



Studio Sunday on the Front Steps September 2017 Activity Cotton



Create a cloudscape by painting a watercolor skyscape, then creating 3D clouds with washi paper and cotton, inspired by Paul Caponigro's photograph *Rancho San Sebastian, Santa Fe, New Mexico*.

For this project you will need:

- Watercolor paper
- Masking tape
- Cup of water
- Watercolor paints and paintbrush
- Gluestick
- Washi paper (Japanese fiber paper)
- Cotton balls

Paul Caponigro, *Rancho San Sebastian, Santa Fe, New Mexico*, 1982. Gelatin silver print. SBMA. Gift of Arthur and Yolanda Steinman.

Let's begin!

1. Mask the borders of the watercolor paper with the masking tape.
2. Use the watercolors to paint your skyscape background. Allow to dry.
3. Carefully tear the edges of the washi paper to create cloud shapes.
4. Insert some cotton under the washi paper cloud to create a 3D cloud.
5. Once the background is dry, glue the edges of the washi paper, over the cotton, on the watercolor background.
6. When dry, remove the masking tape borders. Pull gently and to the side instead of up to prevent tearing.

Tips & Tricks

- Think about the time of day and the weather in your background. How do the light and colors change throughout the day? How would it look if it was a rainy day? Sunny?
- Clouds come in all shapes and sizes—large, puffy, wispy, lumpy, and sometimes they look like objects or animals. Try out different ways of tearing the washi paper and experiment with different amounts of cotton to create a variety of cloud shapes.
- This photograph was taken before photographs were in color—can you emulate the style by limiting your color palette to one or two colors?
- The edges of the cloud in this photograph are somewhat translucent—can you create a similar effect using the watercolor paints on the washi paper clouds to blend it into the background? Or try gluing the clouds before the background is completely dry, and allow the paper to soak up some of the pigment.