

Haley Prestifilippo | Session 2:

Discovering Nontraditional Mediums

List of Required Supplies:

- Be aware that any mediums or materials used may be destroyed in the process
- Objects that can potentially be turned into mediums. A few ideas include:
 - ▷ Nature: dirt, leaves, acorns, rocks, pollen, flowers, etc.
 - ▷ Food: carrots, Broccoli, tomatoes, cocoa powder, matcha, powdered Jell-O,
 - ▷ Candy: chocolate, Twizzlers, SweetARTS, etc.
 - ▷ Liquids: coffee (brewed or grounds), tea, juice (orange juice, grape, cranberry), milk
 - ▷ Spices – turmeric, cinnamon, etc.
 - ▷ Other: bar of soap, candle
- Brushes, pencils, straws, Q-Tips, water, rubbing alcohol, any other substrates and tools to facilitate new uses of these mediums
- Small cups as students need
- Paper towels
- Small plates or old lids, for placing materials such as paint or powders
 - ▷ Enough for each student to have at least one

Additional Links (optional):

Vik Muniz “The Sugar Children”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fH6lzV_tthU

Ted Talk by Vik Muniz: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ik9x-eu49_c

Vik Muniz “The Sugar Children” series images: <https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/valentina-fastest-36332>

Space/Facility Requirements: Tables, table coverings (inexpensive tablecloth or butcher paper), sink for cleaning up after.

Student Time Required: Flexible; 2-3 hours recommended but can be compressed or divided into multiple classes.

Step-by-step Instructions:

Students should bring an object to class that is small, but meaningful. A photo of the object works, but the object itself is best, so they can have a tactile experience with it also. If this is not doable, it is recommended that the instructor provides some small, interesting objects – old fast food toys or small thrifted objects are great for this.

Introduce artist Vik Muniz,

- Discuss his series of sugar portraits as well as other images done with chocolate and other foods.
- Discuss why the medium is so integral to the artwork, how it reinforces the concept.

Vocabulary

- **Medium:** The material used to create an artwork. For drawing, this is traditionally pencil, charcoal, graphite, or pastel.
- **Marks, mark-making:** The act of putting a medium on to a surface. These can be smooth, rough, quick, short, long, etc. – what else can the students think of?
- **Concept:** The idea behind an artwork. This could include the artist's goals, a theme, a question, an answer, etc.
- **Formal elements:** The basic elements of a drawing. . This includes the size and shape of the drawing, the placement of marks, use of images or abstraction, etc.

Exercise:

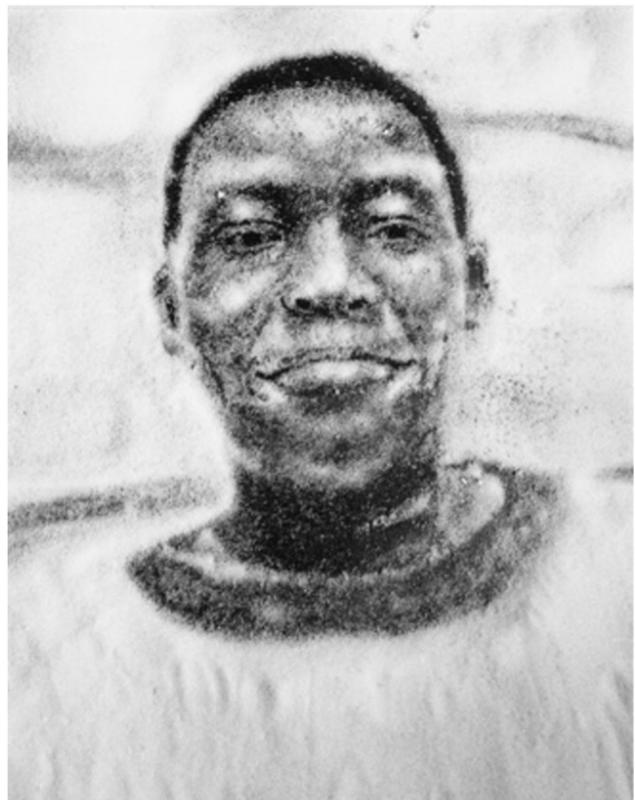
1. Students will first experiment with ways to make marks using nontraditional materials on drawing paper (30-45 mins)
 - a. Be sure to offer Q-Tips, brushes water, rubbing alcohol, other substrates and tools to facilitate more new uses of these mediums.
 - b. Ask students to compare the materials they are using with more traditional materials – how could the applications be similar?
2. Gather students to look at everyone's works and discuss discoveries.
3. Students create a drawing of their object, sharing their newly discovered mediums. They can combine these with more traditional mediums.

For example, a soft pastel layered with berry juice used as a watercolor.
Considering the following questions:

- a. How do these mediums change the mood or perception of this object?
 - b. How does choice of medium change the overall concept of an artwork?
 - c. How do you combine mediums?
4. Gather students to look at everyone's works to discuss.
- a. Difficulties encountered – how were these overcome? Were they successful?
 - b. How did the image of their object change in comparison to last class's image?
 - c. Any other observations.

Artist examples: Vik Muniz

Sugar drawings, portraits of sugar worker's children



Artist examples: Vik Muniz
Chocolate syrup drawing





Student examples. All images courtesy of the artists.

Bottom Left:

Gentry Leach
17" x 14"
Turmeric, lemon juice,
fake blood, pastel, color pencil

Bottom Right:

Isabel Mathena,
14" x 17"
Charcoal, coffee, coffee grounds,
turmeric, matcha, tanning oil,
alcohol marker

