

LESSON PLAN

THE FANCIFUL FELINES OF LAUREL BURCH

Suggested Levels: Grades 3rd - Advanced
Designers: Sally Meixner and Bailie Benson



Design colorful cats in the style of artist Laurel Burch in a project that can be adapted for artists anywhere between 3rd grade and advanced levels!

Laurel Burch was a self-taught artist who is best known for her fantastical cat paintings using repetitive patterns and bright colors. While her fans naturally believe that she must have owned many cats, in fact she never did.

However, Laurel's love for fantastic felines and their unique personalities inspired endless works that convey a childlike joy through the whimsy and wisdom of indigo eyes, purple tails, and brilliant rainbow bodies.

Join us in the tradition of Laurel Burch by following step-by-step instructions to create your own personalized sculpture, and discover your inner Cattitude along the way!

OBJECTIVES

I CAN... apply my understanding of the color wheel to mixing Stroke & Coat glazes to create intermediate colors.

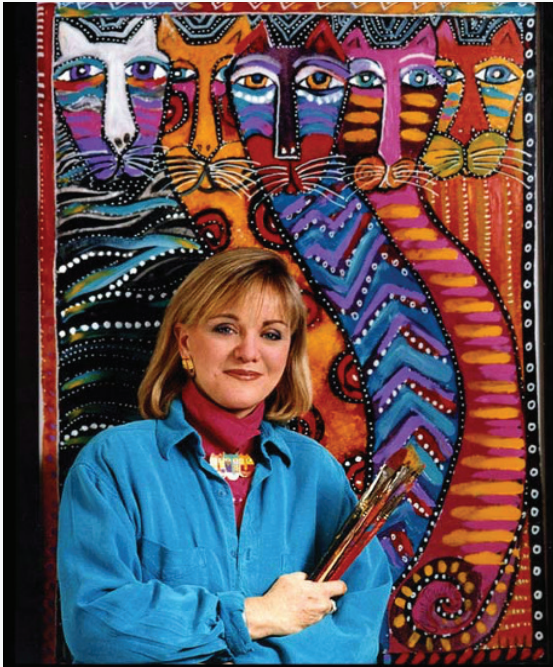
I CAN... follow step-by-step directions of the broomstick method to create a cylinder and sculpt into a Laurel Burch cat sculpture.

I CAN... independently add lines, textures, and patterns to my unique sculpture executed in Laurel Burch's style.

