

Program One: LGBTQ Role Models & The Arts:
Developing Identity Through Creative Expression

Materials:

- Artist biography
- Blank paper
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils

Opening Activity: High-Points and Hopies: Have students share something in their lives that has been going really well (high point) as well as something they are excited about ('hopie').

Mini-Lesson/Warm Up

- Journal Reflection: How do you feel when you create something of your own?
- Facilitator will discuss that students will be talking about modern LGBTQ artists living and working in New York City. Ask students if there are any artists that they know about or like in the city. This may generate some discussion. Then have students break into groups of three or four.

Role Model Introduction: Provide students with images of the following artists and their selected pieces.

Mickalene Thomas: “Her depictions of African American women explore notions of black female celebrity and identity while romanticizing ideas of femininity and power.” Art piece: “Michelle O”

K8 Hardy: A Queer feminist who focuses on performance and installation art. She believes in bold, untraditional movements of the human body and has been the founding member of LTRR, a queer feminist journal and artist collective. Art piece: “Style Posse”

Ellsworth Kelly: An American, NYC based printmaker, sculptor, and painter who focuses on minimalism and “hard edge painting.” Art piece: “Block Island Study”

Keith Haring: Keith Allen Haring was an artist and social activist whose work responded to the New York City street culture of the 1980s by expressing concepts of birth, death and war.

Slava Mogutin: Originally from Russia, Mogutin focuses on visual art that plays with concepts of masculinity. Art piece: “SUPERM”

Zachary Drucker: “Zackary Drucker is an artist who breaks down the way we think about gender, sexuality and seeing. Her participatory art work complicate established binaries of viewer and

subject, insider and outsider, and male and female in order to create a complex image of the self.” Art piece: “Translady fanzine”

Mini-Activity

Students will rearrange themselves into small groups of 3-4. Each group will choose one LGBTQ artist poster. Facilitator will have brief biographies and overviews of each artist included on the poster as well as a sample of their visual art. Students should discuss the following questions in their small group:

1. What do you think this artist is saying about LGBTQ people?
2. Who is the audience for this piece of art--what is the message to LGBTQ people and/or straight populations?
3. Do you like their portrayal?
4. Does an LGBTQ artist have a responsibility to be out?
5. How can this artist and their work be seen as a form of activism?

Mini-Discussion (large group)

Focus Questions: Small groups will share their artist to the large group and briefly explain some highlights of their conversation.

1. What responsibility do LGBTQ artists have to the community as a whole? Do they have a responsibility?
2. Should they portray LGBTQ people in strictly positive ways?
3. What are the benefits/dangers to having artists creating work that speaks to the LGBTQ experience?

Activity

1. Students will be asked to create a piece of art that speaks to their experience in the LGBTQ community. This can be anything from a short poem, haiku, a picture, or even a play script. This an opportunity for students to engage in their own creativity.

Discussion/Share Out

- Each student/group has 2 minutes to share what they came up with. As students leave, encourage them not to drop the project if it invigorated them, they can always move forward with it.
- Share your artistic product with Live Out Loud! With your permission, we can post it on Facebook or Tumblr! Think of it as a way to publish your work!

Take Away Action

1. Organize an LGBTQ Artist speaking/panel series at your school! Live Out Loud will help you coordinate details.
2. Create a series of poetry and/or visual art to present with your school, GSA, or share with Live Out Loud on our Facebook and/or Tumblr! Get other clubs involved!
3. Organize a school-wide assembly to share GSA art with other students--this could be a spoken word performance, an artist showcase, etc.
4. The LGBTQ "rainbow" has been a symbol for the community for years. Do you think it adequately represents the community? Create a NEW symbol that represents your GSA and your experience as an ally or an LGBTQ individual.