

Romare Bearden Collage Works Project

Supply list:

- Canvas or Cardboard Canvas

You supply:

- Scissors
- Glue
- Magazine clippings
- Paint (optional)
- Pastel (optional)

Instructions:

1. Cardboard is an affordable, durable, and sustainable canvas! Let's use it to create artwork.
2. Collect your favorite magazine images. If you include people, consider cutting up their faces and mixing and matching them to each other...
3. Glue down items and wait for them to dry...
4. Once dry, consider putting paint or pastel over them for extra texture and design.
5. Framing is optional :) Once complete



History of Collages by Romare Bearden

Bearden is perhaps best known for his collage and photomontage compositions, which he began creating in the mid-1960s. During this time, he felt he was struggling in his art between expressing his experiences as a Black man and the obscurity of abstract painting. For Bearden, abstraction wasn't clear enough for him to tell his story. He felt his art was coming to a plateau, so he started to experiment again.

Combining images from magazines and colored paper, he would work in other textures such as sandpaper, graphite and paint. Influenced by the [civil rights movement](#), his work became more representational and socially conscious. Although his collage work shows influence of abstract art, it also shows signs of African American enslaved crafts, such as patch-work quilts, and the necessity of using whatever materials are available. Taking images from mainstream pictorial magazines such as *Life* and *Look* and Black magazines such as *Ebony* and *Jet*, Bearden crafted the African American experience in his works.

<https://www.mmoca.org/artist/romare-bearden/>

A ☆ □

Contact News About Us Stay Connected EN ES

Open Tomorrow: 12:00 PM - 6:00 PM

MMoCA
MADISON MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

ART ▾ PLAN YOUR VISIT PROGRAMMING & EVENTS ▾ LEARN SUPPORT 🔍



Romare Bearden

Born: 1911
Died: 1988

Romare Bearden, one of the most important African American artists of the twentieth century, was born in Charlotte, North Carolina and raised in Harlem, New York. As was the case for another African American artist, Jacob Lawrence, Bearden grew up in the midst of the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, a literary movement of notable writers and poets that centered on black culture.

Bearden studied art in New York during the 1930s, asking in an important essay that African American artists give voice to their own distinctive experiences. Gaining recognition during the 1940s and achieving international status by the 1960s, he made his memories of life in the South and in Harlem the basis of his art. His art and that of Lawrence parallel the spirit of American Scene Painting, which in the 1930s recorded and commemorated regional identities, most especially that of the Midwest. In the 1960s, Bearden experimented with a variety of collage techniques that became his signature medium. His later style captures the syncopation and liveliness of American jazz, playing upon caricature and the fragmentation of forms associated with Cubism.