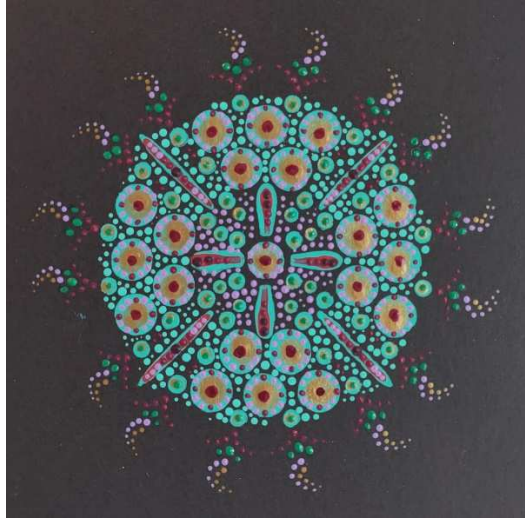


WORKSHOP: “MANDALAS ON FOAM CORE BOARD”



Summary: Participants create acrylic paint dot mandalas using styluses, paint brushes, acrylic rods and paint markers. We are working on black foam core board. Painting techniques include layered dots and brush strokes. Pattern templates are a great starting point and can be made progressively more detailed. Participants can also create their own designs. The process can be very calming and meditative, helping participants reconnect in a relaxing way.

Materials and Equipment:

black foam core board 6-8” square

acrylic paints artist

acrylic paints for crafts

paint brushes assorted sizes

styluses assorted sizes

acrylic rods assorted sizes

wood skewers or toothpicks

foil or plastic lids

water containers

Q-tips (paper and cotton)

t-shirt scraps

scrap paper or foam core to practice on

optional: puff paint in squeeze tubes

optional: iridescent medium

instructions/ideas sheet

pencil, eraser, sharpener

sketch paper

carbon paper

masking tape

scissors

reusable pattern templates

ruler

compass

x-acto knife

hockey tape and mounting string

old tooth brush or scrub brush

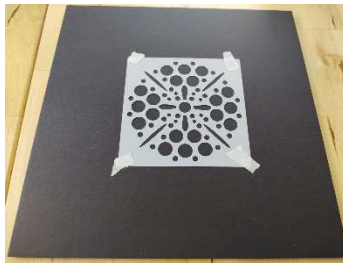
optional: hair dryer with a cool setting

optional: acrylic paint pens

optional: mandala painting books

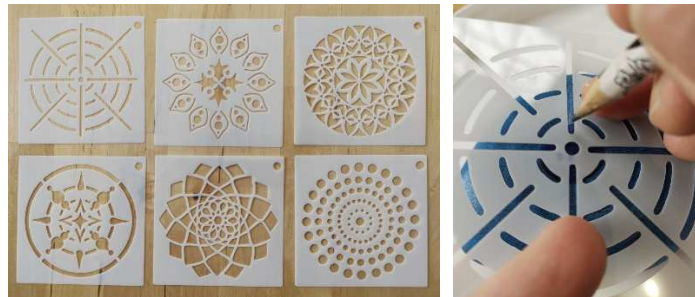
Class Plan:

1. Cut a piece of black foam core board about 6-8” square that works with your design/plan.
2. A hair dryer with a cool setting and low speed can help dry your paint faster between coats. Use a low-speed setting to avoid blowing your dots out of shape or flattening them.
3. Find the centre of your board using a ruler. Place your ruler across two opposite corners and make a small mark near the centre. Repeat for the other two corners. The centre is where your two marks cross.
4. If you are using a stencil design, position it in the centre of your foam core and hold it in place with tiny pieces of masking tape.



5. Decide on your design. There are many ways to work and here some examples.

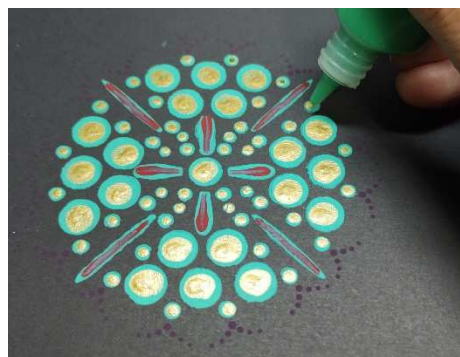
- a. You can work from a template stencil, tracing the design onto your foam core board with a pencil. The stencil shown here (right) is particularly good for marking lines radiating out from the centre as a guide.



