

The Messy Messenger

wabi-sabi: (n.) the discovery of beauty in imperfection



Mrs. Domke's
Favorite Things:

Ice cream? coffee

Color? rainbow

Place to recharge?
Big Bend Nat'l. Park
(or ANY National
Park, sigh...)



Tribe? My own:
Eric, my hubby of
20 years, and my 3
awesome kiddos,
Emory (13), Oliver
(10), and Amelia (9)

Super-power?
singing high and
loudly (at it's best,
this is called "opera")

Job? this one

The children are settling into school and studio life nicely. I love the energy of these first few weeks, making new friends and welcoming their ownership of this "YES" space. Their first invitation to the studio allowed us to talk about the free paint area, and the steps they can follow in order to use the paint safely and independently at any time. We used high-contrast black and white tempera paints for this, and they jumped into their work with joy and curiosity. Kids delighting themselves at the easel for the first time are truly making magic. We also discussed titles, and what they might tell us about a

1

PAINT AREA INTRO

All the children learned how to safely handle independent painting materials, step-by-step.

2

-ISH CRUMPLES

We read the book *-ish*, in which Ramon's little sister teaches him to embrace imperfection.

3

BLOWN WATERCOLOR

Painting with no brush at all... just our breath and a straw move the paint in surprising ways

painting: its subject, its materials, or even the feelings of the artist while painting! I will always ask the children if their painting has a title, but we discussed that although we must always “listen” carefully, not all paintings will tell us their title, and that’s ok, too.

Next, we read the book *-Ish* by Peter H.

Reynolds. In the story, Ramon’s love of drawing is shaken when his older brother teases him.

Ramon becomes increasingly dissatisfied with his work, crumpling up each drawing, and eventually quitting altogether. It is his younger sister who teaches him to see his drawings through new eyes, and as Ramon learns to see “-ishly”, well, everything changes before his eyes yet again. (You can find this book at your library or book seller if you’d like to find out how the story ends... or ask your child!) We drew pictures, crumpled them up, and painted the crumples to create wonderful wabi-sabi watercolors.



Most recently, we’ve been making blown paintings. The children and I first practiced blowing air through straws, then blew puffs of air onto drops of watercolor paint. The paints travel and mix in unexpected ways, creating surprises as they meander across the paper. The younger children worked hard to create enough “puff power”, and the Bear class’ blown paintings will be featured in an upcoming Bear publication... stay tuned to see if you can spot them!



The Tinker Table has been quite popular this month, and some of you may have seen original necklaces and rings coming home on your proud “makers”. We’ve also been gently exploring observational drawing, with a new subject and fresh materials each week to inspire us.

MASTER SKILL: CUTTING

We often have yarn and scissors available to the children for cutting practice in the studio. They don’t think of it this way, of course; they usually prefer to make worms or spaghetti! They love to cuddle up with a trusted adult, who holds the yarn taut for them to cut. A little encouragement and a silly sound when they manage the task usually brings forth a giggle or smile. Either hand is o.k. to use, and at first, they may even use both hands. As their hand strength develops, the children begin to discover that their cutting is more powerful when their “thumb-kin” is on top. And finally, as kindergarten approaches, the non-dominant hand begins to help position the paper or yarn for more precision.