

Abstracted Flower Study

Draw flowers in a colorful relief printmaking style, as seen in the Focus Exhibition *The Flower Prints of Katsuhira Tokushi*.

draw from the
COLLECTION
... at home!

Supplies:

- pencil
- paper
- eraser
- colored pencils
- flowers
- vase (optional)



Step 1

Take a moment to think about the many shapes and colors of flowers. Collect a grouping of fresh or artificial flowers to draw. For best results, use a variety of sizes, shapes and colors.

Helpful hint: pictures of flowers taken on a nature walk or seen in an artwork can also be used as a substitute for physical flowers.

Note: do not use a flash for photos taken inside the museum.

Step 2

Arrange flowers as desired (ex: arranged in a vase) and select the perspective for your drawing. Draw all the flowers seen or a close-up view of just a few flowers.

Helpful hint: for best results, fill the entire page with flowers. Keep at least one flower fully seen in the drawing when using a close-up perspective to provide context to your drawing.



Katsuhira Tokushi (Japanese, 1904–1971), *July: Lilly*, 1961, woodblock print, ink and color on paper. Private collection



full view

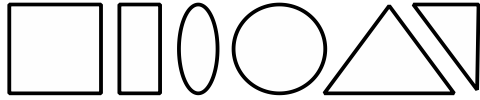


close-up view



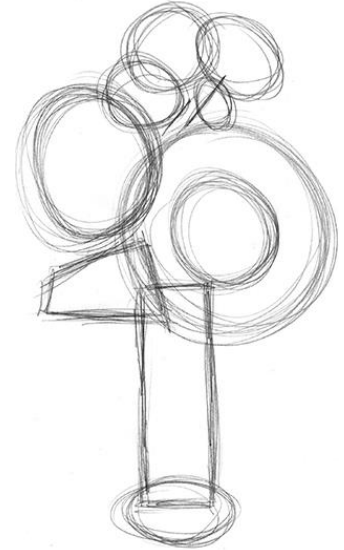
Step 3

Draw the basic geometric shapes of the flowers and objects in your composition (ex: circle for a flower, rectangle for vase, etc.) at the full size you wish them to be.



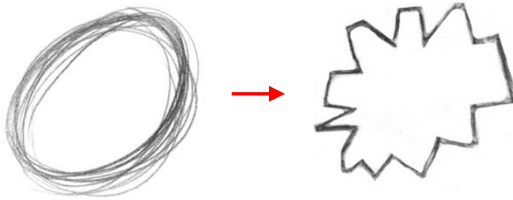
Helpful hint: compare the sizes of all the objects to accurately gauge proportions (ex: vase is half as wide as largest flower, equal in height to largest flower, etc.).

Note: skip to **step 6** if you wish to keep your drawing in this abstract style.

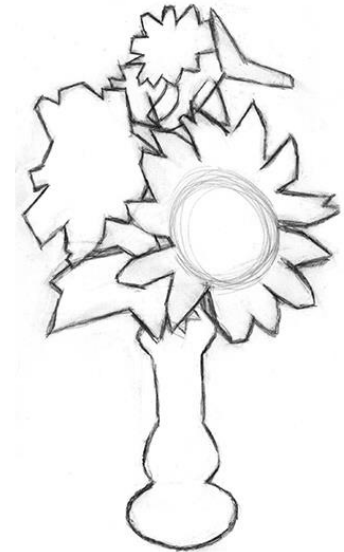


Step 4

Refine all outer contours of the geometric shapes to best resemble their corresponding elements (ex: refine circle to look more like outer contour of a flower, etc.). Draw lightly and erase any former lines as needed.

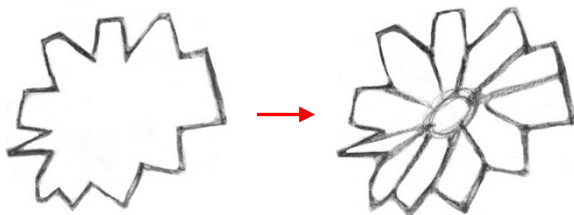


Note: the amount of shape refinement can vary from object to object for more abstraction if desired (ex: some flowers left as circles while other flowers are partially/fully refined, etc.).

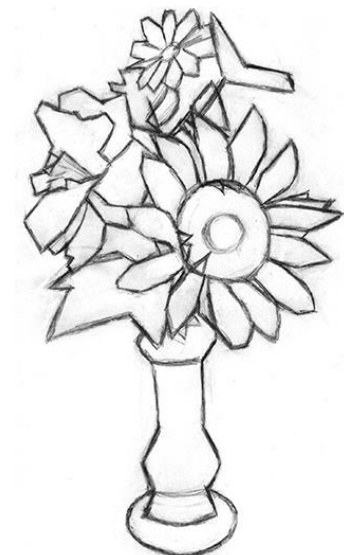


Step 5

Lightly draw and refine all interior details as needed (ex: draw the individual petals inside the flower shape).



