



# Neuberger Museum of Art



## Let's Create a "Playful Universe"

Use mixed media to create forms and settings inspired by the work of Ignacio Iturria

Ignacio Iturria makes all kinds of art! He uses different media and materials (including found objects) to create his paintings and sculptures. Before we get started with this project, let's review a few of the artistic techniques that Iturria often incorporates in his work.

**NARRATIVE ART** tells a story with pictures, either as a moment in time or as part of a larger story about everyday life or an adventure that you've created in your imagination!

**SURREAL ART** (or "surrealism") includes images or events that are unrelated and have been combined in a very strange and dreamlike way. Artists may create whimsical and imaginative scenes that sometimes appearing bizarre and illogical, such as flowers growing from the sky or melting watches.

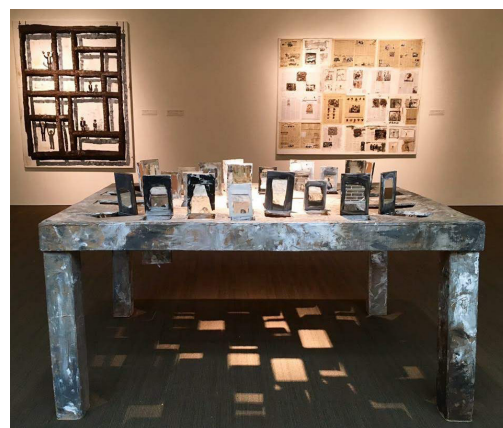
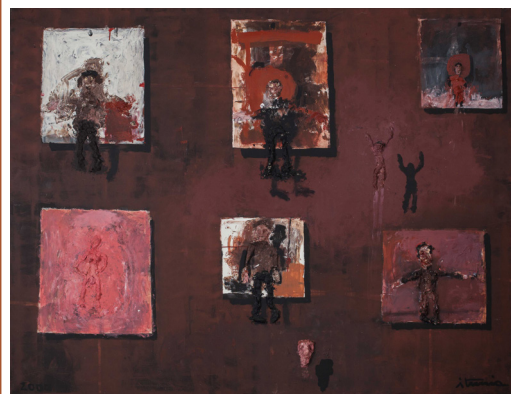
**ART MEDIUM** refers to the substance the artist uses to create a piece of art-work. For example a sculpture can be made by the medium of marble, bronze or plaster. In painting the medium could be oil, acrylic or water color. Drawing can use the pencil, crayon or charcoal as its medium.

**ASSEMBLAGE** (pronounced *ah-sem-blah*) is the act of fitting things together. An artist can assemble from limitless elements, often everyday "found" objects or mediums making the parts made to fit or work together. As an artistic medium, assemblage consists of three-dimensional elements projecting out of or from the background.

**MIXED MEDIA** is a term used to describe artworks composed from a combination of different media or materials

**TROMPE-L'OEIL** (which means "deceive the eye" in French) is a way of tricking the eye into perceiving a painted detail as a three-dimensional object.

**PAPIER-MÂCHÉ** is a type of molding material that consists of paper pieces or pulp, sometimes reinforced with textiles, that has been bound with an adhesive such as glue, starch, or wallpaper paste.



## Activity

Young artists will work with foil, tape, cardboard and paper to create forms and a playful scene within a box frame. As they assemble the scene and arrange the forms, students will explore how light, shadow, and positive and negative spaces can enhance their sculptures.

## Materials

- A cardboard frame (such as the top to a shoe box) or canvas board
- Aluminum foil
- Stock, construction and/or cardboard paper
- Scissors
- Glue or glue stick
- Masking tape
- Newspaper or tarp to protect your work surfaces.

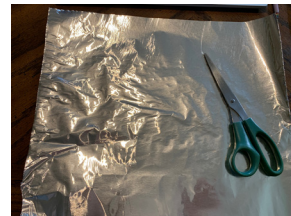


## LET'S BEGIN!

### Step 1

**Prepare the aluminum foil for your form.**

You will need a piece of aluminum foil about 18 inches long. Cut four squares from the piece.



### Step 2

**Cut your shapes.**

Along each square you will need to cut five lines, two at the top in a slight angle toward one another but not connecting.

Along each side in the middle, cut a straight line toward the center only about a third of the way.

Lastly cut one additional line at the center bottom, again about a third of the way. This will create the guide in shaping your figure.



### Step 3

**Form the body.**

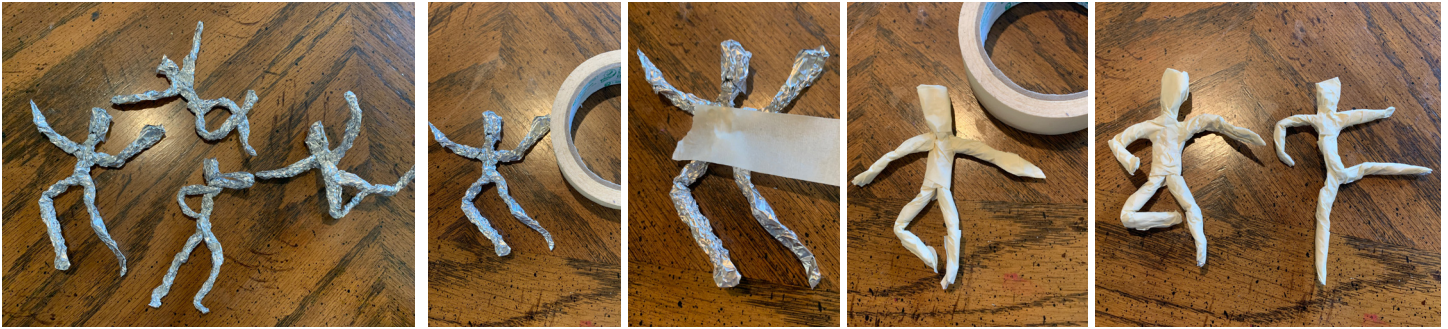
Next, form the body by pinching in the torso, then tightening the legs and arms into thin rods of foil.

