

# WIDE RAINBOW LESSONS: Artist Etel Adnan

## ARTIST INTRO:

Etel Adnan (b. 1925 – 2021) was a poet, essayist, playwright, and painter born in Lebanon to Greek mother and Syrian father. Adnan spoke many languages while attending French schools and though she lived most of her life in poverty, Adnan became a leading voice of contemporary Arab-American culture through her influential writing and later in life her paintings, drawings, and tapestries. She studied philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris and moved to America in the 1950s where she attended U.C. Berkeley and Harvard, and then taught in San Rafael, California. In 1972 she moved back to Lebanon as the cultural editor of the French newspaper *Al-Safa* and *L'Orient le Jour*, but by 1979 she returned to California where she found inspiration at home in Sausalito painting colorful landscapes of her beloved Mount Tamalpias while living with her partner, the artist and writer Simone Fattal. Adnan's acclaimed publications are numerous and live on today inspiring new generations while her artwork is widely exhibited, held in important international museum collections.

## ARTWORK:





**Etel Adnan Untitled 2016,  
Oil on Canvas  
16 1/8 x 13 inches (41 x 33 com)**

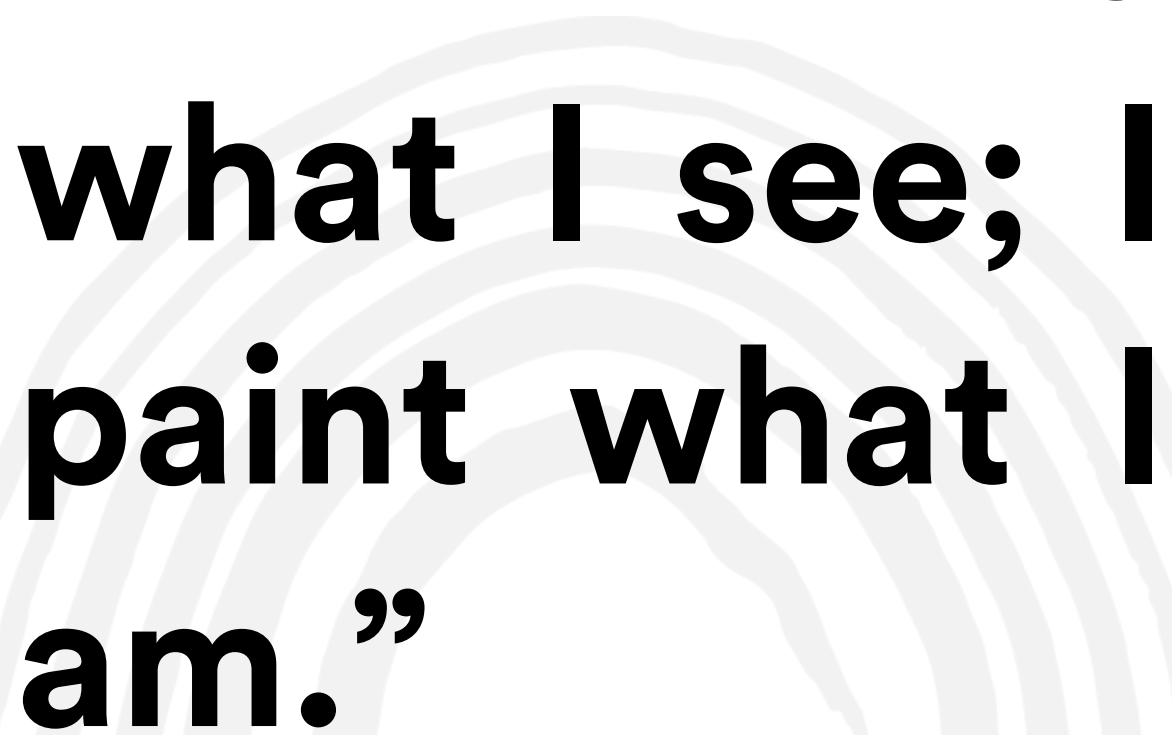
## WORKSHOP:

*Let's take inspiration from Etel Adnan and go outside or look out a window to find nature and paint our own colorful landscapes!*

1. Take a moment to look around your surroundings
2. Find a special view of *nature* whether at home, in the classroom, or around your neighborhood as subject for your landscape
3. Focus on that view and use color to depict the forms you see
4. Paint directly on top of your paper (or canvas) from the paint tube or with a palette knife (or popsicle stick) rather than a brush
5. Play around with texture of the paint
6. Look for the *simple* shapes and forms in your view (outdoors or from a window) to create a colorful, unique, and abstract landscape
7. Get creative! And come back to your view *over and over* again at different times of the day or use different colors, shapes, and textures with your paint to make different versions of your landscape

## MATERIALS:

- Paint
- Paper (or Canvas)
- Palette knife (or wood popsicle stick)



**“I write  
what I see; I  
paint what I  
am.”**

**- Etel Adnan**



**FOLLOW UP:**

Where did you find your view?

Why did you choose that view for your painting?

What is a landscape? What does *abstract* mean to you?

How did you reduce the forms in your view?

What shapes and colors did you choose? Why?

How did you apply your paint? Did you create any interesting texture?

Did you enjoy the process of creating your painting or paintings?

How many paintings of your landscape did you make?

**Wide Rainbow is a 501c3 contemporary art after school program.**

**Providing access to art, artists, and arts education.**

**[www.widerainbow.org](http://www.widerainbow.org)**