
Additional Activities – Women of Colour

Title of Activity	Voice through Art
Type of Activity	Discussion or written Comparing and contrasting Making inferences
Suggested Subjects / Courses	Grades 9 through 12 Media, Art, Art History, English, Philosophy, Gender Studies, Communications

Description of activity

When we think at ‘famous artists’, the names that typically come to mind are those of white men.

Look at the works of the following Canadian artists (women of colour) through these websites or from students’ own research:

<https://www.thriveartstudio.com/six-canadian-female-artists-you-should-know>

Katie So

<https://katie.so/about>

Melissa Falconer

<https://mfalconer.com>

Amika Cooper

<http://blackpowerbarbie.com/work-flatiron>

Annie Pootoogook

<http://www.dorsetfinearts.com/annie-pootoogook>

<https://www.aci-iac.ca/art-books/annie-pootoogook/biography/>

Daphne Odjig

<http://odjig.com>

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/daphne-odjig>

Consider the following questions:

- What was your first reaction to this artwork?
- What Does the artwork represent? Does it represent something about the artist’s life or position?
 - Which area of the artwork is emphasized by the artist? Why?
- *What adjectives would you use to describe this artwork?*
- *What verbs would you use to describe this artwork?*
- *If this artwork was a brand, what would be its slogan?*
- *If you could ask the artist a question, what would you ask him/her?*
- *Who do you think was this artwork created for? Why do you say that?*
- *What do you think this artist is trying to say in this artwork? What is the meaning or message?*
- *What’s the story being told, if any?*
- *Is this work political?*
- *What does this painting say about the world in which we live?*
- *What does this artwork teach us about the past?*
- *How does this artwork teach us about the future?*

- *What emotions do you notice in the artwork?*
- *What juxtapositions do you notice?*
- *How can you connect this artwork to your own life?*
- *What does this artwork say about the culture in which it was produced?*
- *How do you think this artwork was used by the people who made it? What was its function?*
- *How might your interpretation of this artwork be different from someone in another culture?*
- *If you could ask this artwork a question, what would you ask it?*

Deeper thinking:

How do these works compare to work done by men like Picasso, Van Gogh, Rembrandt etc.?

Is the voice different? Does the work challenge what we have typically viewed as 'art'?

What are the implications of not having work by women of colour and marginalized groups in the canon we know as 'great art'?

Consolidating the learning:

Discuss some of these questions with a partner.

Can you draw any conclusions?

Students can write a comparative essay, or show learning through their own drawings, poem, charts or graphs.

Alternatively, the student can choose one image found by a Canadian woman of colour and compare it to a specific work from the canon of Western-European men (some named above). Compare and contrast these works through medium of choice.

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