

PROJECT THEME: EMPOWERMENT

Featuring artist Alisa Sikelianos-Carter from the exhibition [*Serious Sparkle*](#)



Alisa Sikelianos-Carter, *Crown Me*, 2017, archival inkjet print,
glitter, 23 x 16.5 inches, courtesy of the artist

LOOK AND DISCUSS

The Tang Teaching Museum is a place dedicated to art and ideas. When it comes to making art, we use artwork by others as a catalyst to spark new ideas and our creativity!

1. Look closely: Look at Alisa Sikelianos-Carter's *Crown Me*, pictured on the previous page.

2. What do you think is going on in this image? Take about 10 minutes to write down and/or discuss everything you're noticing. Here are some things to think about to help you get started:

- Are you looking at a portrait or a landscape, an abstract or realistic work?
- What is recognizable immediately?
- What do you think about the colors/pattern/images/design in the work? What could those choices mean about how you understand this work? What references or symbolism could there be in the work?
- What are possible connections or relationships between the things you observed and wrote down or discussed?
- Is there dialogue between you, the viewer, and the artist? Is there a story within the work itself?
- What materials does it look like the artist used? What are some reasons why the artist created this work in this way? What larger ideas could the artist be trying to communicate?

What do you see that makes you say that? What more can you find? Make sure to include why or how you are understanding the image. What are you seeing that leads you to have those ideas? Back up your ideas with visual evidence from the image.

3. Reflection: What have you discovered from looking closely and from the exploration of writing and/or discussion with others? What did you discover about how you start to learn and explore a work of art?

- How does this experience relate to how we understand our world through technology and other forms of image-based media?
- How does this work and the ideas opened up from this work, relate to what's going on in your community and beyond? What connections can you make from these works and our world right now? What lingering questions do you have?

MAKE

Art Projects—feel free to be flexible with these ideas!

Materials: suggested materials for these projects are pencil, collage, magazines, markers, cardstock paper, construction paper, etc—use whatever you have available!

1. Empowerment Symbol: Symmetry

These “Crowns” as artist Alisa Sikelianos-Carter calls them, are symmetrical abstract forms created by collaged images of traditional African American hairstyles. Sikelianos-Carter is thinking about self-expression and how our unique ways of expressing ourselves is something that should be celebrated and shared. In the spirit of celebrating diversity within ourselves and in our communities, create your own “crown” through exploring symmetry, abstraction, color, shapes and patterns.

- Fold a piece of paper in half
- Draw a shape, with the fold as one edge of the shape
- Cut the shape out
- Open up the folded paper
- Now you have a symmetrical shape!
- Design and embellish your shape by using colors/patterns/words that expresses who you are!

2. Empowerment Symbol: Internal vs. External

In the spirit of the artist and their work, create your own empowerment symbol!

- Similar to the project above, start by creating a symmetrical shape out of paper
- Use each side of your folded shape to think about what empowers you: one side can express the things that make you feel like your best and the other side can express external pressures that pull you away from that. Explore the things/ideas that you feel describes and empowers you and then explore what kinds of things distract and divert you. What are some conflicts that you experience?

SHARE

Take a photo of your work and post it on social media with the hashtag
#TangAtHome #ArtWithTheTang!

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For more art-making activities, check out:

<https://tang.skidmore.edu/education/tang-at-home>

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