

Anti-
Racism
Resource

BALTIC

An introduction to the resource

What is anti-racism?

Anti-racism is fighting against racism. Racism takes several forms and is the systematic oppression of marginalised groups on the basis of race.

In July 2020, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art signed a collective statement, 'We stand to denounce racism in all its forms'. This statement published online was signed by organisations, companies and individuals within the North East's cultural sector. It publicly denounces racism to be wrong and that it cannot be tolerated or accepted anywhere within what is a just society. You can read this statement in full <https://baltic.art/we-stand-to-denounce-racism-in-all-its-forms>

We know that more has to be done to bring about conversation and solutions. We've been listening. As BALTIC continues its thinking, work and resets its approaches to challenging racism and contributing to a more humane and equitable society, we wanted to create an anti-racism teaching resource for schools as one part of that ongoing journey.

For this resource, co-collaborators, Dr. Sheree Angela Matthews, writer and artist, and Amanda McMahon, BALTIC Producer (Education) have co-commissioned 4 local, Black* artists to explore the North East's Black history through Black contemporary art designed to support schools to tackle racism using art education.

*Black is being used in a broad political and inclusive sense to describe people in Britain who self-identify as being from an African, Caribbean, Asian or Arab heritage. In the past, these communities have suffered enslavement and colonialism and in today's society continue to experience racism and diminished opportunities.

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS



Image © Niveen Kassem

Niveen Kassem

Niveen Kassem is a creativity practitioner and teacher. Her creative practice includes photography, and visual journaling: collage, words, quotes, images, paint and illustrations. She also creates stories, poems and prose. In her work, she draws on diverse themes, including representations of racial and gender identity, slavery, memory and cultural trauma, as well as cultural heritage.



Image © Sheree Angela Matthews

Sheree Angela Matthews

Sheree Angela Matthews' practice manifests through poetry, storytelling, image and the unfolding histories of Black people. Sheree engages audiences around Black women's voices and bodies, Black feminism, ecology and memory. She facilitates national and international creative workshops and retreats in the landscape, encouraging and supporting women on their journey of remembrance back to their authentic selves. She is currently writing a mixed-genre memoir around a Black woman's body with/in nature.



Image © Wajid Hussain

Wajid Hussain

Wajid Hussain is a creative writer and poet from Newcastle upon Tyne with an engineering discipline. His work and workshops are known for their unique engagement and perception-challenging delivery. With a sense of humour and thoughtful artistic delivery, Wajid's artwork and words create vivid stories and narratives, giving space for dialogue and expressive engagement.



Image © Adah Reeve

Adah Reeve

Adah Reeve is a British born artist of Afro Caribbean Heritage, presently working freelance in the North East. She studied at Sunderland University earning a BA degree in Glass and Ceramics. Adah is interested in heritage, enjoying the geography and history of where people come from. Past work has been in both glass and ceramics, but presently she is using textiles as her main art discipline. Within her work she likes to focus on textures and how she can change the natural appearance of a fabric by adding and working into it.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO BLACK HISTORY IN THE NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND

By Dr Sheree Angela Matthews

History is created by those with power.

When we trace the history of the presence of Black people in Britain, we have to rely on the reports compiled by white men. As Black people were viewed as property and livestock, they are recorded as a number, or with a generic name like 'Tom' or 'Mary' in official documents. All humanity was stripped away as a Black person's existence and value was always in relation to the Master, the white man and how hard and long they could be worked. Only in the last few decades have Black people been in a position to tell their own, true and full stories. Stories created by Black people before this time, such as slave narratives, were doctored, censored and manipulated to make them more palatable for a white audience, often sugar-coating the full extent of the brutality enacted upon Black people for centuries.

The Black Indies History: It has been written in history that the North East was on the wrong coast for its ports to be involved in slavery. However, extensive research carried out in 2007 in connection with the national commemoration of the bicentenary of the abolition of the Transatlantic slave trade, indicated there was a complex web of concealed land, trade, industry and people involved in slavery, as well as an increasing Black presence in the North East of England. It was the English who introduced slavery into their West Indies and American colonies. Racism was developed alongside this as a means of justifying the exploitation of Africans. A whole system of belief was built around race, the physical appearance of a person being the primary influence on human traits and behaviours, to produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.

