapes do you see?
- How are the shapes arranged in the painting?
- What feelings or thoughts do you get when you look at this painting? What colors or shapes give you that impression?
- Review the vocabulary words below before answering this last question. Why do you think artists like Slobodkina chose to paint in an abstract style, rather than a realistic one? How might museum visitors view abstract art and realistic art differently?

Esphyr Slobodkina was an abstract painter in the 20th century. Her early artwork did not portray life-like objects, people, or scenes, but rather simple, rich colors and flat forms. By doing so, Slobodkina and other abstract artists intended to challenge the traditional standards of Western art.

ABSTRACT adj. relating to general ideas or qualities rather than specific people, things, or actions

REALISTIC: adj. accurately representing what is natural or real



Esphyr Slobodkina, *Abstraction with Red Circle*, 1938, Oil on canvas, 28 x 12 in., from the Olga H. Knoepke Fund

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2. Collect your materials

*This is a suggested list only, you can use whichever objects and materials you have available to you for this project!

- Piece of white paper
- Colored construction paper
- Scraps of felt or fabric
- Pieces of cardboard
- String, ribbon, or yarn
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Glue

3. Ask yourself these questions before you start your artwork:

- What emotion or thought do I want my artwork to be about?
- What colors and shapes can I use to express this emotion or thought?
- How can I arrange the shapes on my paper to illustrate these ideas?

4. Start creating! Play around with different arrangements before gluing down your final composition.

- Cut shapes out of colored paper and place them on your white paper
- Use markers, crayons, or colored pencil to color in shapes if you do not have colored paper
- Cut pieces of string, yarn, or ribbon and add them to your design for curvy or straight lines
- If you prefer drawing, use pencils and crayons to draw lines and shapes

5. Take a picture of your creation and share it with the Museum using #NBMAAatHome

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Abstract painters like Esphyr Slobodkina enjoyed using colors in their art to stimulate different emotions and thoughts.

Explore the ways colors relate to your emotions and everyday life by writing a color sensory poem. First, choose a color to write about—maybe one that you used in your artwork! Next, think about how the color tastes, smells, sounds, feels, and looks and fill in your ideas by following the poem template. Recite your completed poem to family!

My Color Poem

By: _____

_____ is _____.
(name of color) (noun)

_____ tastes like _____.
(name of color) (noun)

_____ smells like _____.
(name of color) (noun)

_____ sounds like _____.
(name of color) (noun)

_____ feels like _____.
(name of color) (noun)

_____ looks like _____.
(name of color) (noun)

_____ makes me feel _____.
(name of color) (emotion)

_____ is _____.
(name of color) (adjective)

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