

ELLSWORTH KELLY ▲ T 100

إلسورث كيلي قرن من الإبداع



TEACHERS RESOURCE PACKET



Ellsworth Kelly with *Black Form*, Spencertown Studio, 2013. Photo: Jack Shear, courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

## ARTIST'S LIFE

Ellsworth Kelly is an American artist who is renowned for his abstract paintings, using a range of bright colours and geometric shapes. Kelly was born on May 31st, 1923 in Newburgh, New York. He attended the Pratt institute in Brooklyn. In his childhood, Kelly took an interest in the outdoors and bird watching, as his grandmother gifted him a birding book at a young age. It helped to ignite his passion for colour and shape. This is something that continued into his later life. Kelly joined the US Army in 1943, as part of a unit referred to as "The Ghost Army," specializing in camouflage and designing decoys. After the war he returned to Europe on a scholarship at École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He returned to New York in 1954 where he established himself as an artist. Ellsworth Kelly died on December 27th, 2015, at the age of 92 in Spencertown NY.

## HIS WORK



Ellsworth Kelly, *Painting for a White Wall*, 1952, oil on canvas, five joined panels. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo: Ron Amstutz.

His work, which spans the course of 7 decades, this includes painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, printmaking, and collage. Throughout his career, Kelly embraced more refined colour palettes, leaning away from the gestural brush-strokes style that was popular with Abstract Expressionism. Many of his pieces are renowned for their bright colours and geometric shapes.

## IMPACT AS AN ARTIST

Ellsworth Kelly, *Window*, Museum of Modern Art, Paris, 1949, oil on wood and canvas, two joined panels, 128.3 x 49.5 cm. Centre Pompidou, Paris. National Museum of Modern Art / Centre of Industrial Creation. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

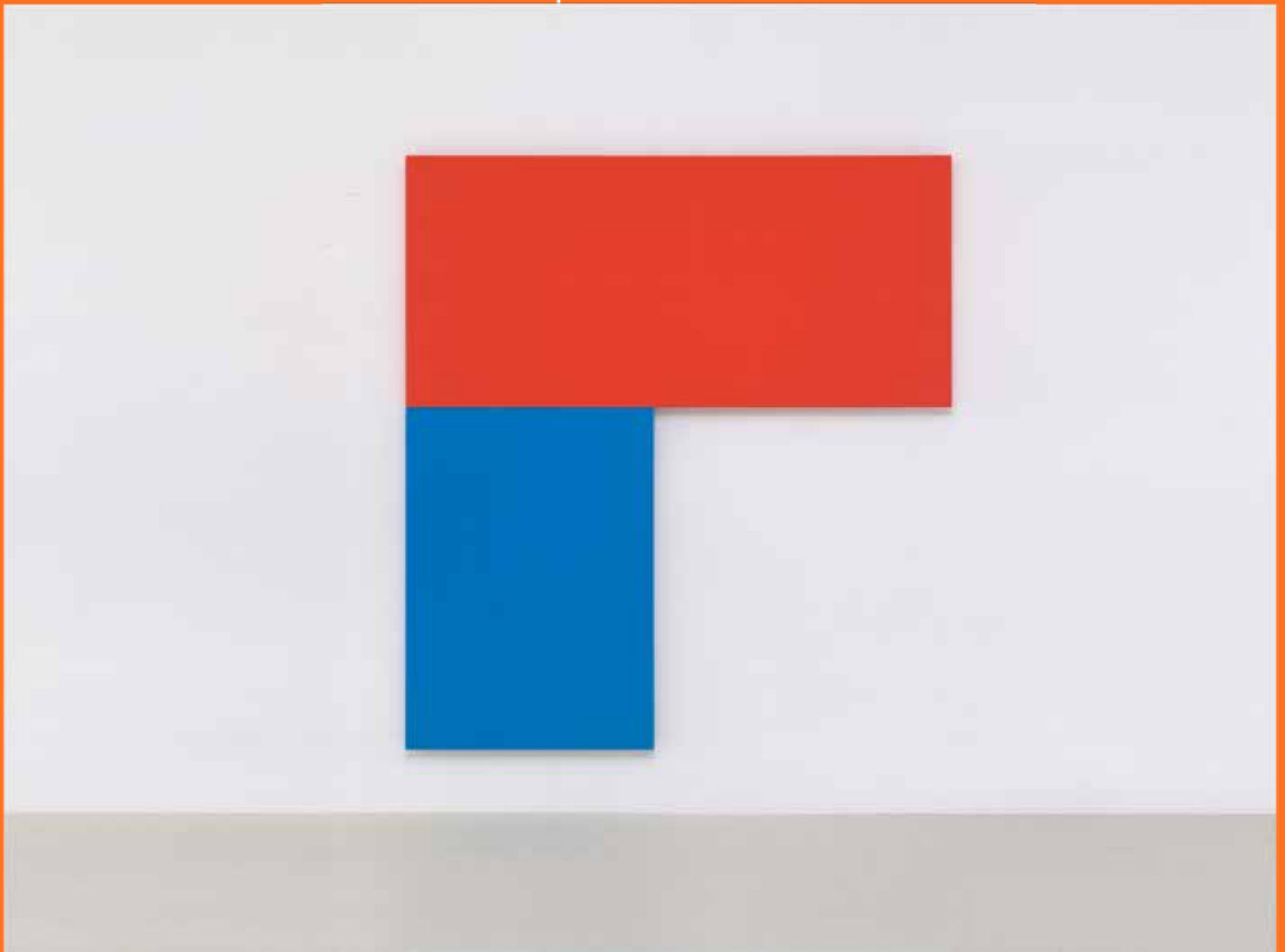
Ellsworth Kelly significantly impacted Abstract Art, distinguishing himself with his innovation and creativity.