The Black Presence in the North East: The first reference to a Black person in the North East region is from March 1715 when a Negro named Wandoe was baptised in Hexham. From parish records, it can be gleaned that he was brought to the country by Captain Roger Carnaby. Carnaby is known from records to be involved in importing slaves to the Americas in 1703/4. There will be others who were present within the North East who did not get baptised, marry or die while in the region, but were here.

Other records that can be used as evidence are within the arts, such as within historical paintings and literature. In 1746, Thomas Bardwell painted the Northumberland landowner, Captain Robert Fenwick with his bride, Isabella Orde and her sister, with Norham Castle in the background. In the left-hand corner of the painting there is a Black servant in white stockings and a red jacket. Black servants included in family portraits were present as a sign of the family's wealth. Black servants were viewed as property just like the dog in the forefront of the painting, but treated worse than pets.

Merchants and Trade: In the North East, many famous families made their fortune being involved in the Atlantic slave trade without having to leave the country. For example, in the 1700s, a Newcastle merchant, Ralph Carr, supplied coal for the ships that sailed to Jamaica, Grenada and Barbados, from North America. The coal was also used in the sugar boilers on the sugar plantations. These ships then continued on to bring back plantation produce such as sugar, coffee and cocoa to the local coffee houses along the River Tyne. In the 1800s, the Graham-Clarkes were wealthy landowners and businessmen who owned 6 cargo ships and 13 sugar plantations in Jamaica. Sugar was processed in the refineries they owned in Newcastle and Gateshead.

Ambrose Crowley's Swalwell factory producing iron-works is listed within the Suffolk Archives of supplying Virginia hoes, Carolina hoes, Barbados hoes, shackles, chains, 'locks for Negro's necks' and branding irons. Ships from Swalwell carried these goods to London and onward to the Caribbean or North America. Other iron goods would also be traded in West Africa in exchange for people.

The Abolition Movement in the North East: Abolition Society was set up in the region in 1791. It organised petitions demanding the end of slavery. In reports published, it carried an engraving created by Thomas Bewick depicting an enslaved African man kneeling on one knee with a plantation in the background. This iconic image was picked up by the potter Josiah Wedgwood and became the rallying cry for freedom as the medallion for anti-slave trade supporters, 'Am I Not a Man and a Brother'.

When Britain finally passed the act to abolish the Transatlantic Slave Trade in 1807, Charles Grey, a Northumberland-born aristocrat and MP played a significant role in the passage of the act. Of course this act didn't abolish slavery itself just the movement of Africans across the Atlantic Ocean. It wasn't until 1833, that enslaved Africans were given their freedom. By this time Grey had become Earl Grey, and a statue was erected in 1838 that stands in the centre of Newcastle known locally as 'The Monument'. Illegal trade and slavery continued beyond these dates.

Africanus Maxwell: The River Tyne was a major port for trade, industry and war supplies. The areas banking the Tyne, would be almost cosmopolitan by today's standards, for the variety of people who visited and settled in the region from the colonies. Royal Navy ships and merchant ships would bring Black sailors and visitors. In July 1831 a Black Royal Navy sailor, Africanus Maxwell, died after falling or being thrown from a quay in North Shields, while out drinking with two fellow sailors from his ship the HMS Orestes. The inquest and their trial for murder were fully covered in the *Tyne Mercury* newspaper. The men were acquitted.

African-Americans On Tyneside: Once freedom was attained within the British West Indies, the Quakers and Abolition Movement of the North East turned their attention to America to bring about freedom there. In the process many African-American abolitionists were welcomed to the region. Henry Highland Garnet, a clergyman and celebrated orator, was invited to Britain, in 1850, by Anna Henry Richardson who was spearheading the Free Labour Produce Movement, an organization opposing the use of products produced by slave labour. On an extensive tour, he came to Newcastle giving a speech to an anti-slavery meeting stating the necessity for Black people to take their destiny into their own hands.

