

DEAKIN'S ABSTRACT GARDEN

Blog 'n' Craft Blueprint



Garden of Heavenly and Earthly Delights
Jane Deakin — Oil on Canvas — 1988

"I like to break the rules if it means achieving a more zingy picture."

— Jane Deakin

Hop across the pond
to London and visit
a modern-day
artist who defies
mother nature
when she picks up
her paintbrush.
Then you too will
break a few rules
by creating your own
abstract garden.

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Jane Deakin paints an abstract garden in her famous painting named **Garden of Heavenly and Earthly Delights**. Both the artist and the painting are perfect examples of Post-Modernism, a late-20th-century art movement that questioned any notion of what art 'is' or 'should be.'

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'Abstract art' is — *an unrealistic portrayal of the real world by an artist. It often includes*

everyday objects, presented in a manner which makes them challenging to recognize.

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Deakin is a famous British artist — born in Kennington, London — who won her first art competition at the young age of 13 with a field of poppies painted unconventionally using watercolors and oil paints. In her own words — those of a true post-modernist — "I like to break the rules if it means achieving a more zingy picture!"

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On any given day, you'll find Jane Deakin painting in her perfectly-lit studio on the banks of the River Thames. There she particularly enjoys creating miniature paint-

ings on small, perfectly-formed slates, which she gathers from the foreshore of the river. She often refers to her tiniest works of fine art as "precious little jewels dredged from the bottom of the deep Thames mud."

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A graduate from Reading University with a degree in Fine Art, Deakin's work is based on the beauty of nature. **Garden of Heavenly and Earthly Delights** is her abstract representation of real-life objects found in a garden.

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Just imagine all the things one might see in a garden — flowers, trees, insects, birds, small animals, statuary, fences, stone walls, benches, hedges, greenhouses, fountains, bridges, pavilions, patios, lawns, stepping stones, reflecting pools, aviaries, trellises, topiary, ponds, gazebos, etc. Whew — that's a long list! Who knew there could be so many things in a garden? Can you think of other things you might find in a garden?

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What makes this abstract art is that nothing in Deakin's painting looks the way it would in a real-life garden. Everything is 'unnaturally' composed using the elements of art — including line, shape, form, space, color, and texture. It's pretty interesting when you think about it — Jane Deakin has painted nature, quite unnaturally!

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Although Deakin's portrayal of a garden in ***Garden of Heavenly and Earthly Delights*** might not match the image that comes to mind when you hear the word 'garden,' it is nonetheless a beautiful representation. Like a real flower garden, Deakin's painting is very bright and colorful. At the top, we see a yellow dot surrounded by an orange glow, which could be interpreted as the warm sun helping the flowers grow. The bright colors and abstract shapes could be seen as a giant blooming explosion. The band of blue at the top of the painting could represent the bright-blue sky. If you look really



closely, you might imagine that the black lines throughout are a wrought-iron fence containing the garden.

Abstract art from the Post-Modern era is unique because it relies on the viewer's imagination. In oth-

er words, you may interpret the painting much differently from me, and even from what the artist intended. Abstract art allows each individual a very different and highly personal reaction to a piece of artwork.

- As we learned, Post-Modernists like to break the rules. Jane Deakin indeed broke the rules when she painted nature — in this case, a garden — so unnaturally.

- The following fun, hands-on artsy craft will have you breaking the rules as you unnaturally compose your own garden painting.

- Think about the objects you wish to include in your garden, remember whatever those objects — flowers, trees, insects, statuary, fences, benches — they shouldn't look as they would in a real life garden.

- Create your abstract art by using out-of-the-ordinary shapes and forms to represent objects. Try thick and thin crisscrossing lines, swashes, swirls,

swishes, globs, blobs, etc. — rather than squares, circles, triangles, and ovals. These unconventional shapes plus bright colors and exciting texture will make your picture 'zingy' too, just like ***Garden of Heavenly and Earthly Delights*** by Jane Deakin.

Abstract Raised-Salt Craft



Create an **Abstract Raised-Salt Craft** for hands-on fun with Post-Modernism!

MATERIALS

- 8-1/2" x 11" White Cardstock
- White School Glue / Squeeze Bottle
- Iodized Table Salt
- Large Baking Pan (Tray)
- Liquid Watercolor Paints*
- Paintbrush
- Container of Water
- Hair Spray (*Optional*)



Everything you need to create an **Abstract Raised-Salt Craft**!



***No paints on hand?
NO PROBLEM!**

For a printable **Watercolor Recipe** check **Artsy Craftsy Ideas!**
www.arttoknowwithmommyo.com

DIRECTIONS

With the bottle of glue, squeeze your abstract garden design onto the cardstock — making thick and thin crisscrossing lines, swashes,

swirls, swishes, globs, and blobs.



When satisfied with your design, hold the artwork over the large tray as you sprinkle the salt over the lines of glue. Be sure to cover the glue completely with salt.



Gently tip the artwork so that any excess salt falls back into the tray. It is important to go to the next step immediately and not allow the glue to set-up with the salt for too long a time.

• Dip your paintbrush in one color of the liquid watercolors. Then, gently touch the paintbrush to the salt-covered glue. It's like magic — the paint will travel and beautifully blend along the salty lines!

• Repeat the previous step with all the different colors, until you are pleased with your abstract garden.
*Tip: Clean your paintbrush before changing colors.



After you've completed applying the watercolor paints to your garden, allow the artwork to dry on a flat surface for several hours.
*Optional: To help preserve the salt, spray your raised-salt painting with a generous amount of hairspray.

