

Polage.

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Polage:
Technique
combining
polarized light
and collage.

In this technique, we allowed white light to pass through one polarizing filter, then through several layers of colorless cellophane (in this instance we used packing tape) cut into a variety of shapes, and lastly through a second polarizing filter. The cellophane is optically of different value when measured in different directions, which means that the index of refraction is not a constant, but dependent upon the direction from which the light shines through the cellophane. The color appears depending on the angle of the polarizing filters relative to each other.

Austine Wood Comarow is the creator of Polage. She begins each piece of art by creating drawings and then cutting out cellulose in the form of cellophane in numerous thicknesses in hundreds of tiny pieces. She places each piece in different angles, laminating each one between polarizing filters.

This project was intriguing to me because it gave an explanation as to how polarized sunglasses work. The function of polarizing filters is easy enough to understand, that it removes polarized light that reflects off of surfaces, but the fact that it functions that way, and that when paired with another filter at a 90 degree angle to block out light altogether is amazing.