The Richardson family, Anna, her husband Henry, and his sister Ellen were abolitionists who aided others who had escaped from slavery. They welcomed Frederick Douglass to their house in Summerhill, Newcastle, and raised the money to purchase his freedom in 1846.

Mary Anne Macham: Mary Anne Macham, born in Virginia in 1802, fled from slavery in America and made a life for herself in the North East. Throughout her life she looked after the different generations of the Spence family. In 1841, at the age of 39, she married James Blyth, a local rope maker and later a bankers' porter, possibly working for the Spence family bank. The couple, who had no children, lived in various houses on Howard Street in North Shields. James Blyth died in 1877 and Mary Ann Blyth continued to live in North Shields until she moved in with relatives of her late husband in South Benwell, in Newcastle. When she died in 1893, aged 91, she had enjoyed more than 60 years of freedom. She was buried in Preston Village, North Shields.

More and more individuals and families are settling within the North East, to continue the Black presence as well as endure and fight against experiences of racism. This is an ongoing process which is complimented through Black peoples' work and engagement within the arts to capture our narratives and tell our own stories.



Rasheed Araeen: *A Retrospective* 19 October 2018 – 27 January 2019. © 2018 BALTIC and Jonty Wilde



SOCIAL ACTION

By Wajid Hussain

How has and does racism affect Black people in everyday life? Why is being anti-racist important? Why are civil rights not universal? What action will you take/talk about? What does it take to affect change? What can you do to make a difference?

Learn about Rasheed Araeen

"Rasheed Araeen is a Pakistani-born, UK-based sculptor, artist and writer with a background in engineering. He became an artist without any formal training. He supported the Black Panther Movement and became an important advocate in establishing Black voices in British Art. He speaks up, involves people and his work gives me space to explore engineering ideas, using simple shapes to create compelling art."

Wajid Hussain

Find images, videos, text and information about Rasheed Araeen's exhibition at BALTIC: <https://baltic.art/rasheed-araeen-exhibition>

What is Social Action?

Social action is people coming together to tackle an issue, support other people, or improve their way of life and representation within society. Helping people to improve their lives and solve the problems that are important in their communities. It can include volunteering, giving money, community action or simple neighbourly acts.

- ▷ **Discuss social action in your class: can you think of any examples?**
- ▷ **Where have you seen this happening?**
- ▷ **Have you ever been socially active?**

Inspired by Rasheed Araeen

Look at Rasheed's artwork on page 9. It features blocks of colour.

- ▷ **What do you notice about the artwork?**
- ▷ **Why has he used those colours?**
- ▷ **If you removed one/two colours from the artwork, would it still look as good?**
- ▷ **What do you think about the sculptures? Are they hard to put together? What shapes has he used?**
- ▷ **How does this artwork make you feel/think?**

Build the Wall (Class Sculpture)

Rasheed's multi-colour block paintings on page 9 look a lot like a wall structure as each piece fits together to create an overall piece.

▷ **What are walls used for? Are walls always used to protect, or can they also repel?**

Taking inspiration from Rasheed's wall-like paintings, you are going to create a multi-coloured wall sculpture with your classmates. This wall will feature messages of social action within the bricks.

Resources you will need: paint, pens, pencils, card, paper

Each pupil will need a wooden block, size: 2inches x 3inches x (approx) 10inches. If you are using blocks they would need drilled holes for dowels to connect them up – this could be part of your DT work. Alternatively, you could use cardboard/cardstock to make nets for cuboids that could be constructed then all glued together to create the final wall.

After a discussion around social action, have pupils write a list of what they understand about injustice and another list about what rights (wants & choices) are essential in our society for everyone. Each pupil will decorate their completed block on two opposing sides: on one side they will include an injustice (e.g not everyone is treated the same) and the opposite side a right (e.g everyone has a right to be treated equally).

Once completed, stack the blocks up to create a class sculpture, injustices will be on one side of the wall (repelling) and on the other side, rights (protecting). .

