

Black Power-Black Arts

“In Color and Mind: The Visions and Words of Malcolm X”

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“In Color and Mind: The Visions and Words of Malcolm X” required students in Alex Carter’s Black Power-Black Arts class to create an artwork and write an artist statement that examined the significant ideological patterns and life experiences of Malcolm X shown in their artwork. A significant focus of the project required students to see Malcolm X as a human being and, as his friend Ossie Davis said, as a man that “did not hesitate to die [for Black people], because he loved us so.” Students gained artistic inspiration by listening to Malcolm X’s favorite music—jazz.



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Student: Mariama Diallo

Artwork Title: The Black Prince

Description: “The Black Prince” sparks a discussion of Malcolm X and the ideologies, black nationalism, and self-defense. Growing up, Malcolm X has always been a role model for me. I was always captivated by his confidence, the attention he commanded, the way he carried himself, as well as the intensity and passion with which he spoke on issues that affected all Americans, especially the injustices faced by black Americans.



Student: Anne Vasquez

Artwork Title: Light Within Blackness

Description: “Light Within Blackness” highlights the concept of community and spiritual awakening within the Black community, referencing Malcolm X’s experience and conversion to Islam. The concept of spiritual awakening is reflected in the Kaaba, the building at the center of the Masjid al-Haram Mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The concept of community is essential and represented by people of different skin tones and hair textures to establish a broad-based community.





Student: Tasha Fonstein

Artwork Title: X is a Placeholder

Description: Utilizing acrylic on canvas, the background is black with stripes of white. An “X” at the center explodes with the colors of the Pan-African flag: red, green, and black. The painting itself holds the power of Malcolm’s Pan-African ideas that burst through the “X” and the white strokes of paint that represent the white hegemonic oppression on Black history. The ideologies of Pan-Africanism and the unity of African-descendant people are critical to Malcolm X.



Student: Mia Edwards

Artwork Title: Strength in Our Culture

Description: “Strength in Our Culture” depicts a black Muslim woman holding the hands of two young children, leading them away from the numerous white hands trying to grasp them. Some of the hands hold out Christian relics, such as the cross and the bible, while the woman walks away from them, staring back with menacing eyes. The woman and children are wearing the colors of the Pan-African flag and making their way towards fragmented pieces of a map outlining the trans-Atlantic slave trade.



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