



Color Field Painting: Celebrate the Art of Alma Woodsey Thomas!

Explore color, shape and line inspired by the artwork of African American artist, Alma Woodsey Thomas. Alma Woodsey Thomas was an Expressionist painter and educator, known for her bright color field paintings. Color Field is a type of artwork in which painters use large shapes of colors to express themselves. Alma Woodsey Thomas was known for her style of repeating tiny, bright rectangles to create her artwork. While this project is inspired by her works of art, it is meant to be an opportunity for children to experience the *process* of making art rather than focusing on the finished product.

Materials:

- Paper (see template), cardstock preferable
 - If creating your own template, use various sized bowls to trace circles and a straightedge to trace lines
- Paint (yellow, blue, red). Washable kids paint preferable
- Small plates or trays for paint (one for each color)
- Sponge, cut a 2" x 1" rectangle to use as a stamp (make a stamp for each color)
- Bowl of water to clean sponges
- Scissors

Try it!

- Create a Stamp - cut off a piece of a sponge, an approximate 2" x 1" rectangle.
- Pour a small amount of paint onto a plate/tray (keep colors separate).
- Choose a template; start-with a straight line template first before trying a circle template.
- Model to your child how to dip the sponge into one color of paint and then stamp it onto the paper, trying to follow the pattern on the template. Remember - it's about the *process*, not the product. It's ok if your child stamps outside the lines of the template.
- Your child can decide how many colors they would like to use.

Guiding Questions:

- What color are you painting with?
- How does that color make you feel?
- What shapes do you see?

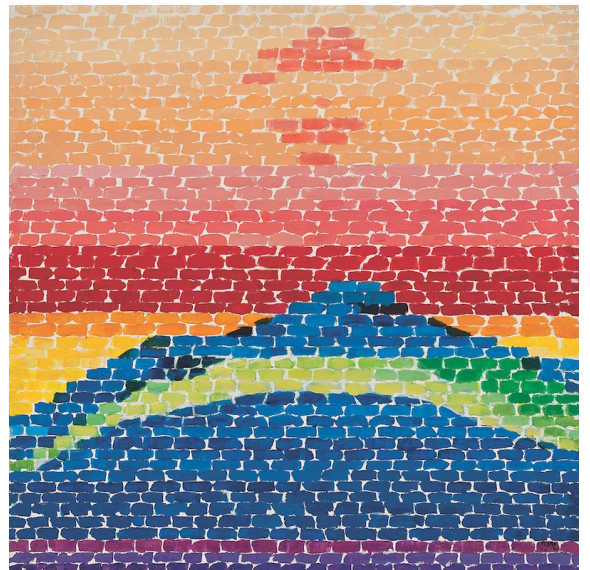
Learning Behind the Play:

- Builds neural connections in the brain through sensory play with paint and three-dimensional objects
- Develops concentration skills through a focused painting exercise
- Develops fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination through gripping and stamping

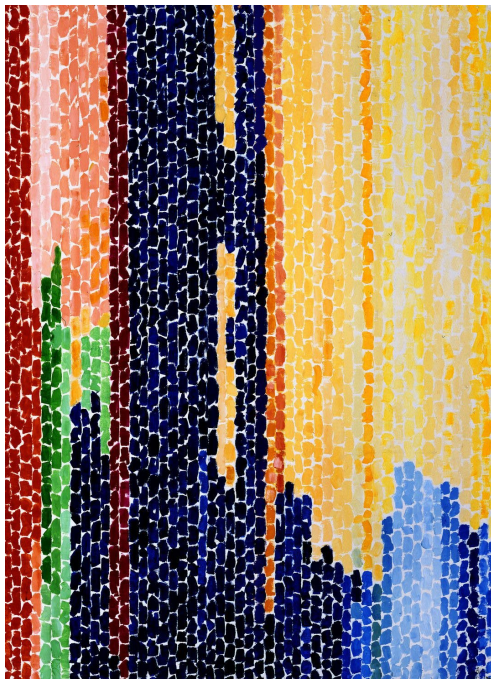
Take It Further:

Experiment with different formations (horizontal lines, vertical lines, circles), stamp shapes, and colors.

Alma Woodsey Thomas



Thomas, Alma. *Apollo 12 Splash Down*. 1970. Acrylic and graphite on canvas. The Studio Museum in Harlem., New York. <https://www.culturetype.com/2019/07/16/50-years-ago-alma-thomas-made-space-paintings-that-imagined-the-moon-and-mars/>, accessed 8 February 2021.



Thomas, Alma. *Launch Pad*, 1970. Acrylic on canvas. National Air and Space Museum, Washington, DC. <https://airandspace.si.edu/multimedia-gallery/5launchpadjpg>, accessed 8 February 2021.



Thomas, Alma. *Resurrection*. 1966. Acrylic and graphite on canvas. White House Historical Association, Washington, D.C. <https://www.whitehousehistory.org/photos/resurrection-by-alma-thomas>, accessed 8 February 2021.

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