• Once the hairspray is dry and the salt is stabilized, you can display your colorful garden on the refrigerator door.



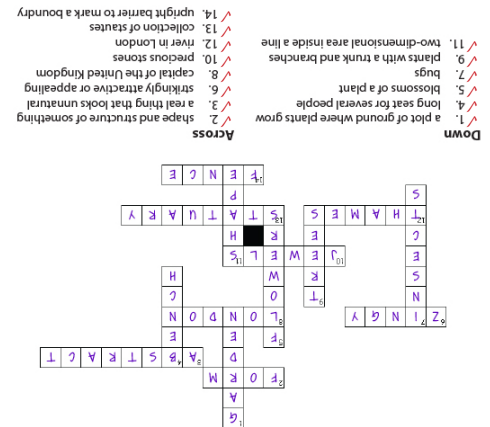
The bright colors are sure to brighten up the kitchen on even the gloomiest of days and your unique abstract garden will forever remind you of Post-Modernist Jane Deakin's beautiful painting named **Garden of Heavenly and Earthly Delights**.



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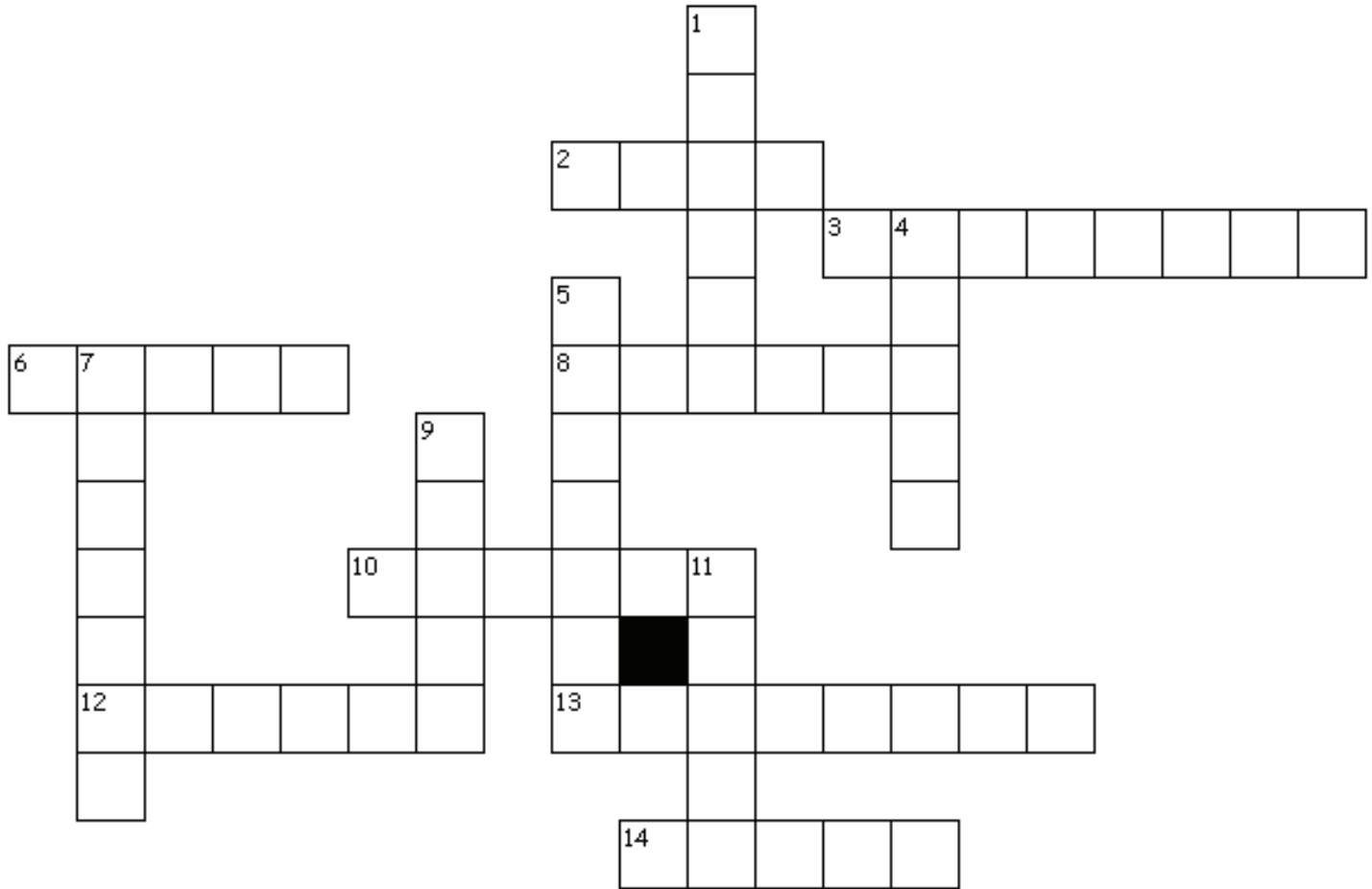


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Crossword Puzzle Fun

Solve for the words below as you test your knowledge of Post-Modernist Jane Deakin and her famous abstract garden painting titled *Garden of Heavenly and Earthly Delights*!

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Across

2. shape and structure of something
3. a real thing that looks unnatural
6. strikingly attractive or appealing
8. capital of the United Kingdom
10. precious stones
12. river in London
13. collection of statues
14. upright barrier to mark a boundary

Down

1. a plot of ground where plants grow
4. long seat for several people
5. blossoms of a plant
7. bugs
9. plants with a trunk and branches
11. two-dimensional area inside a line