- b. You can paint directly over a stencil with a brush or sponge to transfer the design. Rinse the stencil right after to remove the extra paint, using an old toothbrush to clean off any dried paint.



- c. Start with a stencil base design as above and add your own dots and brush strokes building the complexity of the design as you go.



- d. Draw your own design on paper and transfer it with carbon paper or draw directly onto your foam core. You can use a compass to draw a starting circle or circles on your rock working from the centre.

- e. Work without a plan, starting for example with a large dot and building patterns of dots around it.
- 6. Choosing your paints:
 - a. Artist paint dots keep more dimension, creating a raised bump, and they have more pigment so less coats are needed for solid colour coverage.



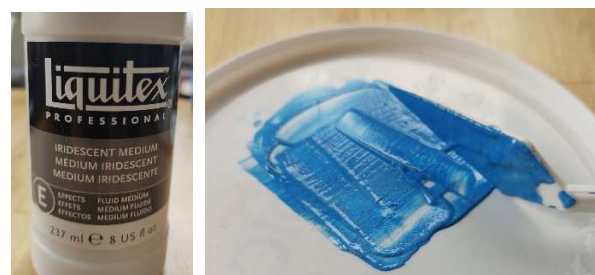
- b. Craft paints work well to but in a slightly different way. More coats are needed for good coverage but less coats gives a nice translucent effect. They create flatter dots.



- c. Working with acrylic paint markers makes it easy to create lines and patterns in lots of colours.



- d. Acrylic inks also work well for mandalas.
- e. Optional: Add iridescent medium to some of your colours for a metallic shiny effect on your board. We mixed the paint 50:50 with the medium using a palette knife but you can vary the amount based on how iridescent you want your colour.



7. Dots can be created using a variety of tools.

- a. A stylus is a tool with a small round ball on the end and they come in various sizes for making different size dots.



- b. Acrylic rods work in a similar way but make flatter dots.



- c. Improvised tools can be used to make dots, such as the end of a paint brush, a skewer end, allen keys or the ends of found objects for unusual shaped dots.

8. Paint brushes are useful for filling in areas, creating shapes like flower petals and fine lines.



- a. Small scraps of t-shirt fabric can be used to blot extra water off of your brush. They can be washed and reused.



9. Try using a sponge to create a background that looks like it glows or blends with another colour.

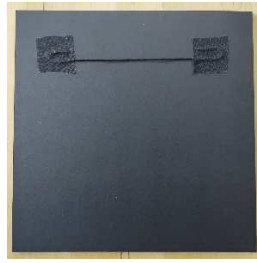
10. For making dots, use a larger stylus or acrylic rod to make larger dots. Smaller stylus means smaller dots.
 - a. To make dots all the same size, use the same stylus and reload paint for every dot. Press down the same amount for each dot. If you are unsure press all the way down until the stylus end touches your surface gently.
 - b. To add dots that get gradually smaller, load your stylus with paint once and then make 5 dots in a row. They will get smaller automatically as the paint on your tip is used up. Reload with paint for the next row of 5 dots.
 - c. To space smaller dots evenly around the outside of a larger dot, add the first small dot. Next, place the second dot opposite it. Add the third and fourth dots halfway between the other two dots on either side. Working this way with dots opposite each other divides the space evenly.
 - d. TIP: You don't have to centre the next dot on the previous one. Try putting it to one side to add interest or add several smaller dots in a pattern on top of one larger dot.
11. If you make a mistake or smear some of your paint, some wet paint can be dabbed off with a damp Q-tip or a piece of fabric over the tip of a skewer for tight areas.
 - a. If your paint is already dry, the area to be removed can be scraped off with an x-acto knife for very small areas. Then touch up the area with the tip of a fine paint brush.
 - b. These repairs are harder when working on foam core board or paper, where the surface may also scrape away. Adding dots to your design to cover the area is a good alternative.
12. For cleanup, we used an old soft toothbrush to clean paint off of the stencils ready for reuse.



13. When your paint is completely dry you can gently apply 1-2 coats of acrylic clear outdoor UV varnish to it if desired. Apply the varnish in thin coats.
 - a. Use as few brush strokes as possible to apply a smooth coat. Avoid over brushing the varnish or it will dry cloudy.
14. Add a hanger to the back of your foam core board when your paint is dry.
 - a. Cut a piece of string or yarn in a dark colour 1.1/2" shorter than the width of your foam core board.
 - b. Measure down and in about 1.1/2" on the back of your board.
 - c. Fold each end of the string back in a curve, to prevent it from pulling out from under the tape.



