

ILLINOIS 4-H

Visual Arts: Plastic Block Art



Plastic blocks, often associated with building and construction play, are a versatile and engaging material for visual arts projects. Their vibrant colors, varied shapes, and stackable design offer endless creative possibilities, making them a fantastic medium for exploring concepts like composition, symmetry, texture, and spatial awareness.

Plastic block art differs from scenes, structures, or builds in its purpose, approach, and focus. Here are the distinctions:

Plastic Block Art prioritizes aesthetic expression, creativity, and design, often exploring abstract, representational, or thematic concepts. The pieces are arranged with an emphasis on color, texture, pattern, and form rather than utility or storytelling. The focus is on visual impact and artistic techniques, similar to creating a painting or sculpture. Examples might include mosaics, sculptures, or abstract forms.

Scene, Structure, or Builds aim to tell a story, represent a location, or serve as a functional or detailed model. They emphasize realism, scale, and interaction, often simulating objects, places, or characters. The focus is on detail, playability, and narrative. Scenes might depict a bustling city, structures could include a castle or spaceship and builds often focus on engineering or functionality.

The key differences are intent and technique. Art is about expression, while scenes, structures, and builds are about representation or function. Art may incorporate artistic methods like shading, perspective, and texturing while builds emphasize stability and accuracy to the subject matter.

Below are some additional resources of plastic block artists to demonstrate what plastic block art can look like.

Sean Kenney: Renowned, award-winning artist who has been creating art with LEGO® bricks for over 20 years. <https://www.seankenney.com/>

Former lawyer strives to make art accessible with Lego® exhibitions (PBS NewsHour): A merger of pop art and surrealism has created a stunning entry in the world of contemporary art. As special correspondent Mike Cerre reports, the components in the work may look very familiar to many of you and might bring back some childhood memories. It's part of our arts and culture series, CANVAS. <https://youtu.be/k8nmPiHA1l4?si=RkyXemrhyiV-39TK>

Creating portraits using thousands of Lego® bricks | Master Craft (Insider Art): Most people have played with LEGO® at some point in their lives, but Andre Veloux took stacking the bricks to the next level. He uses thousands of bricks to create portraits of icons. Here's

how he turns these images into Lego® masterpieces.

<https://youtu.be/1jLFvU62mxI?si=626uxoLu9fWNNhyT>

Artist Discovers New Medium Using LEGO® Bricks | Small Tiny Starts Art Documentary

(LEGO®): Katherine Duclos sees LEGO bricks as the “start of something” – a tool to bring big ideas to life, using something small. That’s why she uses them to create intricate works of art that express emotion and represent her experiences with her family and environment as a neurodivergent woman. <https://youtu.be/C4tNdcgzPDE?si=EDGlxVNpMEklUvO6>

Building your own worlds with artist Ekow Nimako - LEGO® CON 2022 (LEGO®):

Prepare for an astounding build from artist Ekow Nimako as he shares the importance of creating your own worlds, and talks about where you can find the inspiration to build wonders.

<https://youtu.be/U4Lr2GoljYQ?si=pPfgAvc8O4Jk0MyU>



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