▷ **What is the overall message your class sculpture is proposing? Why is it important to see both sides of this sculpture? In what other ways can you use social action to create your message to the world?**

Learn about Kehinde Wiley

“Kehinde Wiley is a Black American portrait artist. His photo-realistic portraits are vibrant and take a powerful perspective. His fresh take on classical poses are brought to life in a contemporary form. I like his flamboyant style that is about capturing and bringing to life the character of the people he is painting. He writes his poetry with a paint brush. Kehinde Wiley's work seeks out to challenge how Black people are perceived in their artwork. His work seeks to empower Black people and Black communities by presenting them back to themselves as humans, citizens and part of society. This kind of social action through artworks creates higher levels of wellbeing and improves people's confidence and skills.” – Wajid Hussain

▷ **How does this artwork change the way we think about Black people? Does this artwork look different to artwork you have seen before? Does this challenge perceptions? Why do you think Kehinde paints these types of portraits?**

Inspired by Kehinde Wiley

Individuality bringing us together: creating visual wall art

Kehinde's work is about challenging stereotypes and perceptions. Art created during the renaissance period did not represent Black people as being in positions of power or acknowledge their place in society. If featured, Black people would be in the background, often painted smaller and in darker light. In Kehinde's work he excellerates his subjects, celebrating Black Excellence by using classic portrait poses from the renaissance period as inspiration. By having Black people pose in a powerful and meaningful way, he is changing a perspective by making a visual statement and (even better) creating talking points for his artwork.

- ▷ **If you go to a gallery, would you see many paintings of Black people? If you look at a magazine or watch a TV show, do you see many Black people represented? Do you think this is a fair representation of our society?**

Look closely at portraits made by Kehinde Wiley by searching online for his work:

- ▷ **How does he explore individuality? How does he represent personality? What do you notice about the background? What do you notice about the poses? Which portrait do you like the best and why? Which portrait would you choose for your portrait? How does that reflect your personality/individuality? Why is the artist compelled to create these? In what ways is his work involved in social action?**

- ▷ **Kehinde's portraits are the original 'selfie' of their era. Each portrait was created to make a statement: Think about yourself, and your own interests and personality, what portrait pose would suit your personality?**
- ▷ **Kehinde uses his artwork to reflect the personality of Black people: Can you understand why it is important for everyone to be able to express themselves personally?**

You are now going to create a self-portrait inspired by Kehinde with a background to suit your personality.

Resources you will need: paper, pencils, pens, coloured pencils, magazines, wallpaper samples, scissors and glue.

- ▷ **What would your background look like? What outfit would you choose? Where would you be sitting, standing? (on a horse, on a throne etc) Practise how you would pose – do you feel the power of your pose?**

Design and create a background for your portrait: think carefully about the patterns you would choose or be inspired by something in nature like Kehinde does for his subjects.

Draw your own portrait: you should use another piece of paper for this then cut it out and then place it over the background

- ▷ **How has your idea for a portrait created talking points with your classmates? Do you see yourself differently/ feel different?**
- ▷ **What have you learnt about others that was interesting and different? How has knowing this helped you understand your friends better? Why do you think it's important that we are all different?**



Kara Walker, *A Subtlety*, Domino Sugar Refinery, Williamsburg, Brooklyn. A project of Creative Time. 10 May – 6 July 2014. Photography © Jason Wyche



STORYTELLING

By Niveen Kassem

At the heart of this activity is storytelling/writing to develop the pupils' abilities to express ideas and take ownership of their creations and voices. Educating pupils about the importance of diversity will contribute to a more humane and equitable society.

