

THIS IS A PORTRAIT IF I SAY SO: **Identity in American Art, 1912 to Today**

Bowdoin College Museum of Art
June 25 — October 23, 2016



FOR KIDS

Activity Booklet Created By:

Hailey Beaman '18

Steff Chávez-Flores '17

Will Schweller '17

Student Education Assistants Summer 2016

Welcome to
This Is a Portrait If I Say So:
Identity in American Art, 1912 to
Today!

This Is a Portrait If I Say So is an exhibition that explores how artists from 1912 to today represent themselves and other people. Every piece of art in this exhibition is an unconventional portrait made by artists who influenced the development of modern American art. This means that the portraits are not paintings or drawings that look like a specific person.

Instead, the portraits that you will see today are artistic experiments that emphasize conceptual and symbolic links between the artist and their subject.

This exhibition brings together portraits made in various media, including photography, print, drawing, video, sculpture, text, music, painting, and collage.

This activity booklet is designed to help you interact with the artwork you see.

Key Terms

Abstract art: Art that uses shapes, colors, forms, and textures to emphasize its message(s) rather than to emphasize visual reality. What the art is trying to show is not always clear.

Conceptual art: Art in which the idea behind the work is more important than what the artwork looks like.

Identity: How someone sees and defines themselves.

Medium: Material(s) used to make a work of art. Examples: oil paint, pen, pencil, fabric, wood, etc.

Mimetic art: Art that imitates the world as we see it.

Non-mimetic art: Art that does not imitate visual reality.

Portrait: A representation of a person or object.

Self-Portrait: When someone makes a representation of themselves.

Subject (in relation to portraiture): The person or object represented in an artwork.

Symbolic: Something that represents something else. Example: A heart can symbolize love.

"This Is a Portrait If I Say So"

Word Search

Q R V C X O Q S H E Q W Y B N R A G J A
C T U E K U Y A H P K O E Y C V S N T B
T R B C O W C M O W A A P O S G Y I L S
H V I K K Q I U S P B R Y D V C A W R T
Q O Q D I M R B Z S Y B G Y E R R A S R
P O T P E C N O C Q E U K O T D F R L A
E V I T A T N E S E R P E R T V Z D P C
P A I N T I N G W B U E O E S O M O U T
X C H D I H N E I V T P G D O P H A W S
D O C X E O H D G A P A L R D B N P W G
U M Y P N N D I O O L J U G E O H W N D
S H N V A M T W S L U D S V Q U R M F J
E K L F J A J I O M C R T G S U N B F P
I E F P N J V C T B S M U W O Z Y A T U
L U T D Q W W D W Y T U U Z J F Y G N W
R G E L W D G C B F N E K Q Z Y F M X T
G C C O X I I L X P Y N Y T Z E B J F H
P I S Z G L M N H P L K G Z S U U N X D
Q V V A A Z S J E B C V H J K K L M Q I
A A K E H B Z I D R Y P I N Q B O B I G

ABSTRACT
BOWDOIN
COLLAGE
CONCEPT
DRAWING
IDENTITY
MIMETIC
PAINTING
PHOTOGRAPH
PORTRAIT
REPRESENTATIVE
SCULPTURE

Match the portraits on the left with . . .

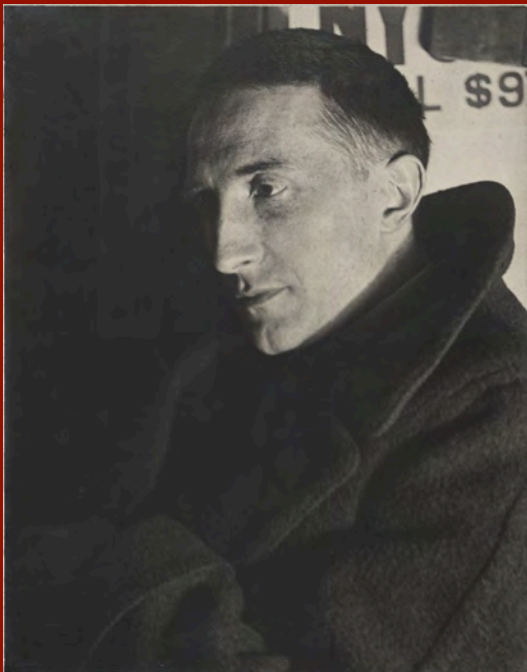
SELF PORTRAIT
EGO PORTRAYAL
ONESELF HEAD
I PROFILE
MYSELF SILHOUETTE
ME SHADOW FIGURE
NUMBER ONE MINIATURE
IDENTITY PICTURE
PERSONSHIP IMAGE
SELFHOOD REPRESENTATION
EGOHOOD CARICATURE
ONENESS DELINEATION
INNER-SELF DEPICTION
INNER-MAN SPITTING-IMAGE
SPIRIT MIRROR
SOUL SYMBOL
LIFE FORCE ICON
BEING LIFESTUDY



