

# IKON ACTIVITY PACK

## KS1 (AGES 5–7)

Ikon's activity packs are designed for creative learning at school or home. They are inspired by Ikon's exhibition by Mali Morris titled *Calling*, which includes includes nearly 30 works from the last 25 years and documents a change in Morris' artistic practice.

Created by artist-educator Polly Brant, the packs include questions for thinking and talking about art in relation to other subjects, including global cultures and environments.

Share your creations via social media @ikongallery #ikongallery or with [education@ikon-gallery.org](mailto:education@ikon-gallery.org)  
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# MALI MORRIS



Mali Morris (b.1945, Wales) is an artist who has been making abstract paintings for over 50 years.

In her artworks, Morris layers colours of paint using different mark making tools, including sponges and paintbrushes. The artist uses bright, bold colours, creating various shapes to build geometric patterns within each painting.

**Key words and themes:** Shape, space, colour, layers, mark making, pattern, Abstract Expressionism, gesture (movement of a body part with meaning), transparent (can be seen through), opaque (cannot be seen through).

**Methods:** Painting, clearing (removing layers), layering.

**Materials:** Acrylic paint, paintbrushes, sponges.

**Related artists:** Gillian Ayres, Helen Frankenthaler, Henri Matisse.



# EXPLORE PATTERNS AND SHAPES IN MALI MORRIS' PAINTINGS

Mali Morris combines different 2D shapes in her artwork. Can you name a 2D shape? How does Morris layer 2D shapes to create patterns?

The lively checkerboard colour of *Second Stradella* (2016) merges squares and a spiral in a similar way to Henri Matisse's famous artwork *The Snail* (1953). Can you find an image of this online? Discuss the similarities and differences between the two works.

The artist uses different tools for mark making, including sponges and paintbrushes. How do you think Morris creates the different shapes?

## Activity: Circles and Squares

Using sponges, make your own abstract pattern painting.

**You will need:** Paper, paint, paintbrushes, sponges (or other items you can reuse and recycle).



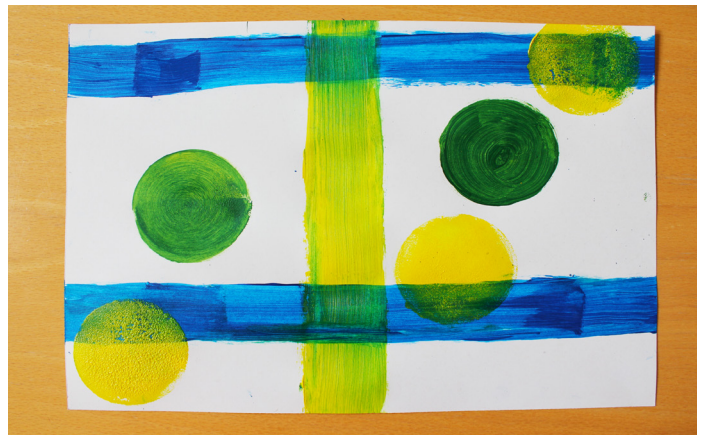
1) Gather your materials.



2) Using paintbrushes, sponges and paint, create different shapes on your paper.



3) Layer the colours and shapes to create patterns.



4) You now have your abstract pattern painting. Display your artwork in your home or classroom. Ask your family and friends what they see and think about when they look at your artwork.

# SCHOOLS AT IKON

Ikon welcomes school groups and offers free online resources, activity packs, tours and workshops.

[VIEW SCHOOLS OFFER](#)



**Ikon Gallery**  
1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace  
Birmingham B1 2HS  
+44 (0) 121 248 0708 / [ikon-gallery.org](http://ikon-gallery.org)

Open Wednesday–Sunday, 11am–5pm  
Free entry, donations welcome

Stay in touch

      @ikongallery

Cover: Mali Morris  
*Hoopla 2* (2008). Acrylic on canvas, 24 × 30cm  
Courtesy of Mali Morris

Taking part in the activities in this pack can contribute towards achieving an Arts Award certificate. For more information visit: [www.artsaward.org.uk](http://www.artsaward.org.uk) or contact Ikon's Education Team at [education@ikon-gallery.org](mailto:education@ikon-gallery.org)

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