Learn about Kara Walker

“Contemporary American artist, Kara Walker, is best-known for her black-and-white silhouettes and installations. In her work, Walker deals with the history of slave trade and its legacy. Her creations explore issues surrounding race, identity, slavery, violence and subjugation. In 2014, Walker created her famous installation A Subtlety or the Marvelous Sugar Baby, which symbolises a Black woman-sphinx made out of sugar and wearing a kerchief and earrings like the stereotypical image featured on American pancake brand ‘Aunt Jemima’s’. The sculpture speaks directly to the history of forced labour and the sugar trade, where enslaved peoples were imported from Africa to the West Indies in the 17th and 18th centuries and forced to work on sugar plantations. Sugar cane was harvested by enslaved peoples and underpaid workers-sometimes children, women and the elderly.” – Niveen Kaseem

- ▷ **Learn more about sugar cane and sugar cane plantations. Where in the world would you find them? Who worked there? What were the conditions like for the people who worked there? What does it mean to be enslaved?**

Inspired by Kara Walker

Resources you will need: notebook or sketchbook, black and white paper, cardboard offcuts, pencils, crayons, coloured pens, scissors, glue, washi tape, quotes/text, magazines. If you feel super inspired by Kara Walker, try painting with different types of sugar or syrup.

Create your own story inspired by the *Marvelous Sugar Baby*

In this activity, you are going to create a story of working on the sugar plantations using visual journaling.

- ▷ **What is Visual Journaling? A creative way that uses a combination of paint, colours, collage, text, words, drawing, images, washi-tapes, and all things creative to express yourself, create a story or a message.**

- ▷ **Retell the story of a character like the *Marvelous Sugar Baby*. Who was this character? What did they do each day? How did they feel about it? Did they have a family? What do they see?**
- ▷ **What would you like to tell people about the impact of lifelong servitude on the people who were imported from Africa and made to work on the sugar cane plantations? Describe their conditions, deprivation and family separation.**
- ▷ **What is the story you're telling? What is your message?**

Now grab a notebook/cardboard/paper. You need to create a background first, so you may want to use a two-page spread to smear some paint (or sugar) on it using a brush or sponge or even a stiff piece of scrap cardboard – wait until the page dries before working on top of it. Or maybe you want to create a landscape of a sugar cane plantation using your own drawings or cut out images you've collected from your research.

When your spread is ready, you can fill the page with ideas you have learnt about from talking and researching sugar plantations. You can use or own or collaged words and quotes – maybe Kara Walker quotes?

You could try making some silhouettes like Kara Walker by drawing just an outline of a person on black paper and cutting it out. Think carefully about how you want to lay out your visual journal before sticking it in so that it tells the story you wanted.



Ellen Gallagher *Bird in Hand* 2006. © Ellen Gallagher



JOURNEY

By Sheree Angela Matthews

This resource is designed to provoke an understanding of the power of transformation through taking the traumatic history of the transatlantic slave trade and transforming this past into artworks to create healing and a more hopeful future.

Learn about Ellen Gallagher

Ellen Gallagher, b. 1965, is an American artist of mixed-race heritage. Her father was from Cape Verde, West Africa and her mother was Irish-American. Gallagher's works in multiple art forms including abstract paintings, film and video, as well as drawings in ink, watercolour and pencil. Consisting of an assortment of drawings of marine life and underwater sea creatures, Gallagher has continued to add to her *Watery Ecstatic* series, since 2001. This series draws upon the AfroFuturism myth of the Drexciyans, the aquatic population born from West African women who were pregnant when thrown overboard from slave ships during the Middle Passage.

- ▷ **Learn more about the Middle Passage: a forced voyage of enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean**
- ▷ **How did Africans find themselves in the slave forts on the West Coast of Africa? How was a ship fitted out to carry human cargo? How long was the Middle Passage, across the Atlantic Ocean? What were the odds of survival during this journey? What were the conditions on board the ship for the Africans? How did some kidnapped Africans end up in the sea? What was waiting for these enslaved people once they reached the New World?**

"Gallagher relates her process to a unique version of scrimshaw (carvings made on whalebones, ivory, and other materials). Using bright white watercolour paper, Gallagher carves images into the surface and then draws into them with ink, oil, pencils and watercolours to create these drowned souls. Accidental Records, returns to the sea and builds upon this practice and themes within her work, questioning the accepted geographies of the ocean, layering surfaces on top paper and canvas to represent the many stories that lie within the watery landscape". – Sheree Angela Matthews

Learn about Ellen Gallagher and Drexciya

Drexciya is a Detroit, Michigan electronic music duo. Mixing a funky hybrid of electro and Detroit techno, Drexciya inspired by the mythology of the “Black Atlantis”, transformed the Middle Passage of the transatlantic slave trade into a sci-fi underwater saga of freedom and power. Their musical output explores the mythical civilisation who can breathe underwater, the descendants of pregnant African women cast overboard from slave ships crossing the Atlantic. Here, in this watery world Black people live their lives in freedom and glory.