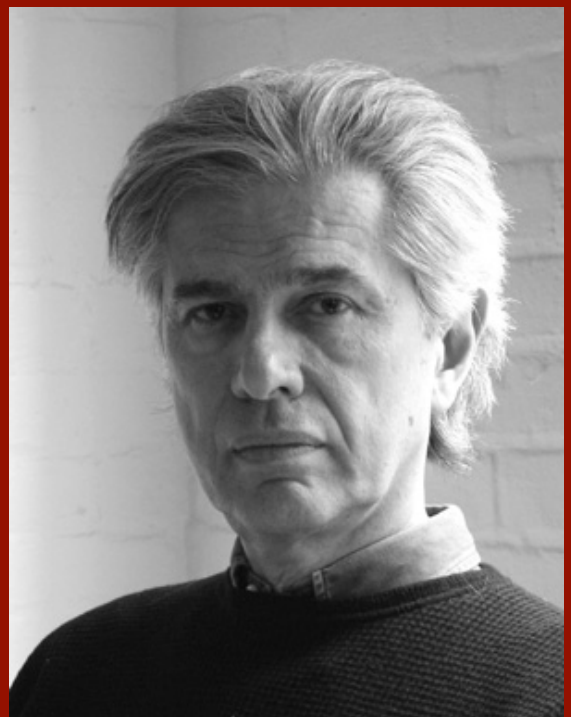
the photographs
of the people
they represent on
the right.



Alfred Stieglitz
(1864—1946)



Marcel Duchamp
(1887—1968)



Mel Bochner
(1940—Present)

Scavenger Hunt

Can you find the following things in the exhibition?

1. A teacup
2. A light bulb
3. Three portraits made of words
4. A mirror
5. A rainbow
6. Two spoons
7. A handprint
8. A fingerprint
9. Musical notes
10. How many flowers can you find?

BONUS

1. Find a portrait that will change over time
2. Find a portrait that contains a map
3. Find a portrait of an artist and a portrait by the same artist



Draw a portrait of someone you admire!

Create a non-representational portrait by drawing something that reminds you of the person OR create a representational portrait by drawing what that person looks like.



**What is your favorite portrait in the exhibition
and why?**

**How would you want an artist to represent
you? What would be in the portrait? What
medium would the artist use?**

Patron Letter

You asked an artist to create an unconventional portrait for you. Now fill in the blank words to write a letter thanking the artist for creating an unconventional portrait for you.

Dear _____,

I cannot thank you enough for your _____ of _____. It really is a _____. You are very _____ for representing my _____ with _____. I do not think that I/he/she/they look like _____, but you are the artist!

Do you make many portraits of _____, or do you mostly _____? The portrait will look fantastic next to my _____ in my _____.

My _____ will all want you to _____ portraits of them, too!

Thank you again for the portrait!!!

All the best,

Image Credits

Cover: Robert Rauschenberg (1925–2008), *Self-Portrait [for The New Yorker profile]*, 1964, ink and graphite. Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, New York, New York. © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation / Licensed by VAGA, New York, New York.

Page 2: Mel Bochner (born 1940), *Wrap: Portrait of Eva Hesse*, 2001, charcoal and pencil on paper. Courtesy of Akira Ikeda Gallery, New York and Tokyo, Japan. © Mel Bochner.

Page 4: Word search produced on <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com>

Page 5: Mel Bochner, *Self / Portrait*, 2013, oil on canvas. Collection of the artist. © Mel Bochner.

Francis Picabia (1879-1953) *Ici, C'est Ici Stieglitz Foi et Amour*, relief print on paper published in *291*, nos. 5-6 (July-August 1915). National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., gift of Katharine Graham. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris. Image courtesy National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution / Art Resource, New York.

Charles Sheeler (1883-1965), *Baroness Elsa's "Portrait of Duchamp,"* ca. 1920, gelatin silver print. Bluff Collection, Houston, TX. © The Lane Collection.

Page 6: Gertrude Käsebier, *Alfred Stieglitz*, photograph, 1909, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Man Ray, *Portrait of Marcel Duchamp*, 1920-21, gelatin silver print, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT, gift of the Estate of Katherine S. Dreier.

Nicholas Knight, *Mel Bochner*, photograph, "Mel Bochner with Phong Bui," *The Brooklyn Rail*, May 9, 2006, <http://www.brooklynrail.org/2006/05/art/in-conversation-mel-bochner-with-phong-bui>. © Nicholas Knight.

Page 8: Marsden Hartley (1877–1943), *Portrait*, ca. 1914–1915, oil on canvas. Collection of the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, bequest of Hudson D. Walker from the Ione and Hudson D. Walker Collection. Image courtesy Collection of the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

Back Cover: Byron Kim (born 1961), *Emmett at Twelve Months, #3*, 1994, egg tempera on panel. Collection of the Artist. © The Artist / Image Courtesy James Cohan Gallery, New York and Shanghai..



June 25 – October 23, 2016
Bowdoin College Museum of Art

bowdoin.edu/art-museum • 207-725-3275

Bowdoin