



Todd Sanders

Roadside Neon

June 7 – July 21, 2019

Craft Kit #27: Glowing OK Sign

About the Artist

Todd Sanders' neon art evokes a time when America fell in love with motion. He calls his style modern vintage, but considers himself a pop artist. A Houston native who began pursuing his muse in earnest after moving to Austin, Sanders' work is prized by collectors and has been featured widely in films and publications alike.



Todd Sanders, *Good Luck HorseShoe*, 2018

About the Exhibition

Transporting viewers to the open road, neon artist Todd Sanders creates work that celebrates the often underappreciated American art form that paints the now iconic Route 66 landscape. Rooted in 20th-century pop culture, Sanders' pieces are energetic, powerful, and completely unforgettable, celebrating and continuing the Americana legacy of artisans past.



Todd Sanders, *Modern*, 2018



Todd Sanders, *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, 2018



What is Neon?

Neon is a noble gas, and the fourth most common element in the universe! On earth, it makes up a small portion of our atmosphere. It is what makes up the Aurora Borealis-- when charged particles from the sun hit the earth's atmosphere, they excite the atoms and cause them to light up. It is harnessed by people and most commonly used to make neon signs which has a century old history.

Neon Art History

First developed by French engineer Georges Claude in 1902, neon lights create light by applying electricity to neon or argon in a sealed glass tube.

Though neon was once regarded as utilitarian, Sanders, a voracious student of its history, is devoted to preserving the art form and elevating appreciation of its importance to 20th-century pop culture.





Todd's Process

Each Sanders creation begins with his hand-drawn design, which he then gives to fabricators to bend neon- and argon-filled vacuum tubes and shape the metal on which they're mounted. Then he carefully paints and weathers the metal, scrubbing with Scotch-Brite pads and causing it to rust naturally via an accelerated-aging process he developed himself.

