

HIRSHHORN KIDS AT HOME

Time: 60 minutes plus drying time

Skill Level: Intermediate

Topic: Pattern and repetition

Pumpkin Pinch Pots

Create your own pinch pot inspired by artist Yayoi Kusama.

As a young girl growing up around her family's plant nursery, Yayoi Kusama fell in love with the round, playful and lumpy shape of the pumpkin. She began creating art at a young age, despite her mother's disapproval.

For most of her life, she has experienced hallucinations involving dot-covered surfaces, and her work in recreating these mental images has been a form of therapy for her.

Dot-covered pumpkins are a common theme in her work. *Pumpkin* by Yayoi Kusama (2016) is an eight-foot tall sculpture covered in repeating patterns of different sized dots.



Yayoi Kusama. Installation view of *Infinity Mirror Room—Phalli's Field*, 1965.

LOOK CLOSELY

What do you see? Describe the colors and shapes. Do you notice any patterns? Talk together about the pumpkin. Does it look real? Why, or why not?



Pumpkin by Yayoi Kusama, 2016.

HIRSHHORN KIDS AT HOME

MAKE IT!

This project requires a day between sculpting and painting in order to give the pinch pot time to dry.

1. Gather materials. You'll need clay or play dough, sculpting tools (pencil, toothpick), paint, and painting tools (brush, toothpick, dry spaghetti).



2. Pinch the dough. Roll the clay into a ball, then use your thumb to pinch a hole in the center.

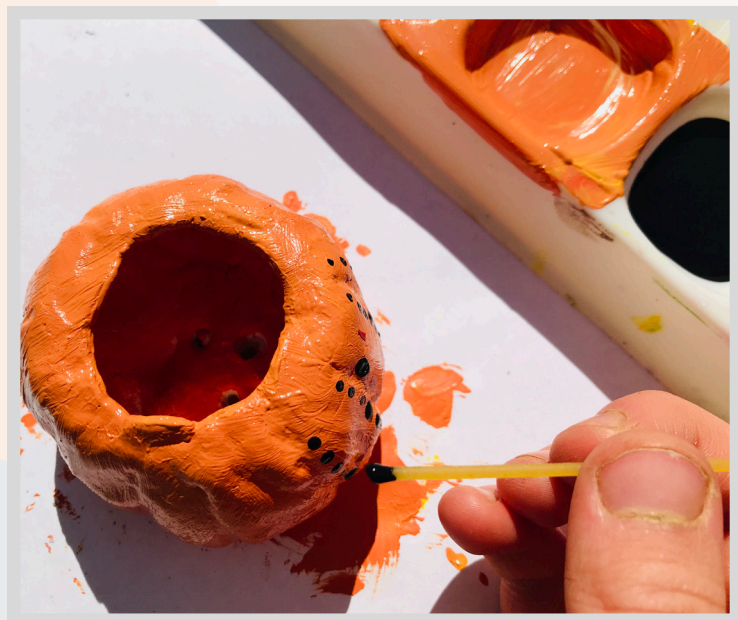
3. Shape your pot. You can make a pumpkin or any other shape you like! Use a sculpting tool (a pencil or toothpick will work fine!) to add details.

4. Paint your pot. Once the clay dries, add a few coats of color to your pinch pot.



HIRSHHORN KIDS AT HOME

5. Add pattern. Use another paint color to add a repeating pattern, like the dots Yayoi Kusama loves so much. Dry spaghetti and toothpicks are great tools for adding dots!



6. Give it life. Plant a seedling or add a flower to your pinch pot.

**Share what you created:
@hirshhorn #hirshhorninsideout**

Image 1: Yayoi Kusama. Installation view of *Infinity Mirror Room—Phalli's Field*, 1965, in *Floor Show*, Castellane Gallery, New York, 1965. Sewn stuffed cotton fabric, board, and mirrors. Courtesy of Ota Fine Arts; Victoria Miro; David Zwirner. © YAYOI KUSAMA. Image 2: Yayoi Kusama. *Pumpkin*, 2016, at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. Fiber-reinforced plastic. Courtesy of Ota Fine Arts. © YAYOI KUSAMA. Photo by Cathy Carver.