NATIONAL VISUAL ART STANDARDS

- Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

MEET THE MASTER



Laurel Burch

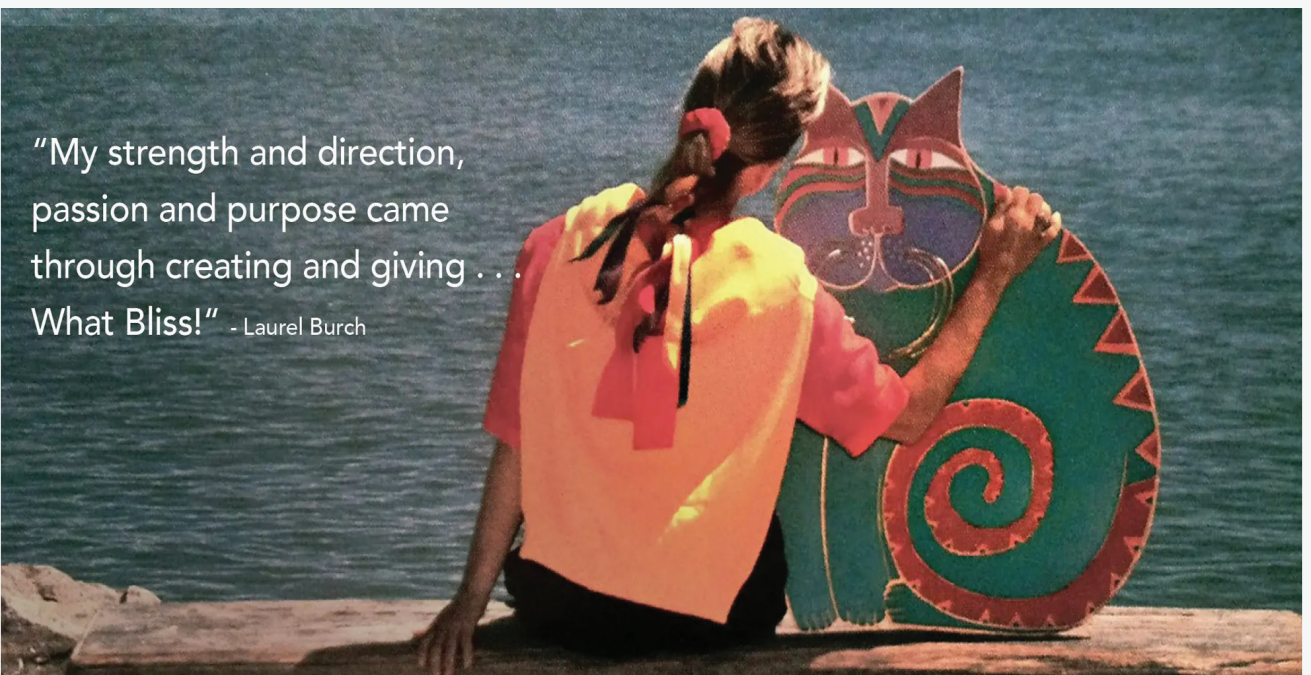
1945 - 2007

Laurel Burch was born in San Fernando Valley, California in 1945. She faced many challenges in her early life and was diagnosed with Osteoporosis, a rare and painful bone disease which caused her to suffer over one hundred bone fractures over the course of her life.

Despite her hardships, Laurel remained a fiercely vibrant person. She began a career as a jewelry designer and painter and proved to be a successful businesswoman, creating unique art and treasures to share her creativity with the world.

"My strength and direction,
passion and purpose came
through creating and giving . . .

What Bliss!" - Laurel Burch



SUPPLY LIST

CLAY

- 3lbs of clay body of choice

MISCELLANEOUS

- Toothpick
- Dowel rods (24") of graduating thickness (1/4", 1/2", and 1")
- Sponge
- Pencil
- Water based marker

COLORS BY MAYCO

This lesson plan features Mayco's Stroke & Coat® Kit 1 (SC-KIT1). Stroke & Coat® is a highly versatile glaze with a wide firing range and can be used in every decorative way imaginable!

[Examples of Stroke & Coat® fired to cone 06.](#)

[Examples of Stroke & Coat® fired to cone 6.](#)

Stroke & Coat® Kit 1 is available in 2 oz and pint sizes. It features 12 of the most popular glaze colors at a great value, making it the perfect option for your classroom.

Stroke & Coat® is also intermixable, allowing students to apply their understanding of the color wheel to create intermediate colors as a key component of this lesson plan.

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Assorted round brushes
- Script liner
- Detail liner
- Clay cutter
- Various carving tools
- [AC219 Writer Bottle](#) or squeeze bottle with tip



ACTIVITY

1. Students will look at Laurel Burch's art and read her biography.
2. Students will brainstorm what is unique about Laurel's style and produce lines, texture and pattern ideas that they like.
3. Students will cut clay and prepare clay for the Broomstick Method (suggested coil size is 7" and coil diameter is approximately 2").
4. Students will gather dowels and begin to create their cylinder shape by inserting the dowels in each end of the cylinder until they meet in the middle. They will roll with one dowel until enough space is created to insert the next larger size dowel. Continue this process until they have desired size and shape.
5. Be aware that the center of the cylinder can be thicker than the outer edges due to the dowel rod being flexible. As the diameter of the dowel increases, becoming less flexible, the cylinder walls will even out.
6. Continue to work with clay to create a head shape by slipping and scoring the top of the cylinder together. Then, cut it in two to create ears (see step by step photos for a more detailed understanding).
7. Add cat feature details, lines and patterns until you have created your own unique cat in the style of Lauren Burch.
8. Mix Mayco Stroke & Coat[®] glazes to create your own unique intermediate colors.
9. Apply glaze to leather hard clay or fire bisque followed by glazing.