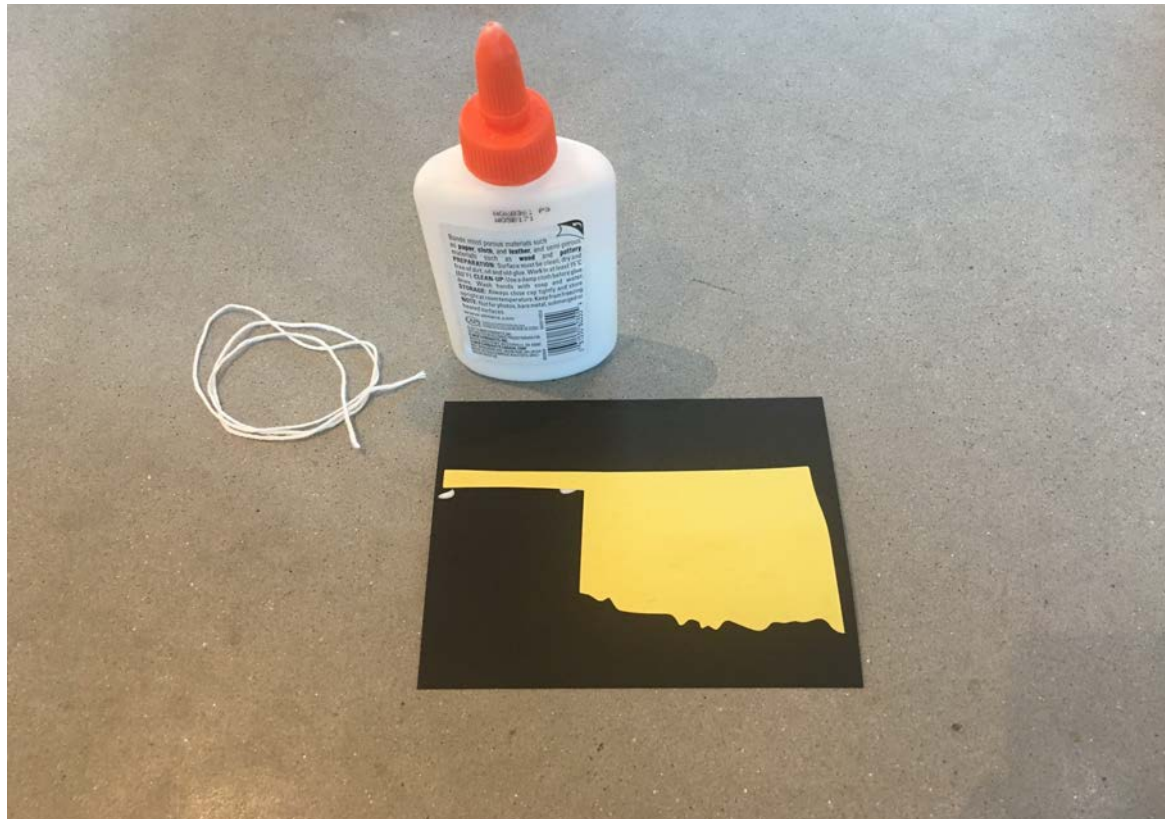
Glowing Oklahoma Sign



Inspired by Todd Sanders line art, this Craft Kit allows guests to create their own representation of a neon sign. Use the paper and yarn to make your own design or follow the steps below as a sample piece!

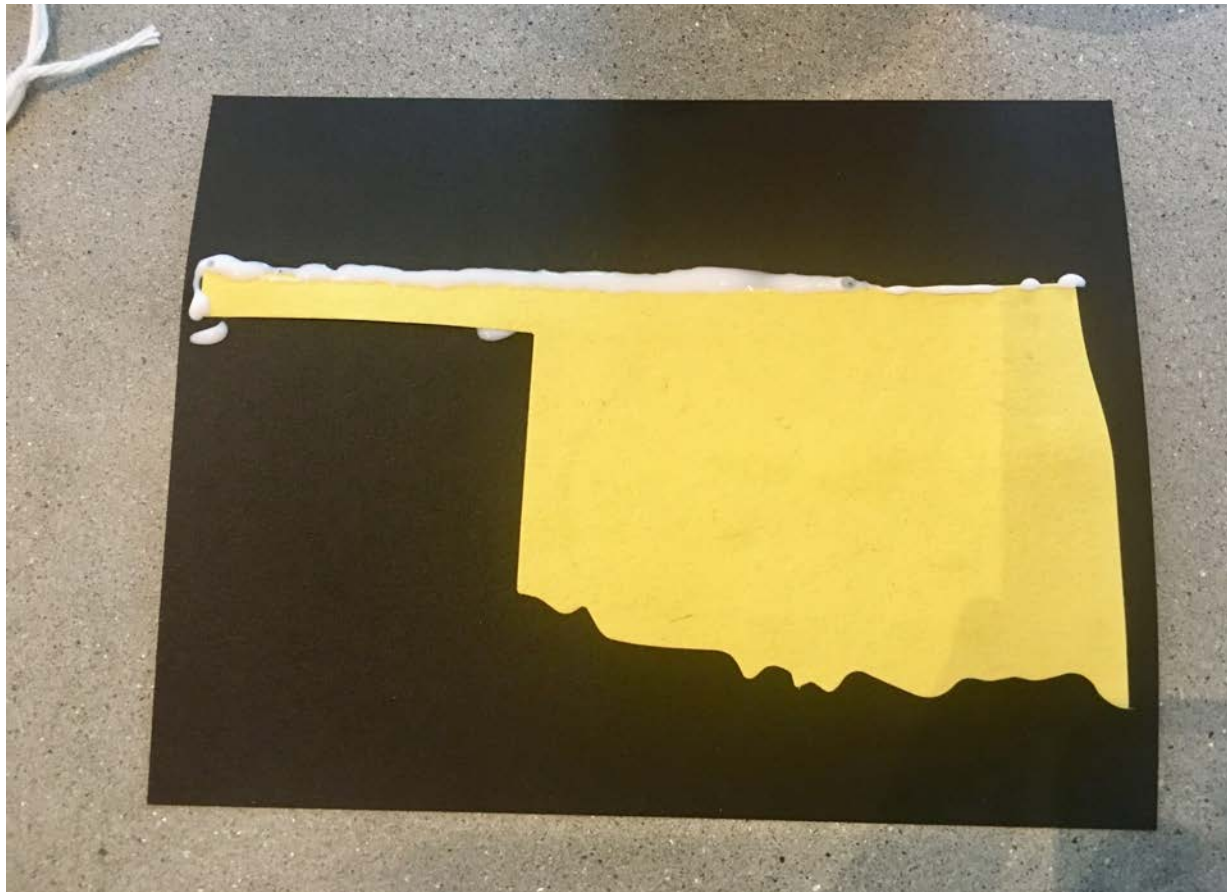
Step 1:

- Secure the Oklahoma cut out to the center of the black rectangle.