His deep connection to nature and exploration of our perception of colour and shape are recurring themes in his work. Kelly also challenged conventional notions of logic and sequence, encouraging viewers to see things from new perspectives. His influence remains strong today, continuing to inspire current and future generations of artists.



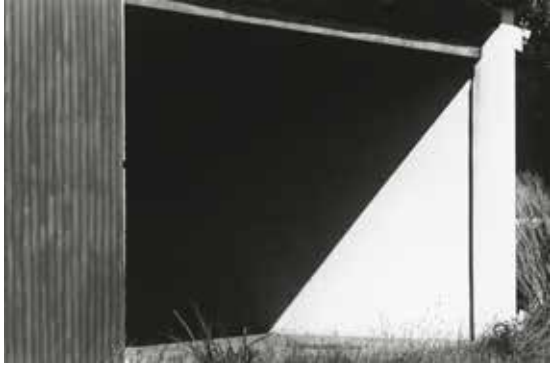
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**ENGLISH**



Ellsworth Kelly, *Hangar Doorway*, St. Barthélemy, 1977, gelatin silver print, 21.6 x 32.4 cm. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

# INSPIRATION

In 1950 Kelly borrowed a camera from a friend and began taking photos. These photos which mainly focus on the mundane and ordinary objects, however through his compositions he shows that there is artistic qualities in the details of light and shade. Ultimately his series of photographs document his view of the world around him and how ordinary objects carry many details that are not seen at first glance. It can also challenge us to look at things in a different perspective.

## PRACTICAL TASKS

### TASK 1

Complete the following Comprehension Questions based on the information given about Ellsworth Kelly's life and work.

- Q.1 Where and when was Ellsworth Kelly born?
- Q.2 What interest did he share with his Grandmother?
- Q.3 What job did he have in the army?
- Q.4 Where did Kelly get a scholarship for?
- Q.5 When did Ellsworth Kelly die?

- Q.6 What art movement did Ellsworth Kelly set himself apart from?
- Q.7 What qualities are most common in Kelly's work?
- Q.8 What type of art did Ellsworth Kelly impact?
- Q.9 How do you think bird watching was helpful to his development as an artist?
- Q.1 Why do you think current and future artists may be inspired by Ellsworth Kelly?



Ellsworth Kelly, *White Red*, 1963, oil on canvas, 175.3 x 220.4 cm. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo: Ron Amstutz, courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Potato Barn*, Long Island, 1968, gelatin silver print, 21.6 x 32.7 cm. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

### TASK 2

Using the image of *White Red* (1963) Describe the painting in only 5 sentences. Aim to use 1 example of alliteration, simile, metaphor or personification in your answer.

### TASK 3

- Looking at the photograph above, create a short descriptive story using the photo as a starter. It can be any genre, such as horror, mystery or drama. Include descriptive language to set your scene.
- Imagine you are Ellsworth Kelly working as a camouflage artist during WW2. Write a descriptive letter home to a friend detailing your experience.

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TEACHERS RESOURCE PACKET

**SCIENCE**



Ellsworth Kelly, *Spectrum IX*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, twelve joined panels, 273.7 x 243.8 cm. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo: Ron Amstutz, courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

# INSPIRATION

*Spectrum IX* conveys Kelly's interest in how our senses perceive colours and the elements of contrast. The piece is most notable as it starts and ends with the different shades of yellow which was an intentional decision by the artist. It shows a fluid movement from green to golden orange which makes it difficult to tell that the two yellows are the same. He made a total of 9 *Spectrum* paintings from 1953 and 2014, these ranged from small canvas sizes to large wall installations.

