

DAN COLEN CONFETTI PAINTINGS

The process used to make the confetti works is akin to that employed by Jackson Pollock when creating his legendary ‘Action Paintings,’ in which paint was applied to canvas through energetic gestures rather than with exactly deliberate intent. With the canvas laid upon a flat surface, Colen throws handfuls of confetti downwards, allowing the material to coalesce and form patterns in a totally arbitrary manner: the resulting intricacy of pattern, colour and texture recalls not only the work of Pollock but also of other Abstract Expressionist artists such as Joan Mitchell.¹

Mr. Colen uses it [confetti] in pieces that explore the role of chance in making art. By throwing it onto canvases and seeing where it lands, Mr. Colen said, he “eliminates having to make decisions.” And though he also uses paint to make canvases that only look like they’ve been strewn with confetti, he bases those on photographs that he takes of the real thing, “recording a frozen moment that avoids invention,” he said.²

ADDITIONAL LINKS

[DAN COLEN: HELP!](#)

[DAN COLEN: HELP! EXHIBITION CATALOGUE](#)

[DAN COLEN: THE L... O... N... G COUNT](#)

[PETER BRANT & DAN COLEN IN CONVERSATION WITH MARK TRIBE](#)

[FREE ARTS DAY WITH DAN COLEN](#)

[DAN COLEN BRINGS A DOWNTOWN AESTHETIC TO THE BRANT FOUNDATION](#)

1 <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2014/contemporary-art-evening-auction-114020/lot.56.html>

2 <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/10/arts/design/10colen.html>



ACTIVITY

Use a blank piece of paper as your canvas. Choose a few different sheets of colored paper (or color your own) and cut out about 20 pieces in various shapes and sizes. Sprinkle the colored pieces over your blank paper and glue them down wherever they happen to fall. Repeat this step two more times. You have just made an artwork based on pure chance!

Share your creations with us on Instagram @thebrantfoundation!

QUESTIONS

1. What colors did you choose to sprinkle? What effect do they have on the overall mood of your artwork?
2. What do you see in your artwork? Do the colored pieces of paper look like a person, an object, or a place?
3. How do you feel about making work by chance vs. planning an artwork before creating it?
4. If you could give your artwork a title, what would it be? Why?

MATERIALS

Blank paper
Colored paper
Scissors
Glue