



## LOOK AND DISCUSS

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Karl Wirsum, *Worse Sum Show*, 1970

1. **Look closely** at *Worse Sum Show* by Karl Wirsum.
2. **What do you notice?** Discuss with a partner: What stands out to you? Make a list of all the images you see. What do you think the figure is doing? What do you think inspired the artist to make this artwork? How would you describe the style of this artwork?
3. **Reflect:** Karl Wirsum gained inspiration from flea markets, music, comic books, and popular culture. How does this artwork compare to your favorite comic books or graphic novels?

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Karl Wirsum was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1939, and passed away in 2021. He enjoyed traveling and making new connections with people he encountered around the world. He drew inspiration from local Chicago musicians, flea markets, African art, and American Indian totems and transformational masks. Wirsum was particularly influenced by Chicago's rhythm and blues music scene. The improvisational style of rhythm and blues inspired his art process of letting his creativity and wacky ideas flow with energetic humor.

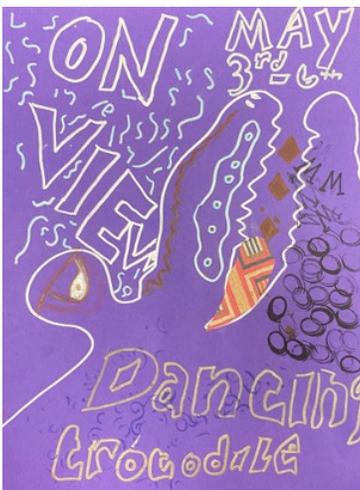


Photo Courtesy of Louis / Buhl & Co.

## MAKE

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**Suggested Materials:** construction paper, paper cut-outs (magazines, computer printouts, books, or hand-drawn images on paper), recyclable objects (such as paper, plastic bottles, paper bags, newspapers), clay (or playdough)—use whatever you have available!



Artwork by Fabian Rodriguez '22

### Drawing: Event Poster

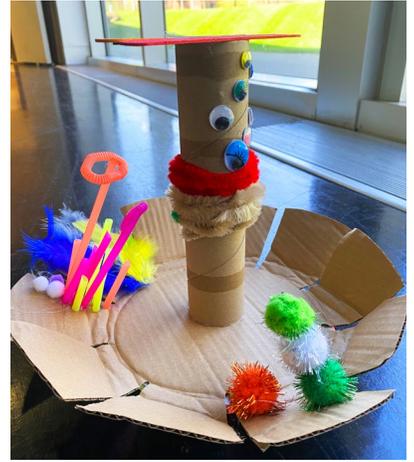
Collage a poster for a real or imagined concert, poetry slam, or art show!

1. Gather images from magazines, your favorite television shows, and the internet that catch your eye.
2. Glue images down on a piece of paper and start adding other elements that connect these images in an unusual and wacky way, like in Wirsum's work!
3. Share your collage with a friend!

## Sculpture: Reimagining Discarded Objects

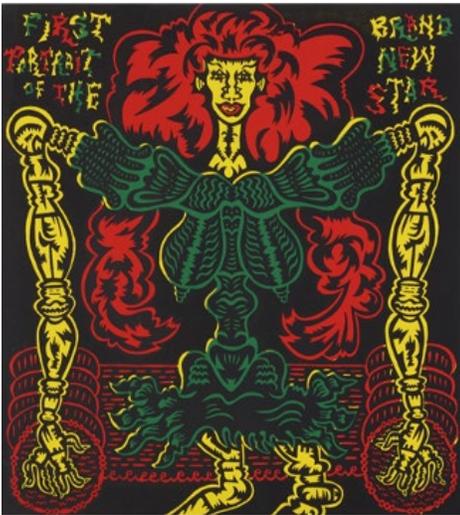
Create a new toy out of discarded or recyclable objects around your home!

1. Find an item from your house that you can repurpose like a plastic bottle, toilet paper roll, or cardboard box.
2. Think about how it could be changed into a fun toy. What do you see it being changed into?
3. Start embellishing and decorating your toy. Let your imagination run wild!
4. Share your new invention with a friend and show them how to use it!



Artwork by Fabian Rodriguez '22

## LEARN MORE



Karl Wirsum, *First Portrait of the Brand New Star*, 1970, screen print on paper, edition of 190, published by Advance Screen Company, Chicago, and The School of Art Institute of Chicago.

Karl Wirsum graduated from The Art Institute of Chicago. He joined his art school peers to become part of The Chicago Imagists. This group of Chicago-based artists of the 1960s exhibited their work together at the Hyde Park Art Center in the South Side of Chicago. Each artist has their own uniquely bizarre, figurative, and expressive style, which was much different from the more mainstream Pop Art style of that era.



Karl Wirsum, *Deep Tea Diver*, 2016, mixed media acrylic, photo courtesy of David H. Ramsey

## SHARE

Take a photo of your work and post it on social media with the hashtag **#TangAtHome** **#ArtWithTheTang!**

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**For more art-making activities, check out:**  
<https://tang.skidmore.edu/education/tang-at-home>