Why do you think he decided to use different shades of yellow from the start to finish?

Why do you think it's difficult to tell that the shades are the same? Is there a Science principle that could apply here?

## PRACTICAL TASKS

### TASK 1

Using *Window V* as inspiration, create your own composition by completing a range of different Paper Chromatography Experiments using a variety of different colours found in *Spectrum IX* above.

### TASK 2

Using a collected leaf, paper and crayon. Complete a transfer image of the leaf similar to *Grass*, by placing the paper on top of your leaf and shading over it to pick up the details such as shape and veins. When completed label the key areas of the leaf dissection.

### TASK 3

Create your own Artwork inspired by *Spectrum IX* by completing a pH indicator experiment testing for acid and alkalis. Use Universal indicator paper and the following substances below. When you have completed the strips. Arrange them into a composition of your choice and photograph.

- Vinegar
- Baking Soda
- Baking Powder
- Water
- Milk
- Juice
- Dish Soap
- Laundry Soap
- Ammonia



Ellsworth Kelly, *Window V*, 1950, oil on wood, 69.9 x 18.4 x 1.3 cm. Forman Family Collection. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Grass*, 1961, pencil on paper, 72.4 x 57.2 cm. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo: Ron Amstutz, courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Spectrum IX*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, twelve joined panels, 273.7 x 243.8 cm. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo: Ron Amstutz, courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

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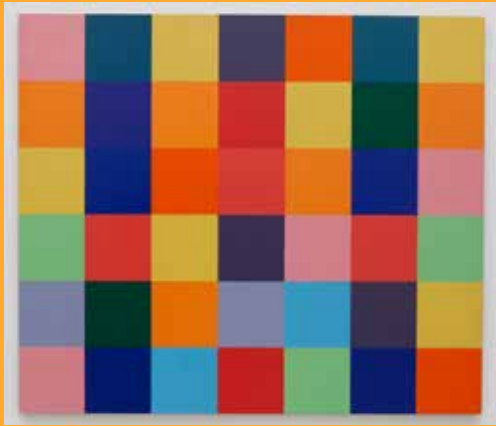
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TEACHERS RESOURCE PACKET

**ART**



Ellsworth Kelly, *Sanary*, 1952, oil on wood, 130.8 x 152.4 cm. Collection Marguerite and Robert Hoffmann. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

# INSPIRATION

Throughout his life Kelly spent time in Sanary-sur-Mer which was a small town located near Toulon. He took inspiration from the light reflection from the water, fishing boats and the brightly painted architecture. This inspiration through his own observations of everyday life is again something that emerges through many of his works. As a result of this change in his environment Kelly began to redirect his work from dark shades to creating more vibrant colour ideas for large scale pieces. *Sanary* 1952 similarly to *Gironde* began as a collage using a selection of coloured papers. Again the arrangement is random with the exception of darker tones to separate the lighter colours. The darker rows can be seen in a vertical direction which creates an almost weaving effect.

## PRACTICAL TASKS

### TASK 1 : DRAWING TASKS

- Bring in some leaves, fruit or flowers or alternatively, visit a garden area in your school. Choose natural object to be the focus of your drawing task.
- Complete 1 Continuous line, 1 blind drawing and 1 opposite hand drawing in your sketchbook of your natural object. Spend atleast 5 minutes on each drawing.
- Choose your best drawing and experiment with watercolours to paint your chosen sketch.

### TASK 2 : COLLAGE

Choose any image in black and white or colour to be printed. You will cut your image into small squares and mix them up. Create your own pixelated inspired collage using glue. The pieces can be put down at random or you can create your own colour story.

### TASK 3 : SCREENPRINT/ PAPER CUTTING

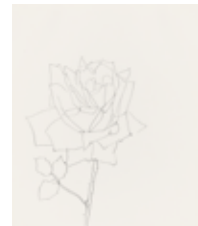
Continuing with Kellys theme of observational drawings in his work. *Atlantic* (1956) which stands at a large scale of over 9 feet. The initial inspiration stems from a fleeting moment of how a shadow emerged across an open page in a book he was reading. The shades are inversed in the work so that the shadow is shown in white.

Move around the room and sketch out different shapes of shadows you see.

