



THE THIRD DIMENSION

*Discover how abstract art expresses emotions and depth,
revealing beauty even in imperfection!*

Welcome!

A work is abstract when it does not represent figures, objects, or characters—when it moves away from the original idea of having to imitate reality. The artist focuses more on expressive than representational function, paying attention to materials and colors that help the viewer feel an emotion.

Painting without form means painting without recognizable figures, using “new” materials to express one’s mood and vision of the world.

Arte Povera is an artistic movement that revolutionized modern and contemporary art in Italy and around the world in the 1960s and 1970s. It is characterized by the use of unconventional materials and the desire to break down barriers between art and everyday life, creating installations and works that invite reflection.

So, in addition to traditional materials like stone, clay, and bronze, sculptures can also be made with discarded materials—to affirm that even what is imperfect hides a spark of beauty capable of shining when discovered.

materials

To carry out the activity proposed in this sheet, you will need some sheets of paper, cardboard and tissue paper, scissors, glue stick, adhesive tape, and a flashlight (you can use your smartphone’s or a desk lamp).

**BE
GREEN**

You can do the activity
without printing this
sheet!



Doctor Donald Woods Winnicott said:

“The capacity to be surprised again is essential in the process of creativity.”

Let's begin

Observe this work by Nunzio Di Stefano made with a lead sheet placed on wood: although the sheet is flat, with simple techniques like folds or incisions, the artist manages to create a shape that seems to emerge from the surface. Scan the QR code to view the work in high resolution.

Nunzio Di Stefano is an artist who explores the relationship between form, space, and matter, using materials like lead to add depth and dynamism to his works.

In the outer areas, the work seems to come closer to the viewer, while the central parts gain a sense of greater depth, thanks to the artist's skill in folding and curving a two-dimensional sheet.



Nunzio (Nunzio di Stefano),
Senza Titolo,
2004

Now it's your turn

Paper is a simple material but full of possibilities: with just a few gestures, we can transform a plain sheet into something three-dimensional that changes depending on how we look at it! By folding, cutting, and shaping it, we can create surprising forms, playing with light and shadow.

Let's discover together the main techniques to give volume to paper and turn it into a work of art!

What to do?

1 Folding

Folding is the first step to turning a sheet into a 3D shape. Take a sheet and fold it in half: you've already changed its form! Now try folding it several times like an accordion: the paper will start to stand on its own and create movement. If you fold it diagonally, you'll get even more interesting angles and shapes. Try folding cardboard now: it's harder to fold, but the structure will be much more stable!

2 Cutting

With scissors, you can give paper any shape! Make a cut halfway through the sheet without going all the way, then open it and fold the cut part inward. You've created a small 3D flap, like in pop-up books! If you make several parallel cuts and lift each flap, the paper becomes even more dynamic.

3 Rolling

Take a long strip of paper and wrap it around a pencil, press well, then remove the pencil: you've made a spiral! Now try changing the shape of the paper (instead of a strip, use a long triangle or a zigzag edge) and the object (instead of a pencil, use a cone-shaped piping nozzle)!

4 Tearing

Sometimes you don't even need scissors—you can tear the paper with your hands! Do it slowly for irregular edges or quickly for a sharp effect. If you tear a long strip, you can fold it, twist it, or glue it to create new effects. Tearing gives paper a more natural look, like rock or clouds.

Now it's your turn

5 Layering

Layering multiple sheets is another way to give paper thickness. If you glue one piece on top of another, you've already added dimension! Try with folded or curled pieces: you'll see waves, steps, or domes form. Using tissue paper adds transparency, while cardboard creates sturdier structures.

6 Curving

Curving means giving paper a smooth, light shape without sharply folding it. Take a strip of paper and slide your thumb along it while gently pulling it between your fingers: you'll get a natural curve. This technique is perfect for creating soft movements, like waves or flower petals!

7 Scoring

Another way to transform paper is by scoring it—using pointed tools like a toothpick as if they were pencils. Try “drawing” with a toothpick on cardboard, applying light pressure. The cardboard will mark without tearing, creating a “relief” effect. On colored cardboard, the scoring will stand out even more!

8 Bonus: play with light!

Now that you've transformed the paper, experiment with light! Take the flashlight and shine it on your creation from different angles. The shadows will change, giving even more depth to your forms. With tissue paper, the light will pass through, creating translucent effects, while with cardboard the shadows will be sharper. Even the scoring will stand out in surprising ways!

How many effects can you create by moving the flashlight? Which angle highlights your work the most?

About the artist

► **Nunzio Di Stefano** was born in 1954 in the province of L'Aquila. After moving to Rome, he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts and graduated in Scenography with Toti Scialoja. He was among the artists who established their studios in the former Cerere pasta factory in the San Lorenzo district of Rome, becoming a key figure in the "San Lorenzo School."

Nunzio Di Stefano chose sculpture to explore the expressive and formal possibilities of matter and its connections with space and light: he mainly uses materials like charred wood and lead in compositions with a primitive flavor.

With the San Lorenzo School group, Nunzio shares a return to drawing, painting, and manual work, reconciling art with tradition and attention to memory.

Did you know... For Nunzio Di Stefano, the artwork becomes a kind of extension of the artist, and the studio where he works is full of charm because the hands, the mind, and the heart never tire of creating new things.

Did you know... Nunzio Di Stefano has received many awards: in 1998 he won the Premio 2000 for best young artist in the "Aperto" section of the Venice Biennale and the President of the Republic Prize for Sculpture. His works are exhibited in renowned collections such as GAM in Turin, MACRO and MAXXI in Rome, the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig in Vienna, and the Maramotti Collection in Reggio Emilia.