Recycled Paper Mache Animalitos
with Tony Ortega

The Big Idea
For this workshop, students will assemble and paint Animalitos/Alebrijes fantastic creatures. Students will use recycled materials, masking tape, hot glue guns, and paint with gesso and acrylic paint.

You Need
- Newspaper, newsprint pad, or cheap cop paper cut
- One cup of flour
- Masking tape
- Paint shirt or apron
- Acrylic paint (primary colors, secondary colors, black and white) or watercolors
- Low-temperature hot glue gun and glue sticks
- Plastic containers (strawberry, raspberry, blackberry, tomato, etc.)
- Cardboard, egg cartons, toilet paper, paper towel rolls, paper cups etc.
- Variety of brushes
- Scissors
- Small container of white gesso 8 to 16 oz. or white house paint
- Variety of sizes of dowels, toothpicks, or acrylic markers for embellishment
- Step-By-Step tutorial: www.think360arts.org

The Plan
- Search for animal images online or in books.
- Begin to visualize the animalito by picking out scraps of recycled materials.
- Create some thumbnails/ sketches to visualize the animalito.
- Be creative and try different shapes (abstract and geometric) and directions (horizontal, vertical, and diagonal) to create a sense of movement and balance.
- Assemble the armature of the animalitos and glue the recycled pieces together using tape and hot glue.
The Plan cont.

- Cut out strips of newspaper.
- Glue the newspaper strips using the paper mache glue.
- After paper mache is dry paint the animalito with white gesso.
- Paint the animalito with solid opaque under colors.
- Embellish by adding a variety of patterns onto the solid under colors. Wooden dowels can be used as stamps for the pattern.

Teaching Artist Tip

- Students in primary grades may use Modeling Clay to create an animalito and simulate the lines and patterns with Sharpies or other markers.
- Students can use clay to form an animal or mystical figure. After the figure is bisque fired a base coat will be added to cover the object.

Going Further

- Create an exhibit of their work for their school or community.
- Publish their artworks on the Internet on the school website.
- Write a story about their created sculpture.
- Plan a fiesta day to share what they've learned about Oaxaca and Mesoamerican culture.