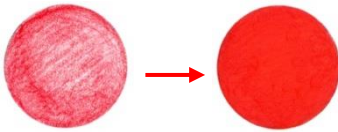
Note: interior and exterior shapes can also be further altered or abstracted at this stage if desired (ex: petals stretched into longer, more exaggerated triangle shapes).



Step 6

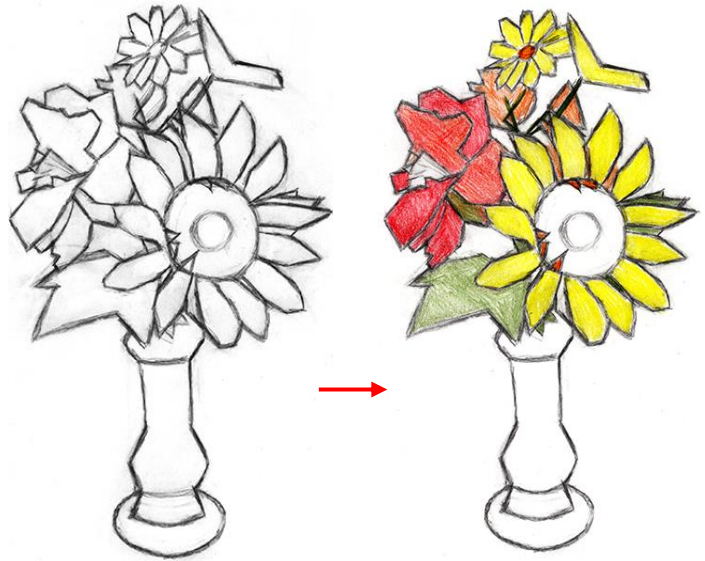
Fill in the general color of each object with colored pencils (ex: color the petals of flower yellow).

Helpful hint: enhance the general colors by blending layers of other similar hues into them (ex: add orange to a red base color) while continually adding firmer pressure with each color layer.



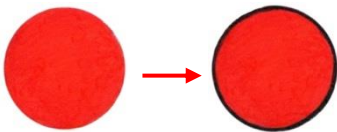
Helpful hint: for best color effect, fill in areas with color until white of paper is no longer seen.

Note: colors used in drawing can also be colors of choice rather than colors seen in the flower study if desired (ex: color a white vase aqua, blue, or green).

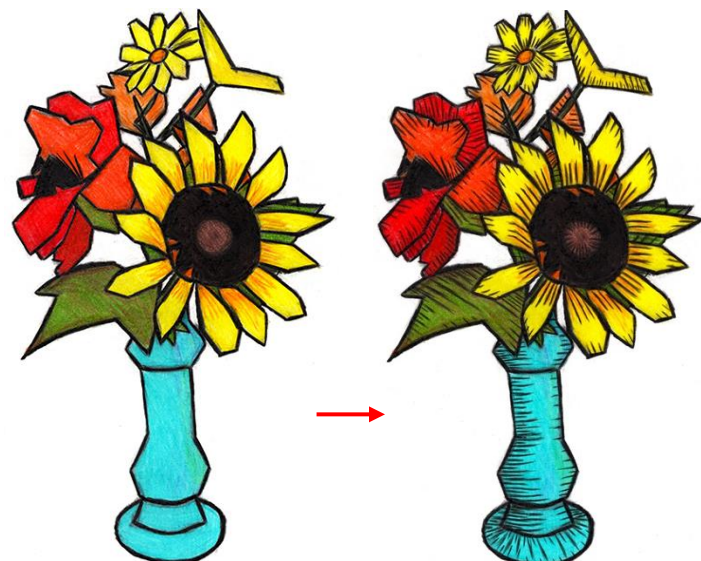
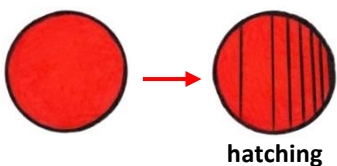


Step 7

Give the drawing an abstracted relief print look by outlining all shapes with a black color pencil.



Helpful hint: use black hatching lines to provide abstracted value and dimension to the shapes. Place hatching lines close together to create dark shadows.



Step 8 (optional)

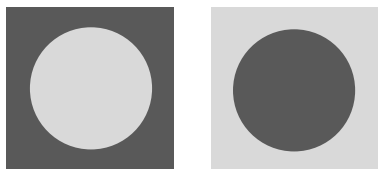
Add color to the background of the drawing. Multiple colors can be used if desired.

Helpful hint: for best color effect, select a background color that will pop the flowers forward (ex: use a cool color background for a warm color flower).



warm vs. cool background

Helpful hint: for best dimensional effect, background colors should also contrast the focus drawing in value (ex: a light background for dark objects).



dark vs. light background



Resources

- [Color pencil blending techniques](#)
- [Simple flower arrangement techniques](#)
- [The Flower Prints of Katsuhira Tokushi](#)

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Questions about or ideas for Draw from the Collection? Email edu@daytonart.org