

Glass and Ice- combined at RE:FRACTION 2011

Glass and Ice- these materials are so similar in aesthetics and in physical appearance, so different to work with or are they really?

The sculpture park provides students with the opportunity to get involved with the spring outdoor glass exhibition, RE:FRACTION, work with an ephemeral material and learn about the challenges an artist faces when going from the initial idea to the finished art work. The planning and considerations involved, the time consuming production and the failures are all part of the process.

Tutorial on ice sculpture – Ice casting and fusing/ice cubes

Step 1: Look for natural materials in your garden, the nearest park or on your school ground. The more colourful the material you find (flower petals, colourful leaves) the better as they will show in your ice sculpture. Consider common features the materials could share:

- colours
- shape
- texture

Step 2: Put them into your ice cube tray, fill the tray with water and freeze. If you fill your tray in the evening, you should have your ice cubes in the morning.

If you take your ice cubes out of the tray, they will already look pretty amazing: flower petals glittering like jewels, embedded in ice they look like precious fossils.

In fact the ice would make your flowers last for a very long time: if you look for Lyuba the baby mammoth, that was found in the arctic tundra in 2008, you will find that she was perfectly preserved by the ice for 40 000 years

<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/episode/waking-the-baby-mammoth-363>

<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/episode/waking-the-baby-mammoth-360>

(Please note: always ask your parents for permission to use the Internet. Attention parents: please accompany your child whilst visiting this page. Although national geographic is a wonderful source of information, this is not a children's website and should be monitored careful regarding the age of your child)

Step 3: To build an ice sculpture out of your ice cubes is easy now.

You will need:

- ✓ a nice cool place in the shadow
- ✓ a towel or cloth so your ice cubes won't slide away all the time
- ✓ a bowl with water

You can now build with your ice blocks like you can do with normal wooden blocks. And you can even “glue” them together by dipping them into the water before pressing them together. This is called tack fusing, a technique sometimes used by glass artists to connect pieces of glass.

If you want to build a tall tower or more complex structure consider starting from a base of ice like a slab frozen in an ice cream container.

Note to parents and teachers:

These tutorials are a way to acquaint you and your child/students with different techniques of glass work. Ice is not only very similar to glass in its aesthetic properties; also the work process can be compared. It is an environmentally friendly way to experiment with sculpture.

Every tutorial is aiming at a different technique that you can also find in glass work. If you want to have a closer look at the process of glass fusing, please have a look at the Corning Museum of Glass on youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4Xul2xDx-w>

Please note: The Waikato Sculpture Trust has other tutorials of interest to teachers. Just contact the Trust's arts educator artseducator@sculpturepark.co.nz



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