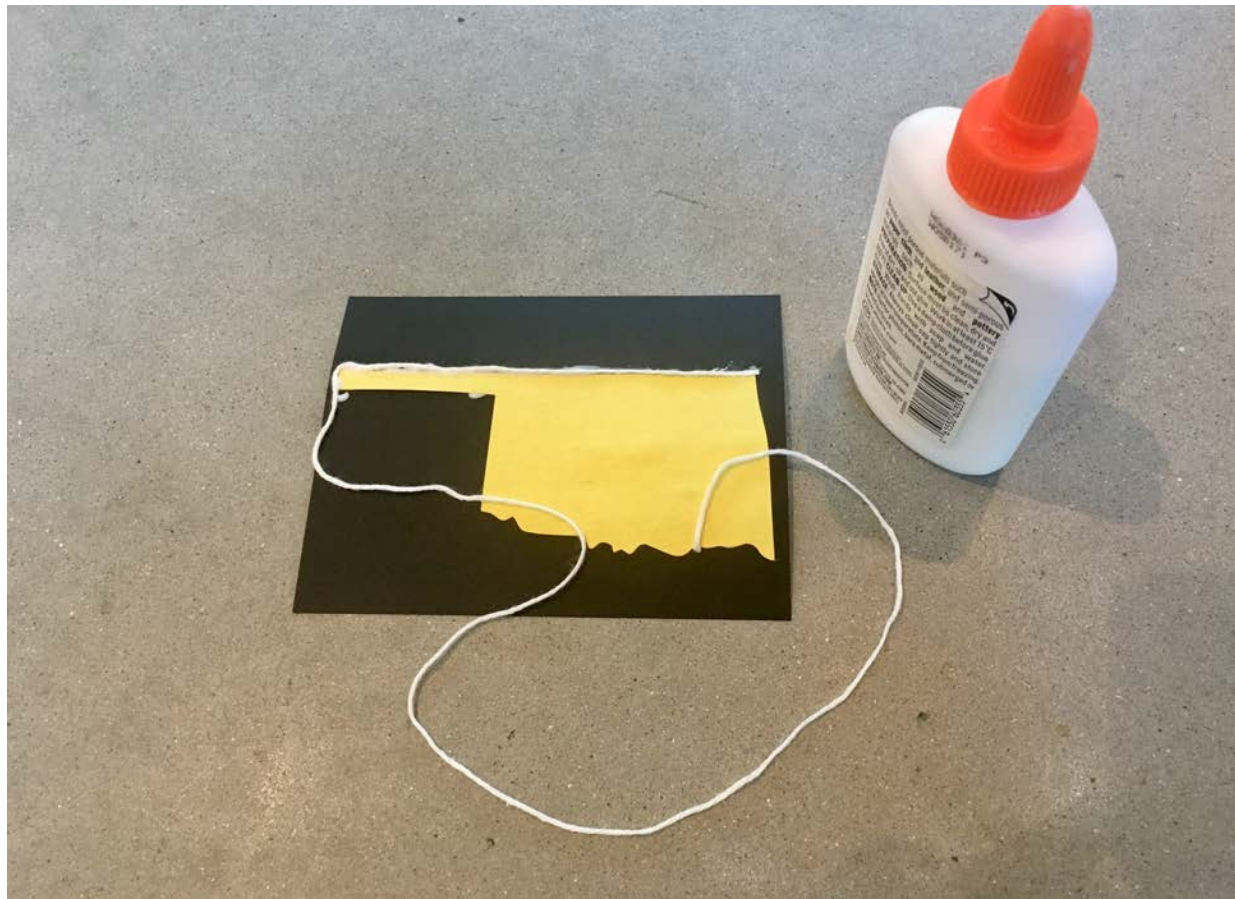
Step 2:

Spread a narrow line of glue along the edge of the Oklahoma shape.



