

## NSU ART MUSEUM FORT LAUDERDALE Creativity Exploration

Virtual Mindfulness Module  
*Celebrate You*

Works from NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale's permanent collection inspire this series of independent mindfulness experiences and art prompts for creating in the comfort of your own home. Learn about art and connect to your own creativity and wellness through inspiring ideas that promote personal discovery.

### #NSUMindfulModules

NSU Art Museum's Creativity Exploration workshops promote the benefits of creative exploration and the mind-to-body experience. Studies have shown that just 45 minutes of creative activity a day can reduce stress and improve mental clarity and well-being. Expand your perceptions of forms as you increase brain connectivity through visual and cognitive stimulation in this virtual workshop designed by educator Lark Keeler, a specialist in mindfulness education.



Mickalene Thomas, *A Moment's Pleasure in Black and White*, 2006. NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale; promised gift of David Horvitz and Francie Bishop Good © Mickalene Thomas. Courtesy of the artist, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago and Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Mickalene Thomas, *A Moment's Portrait of Mama Bush 1*, 2010. NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale; promised gift of David Horvitz and Francie Bishop Good. © Mickalene Thomas. Courtesy of the artist, Lehman Maupin, New York and Hong Kong, and Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

# Celebrate You

In this mindfulness exercise, we will reflect upon ways in which we can celebrate our unique style and personality with pride.

- Find a comfortable and alert way of sitting
- Take a cleansing deep breath and feel gravity holding you in place. Be comforted in your space. Feel safe and calm.
- Inhale... and relax your face, neck, and shoulders when you exhale. Let your hands be still and relaxed. Trust your breath. Notice the natural rhythm your breathing makes.
- Think about the word pride. Breathe in the word and sit with it for a moment. When do you feel pride towards yourself? Breathe with the ideas that wash over you.
- Imagine moments of pride in your life. What was happening at that time? What achievements are connected to the word pride? Feel gratitude towards the memories in which you have experienced pride. Breathe in slowly and exhale love.
- In what ways do you cultivate self-pride and positive self-esteem in your life? Feel good about feeling good. Feel the natural rhythm of your breath and let it create calmness throughout your body.
- Allow your visualizations to come to you freely and without judgement. Breathe with your thoughts and inspirations that arise within your mind's eye.
- Reflect for a moment upon the idea of validation--seeing yourself and being seen by others. With a deep breath consider what this means to you, how you wish to be seen, and validated.
- Take a moment to celebrate your self-worth and be compassionate. Accept your thoughts and emotions with gentle care and your healing breath. Focus on your strengths and unique gifts.
- Take a cleansing breath of gratitude for your uniqueness and perspective. Celebrate the idea of you and your authenticity. Give yourself an inner smile knowing that no one else is quite like you in this wide world.

# Mickalene Thomas

Reclaiming and remixing a blend of art history, pop culture, 1970s aesthetic, and rhinestones, Mickalene Thomas makes portraiture through the lens of a black lesbian woman. She works in photography, but also in mixed media, film and video, installations, and sculpture. The subjects of her photographs and mixed media paintings are charismatic, sophisticated, powerful, yet vulnerable women of color. Thomas builds the installations her models are photographed in, as well as dressing and styling them. Loaded with extreme patterns and faux wood paneling, the paintings have a busyness where often the skin of the model is a place for eyes to rest and pause before continuing to explore the bedazzled surface of enamel and acrylic paint.

Thomas' work speaks to the importance of seeing people of color represented in museums. It addresses the black experience and perspective, formed from a collaboration between Thomas and the models she works with. Thomas states, "to see yourself and for others to see you, is a form of validation." She considers her portraits, although often of models, to be mostly self-portraits, and "stand-ins." Informed by historical works and personal style, Mickalene Thomas self-fashions dynamic photographs and jewel encrusted paintings, owning and claiming her space in the visual art world.

## Artmaking Ideas

Inspired by the work of Mickalene Thomas and the reflective mindfulness exercise that pondered feelings of pride and validation, create a work of art to celebrate your powerful, authentic being through a mixed media self-portrait.

- Plan and design an outfit that reflects your personal style. Contemplate how this outfit will make you feel. Choose clothing that will ask others to see you as you wish to be seen and celebrated.
- Style yourself in the outfit and take a moment to reflect. Do you feel powerful, glamorous, sophisticated, handsome? How does the clothing change your attitude?
- Design a space to be photographed in. Make it a space in which you feel ownership. Take a selfie or collaborate with a partner to photograph you.
- Use filters on your camera to assist in creating the image. Bling, glitter, and sparkle filters can create the effect of faux rhinestones.
- If possible, print out the image and add real gems and rhinestones, paint and collaged patterns over the photo. Consider adding reflective writing on the back of the image, informed by the mindfulness exercise and thoughts of self-pride.
- Display your finished self-portrait in a place where you will see it often. Let it serve as a reminder to celebrate you.

# We'd love to see your experience! Take a photo and tag @nsuartmuseum



**Creativity Exploration is sponsored by the Charles P. Ferro Foundation.**



Lark Keeler is a museum educator at NSU Art Museum and a visual arts teacher at Saint Andrew's Lower School. Over the past 20 years she has taught visual arts in schools and museums, working with students of all ages and abilities throughout South Florida. Keeler was awarded the Florida Art Education Association's Museum Educator of the Year in 2010 and since has participated in the National Guild for Community Arts Education Leadership Institute and the National Art Education Association's School for Art Leaders. She has received a certification in Mindfulness Fundamentals and is a certified MindUP educator. She now serves as a board member for the Florida Alliance for Arts Education, Florida Art Education Association's Past-President, Secretary for the National Caucus on the Spiritual in Art Education, and as a member of the Delray Beach Public Art Advisory Board.



**NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale**

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