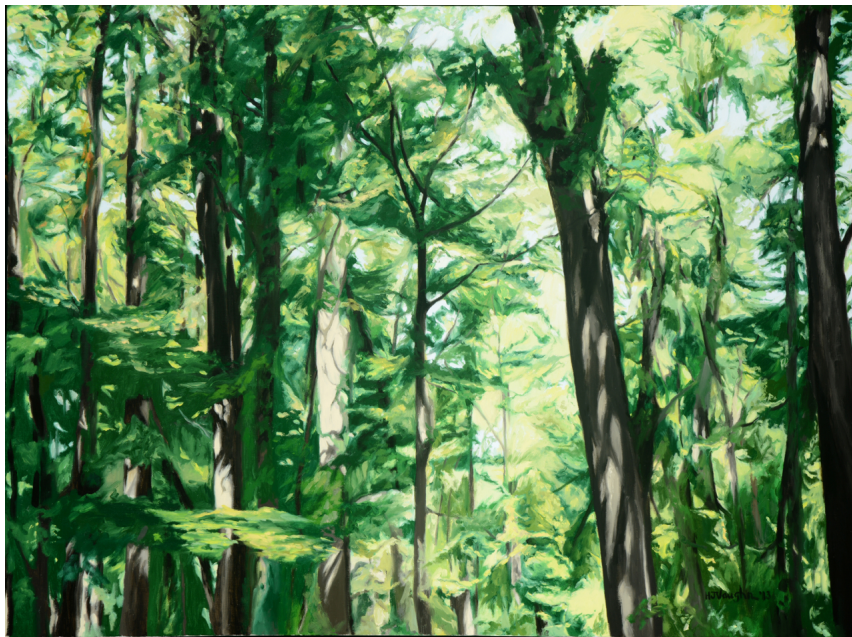


CREATE At-Home Art Activities for Kids & Families
Art in Nature: Crayon Resist Leaf Rubbings
Inspired by Helen Vaughn's *Tree Tops in Early Spring*

A multifaceted realist artist, Helen Vaughn has lived and worked in Huntsville for most of her long and productive career. Her work has undergone several transformations over the past four decades, moving back and forth between oil paint, pastel, and other drawing media, and encompassing figurative subject matter from a feminist viewpoint, as well as still life and landscape. A significant portion of her career has been focused on semi-autobiographical imagery, sometimes with narrative or self-reflective elements. In recent years Vaughn's work has tended toward landscapes and still life paintings, which demonstrate her command of composition, color, and light.

For many years, Vaughn has also been preoccupied with capturing intimate views of the Southern landscape, depicting the distinctive rolling hills and woodsy enclaves of North Alabama in every season. *Tree Tops in Early Spring* captures the artist's experience of hiking in a remote area of the region and encountering a canopy of tall trees with sunlight filtering through their immature leaves. "The green was that color that you see only during the spring before the leaves take on their summer, mature color," Vaughn observes. "That combination of green and light was what I wanted to paint. This is a landscape and there is actually no land present - only the trunks, the tops of trees and the light." Characteristic of the artist's mature painting style, the work is rendered with confident, active brushstrokes, masterfully orchestrated to convey the fresh and lively energy of the scene.

Helen Vaughn – *As a painter, I am continually fascinated by the properties of color, light, and shadow as they affect both the image and my own sense of time, place and inner harmony.*



Helen Vaughn (b. 1940, Birmingham, AL/lives in Huntsville, AL) *Tree Tops in Early Spring*, 2013, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches, Gift of Helen Vaughn

In this **At-Home Art Activity for Kids & Families**, we'll go through step-by-step on how to create a crayon resist leaf rubbing work of art inspired by Helen Vaughn's ***Tree Tops in Early Spring***, 2013.

Let's Begin:

- What kinds of textures can you find? smooth or rough
- What type of lines has the artist used in the work of art? straight, curvy, diagonal

Materials:

Pencil; Leaves

9 x 12 inches sheet of multi-media or watercolor paper, 60 lb.

Crayons – yellow, green yellow, green, brown, gray, white and black

Watercolors – blue

Art Activity Instructions:

1. Using your pencil, begin drawing vertical (straight) lines to create the trees in the background onto your 9 x 12 inches sheet of multi-media or watercolor paper. Be inspired by the photograph below of trees in nature. Look in your background to find different kinds of trees to draw onto your paper.



Art Materials



Spring Sunny Day!



2. After you complete drawing the trees, trace over your pencil line with the black crayon. The fill in the tree branches with your brown crayon. To add highlights from the sun shining onto the trees use your gray and white crayon on top of the brown crayon to blend the colors together. Next step is to place your leaves under the paper and use your green crayon and begin drawing on top of the paper. You will see the crayon resist rubbing of the leaves will appear as you move the crayon across the top of the paper. Add more highlights on the leaves with the yellow, white and yellow green crayons. See below.



3. Next, begin adding the blue watercolor on top of your crayon leaf rubbing. You will see that the blue watercolor paint will resist on top of the paper. **All done!**



Optional: Share your artwork on Twitter @HSVmuseumArt or Instagram with #hsvmuseum; #HeARTforHSV

Art Terms:

Texture: element of art that refers to the way things feel or look as if you could feel if touched – rough, smooth, sticky, fuzzy, soft or slick.

Line: vertical, horizontal, diagonal, zigzag, and curved lines. ... A line in art is defined as a point moving in space.

Crayon Resist: water-resistant medium (in this case, wax **crayons**) is applied to dry paper before painting to create the **resist** effect. The **watercolor** paint will not adhere to the resisted areas but will seek out the cracks and crevasses within the **resist** layer and be absorbed by the paper.

Reference: ***Our Shared Heritage: Alabama Artists from the Collection of the Huntsville Museum of Art*** © 2019.



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