

# PAINTING WITH PAPER

BY KYLE LUBINSKY '17

**A**s an artist, Megan Coyle '08 is constantly breaking down what she sees into smaller pieces in her head.

It's not surprising that her medium of choice is collage, but that was not always the case. When she arrived at Elon in 2004, she intended to become a writer. Soon, however, she realized writing was not for her, so she decided to return to her first passion, art, which she discovered at an early age growing up in Alexandria, Va.

Though she studied painting, she chose to create portrait collages for her senior thesis. It was a decision that set the course for the rest of her career. Since then, Coyle has honed a collage style she calls "painting with paper," which is based around creating images using thinly cut up pieces of magazines. Some of her early works combined both oil pastels and cutouts, but over time she gradually phased out the use of pastels in favor of strictly magazine cutouts.

Her innovation has paid off. Since graduating from Elon with degrees in art and creative writing in 2008, Coyle has showcased her art across the country. She has held multiple exhibitions around the Washington, D.C., area and some of her work has made it into permanent museum collections, most notably The Ward Museum in Salisbury, Md. Various news sources have taken note of her art, including *The Washington Post*. She was featured on Conan O'Brien's website for a collage she made of him and her works have been featured in different art books, including *Flowers in Art*, which features art from all over the world.



"All in a Row"

But her work goes beyond gallery walls. Coyle has used her art to foster education by creating lesson plans for students ranging from elementary to high school. She often receives updates from teachers who are using her techniques. "I'm devoted to education," she says. "I'm really happy I put them together." She also uses her art to illustrate children's books, and she has written and illustrated her own children's book, *Duck and Fish*, which features more than two dozen original illustrations.

Going forward, Coyle hopes to apply her skills to video and animation. She has used video in the past as a means of explaining her collage technique, but animation would be a new process. Learning new things has always been one of Coyle's biggest motivations to continue making art. "I'm always interested in trying to refine my craft," she says. "I'm motivated by that desire to continue to grow as an artist as well as explore different subjects and compositions." ♣



Learn more about Coyle's work at [megancoyle.com](http://megancoyle.com).