Drexciya's music, in such LPs as *The Quest* and *The Journey of the Deep Sea Dweller*, creates and celebrates this watery kingdom.

Inspired by Ellen Gallagher and Drexciya

Resources you will need: watercolour paper, water, inks, oil pastels, watercolour paint, watercolour paper, salt, lemon juice, cardboard, glue, tape, pencils and/or felt tip pens

How to make an underwater landscape

Search and listen to Drexciya tracks such as *Black Sea* and *Water Walker* from LP – *Journey of a Deep Sea Dweller IV*.

Create and collect a word bank of feelings and impressions created from listening to the music. Use this discussion to imagine what life would be like if we lived under the sea. This will be used later to make protest poetry.

Using watercolour paper, experiment with adding water to the page and then adding mixed paint of greens and blues and yellows. When still wet, draw in details with oil pastels for added texture. Draw waves, seaweed, coral, or even small fish. Then sprinkling table salt upon the wet paper. What effects are created when paint is then added, or lemon juice or ink? Experiment using different substances to create magical and textured seascapes.

▷ **What effects are created when paint is then added, or lemon juice or ink?**

How to make Mythical Sea Royalty

Looking at Ellen Gallagher mythological sea creatures such as: *Bird in Hand*, 2006, *Accidental Records* and *Water Ecstatic* as well as the graphic novel images created in response to Drexciya's music, create your own underwater mythical sea royalty.

▷ **Imagine you were able to survive underwater. Think of all the things you'd need to live underwater? What abilities and adapted body features would you need to survive? How would you breathe? How would you eat and talk and sleep?**

Draw the free and powerful human race who live within the ocean. These can be inserted into or onto the textured seascapes already created by cutting them out after and pasting them, or drawn directly into the paintings.

How to make protest poetry

Search and read the Grace Nichols poem *Epilogue* and discuss what this could mean.

▷ What ideas are suggested by the poem?

These mythical sea royalty, now have the opportunity to walk out of the sea to share their wisdom with the current world where there are the Black Lives Matter unrest and uprisings. Use your word bank from before to bring in some feelings, use some words and images supplied by searching online for 'Black Lives Matter movement' to create a discussion around these ideas.

▷ What do they say? What can they do to help the current situation where the Western world has become successful for a few, while Black people have endured and suffered under racism?

Search and read the poem by Toi Derricotte, *Why I Don't Write About George Floyd* to bring in the idea that there are no words to explore these troubling times but we have to try.

▷ Why is it important that Black people are treated just the same as white people in society, in school, in the world?

Create your own protest poetry, to empower and embolden people to stand up for their rights by using the structure of Toi Derricotte's poem as a template:

Because _____ x5

What can I say what can I say

Something _____ x5



Joy Labinjo, *Our histories cling to us*, 19 October 2019 – 23 February 2020. Photo: Rob Harris © 2019 BALTIC and the artist



GAZE

By Adah Reeve

"In contemporary art we refer to the term 'The Gaze' as a way of communicating between viewer, subject and artist. For this resource, I am using the term 'The Gaze' as an unspoken and often unnoticed, natural reaction when someone may first glance or see a Black person. Due to a lack of understanding or explanation, starting perhaps as a curiosity or unfamiliarity, 'The Gaze' can become 'The Stare'."

Adah Reeve

Learn about Joy Labinjo

Joy Labinjo makes large-scale paintings featuring portraits of relatives, friends and people she has discovered in family albums. Drawing on her personal experiences of growing up in the UK with British-Nigerian heritage, Labinjo explores the relationship between identity, race and culture. The artist's paintings depict intimate scenes of contemporary family life, capturing the everyday and the domestic. She creates her compositions by fusing different photographs together, instinctively collaging interiors and figures.

