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Copyrighted images, Theo Van Rysselberghe, Rainbow over Veere



Copyrighted image, Edward Munch, The Rainbow



Copyrighted image, Banksy

During the past year, the rainbow has become a symbol of hope, solidarity and gratitude to our NHS and emergency services during these challenging times. However, the rainbow has been a symbol of many things over the centuries.

For this project, we'd like you to become inspired by the rainbow. This project is very open to interpretation; perhaps you would like to go down a traditional route and feature a painting or drawing with a rainbow – you could produce your own interpretation of an artist's work; you may wish to take a more crafty approach – think crocheted rainbows or a rainbow created from household objects or items found in nature; perhaps you want to think more abstractly about what the rainbow symbolises to you.

To get those creative juices flowing, have a look at the information below to inspire your own rainbow art:

- The ancient Greeks and Romans believed that the rainbow was a path between heaven and Earth. In Greek mythology, Iris was the messenger of the Gods who travelled along the rainbow.

- In Chinese mythology, the rainbow was a slit in the sky, sealed by a goddess using five different coloured stones.
- In some forms of Buddhism, a rainbow body, a level of realisation and knowledge, is believed to become attainable through meditation and practice.
- In the Christian bible, God placed the rainbow in the sky, after the Great Flood, as a promise he would not destroy the Earth again.
- In some traditions, the rainbow can signify a period of transition and change from one phase to another.
- In more recent history, the rainbow has been used to symbolise moments of social change. For example, in the 1960s a rainbow flag was used in peace rallies and in demonstrations against nuclear armament, symbolising a longing for peace.
- The American artist, Gilbert Baker, designed the rainbow flag for the LGBT community in the 1970s and thus became a symbol of pride.

What does the rainbow mean to you? Here are some work of art by other artists and craftspeople to inspire you.



Copyrighted images, Damien Hirst

Damien Hirst created this image of a rainbow using butterfly wings to raise money for the NHS and Other Stories. The butterfly can symbolise hope and transition, sharing these with the image of the rainbow too. I'm not suggesting that you should go out there and recreate this using the same materials but why not try a collage with what you have to hand.



Copyrighted images, Norman Adams

British artist, Norman Adams, made at least 15 paintings featuring rainbows. His work has been described as combining the spiritual and the natural world. Take a look also at his use of colour.



Copyrighted image, Vincent Van Gogh, Avenue of Plane Trees near Arles Station.

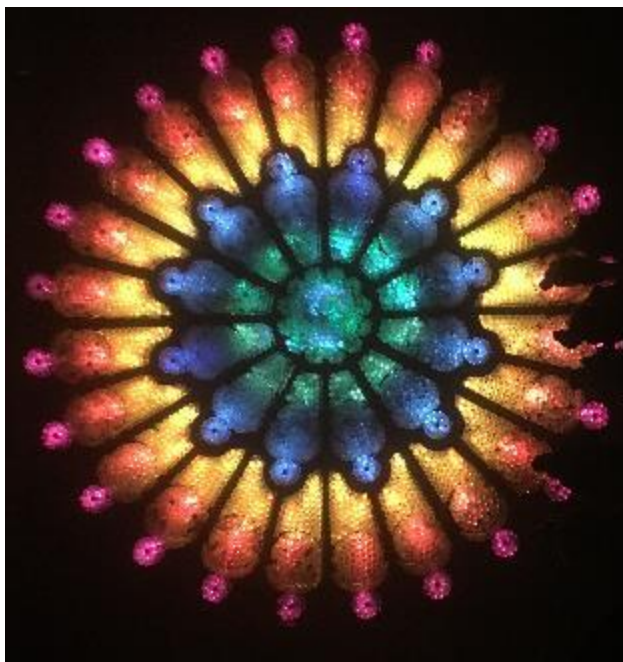
Although at first glance, there may appear no connection to the rainbow, just look at Van Gogh's use of colour in the image above. When we think rainbows, we think colour, so why not create something bright, vibrant and colourful!



Copyrighted image, Andy Goldsworthy

The British sculptor, Andy Goldsworthy, is renowned for this work in nature and believes that nature is not separate from us but we are nature ourselves. Goldsworthy uses natural items such as leaves, stones, pebbles and wood to create his sculptures and then photograph them.

Why not create your own Andy Goldsworthy artwork inspired by nature. Take a photograph of your work and post it.



Copyrighted Image, Mick Stephenson



Copyrighted Image, www.thestitchfoundry.com

Above left is an installation by Durham artist Mick Stephenson. This replica of the rose window from Durham Cathedral, which first appeared at Durham's Lumiere festival in 2015, is built from hundreds of recycled plastic bottles.

On the internet you can find a plethora of free crochet patterns. Not in the mood for painting, drawing or sculpture? Try something crafty. Above right is a crocheted rainbow. Use the following link for the free pattern: www.thestitchfoundry.com/free-crochet-patterns/crochet-rainbow-free-pattern/



Copyrighted Image, Gustav Klimt, Hope II

As outlined on the first page, the rainbow can be used to symbolise a number of beliefs. If you want to think about the theme of the rainbow in a more abstract way, take one of these themes, such as hope, peace or transition. Take a look at Gustav Klimt's painting entitled 'Hope II'. What is more hopeful than the prospect of new life? Look at some of the words associated with rainbows. How can you represent this word in your own piece of art?

Finally, if you're wanting to go down a more traditional route, take a look at some of these copyright free photographs that you could replicate in your chosen medium. Images from the mood board on the first page could also be used.



As ever, we know what a creative bunch our ColourWheel students are, and we can't wait to see your results!!!