Hojalata (Tin) Art

Ages: All Ages

Activity Summary
Express your creativity while exploring a form of Mexican folk art called Hojalata or “tin” art. Use simple materials to create unique pieces with different patterns, shapes, colors, and textures.

Learning Objectives
- Participants will explore patterns, shapes, color, and textures through a specific technique.
- Participants will use their fine motor skills to apply their art medium of choice.
- Participants will practice creativity as they design and make a unique piece of art.

Materials & Supplies
- Paper plate, cardboard, or chipboard (cereal boxes)
- Aluminum foil
- Sharpies or paint
- Paint brushes
- Scissors
- Tape
- Optional: glue, cotton swab, cup of water, paper towels

Setup
Find an open space (counter, table, outdoors) to construct your pieces.
Have a designated space where you can paint, use sharpies, or use glue.
This activity can get messy if you choose to use paint, so have a water cup and paper towels.

Key Words
- Hojalata
- Fold
- Tin
- Pattern
- Aluminum
- Emboss
Safety Precautions

While decorating your tin art, be careful as sharpies or paint may stain fabrics.

Keep an eye on your scissors while in use and remember to close them when not in use.

Directions

1. Fold and wrap a sheet of aluminum foil over your material of choice (cardboard, paper plate, etc.).

2. Smooth out the foil to try to get out the wrinkles. If you want, you can add a second layer of aluminum foil for reinforcement. Please note, wrinkles are ok.

3. Use your art medium of choice, such as paint, to add patterns, color, shapes, and details to your art.
   a. For younger children, invite them to explore color mixing over their foil.
   b. For older children, encourage them to cut out different shapes out of cardboard or chipboard before covering with foil and then combine to make a unique pattern.

Going Further

Try adding an emboss effect! First, use a pencil to draw the details and patterns of your design on your cardboard or other material. Next, trace over the pencil lines with glue. Once it’s dry, wrap the piece with foil and use a cotton swab to press around the glue designs to create a textured look and feel. Finish by adding color with paint or markers.

Adaptations

Don’t have glue to create an emboss effect? Gather other materials from around the house that could be used to create different textures under the foil, such as yarn, string, or tape.

Try using a disposable aluminum baking pan as an alternative to foil sheets.

Clean up

Recycle any cardboard, chipboard, or aluminum foil scraps.

Wash paint brushes and cups in the sink.

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