

## POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

### Chase Open Studio

Visit our free drop-in art studio, for hands-on art making. The Chase Open Studio is located in the South Building, near the Grand Staircase.

### At Home

**Write** What do you most remember about the exhibition? Write a letter to an artist in the exhibition telling them what you remember about their paintings and what questions you still have. Ask your parents to mail the letter to SAM and we can make sure the artist receives it!

**Draw** Think of an important event that happened during your lifetime. Make a drawing or painting of that event. Experiment with different colors, shapes, textures, and patterns. Whose story is being shown in your paintings? Whose stories are not included?

*Figuring History: Robert Colescott, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas* is organized by the Seattle Art Museum.

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## FAMILY GUIDE

**ROBERT COLESCOTT**

**FIGURING**

**KERRY JAMES MARSHALL**

**HISTORY**

**MICKALENE THOMAS**

#FiguringHistory  
[visitsam.org/figuringhistory](http://visitsam.org/figuringhistory)

**SAM KIDS**

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

*Figuring History: Robert Colescott, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas* presents paintings by three generations of artists. Each painter offers his or her perspective on Black culture and how it is represented in paintings. Even though each artist has their own unique style and approach; they are united in centering the Black figure at the heart of each story, and celebrating Black power and culture.

This exhibition tackles questions around race, identity, and representation. We hope this guide can help you and your family navigate and address these complex questions as you walk through the galleries. Please note that there is female nudity, sexual content, and images of violence in some of the works in the exhibition.

## WHAT QUESTIONS CAN I ASK TO ENGAGE MY CHILD WITH THE ART?

- What is happening in this artwork?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What more can we find?

The paintings in this exhibition are often large in scale. Encourage young people to move around the gallery, looking at the works from different vantage points. Sit on the floor or find a bench to be comfortable as you discuss.

## HOW DO I PICK A WORK OF ART TO TALK ABOUT?

Pick what looks most interesting to you! Let everyone choose one work to talk about together, have the children pick their favorite and least favorite in each room, or have everyone vote on which to talk about— just focus the visit on whichever works are most interesting to all of you.

## WHAT ARTWORKS MIGHT MY CHILD BE INTERESTED IN BASED ON THEIR AGE?

**While every child is different, certain ages tend to be more interested in different types of art.**

**Eight and younger:** Look for bright colors, paintings with lots of details or action, more realistic artwork, and strong shapes. Talk about what abstract shapes remind you of, or how some paintings look more ‘real’ than others do. Look for pictures with high contrast, bright highlights, dark shadows, bold colors, and different textures.

**Eight and older:** Children in this age range are drawn to images with complex stories behind them and pictures depicting different eras. Come up with backstories for a painting together and read the labels next to the artworks to learn about the makers. Read the labels for historical context and to learn about the artistic process. Challenge children to think about the artist’s perspective and intentions and how they use different lines, textures, and colors to express different emotions.

## HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO EACH ARTIST

### Robert Colescott

- What people do you see in this artwork? What roles do they play?
- What clues does the artist give us to help us identify the characters?
- What is similar and what is different about the people you see in the painting? Why do you think the artist depicts people in a similar way?

### Kerry James Marshall

- What is going on in this scene?
- Where is this scene taking place?
- How do you think the people in this painting feel? What emotions are they experiencing?
- How do you know?
- How do you think this painting addresses stereotypes of Black culture?

### Mickalene Thomas

- Portraits often include five elements: pose, gesture, facial expression, clothing, and props. Look for each of these elements in the painting. Based on that how would you describe the people you see? What do you think their story might be?
- What colors, patterns, and textures do you see? How is the artist using color and pattern to create feeling in the painting?