- d. Use black fabric hockey tape to attach each end of your yarn, creating a hanger.



15. Project Example 1: Build on a Template Design with Your Own Dots

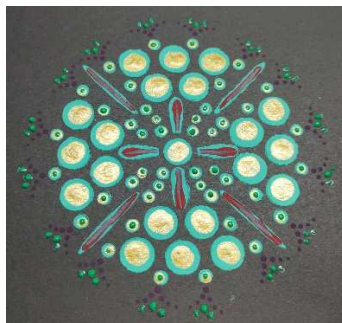
- a. Start by applying a template pattern to your foam core board. Centre your design if desired.



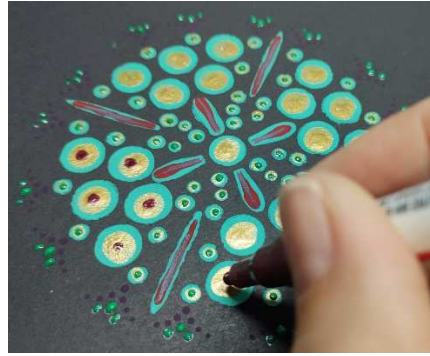
- b. Add paint brush strokes in red to the longer and tear drop sections of the pattern.
- c. Add gold dots on top of all of the turquoise dots with styluses of appropriate sizes. Make the gold dots slightly smaller than each size of turquoise dot.
- d. Add descending size rows of four dots in a half circle with a stylus from each smaller turquoise dot on the outer edge of the pattern.



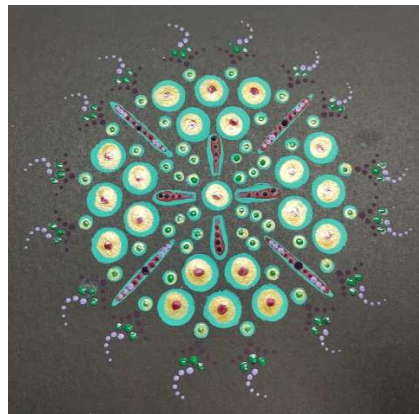
- e. Add small raised green dots in fabric puff paint from a squeeze tube, to the centres of each small turquoise/gold stacked dot.
- f. Add small raised green dots in fabric puff paint in groups of three just beyond the purple half circles of tiny dots.



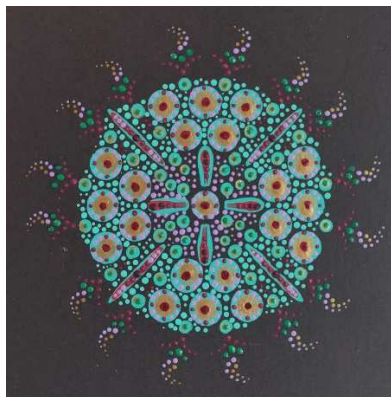
- g. Add smaller red dots in the centres of the larger gold dots all over the pattern with an acrylic paint marker.



- h. Add purple descending size dots spirals with a small point stylus, working out from the outer edge green puff paint dots.
- i. Add smaller mauve, purple and burgundy dots in rows with a stylus to the long and tear drop shapes in the pattern.



- j. Continue adding dots to add to the complexity of the pattern. Go over any dots that are not visible enough. Here we went over the tiny purple half circle dots near the outer edge with brighter burgundy paint on a stylus.



- k. Remember you don't have to centre the next dot on the previous one. You can add several smaller dots on top of a larger one in a pattern or you can add one off-centre.
16. Happy creating, and please send us photos of your creations if you feel comfortable sharing.

Useful Information/Adaptions/Variations:

- Mandalas can be created on all kinds of surfaces, such as wood panels, wood objects and foam core board to name a few.



- Try making multi-coloured dots by loading two colours on your stylus at once.



Trouble Shooting:

- If you have pencil lines still exposed after painting, gently erase them when the paint is dry.
- Ensure successive layers of dots are thoroughly dry to avoid them blending together.
- If you put a dot in the wrong place on paper foam core, dab it off with a damp Q-tip while it is still wet. Allow the area to dry and continue dotting.
- Add to your pattern with more dots and lines to cover any paint/dots in the wrong place that cannot be removed otherwise.