Yarn Art, Session 1
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Video Arts Instructional Workshop Series

Creative Artists Migrant Program Services (CAMPS)
Administered by the Genesee Valley Council on the Arts (GVCA), Mt. Morris, NY
(Formerly of the Geneseo Migrant Center)

Yarn Art Session 1
Huichol Yarn Paintings - "Nierika"

The Huichols are an indigenous people who mostly live in the mountainous areas of Northern Mexico. These areas include Jalisco and Nayarit, with their main cultural hubs being in San Andres, Santa Catarina, and San Sebastian. In their language, Huichol means soothsayer or medicine man.

The yarn paintings they are known for making are a traditional way for them to represent and communicate with the Gods they worship. They are called Nierikas and they are often quite elaborate and have very intricate designs and bold colors. Here is an example of a traditional Huichol Nierika:
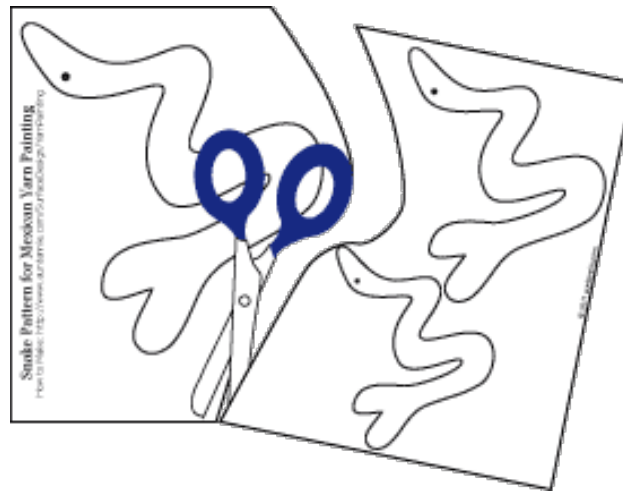

For your Nierika, you will need:
- Cardstock or paper
- Yarn (multicolored)
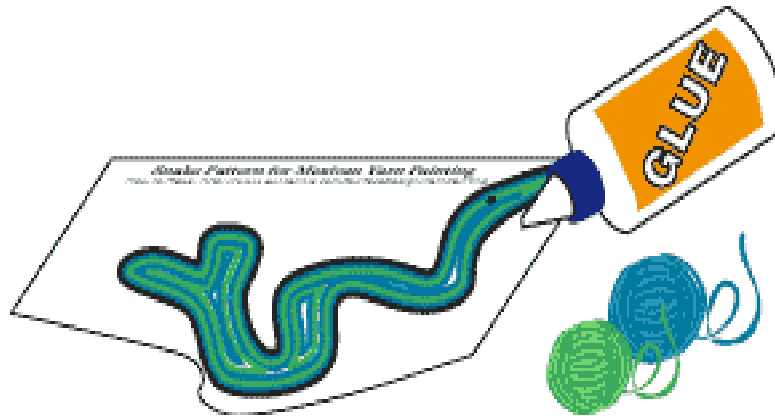- Pencil or marker
- Glue
- Scissors

Instructions:

1. Choose a design and draw or print it out on the cardstock/paper (I've included both some easier and more challenging ideas below)

2. Cut out the design, leaving a small border around it so it is easier to work with for the time being. You will cut the design more closely later.

3. Use the glue to start outlining the design. I would suggest gluing little by little as you go, and not outlining it all at once because the glue could dry before you get to every section.

4. Start laying the yarn in the line of glue you laid down, and guide it with your hand, and then lightly press it into the glue so it will stick.

5. You want to take your time with this, because moving too quickly could cause a mess with the glue. You can also rotate the design as you work so the yarn doesn't drape in the wet glue.

6. Once the outline is complete, cut the yarn and adjust any spots with your finger if needed.

7. Using a variety of colors, start to fill the outlined design in with yarn. Start from the outside, close to your outline, and work into the middle. Use as much yarn as needed to completely fill in the design.

8. Remember to periodically press the yarn into the glue so it sticks.

9. Once the design is completely filled in, you can let it dry for some time before cutting off that little border and mounting it to another piece of paper.

CAMPS – NYS-MEP Collaboration, Summer 2020 – Yarn Art Session 1 - English

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