



## Shadow Sculptures!



by TheJehosephat

Awesome sculpture that looks like a pile of trash, but when you shine a light on it.... BAM! It suddenly finds... meaning? I guess what I'm trying to say, is that through the pile of trash I can create something of beauty. Something that people will WANT to look at. I've been looking for a new way to recycle trash into art and here it was...

I found a gallery of shadow sculptures. They amazed me because I didn't know how a pile of trash could have the shadow of a motorcycle or a person! I decided that I would try my own version...



1. Pile of trash...
2. The shadow of said "pile of trash"
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## Step 1: Gathering Materials...

So first off you will need a bunch of junk to use. This is your opportunity to go dumpster diving. I used a bunch of recyclables myself. This is the easiest part, because you shouldn't be selective or biased based on the shape of the object. Just grab everything! (anything that doesn't go rotten or smell after a couple days)

- +Something to bind the sculpture together (I personally used superglue and silicone)
- +A source of light. I used a simple household lamp.

WhiteOakArt mentioned a good tip that I thought I'd share:

*Hot melt glue would be my choice for an adhesive. It has nearly instant sticking power. If you are a hot melt connoisseur, like myself, you would use three different guns:*

low temp: quick set, relatively safe. for light weight items. Available at craft stores, grocery stores, and department stores. This is what your preschool

Materials needed:

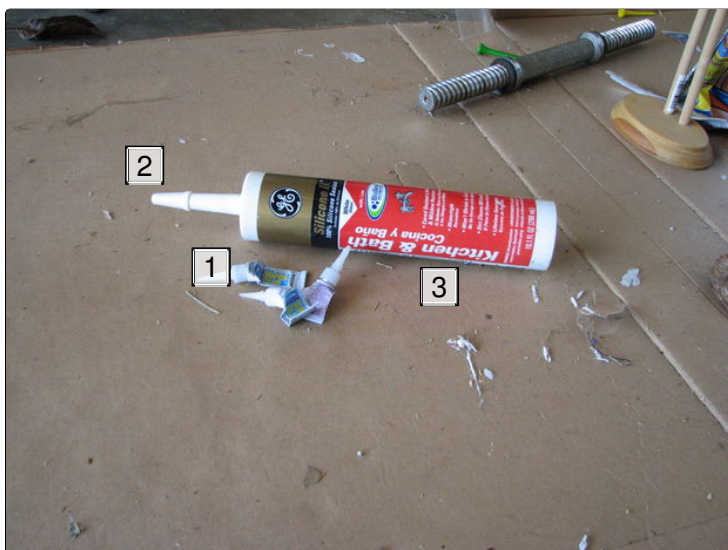
- +A base of some sort. I ended up just grabbing a large cardboard box.
- +Trash/junk
- +Large sheet of paper/piece of cardboard/wall you don't mind drawing on.

teacher uses.

high temp: industrial power. for heavy weight items. Will fry your skin off, so be careful. These guns are not easy to find. You must get them at a tool supply company. But they work great.

medium temp: for everything else. You can find these at any hardware store.

Or you could just use the medium temp, which is what reasonable people do.



1. Empty tubes of super glue
2. Half empty tube of silicone
3. General extra mess from the silicone

## Step 2: Sketching Your Shadow

In order to make a shadow, you need to know what you are creating (you could just wing it and see what you come up with, but I'm not sure I can do that).

I ended up deciding on something fairly simple, the shadow of a sitting cat.

First you will need to take your large piece of paper/cardboard/wall and draw a sketch of what you

want in the end. Refine it until you are satisfied, but you can always make shadows outside the lines if you screw up.

If you are working with paper or cardboard, tape it up on a wall.

This is going to be the perimeter for the sculpture.



1. Remember that you are allowed to change your ideas!



### Step 3: Setting Up the Light

In order for your sculpture to be... reliable? You will need to make sure that your light is set up correctly. It is very disappointing if someone moves your light source and you don't know where it was supposed to be!

Place your light source where you would like it and mark the set-up on the base. You will need to make sure that not only you mark WHERE it is on the base but how HIGH from the base it is.



1. Better to mark it twice than to screw it up. (And it doesn't matter how neat it looks, people will be looking at the shadow anyway!)



1. Don't forget the height!

### Step 4: Building the Shadow

Finally after all that set-up, you get to build the shadow!

This is actually easier than you may think. All it takes is filling in the perimeter you set-up earlier!

Some notes:

Picture 1

The cereal box has been torn on purpose. You should try to stray away from doing this too often, as it tends to be considered as "cheating". If you have no other

options, you can resort to this, as in small parts it can be helpful and look pretty cool.

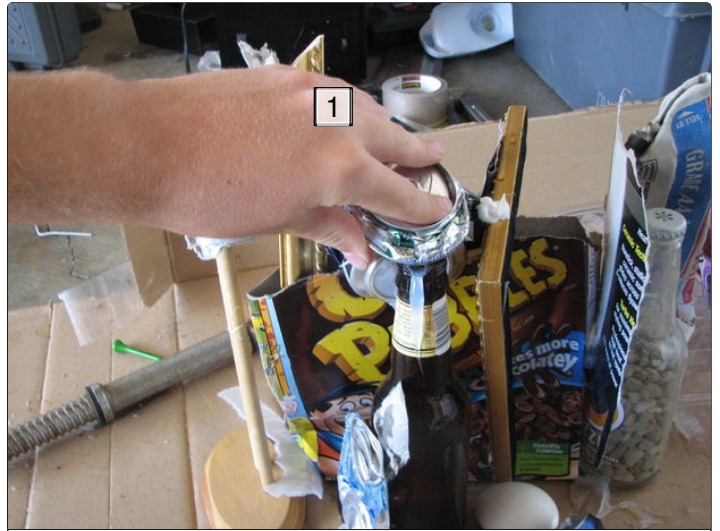
Picture 2

At times the pieces of junk that you use will need to be balanced in a certain position. This means that you will need them to be glued that way. But unfortunately, not all glues are instant. So you will need to hold it in place while it dries a bit.