Choose 1 sketch to be the focus of your work and complete either a screenprint or paper cutting using 2 colours as your focus.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Wild Grape*, 1961, watercolour on paper, 57.2 x 72.4 cm. Collection Jack Shear. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Rose*, Palm Springs, 1984, graphite on paper, 61 x 50.8 cm. Private Collection. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Cut Up Drawing Rearranged by Chance*, 1950, ink and collage on paper, 64.8 x 49.5 cm. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo: Ron Amstutz, courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Atlantic*, 1956, oil on canvas, two joined panels, 203.2 x 289.6 cm. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Purchase. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

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TEACHERS RESOURCE PACKET

**DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY**



# INSPIRATION

Many of Kelly's works stem from his observations and inspiration from the world around him which are seen in his notebooks. These have included the natural world, architecture and also his observations from the simplest of encounters such as bus journeys and places he saw on his travels, he would focus on the smallest of details. *Relief with Blue* 1950 is also renowned for an inspiring encounter he had. In 1949 when in Paris, Kelly went to see a production of *Hamlet*. He was fascinated by the use of the curtain. It shifted in size and colour to create the mood changes within the play. Kelly's sketch of the curtain was transformed into a wood relief and painted with oil. The fall and shape of the curtain can be seen in the shape of the wood with the curve creating the illusion of fabric. The use of the blue and white creates a contrast making the curve more prominent.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Relief with Blue*, 1950, oil on wood, 114 x 44.5 x 3.2 cm. Collection Bettina and Donald L. Bryant, Jr. Promised gift to the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in honour of Kirk Varnedoe. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

## PRACTICAL TASKS

### TASK 1: DESIGN

Study for "Window I" (1949) is based on Ellsworth Kelly's fascination with everyday objects such as windows.

- Using this piece as inspiration complete quick sketches of different windows you see.
- Create 3 design drawings of different shapes and layouts using your studied windows as inspiration. This can be done by hand or digitally.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Study for "Window I"*, 1949, ink and gouache on paper, 20 x 13.65 cm. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo: Ron Amstutz, courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

### TASK 2: RESISTANT MATERIALS

Many of Kelly's pieces take the form of wood relief and layering one shape on top of another. These shapes were usually based on everyday found objects such as trash, buildings and views from the bus. Using *Concorde Relief I* as inspiration create your own relief piece using 2 pieces of reusable wood.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Concorde Relief I*, 1958, elm, 29.2 x 19.7 cm. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The Doris and Donald Fisher Collection at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and promised gift of Helen and Charles Schwab. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

### TASK 3: TEXTILES

Although Ellsworth Kelly predominantly worked within paint, wood relief and sculpture, some pieces are reminiscent of printed textiles. Using *Gironde* (1951), attempt to replicate this print using fabric. This could be done using dye and resistant methods such as batik or tie dye. It could also be constructed using stitch or embroidery techniques.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Gironde*, 1951, oil and Ripolin on Masonite, 114.9 x 114.9 cm. Private Collection, courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

