

# Howard Finster's Portraits

By: Jenny Akridge

*Grade level: 6th*

*Estimated Time: 3-4 class periods*

## Resources/Materials:

- Access to technology
- Acrylic paint
- Cardboard rounds or scraps
- Paintbrushes
- Paper towels
- Pencils
- Permanent markers
- Scissors
- Sketch paper

## National Core Visual Arts Standards and Essential Questions:

### Creating

VA:Cr1.2.6a Formulate an artistic investigation of personally relevant content for creating art.

EQs: What conditions, attitudes, and behaviors support creativity and innovative thinking?  
What factors prevent or encourage people to take creative risks?

VA:Cr2.1.6a Demonstrate openness in trying new ideas, materials, methods, and approaches in making works of art and design.

EQs: How do artists work?  
How do artists and designers determine whether a particular direction in their work is effective?  
How do artists and designers learn from trial and error?

VA:Cr3.1.6a Reflect on whether personal artwork conveys the intended meaning and revise accordingly.

EQs: What role does persistence play in revising, refining, and developing work?  
How do artists grow and become accomplished in art forms?  
How does collaboratively reflecting on a work help us experience it more completely?

### Responding

VA:Re.7.1.6a Identify and interpret works of art or design that reveal how people live around the world and what they value.

EQs: How do life experiences influence the way you relate to art?  
How does learning about art impact how we perceive the world?  
What can we learn from our responses to art?

VA:Re7.2.6a Analyze ways that visual components and cultural associations suggested by images influence ideas, emotions, and actions.

EQs: Where and how do we encounter images in the world?  
How do images influence our views of the world?

### Connecting

VA:Cn10.1.6a Generate a collection of ideas reflecting current interests and concerns that could be investigated in art-making.

EQs: How does engaging in creating art enrich people's lives?

*This program is supported in part by Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. Georgia Council for the Arts also receives support from its partner agency – the National Endowment for the Arts.*

How does making art attune people to their surroundings?  
How do people contribute to awareness and understanding of their lives and the lives of their communities through art-making?

### Objectives:

- The students will discover the life, work, and influences of Howard Finster using available technology.
- The students will create a self-portrait containing images and text of personal relevance to their lives.
- The students will critique their preparatory sketches as a whole group.
- The students will reflect on whether their artwork conveys the intended meaning and revise accordingly.
- The students will successfully communicate their ideas, emotions, and values in their artwork.
- The students will write an artist statement explaining their self-portrait.

### Terms:

- Artist statement — an artist's written description of their work to give the viewer understanding
- Critique — to review or analyze critically
- Folk Art — artistic work created by untrained artists often having such attributes as highly decorative design, bright bold colors, flattened perspective, simplified forms, and obvious meaning
- Portrait — a likeness of a person, especially the face
- Self-portrait — a portrait of oneself done by oneself

### Mini Lesson

- The teacher will lead students through discovery of the life, work, and influences of Howard Finster using technology appropriate to their situation.
- <http://paradisegardenfoundation.org/>
- <https://www.high.org/highlights/howard-finster/>
- The teacher will explain, demonstrate, and show examples of the project.

### Activating Thinking Strategies:

- The students will discuss essential questions daily appropriate to class pacing.
- The teacher will provide students with a daily agenda appropriate to class pacing.

### Instructional Activities:

- The students will sketch a simplified self-portrait.
- The students will add images and text to the self-portrait sketch which have personal relevance to their lives.
- The students will critique their preparatory sketches as a whole group.
- The students will reflect on whether their artwork conveys the intended meaning and revise accordingly.
- The students will draw their portrait on the cardboard.
- The students will cut the portrait out of the cardboard.
- The students will paint their self-portrait using acrylic paint.
- The students will add details and text to their self-portrait using permanent markers.

*This program is supported in part by Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. Georgia Council for the Arts also receives support from its partner agency – the National Endowment for the Arts.*

### Summarizing/Closing Strategies:

- The students will glue a scrap of cardboard to the back of the cutout like a picture stand for display purposes.
- The students will write an artist statement explaining their self-portrait.

### Assignment Assessment:

- Formative assessment will occur through teacher observation and discussion with students and group critique. Summative assessment will occur through completed self-portrait and artist statement.
  - The students will participate in a group critique.
  - The students will create a Howard Finster inspired self-portrait containing images and text of personal relevance to their lives.
  - The students will participate in a group critique.
  - The students will successfully communicate their ideas, emotions, and values in their artwork.
  - The students will reflect on and explain important information about their
  - personal artwork in an artist statement.