

The Artist's Studio: Shadow Stories

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This painting by Hughie Lee-Smith reads like a scene in a mystery novel: The sky darkens over a desert. Two figures wander the empty landscape. A source of light creates long shadows on the sand.

Who are these people? What is this place? What will happen next?

Materials

- Large sheet of paper or an unfolded grocery bag
- Markers, crayons, or pencils
- Assorted objects (toys, blocks, etc.)

Play with light and shadow as you make your own drawing inspired by this mysterious artwork. Place small figures, blocks, toys, or other objects with interesting shapes on a large piece of paper. Shine a flashlight onto the objects (or place them in the sunlight) and look at the shadows they cast. Experiment with the placement of the objects and angle of the light source to create long and short shadows. Use your favorite mark-making tools to trace and color the shadow-shapes.



Hughie Lee Smith. *Desert Forms*, 1957. American Art Sales Proceeds Fund; through prior acquisitions of Charles S. Peterson Purchase Prize and Charles D. Ettinger funds, and Mr. and Mrs. Frederick G. Wacker Jr. Endowment Fund.

Create a story about your drawing. Begin with the phrase, "Last night I had the strangest dream . . ." As you share your story, describe what you saw, heard, touched, smelled, and experienced.