

# Self-Portraits Inspired by Howard Finster

Grade levels: 3rd-5th

Duration: two sessions (about 40-60 minutes per session)

Media type: drawing

## Lesson Objectives:

- The student will learn about Folk Artist Howard Finster.
- The student will use a variety of art materials to compose artwork.
- The student will create artwork based on the self-portraits of Howard Finster.
- The student will create artwork emphasizing pattern.
- The student will discuss expressive qualities of Finster's artwork & give personal interpretation.

## Materials:

- 12"x18" white drawing paper
- Black Sharpie Marker
- Colored pencils or markers

## Procedure:

1. The student will have a classmate or instructor trace profile outline of his or her head using pencil, and then go over with marker.
2. The student will write words and/or sentences about themselves, as well as create patterns to represent them. *\*\*The key point is that the students are telling a "story" through their art.*
3. The student will use colored pencils or markers to embellish their work, emphasizing layering of colors.

## Discussion Questions:

- When discussing Finster's self-portrait paintings:
  - What aspects of Finster's artwork tell us something about Howard?
  - What do you see?
  - Why did he do that?
- Look at self-portraits by other artists. What can their self-portraits tell us about them?
  - Consider the work of [Frieda Kahlo](#) or [Mose Tolliver](#).
- You are the artist of your own self-portraits. What can your self portrait tell us about you?

## Resources:

- Examples of Howard Finster's self-portraits, as well as examples of other self-portraits by (self taught or trained) artists, — 2 to 4 examples per table or group
- Powerpoint of "Paradise Gardens"
- Finster's outdoor art "museum"
- Various other Finster prints

## National Core Arts Curriculum Standards:

- VA3MC.1 Engages in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas.
- b. Formulates visual ideas by using a variety of resources (books, magazines, and Internet).

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VA3MC.2 Formulates personal responses to visual imagery.

- b. Responds to big ideas, universal themes, and symbolic images to produce images with richer and more personal meaning.

VA3CU.1 Investigates and discovers the personal relationship of artist to community, culture, and world through making and studying art.

- a. Recognizes the unique contributions of contemporary and historical Georgia artists and art forms.
- b. Discovers personal relationship to community, culture, and world through making and studying art.

VA3PR.1 Creates artworks based on personal experience and selected themes.

- a. Creates artworks to express individual ideas, thoughts, and feelings from memory, imagination, and observation.
- b. Creates artworks emphasizing one or more elements of art (e.g., color, line, shape, form, texture).