Find images, videos, text and information about Joy Labinjo's exhibition at BALTIC: www.baltic.art/joy

Inspired by Joy:

"Joy Labinjo's work shows her family of African heritage. In her work, the viewer is able to see ordinary family gatherings of people enjoying family life, and you are invited to observe and gaze as you look at them and they look out at you. The viewer is able to look at the family, how they dress, focussing and gazing at family bonds. Joy has brought the gaze and representation of Black family life to the gazer so they have an insight into Black family life and also for Black families to see people like themselves represented in art. This opens up conversations about Black families' culture and history as well as lack of representation."

- ▷ **What expressions can you see looking out of the paintings? How do you feel when you look at them? What events do you recognise in Joy's paintings? What are the relationships of the people in the painting, why do you think that? How has Joy used colour in her paintings? Look at the fashions people are wearing in the paintings, what do you notice? Is everyone dressed the same?**

Create a Gaze Story

Resources you will need: paper, card, pencils, pens, scissors, glue felt tips, photos, fabrics (use different textures and patterns) fabric, acrylic paints, glue, wallpaper scraps, tracing paper, magazines and newspapers.



Adah Reeve, *The Gaze in the office: a first meeting*. Collage, fabric, cardboard, wallpaper. August 2020.

"This collage is inspired by one of my adult learners who attended my art classes, who entered a room for an interview she was well qualified for. The woman had decided to wear her African dress for the interview. On entering the room, the interviewer immediately made her feel a little uncomfortable by Gazing at her, turning into a stare. The interviewer had read the CV of the woman and had not expected to see a Black woman. The woman was then left with a feeling; Was something wrong? Was it her face? Was it her skin colour? The African dress she wore?"

▷ **What does it feel like to be looked at? Why do people look?**

It's time to learn more:

- ▷ **Find out more about traditional African prints by searching online.**
- ▷ **Learn more about what inspired them and the country that they originate from**
- ▷ **Create some drawings that experiment with the colours and patterns used in the materials.**

Creating a scene with collage

- ▷ Think of the scene you'd like to create, find an image in a magazine, newspaper or online.
- ▷ Think about the story going on in the scene: is someone being looked at? Are they looking out at you? What are they wearing?
- ▷ Draw the outline of your chosen scene on paper.
- ▷ Use some tracing paper to trace the image you have drawn.
- ▷ Outline the images in sections e.g. head/hair/headaddress.
- ▷ Numbering each section could help you put it all together later.
- ▷ Continue this technique for all the pieces that make up your collage picture.
- ▷ Cut out the outlined pieces of tracing paper.
- ▷ Choose fabrics you feel are suitable.
- ▷ Pin the cut out tracing paper to the fabric and cut out the shape.
- ▷ Cut all the shapes in your chosen fabrics or card.
- ▷ Arrange to reform the picture, this is where numbering each piece could help.
- ▷ Glue all fabric pieces into place.
- ▷ The finished collage should resemble the original picture, but in much more detail and textures.



Images: Adah Reeve, August 2020

FURTHER LINKS AND SUGGESTED READING

www.blacklivesmatter.uk

www.baltic.art/resources-supporting-black-lives-matter

www.theantiracisteducator.com/recommendations

www.theblackcurriculum.com/

Artists

Afrofuturism definition: www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/afrofuturism

Drexciya: www.discogs.com/artist/1172-Drexciya

Ellen Gallagher: www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/ellen-gallagher-9553

Grace Nichols: poetryarchive.org/poet/grace-nichols/

Joy Labinjo: www.joylabinjo.co.uk

Kara Walker: www.karawalkerstudio.com/

Kehinde Wiley: www.kehindewiley.com/

Rasheed Araeen: www.baltic.art/rasheed-araeen

Toi Derricotte: toiderricotte.com/

Get inspired by more examples of visual journaling from a local artist, Sheree Angela Matthews: www.livingwildstudios.com/portfolio/visual-journaling-part-2/