

## Clearly Cloudy (Sky Swatches)

*An ongoing art project that anyone can do from home to explore how we are all connected, by Cassie Phan*

### Materials & Prep

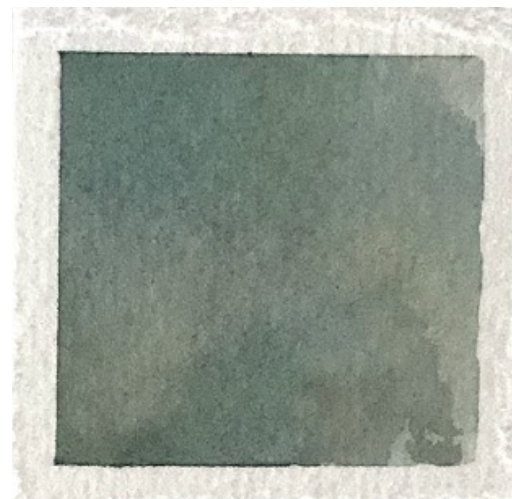
- Paint set (any kind, any number of colors) OR Any dry color media (colored pencils, oil or chalk pastels, crayons, etc.)
- Small brushes if working with paint
- Paper suitable for whatever media you are working in (Watercolor paper or other heavy paper suitable for wet media, most any paper is suitable for dry media)
- Scissors or X-acto knife
- Ruler or straight edge
- **Optional:** Painter's tape (or masking tape; press it onto cloth first to make it less sticky)
- **Optional:** A small, rigid surface such as a clip board or a piece of Plexiglass

Cut your paper into 2x2 inch pieces. (Start with at least 7—a week's worth.) Tape it to the board if you want a white border around each swatch.

### Activity and Concept

Create small daily paintings or drawings of the sky, capturing the color and perhaps the overall feeling or quality of what you are seeing at the time of recording. These small images can capture your experience, perspective, and perception.

At the end of a week, month, or other period of time you decide on, gather all the swatches into a format of your choosing so they can be seen together. For example, arrange them in a grid or a row, paste them into a photo album, make a tiny flipbook to suggest the passage of time, or come up with your own presentation. Display at home or share with others.



**Suggestion:** Choose a particular time of day and the same view of the sky to record daily. Perhaps find a specific position or vantage point that feels important or meaningful to you.

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### Tips:

- Focus on one day at a time. Don't look at the swatch from the previous day, and don't worry about any of the swatches looking too much the same. This is a short meditation on color and form, and a way to do a daily check-in with the sky—something we can all do, no matter where we are. (Unless you are stationed on a submarine, perhaps?)
- Suggest doing this activity with a friend and compare your swatches after the whole period is complete. How did you perceive the sky in the same ways? How did you see it differently? Is your friend in a far-away place or in the same city/town as you?
- Practice mixing colors to get the exact color you want; try using more or less water or solvent (wet media) or pressure (dry media) to get a more opaque or translucent effect.

**Artist's Note:** I am excited to present this project as a variation of one that I have been working on in my studio long-term. What began as a question about the “real color” of the water in Galveston turned into an daily practice of painting small watercolor swatches to record the water's color on different days. While this project is ongoing, I hope that the ideas of perception and perspective can be meaningful to others as we separately and collectively navigate and endure our current experience.



**Cassie Phan** is an artist and educator working in Galveston, Texas. She received her MFA from the University of North Texas in 2013 and works primarily in multimedia installations of video, objects and drawing. Her work often questions perception, memory and the mechanisms of resilience through subjective experiences. She has exhibited work nationally, with solo exhibitions at venues including Art League Houston, Terrain Dallas, 500X Gallery, and Beefhaus. She currently teaches for Blinn College and for the Galveston Arts Center's *Art for All* program.