

Recreating Marc Chagall's Circus Horse and Rider

At The Little Bits Workshop, 17 local children ranging in age from six to eleven, recreated Marc Chagall's *Circus Horse and Rider* by hot gluing buttons, beads, Legos, lids, shells, feathers and so much more. We were inspired to create this mosaic style after seeing the work of British artist Jane Perkins who recreates famous paintings and photographs with little bits.

All our campers were asked to clean out their toy bins and junk drawers at home and bring a bucket of bits with them on the first day. We dumped everything into three sheets and sorted by color to create a "paint set" of bits. The Chagall painting was digitally output on gator board and kids began the process of matching bits to the image. The painting was divided into four sections so teams could work on the piece separately. In each team we put younger kids with older kids and assigned the oldest as the glue-gun-art-director who got to decide if the bits that the younger ones chose matched well enough. By the last day, almost every child had a glue gun in hand and all were busy matching and gluing. It took 17 kids 9 hours to create this piece.

We peppered the week with some stories and history about Marc Chagall, a Russian Jew born in 1887. He grew up never drawing or seeing artwork until he was 13 years old. One day he noticed another boy drawing and just had to try it himself. Being from a strict Jewish community, drawing from reality was frowned upon and in some cases prohibited. But alas, his desire to draw and paint prevailed as he pursued a

career as a struggling painter. His work, while taking on different styles, is consistently dreamlike and often illustrates both Jewish and Christian themes.

As a child, he'd seen impromptu performances in the streets of his hometown and loved the circus. This also became a favorite subject of his work.



We chose the work of Marc Chagall because of his childlike style and bright color pallet which is very conducive to school age children who come to our workshop. Also, if they mismatched a bit here and there, the Chagall painting would not suffer in the least.

In each quadrant of our rendition, we've embedded a dreidel as well as a photo of every child who participated. See if you can find the faces of 17 children???

—Liita Forsyth



The Little Bits Workshop is a cozy studio in the heart of River Forest where people of all ages and abilities come to learn the fine craft of upcycling through traditional skills: sewing, knitting, crochet, collage; fiber & paper arts; jewelry making; building with hand & small power tools...and so much more. Our mission is not to mass produce anything, but to teach the masses to discover the thrill of creative productivity. We teach afterschool workshops, host birthday parties and run camps both in our studio and in five Oak Park Schools.

*The Little Bits Workshop, 411 Park, River Forest
Check out our website for upcoming events:*

thelittlebitsworkshop.com

