## **Exploring How Artists Use Words and Colors in Art**

This activity will guide you in creating a work of art that uses both words and colors inspired by Wadsworth Jarrell's painting *Revolutionary*, now on view at the Museum as part of the exhibition *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*.

Time: 45 minutes

Difficulty level: Moderate

Messy level: Moderate to high



### Investigate the Work of Art!

- 1. Chicago artists Jeff Donaldson, Wadsworth Jarrell, Jae Jarrell, Barbara Jones-Hogu, and Gerald Williams founded the artists' group AfriCOBRA (African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists) in 1968 to build pride in the Black community. AfriCOBRA artists created works of art that were committed to social responsibility and celebrating the beauty of Black culture.
- 2. Colorful words like "love," "beautiful," "black," and "revolution," are repeated and combined to create this energized portrait of Angela Davis, based on a photo from an impassioned speech the activist gave in 1970. Look closely at these words. What other words or statements can you read?
- 3. Wadsworth Jarrell is famous for his use of "coolade colors," named for the brilliant shades and colors of Kool-Aid powdered drinks. What type of impact would this work of art make if the colors were muted or black and white?

To view an image of this work and to learn more about the exhibition, visit the Museum's website.



# This exhibition is organized by Tate Modern, London, in collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville; Brooklyn Museum, New York; The Broad, Los Angeles; and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

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#### Let's Make Some Art!

Gather These Art Materials

- $\cdot \, \text{Multiple sheets of paper} \,$
- · At least four colored pencils
- · At least four markers
- · Regular pencil
- ·Ruler

### **Step-by-Step Artist Instructions**

- On a sheet of paper, brainstorm words that represent you and your community and write them down.
- 2. On another sheet of paper, draw the outline of yourself as the central image of your artwork. It can be a portrait of just your head, or it can be an image of you dancing, singing, running, or jumping. You can also trace the silhouette of yourself from a photograph.
- Starting from a central point, such as your mouth or eyes, use a ruler and a pencil to make light lines, dividing your image into at least four sections. Each of these sections will focus on a different color.
- 4. In each section, write several large words from the list you brainstormed and fill in the gaps with smaller words being creative with the size of the letters, the font, and the colors.
- 5. Place your words in a direction that creates movement and energy, like rays of sunshine.
- 6. Add details to the letters. For example, outline them in different colors or add circles or triangles. Try to fill in all the gaps between the letters.

Family Programs at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, receive generous support from the Junior League of Houston, Inc.