Awkward Art

Chanute Public Library

Young Adult

|

Adults

Awkward Art

Feb 5, 2025

$51-100

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Byline

Chanelle Gontarz, Outreach and Adult Services Librarian, Chanute (Kan.) Public Library

Participants follow prompts for setting, subject and action to create “bad/awkward” art using provided materials. The emphasis is on process over product in a judgment-free social setting.

Advanced Planning

Goals:

1. Provide a semi-structured event in a no-judgement atmosphere to promote playful exploration, imagination, creativity and artistic expression.
2. Promote the Summer Reading Program's "Color Our World" theme.

Advance planning began in November of 2024 (two months before the event) to order supplies and meet with the local art gallery to pitch a "Bad Art Show" at the end of our summer reading program. The library director and adult services librarian were involved in putting on this event, with the adult services librarian providing the bulk of the planning and outreach.

View the full event plan.

Marketing

For this event, we promoted via social media (Facebook and Instagram), print flyers around the library, our monthly library newsletter, event bookmarks, calendar and word of mouth. We capped our event with 20 participants, and it filled up quickly!

Budgeting

We used crafting supplies we had on hand, so the only cost to us was the purchase of pre-primed 8x10 canvasses, which we bought in a pack of twenty. This worked out to about $1.50 per canvas. We wanted canvas in particular because we collaborated with the local art gallery—this makes it easy to hang and display the artwork. If this was not a consideration, a heavy sketchbook or watercolor paper would have worked well, and we generally keep these items on hand.

Day-of-event Activity

The set-up included arranging tables and chairs, covering them with newspapers and placing a canvas, instruction sheet, scratch paper, half-sheet artwork information page and pencil at each place. We also arranged supplies on tables for

participants' easy access. Two staff members were sufficient for this process.

Program Execution

We had a full program! Feedback during the program was favorable, as was what we received in our surveys distributed at the end of the event. Our goals were met, and everyone got a fun piece of art and a little more creative confidence.

Some extra volunteers to assist with materials management (returning items to tables) and cleanup and setup would have been nice, so the next time we do this event, we will be sure to ask our Friends group for help.

Advice

This is a great opportunity to use leftover odds and ends of crafts past and encourage your patrons to leave their comfort zones. Surprisingly, a majority of the participants indicated an interest in having their artworks displayed in our local gallery in a few months, so a similar collaboration or simply an in-library art show and reception as space allows will probably be well-received by your own patrons!

Since Programming Librarian published this article, our readers have tried the program at their own libraries! Here’s what they have to say:

Feedback
This made for a perfect de-stress after work program for adults at my branch library. Usually our craft programs are very step-by-step / follow the rules but my patrons seemed to really love the open ended nature of this one. I printed out those prompts and put them in jars for people to pick from -- some did this and some went along to do their own art thing.
— Holly Eberle, Eastgate Branch Librarian, Algonquin (Ill.) Area Public Library District

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Document
CPL Event Plan Awkward Art January 2025.pdf
Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images





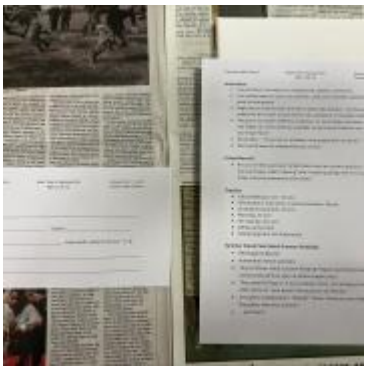


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More Programs

May 7, 2024
Adults (21 and up)+ | $$
Image



Community-Made Granny Square Afghan

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)

Apr 16, 2024
Teens (13-16)+ | $
Image



Air Dry Clay Pottery

Audiences:

Teens (13-16)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
May 3, 2022
Adults (21 and up)+ | □□
Image



[Community Art Swap]

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)
Children (9 and under)
Intergenerational
Teens (13-16)
Young Adult (17 - 20)