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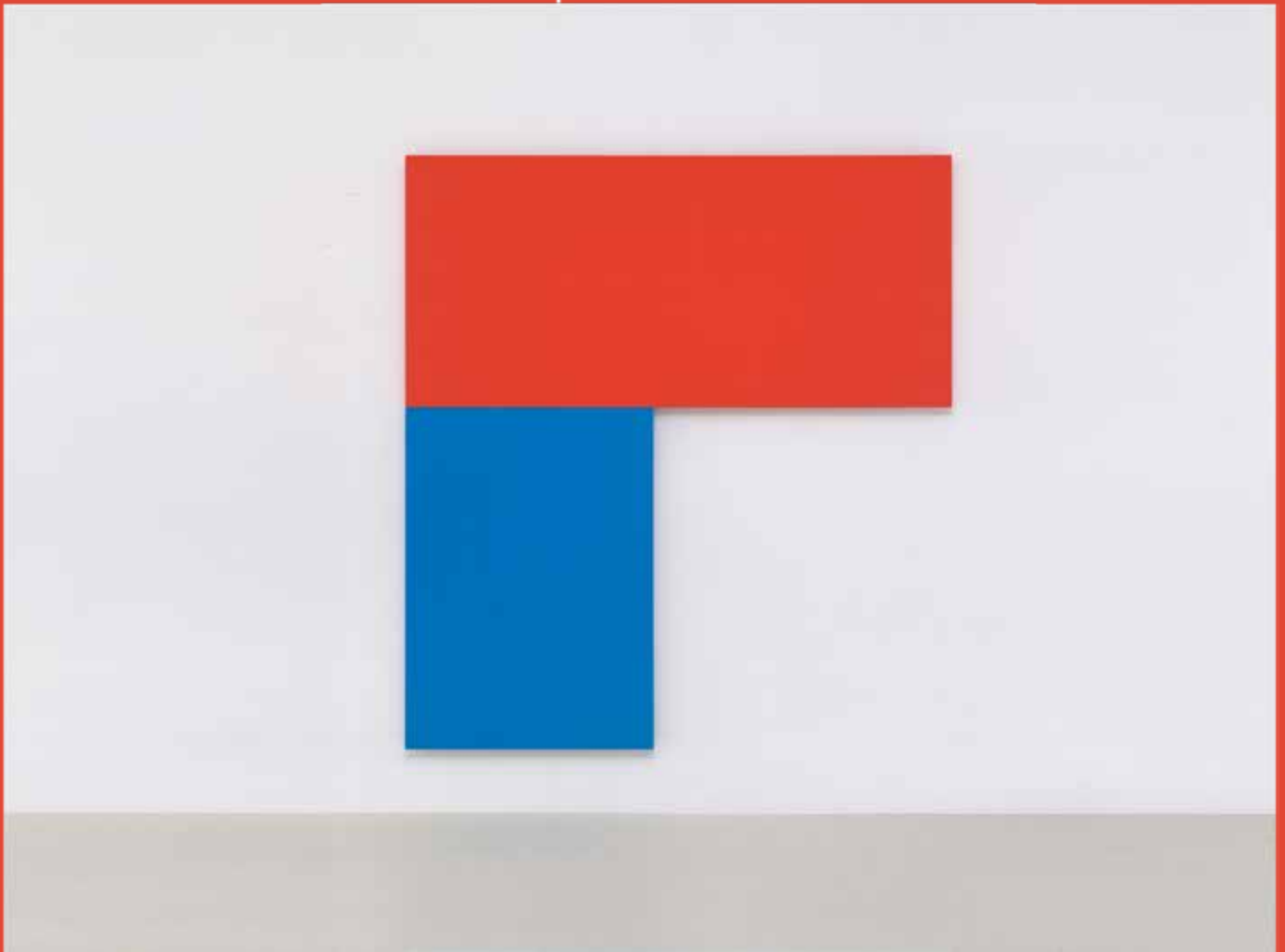
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TEACHERS RESOURCE PACKET

**MATH**

# INSPIRATION



Ellsworth Kelly, *Seine*, 1951, oil on wood, 41.9 x 114.9 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art. Purchased with funds contributed in memory of Anne d'Harnoncourt and other Museum Funds. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.

*Seine* (1951) is a fascinating example of how Ellsworth Kelly transformed the mundane into the abstract. This piece highlights the theme of chance which is something that emerges in many of Kelly's other works. It is an element that he was very much interested in. He was curious about how nature was unpredictable, especially in the way that objects could change or move at random, such as shadows and tones. Kelly began his inspiration for *Seine* by completing realistic drawings using pencil and black pen, and in doing so captured the glittering reflections of the water. Using the element of chance, he then transferred these into patterns by pulling numbers at random and painting in the matching squares on a grid. Although *Seine* began from observing nature, it shows that unconventional techniques can transform ideas into something new. In doing so, *Seine* conveys a delicate balance of light and dark.

## PRACTICAL TASKS

### TASK 1

Calculate the area of the green panel (as square cm and as a % of whole area).

Dimensions: Full Vertical 203.4cm; Full Horizontal 159cm; Long Green Vertical 144.9cm; Short Green Vertical 85.7cm; Short Green Horizontal 101.8cm

### TASK 2

Choose an image to print. Measure the length, width and area of the image and separate it into 8 squares of equal sizes.

Cover a sheet of clear acetate in glue and piece your image squares together face down so that the composition is random.

Can you calculate the number of possible combinations (8 factorial).

### TASK 3

Using *Gironde* (1951), as inspiration. Work together as a class or in small groups and create 16 lined squares. Each square should be unique and ranging from 2-6 lines per square. These can be done using pen or markers. Take 10 minutes and arrange the pieces in different combinations (akin to the original piece). Take pictures of each combination throughout.

Can you calculate the number of possible combinations? (16 factorial = 20.9 trillion)



Ellsworth Kelly, *Green Relief*, 2009, oil on canvas, two joined panels, 203.2 x 158.8 x 6.7 cm. Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Cut Up Drawing Rearranged by Chance*, 1950, ink and collage on paper, 64.8 x 49.5 cm. Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo: Ron Amstutz, courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Gironde*, 1951, oil and Ripolin on Masonite, 114.9 x 114.9 cm. Private Collection, courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery. © Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Photo courtesy Ellsworth Kelly Studio.



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