Norton Simon Museum

Family Art Project: Multimedia Self-Portraits

Artists like Rembrandt van Rijn, Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun and Vincent van Gogh made portraits that communicated something about the person they were painting—their status, beauty and humanity. Create a multimedia self-portrait that expresses who you are, including your interests, personality and background.

L-R: Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait*, c.1636-38; Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, *Portrait of Theresia, Countess Kinsky*, 1793; Vincent van Gogh, *Portrait of a Peasant*,1888.

Materials:

- 6 ½" x 8" construction paper (2 sheets)
- 6" x 8" Dura-lar (3 transparency sheets)
- 6" x 8" white paper (1 sheet)
- Pencil
- Sharpies

- scissors
- glue stick
- collage papers
- mirror or smart phone

Steps:

Begin by using a mirror or the camera feature on a smartphone (flipped to face you) and make a line drawing of your face and neck using paper and pencil.
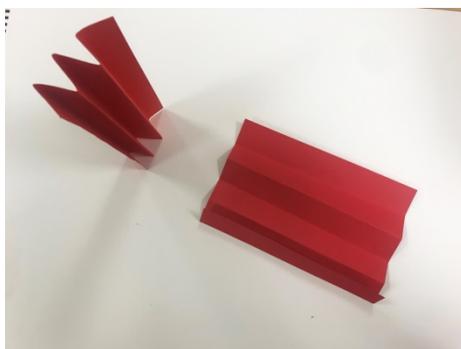

Place a transparency sheet over your drawing and trace your drawing onto the transparency sheet using a Sharpie.

Cut out images from magazines and/or use other collage papers or photos that connect to your interests, personality and culture. Arrange them into a meaningful and balanced composition on a transparency sheet, and then glue them in place. This layer will be your background.

Take another transparency sheet and using Sharpies, draw additional images that symbolize aspects of your personality and culture. You can also add more collage, but keep some areas open in order to see through to the background. This transparency sheet will be your middle layer.

Take one piece of 6 1/2" x 8" construction paper and fold the edge lengthwise (about an inch). Flip the paper over and fold it back the same width of the first fold. Do this three more times until you have 6 sides when you open up your fold. Do the same for the second sheet of construction paper. For younger students, you can prepare this step in advance.

Glue the side of the line drawing of your face about half an inch onto the first fold of the construction paper. Then repeat, gluing the other side of your drawing to the other folded piece of construction paper. This will be your first layer.

Glue the Sharpie drawing of additional images (your middle layer) onto the third fold of your construction papers, behind your line drawing. This will be your second layer.

Glue your background sheet onto the last fold of your construction papers. This will be your third and final layer.