

# Art Activity

## The Art of Mixed Media: Radcliffe Bailey



### Any material can be made into art

Radcliffe Bailey is an artist who uses mixed media to tell a story. Sometimes that story is very personal to his life, and sometimes that story is something interesting he read in a book. History is a subject Bailey uses very often in his artwork. For this project, let's collect materials that stand out to us. Use them in a mixed media collage to tell any story we want. To help get you started, try the prompts below.



Radcliffe Bailey has many common themes throughout his artwork that reflect his interests in his life, water, genealogical history of his family, and storytelling. This artwork, *Procession*, reflects a story he read about the death of a Nigerian farmer as his body rode down a river with a procession that followed. Even though that story is a personal interest to him, his artwork is something that everyone can enjoy. See a [video](#) on the artist discussing this specific work of art.

Radcliffe Bailey, *Procession*, 2005. Acrylic, velvet, plaster, Plexiglas, wood, and found objects. Collection of the McNay Art Museum, Museum purchase with funds from the McNay Contemporary Collectors Forum. © Radcliffe Bailey.

Writing prompt: begin a journal entry and reflect on a recent event. You can write about a great dream you had or a favorite family memory. Write it down and try to form it into a picture. It can be any moment you want to remember and share.

Reading prompt: Grab a good book and flip to your favorite part. Reflect on why you love that scene so much and write down the reasons why. Draw your own version of that scene in a sketch.

## Suggested materials:

- Absolutely any found objects to collage with. Examples are magazine/ newspaper pages, recycled cardboard, plastic, cartons, or bags.
- Found materials such as yarn, thread, buttons, beads, fabric, etc.
- glue and/ or tape
- scissors
- paint, permanent markers, glitter; anything to color or paint with

## Instructions:

1. Once you've gathered some found and recycled materials, refer back to your writing or reading prompt. Using your imagination, which materials could be used to portray what you've written or read?
  - Are there any materials that could be joined together and painted to create a favorite story character or object?
  - What materials would make the best background for this scene?
2. Cut, paint, and glue all materials together as you like to create your own scene.
3. See the following images for an example of a project. The scenario depicted is a memory with a grandparent. The two cats represent the people in the memory sitting on lawn chairs listening to birds and looking at flowers.





Green paint and cut up green feathers can be a grassy field.



Cut up cardboard from a cookie box made some lawn chairs.



Several found plastic pieces made a fence and the yellow flowers in the field.