DIRECTIONS - CLAY BUILDING PROCESS



1. Create a cylindrical vessel with the Broomstick Method using a set of dowel rods with graduating thicknesses. Wedge 2 pounds of clay and slap it into a rough cylinder shape about the size of a soda can. Skewer the center of the cylinder with the smallest dowel. To establish a straight channel through the clay, it may be easier to poke through both sides and meet in the middle.



2. Holding both sides of the dowel, roll the clay like a rolling pin. As the hole widens, swap the dowel rod for a thicker one and continue rolling. Repeat this step until a cylinder with $\frac{1}{4}$ " walls have taken shape.



3. Augment the cylinder using gentle pressure with a damp sponge, pressing in from the outside and pressing out from the inside to close the top. When satisfied with the shape, set the piece on top of a slab to mark the floor. Cut the floor shape and attach it to the augmented cylinder using the slip and score method. Compress the underside with a rib to prevent cracking and weld the seam upwards. Cut an optional hole in the top.



DIRECTIONS - CLAY BUILDING PROCESS CONTINUED



4. After cutting cat ears from the top of the cylinder, carve the cat pattern using a carving tool or dull pencil. Clay carving is best done in the leather-hard stage. Allow clay scraps to dry and sweep away with a fan brush.
5. Allow to dry thoroughly and fire to cone 04.



DIRECTIONS - DECORATING PROCESS



This project features Mayco Colors [Stroke and Coat](#)®, which have a firing range from cone 06-10, can be applied to clay or bisque, and is AP Non-Toxic.

In this project, we feature the intermixability of Stroke and Coat® to create custom colors.

Method 1:



1. Mix transition colors by adding darker glaze to a lighter glaze.
2. Stir colors with a round brush.

TIP:

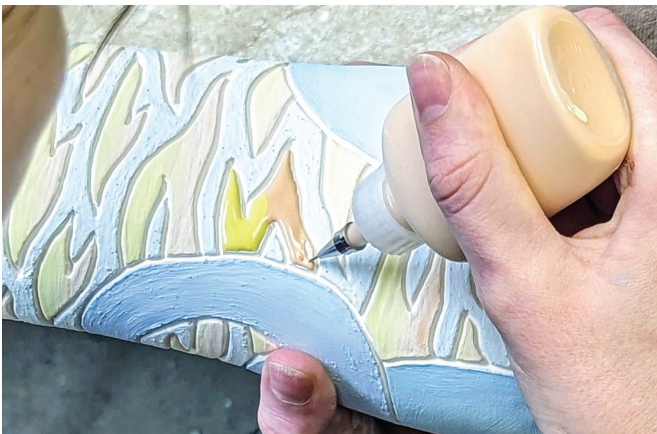
When fired to low-fire temperatures, Stroke & Coat® does not move or blend into existing colors. Use this feature to apply side-by-side or layer colors without losing the integrity of the design.

DIRECTIONS - DECORATING PROCESS CONTINUED

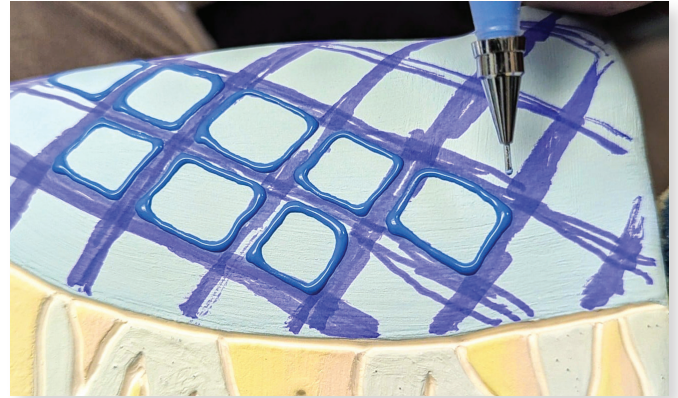
Method 2:



1. Create transition colors directly on the piece. Fill two writer bottles with two glazes and apply them side by side. While still wet, blend the glazes where they meet using a brush.