Lastly, shape the head into an oval and tighten any joints as needed.

At this point, you will have a fully posable frame for your figure.

Repeat this process three more time with the other pieces of cut foil.





## Step 4

**Wrap the foil characters with masking tape.**

Wrap the foil characters with masking tape. It is easiest to start at the torso and work your way outward around the legs and arms. Be sure to reinforce the joints with thin torn strips of tape and wrap the head until all the foil is covered. Repeat this process for all your figures.

## Step 5

**Begin creating your 'universe.'**

You will need a base such as a cardboard box top, like from a shoe box or a sturdy canvas board. With additional pieces of cardboard and colored construction paper, begin cutting shapes to create your "universe." Create a home, a playground or park, or any other space you can imagine!

## Step 6

**Add details.**

If you are creating a home, cut out and add elements that resemble things you might find in your home, such as a door, a table and chairs, stairs, or even a bed. These do not need to be exact but you will want to create an impression of what is in your space.

## Step 7

**Layer.**

Layer your shapes and colors to create depth and shadow. You can use earth tones (such as browns and reds) like Iturria or any color that best represents your world. Use darker pieces of paper below objects to imply negative spaces. This will help trick the eye in seeing a three-dimensional space.

## Step 8

**Glue.**

Once you have placed the pieces and shapes inside of your frame in the arrangement you want, begin gluing them down. Remember to start with the bottom pieces first!



## Step 9

### Make your universe playful!

Now that you have created your universe, make it playful! Position your figures within the world you have created. Bend them, move them and have them interact!

You can glue them down to a fixed position or continue to play with them again and again. The choice is yours.

## Step 9

### Share!

Don't forget to take photo and share! Have a grownup post your photo to social media and be sure to tag them #NeutoDoKids.

We can't wait to see your Playful Universe!



## Learn more about Ignacio Iturria

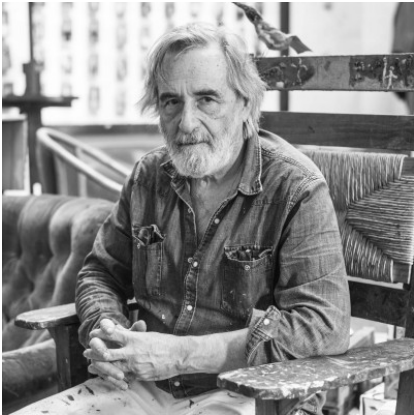
Watch videos to see him speak about his work

Get 'up close' while he is painting in his studio

See photos of his work on display at the museum

SEE IT ALL ONLINE HERE:

<https://www.purchase.edu/live/profiles/4099-inside-the-neu-ignacio-iturria>



## Ignacio Iturria Vierra

April 14, 1949 -

Born and raised in Montevideo, Uruguay, Ignacio Iturria Viera is one of the country's most accomplished painters.

As a boy, Iturria and his five siblings spent their childhood near the beach and in the open fields where they had the freedom to wonder, play and explore. Ignacio, however, suffered from adolescent asthma which caused him to spend much of his time alone. During these periods he would lend his creativity to writing, drawing and disassembling old radios; he often used his drawings as a form of communication with his family.

After the passing of his father in the 1980's, Iturria's style began to change. Departing from the traditional painted canvas, he began to adopt other media, such as tearing and painting corrugated cardboard. In healing from his loss, Iturria dedicated himself to creating scenes of joy rather than scenes of sorrow. His work continued to evolve sculpturally through the 1990's, exploring internal and external spaces and occupying them with his characters and narrative. Iturria often uses found objects and paint that he allows to thicken and become tactile similar to clay or papier-mâché. He builds outward onto his works, adding form in relation to shape, scene or character. This became the progressive style he continues to use to this day.

In his exhibition *The Playful Universe of Ignacio Iturria*, that was on view at the Neuberger Museum of Art from September 2017 to February 2018, he recreated universes filled with whimsical characters and playful animals staged within surreal environments.

Favoring darker, earth tones, such as reds, browns and blacks, Iturria would often depict scenes drawing upon his life experiences and connections. Whether they be spiritual, cultural, tales of family and friendship, scenes humor or playfulness. He cleverly transforms found objects, and uses illusion to trick the eye and play with the viewers' perception. His paintings frequently depict small stages from which characters may enter and escape; the play of shadow and light enhances their theatricality. Iturria looks at society in a poetic manner. His ability to see a universe in a dripping sink recalls the wonder of a childlike gaze. Iturria's work invites us to view the world with amusement and hope.

Having painted for more than four decades, his work has been shown around the world and is one of the most beloved artists of Uruguay. Today, though well-traveled, you can likely find Iturria creating imaginative masterpieces in his studio along the most eastern coast of the Dominican Republic where he shares a home with his wife Claudia.



Ignacio Iturria, *El Ruso (The Russian)*, 2001.

Oil on canvas, 39 x 52 inches.

Courtesy of the Fundación Iturria,  
Montevideo, Uruguay.

Photograph by Alvaro Figueroa.



Iturria at work in his studio at the Neuberger Museum of Art during his exhibition, *The Playful Universe of Ignacio Iturria*, (Fall 2017).