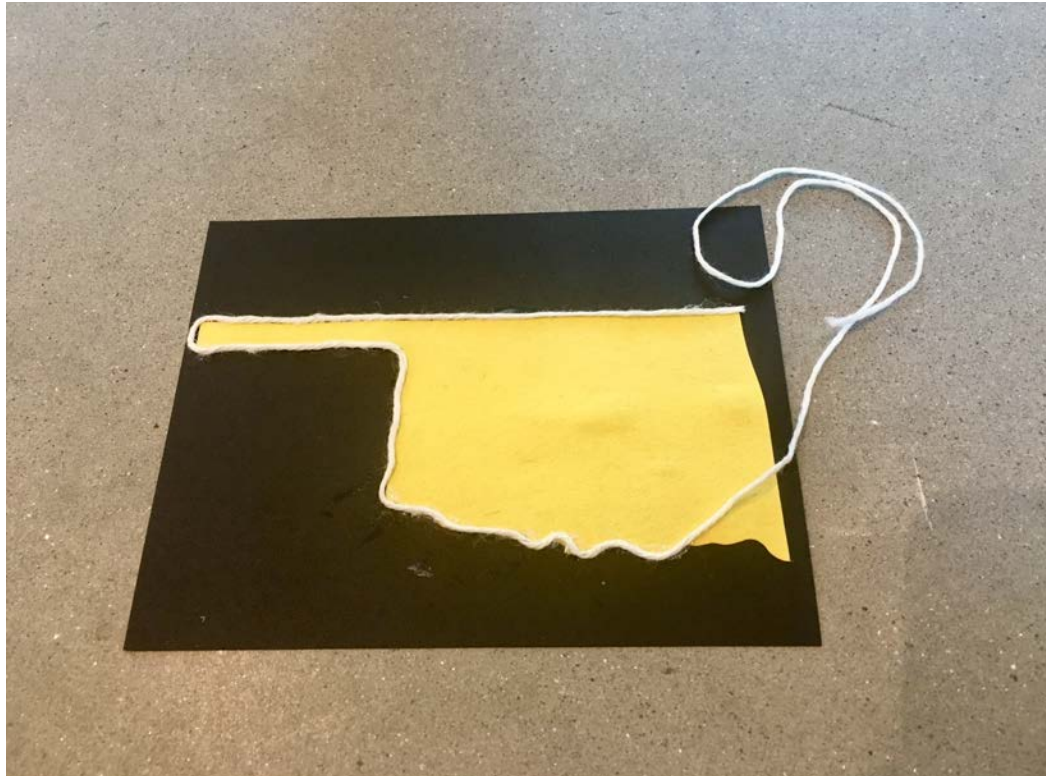
Step 3:

Press the yarn into the glue.



Step 4:

Continue gluing yarn around the edges of the shape until you reach your starting point.



Step 5:

Trim the end of the yarn.

- We used the extra yarn to write our name!



Step 6:

Leave your sign in a sunny window or under a bright light for several hours to charge the glow-in-the-dark yarn.



Done!

Get Fancy:

- Use crayons, colored pencils, or markers to decorate the Oklahoma shape before you attach it to the black card.
- Get the Todd Sanders retro rustic look—crumple and smudge your Oklahoma shape before you glue it to the card.
- Use tape or sticky tack to lightly affix the state shape, then remove it once the yarn has been placed.
- Ditch the Oklahoma shape altogether! Use a pencil to draw your own line art on the black card, and then glue the yarn to your original drawing.



Additional Resources

- www.toddsandersart.com/
- Keep up with Todd Sander's company, Roadhouse Relics, at www.roadhouserelics.com/
- Watch how Todd Sanders created the Mechanical Bull sign for Kings of Leon [here](#)
- Read [an article](#) on the ways other artists use neon lights and how neon art is made
- Visit [108 | Contemporary](#) for more information on upcoming events!