2. Create patterns with a marker to guide application. When fired to midrange temperatures, Stroke & Coat will blur if colors are layered or overlapped. Use this feature to create diffused patterns.
3. Allow to dry and fire to appropriate temperature for clay body used.



TIPS:

- Use a writer bottle with color to apply color to carved grooves.
- Apply color of choice to interior if a hole was cut in the top.
- Use a brush handle to other tools to add dots to your design.

EXTEND THE LEARNING *using Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory*

LINGUISTIC (Word Smart)

Complete a Color Word Search or a Color Wheel Worksheet.

Read articles, essays, or a biography about Laurel Burch.

Write a story about the cat you created and give the cat a name.

Choose a book about a cat to read.

Memorize quotes by Laurel Burch.

SPATIAL (Picture Smart)

Create a cat collage.

Draw or paint other animals in Burch style.

Use maps or webs to organize ideas for writing or create mind maps (Brainstorm).

Experiment with color mixing and create unique intermediate colors.

Make a Laurel Burch puzzle and hide the pieces around the art room to find and assemble.

INTERPERSONAL (People Smart)

Engage in peer tutoring or elbow partners work time.

Interview or report about Laurel Burch.

Create a task list for assignment and report when completed.

BODY KINESTHETIC (Body Smart)

Use hands on activities like drawing a Burch cat with a how-to drawing video.

Sculpt a cat from found objects.

Move like a cat yoga pose.

Imagine game where a big mean cat is chasing you . . . jog or jump in place to escape.

Catching flying balloons "cat style" by jumping and reaching.

Imagine you are a cat sleeping, bathing, or eating as a friend uses gesture drawing to capture the pose.

NATURALIST (Nature Smart)

Keep an "animal in nature" journal.

Outdoor observational drawing of cats, horses, or any other animals Laurel Burch may have used in her art.

Visit the zoo to sketch or journal about the animals and their environment.

LOGICAL/ MATHEMATICAL (Word Smart)

Conduct color mixing investigation and graph or chart the findings.

Conduct a survey. Compare and contrast cats' size, color scheme, etc.

INTRAPERSONAL (Self Smart)

Make a display where students put a post-it note in each of the following categories, "What I know, what I wonder, what I learned".

Journal about the path this project has taken and how you did or did not achieve the goals of the lesson or any personal goals you may have set.

Continue with a journal entry titled "What I'll Do Differently Next Time" and self reflect/evaluate.

MUSIC (Music Smart)

Sing or play music (a color mixing song ROYGBIV).

Write your own rap song about colors and mixing.

Draw shapes to create patterns that can later be played by clapping or using different sounds.

Record animal sounds with cat sounds scattered throughout and see how many times your students recognize or hear the cat.

RUBRIC

	RIGHT ON!	GETS THE POINT	NEEDS SOME UMPH	BARELY HANGING ON
CRAFTSMANSHIP & CONSISTENCY	The surface is smooth and prepared perfectly for glaze. Edges are appropriately handled.	The surface is prepared well but there is a slight lack of neatness in some areas.	There are many areas of poor technique in the surface is not prepared well for glaze.	Minimal effort or concern with craftsmanship.
CREATIVITY & ORIGINALITY	Demonstrates creative and unique approach to design.	Somewhat creative and some uniqueness to design.	Lacking creativity but trying.	Complete lack of uniqueness, obvious use of others' ideas.
PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (Wall thickness, slip & score, smooth)	All Requirements met and exceeded expectations!	Requirements met.	Few project requirements met.	No evidence of any project requirements being met.
COOPERATION & COLLABORATION	The student worked toward goals. Performed a variety of roles in class.	The student somewhat worked toward goals. Some input in class oriented work.	Student allow others to do most of the work only taking part in some ways.	Student made no effort to be cooperative or collaborative in the classroom
SKILL GROWTH	Obvious growth is taking place.	Student has shown some growth.	Shows no growth from previous projects but trying.	Shows no growth.

FINAL GRADE	COMMENTS