1. Torn cereal box: do not always attempt.



1. Glue takes some time to dry.

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## Step 5: Finished!

That's it! Pretty easy huh? Now go and make a bunch of shadow sculptures. Amaze people with your shadow prowess ;)



## Step 6: Extra Tips...

A couple extra tips before I stop...

1. Clear objects help to create mid-air shadows/holes.
2. Clear objects cast *nearly* no shadow. You will find that clear objects do cast a partial shadow. So, do not assume that no one can see the shadow but you.
3. Don't be afraid to build outside the lines! If you

think that the shadow looks better somewhere else, change it! In my sculpture, I did not like where the left ear was, so I moved it over.

4. Take a picture when you are done and show me! I'd love to see what you came up with.



1. Nearly shadow-less plastic case.



1. Please excuse bad quality..... x-(  
2. Moving the ear over a bit...



Any tips for making stuff like this?

<http://www.kumiyamashita.com/light-and-shadow/>



- How about putting the junk on a turntable so after awhile the shadow turns to random shapes, then back to the proper shape, or maybe more than one shape from the same pile. Also, if you shine red and blue lights on the piece & wear old school 3D glasses you could get a 3D shadow.



I love the ideas! If I can find the time, I'll have to experiment

- That's always been my problem, so a lot of art takes place in my head. I'm always happy to share ideas because they stand a better chance of manifestation that way. I'd rather someone else develop one of my projects than not have it ever happen.

Wow!! Amazing what can be made, with just a little bit of imagination!

Beth

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haha pretty cool

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it would be a cool trick to make someones shadow a wolf

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your right! Never know what shadow will be like I post this picture. Shadow came from chewed seat belt in my van.

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If you want a cat shadow why not just cut a cat out of cardboard and put a light behind it? Why waste all the time playing with trash?

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because its more creative, artistic and impressive..

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Ok, but then you have a pile of junk sitting around gathering dust. That does not seem too artistic or creative or impressive. Just messy.

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i would consider this EXTREMELY impressive...the cat may not be quite that good but you have to start somewhere.

link from below

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Heya.. thanks for the great tips links etc... very interesting and inspirational. Might use this technique with my 3rd year degree show... mmmm

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Haha this is awesome im totally making one of these asap

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That's a good tip right there. When I get the chance I will add that to the instructable. Would you mind?

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I don't mind. In fact I would be delighted. Isn't that what Instructables is all about, Sharing? Have a great day. I love this Instructable. I think my kids will really like trying it.

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- here are a few artists working like this:  
ian burns  
Tim Noble and Sue Webster etc.
- 



The best live shadow puppetry I've ever seen was Penn and Teller in their show in Las Vegas. Just astonishing (and they are cool magic hackers as well).

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- Boy that cat one really looks good. Like a real kitty.
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Really great. Looks like a cool summer project to keep the kids busy and out of trouble.

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- This type of idea (sculptures as well as shadows) are becoming more popular. For an adult themed reference, check out almost any of the three Austin Powers movies...especially the last one: Goldmember!
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- Something like this could be done with larger objects and outdoor lighting to create cool shadows in your yard
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I love the work of Fred Eerdekens, artist who plays with light and shadows in a very elegant and simplistic way, to give sense to a magma of clothing, metal, clouds. He uses very simple elements of design, and yet it has a strong impact. Playing with our expectations of what an object can and/or cannot do, artists can impress us. In his work, shadows of objects turn into words, it is beautiful, check it out!  
Shadow of Objects

Also a very fun project, the shadow monsters created by Philip Worthington at the RCA. You play with your hands, their shadows transform into monster on a projector screen. Awesome!  
Shadow Monsters

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Double plus good!

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Wow, that's really cool. Although, there are a lot of cool things on this site. Unfortunately, I will never do any of them T\_T

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Why not? This has got to be one of the easiest (and coolest). Take your trash, a lamp, and some duct tape and go to it!

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Great job! Now if there could be animation involved... :-)

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I've been thinking about this myself and have come up with a couple ideas. If one of them works, I'll make an instructable!



I've been wondering how to do that. I'll use this for sure...cheers!



sweet shadow arthttp://www.pantherhouse.com/newshelton/freeze-frame-screen-the-shadow-hot-heads-under-silent-wigs/



You know, that's the exact page that inspired me to do this? Nice find, I lost the link :P



Nice job, that looks really cool. Did you submit it to the "Go Green" Contest?



Actually, I didn't join in that contest until you mentioned it! Thanks a lot!

◦ awesome. I have been thinking about trying this for a while, I really like the idea of shadow art. I will use your awesome instructable to help me finally try this out. great job!



Great first! Definitely gonna have to try this one!



Way too cool! Well done instructable. Thanks for sharing.



Well done!

◦ wow that is pretty cool and creative nice instructable