

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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ART FOR THE FAMILY, by Victor D' Amico, Frances Wilson and Moreen Maser. 112 pages; 195 plates. Published by the Museum of Modern Art. Distributed by Simon and Schuster. \$2.95

ART FOR THE FAMILY, a how-to-do book for children and grownups, will be published by the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, on December 10. Written by Victor D'Amico, Director of the Museum's Department of Education and of the Museum's school, with two teachers, Moreen Maser and Frances Wilson, the book is based on the conviction that all people have creative ability and that anyone at any age can enjoy and develop his aptitudes in art. It is the only book of its kind designed to further the creative interests of the family as a group.

Activities outlined and illustrated in the book include painting, clay work, papier-maché, paper magics and space designs. Special suggestions are described for those who wish to work by themselves, those who are ill or convalescent as well as for family groups who want to work together. There are also projects intended to help parents and teachers guide the creative expression of children too young to read.

While the projects are stimulating and informally presented, they are based on the fundamentals of art and a sound method of creative teaching. The idea grew out of the very successful television program "Through the Enchanted Gate - Art for the Family" series, written and produced by the authors and presented by WNBT and the Museum two years ago.

Ways to make feeling and seeing pictures using materials of different textures -- leaves, shells, velvet scraps, pieces of fur -- are described and illustrated with photographs of actual work done by children and adults. For example, a boy of 8 made a "feeling" portrait of his family using sandpaper to suggest his father's beard, torn paper to indicate his baby sister's destructiveness, and a piece of veil and a feather for his mother's hat.

Materials and tools to get for painting as well as ways to discover what you can do with paint by dabbing, dry brush strokes, blending, scratching through paint with brush handle, dropping color on a wet background, stippling, sponge painting and pouring paint and letting it run are clearly illustrated. Perspective

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expressing form through distortion and exaggeration and painting faces and figures are discussed and illustrated.

Clay modelling and papier-maché sculpture are explained and illustrated as well as paper magics, space designs that move and how to draw with wire. Family activities described include room and table decorations, party hats, masks, a portrait game, a tray painting game and a game of touch and feel. Texture puzzles, and puppets are explained and directions for making and using them are shown. A family album movie is suggested with complete instructions for making the "stage" in which to show the "film".

In the last chapter the authors offer a unique and valuable guide for adults and for parents of young children in answering the important question - How do you know you are growing in art? They suggest that art work be kept and dated so that after a period of weeks or months it can be reviewed to see if recent paintings or space designs show more experimenting with materials and color or if the tools and materials are being used with more skill, for example. They point out that while trying many different ideas is a sign of growth for a young person, for an older person a sign of growth might be fewer new ideas tried but expressed with greater skill. And they conclude by saying that the most important way to gauge an adult's or child's development is the changes in him, in his reaction to color, texture, pattern and movement in the world around him, in his courage in trying new experiments, and in his feeling of respect for his own ideas and those of others.

Note: Review copies and photographs available from

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