

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS' GALJERY

TPG Activity: Inspired Self-Portraits

This activity asks you to create a self-portrait by personifying someone you find inspiring or a prominent figure in history. You are asked to reflect on the work of *Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2023* winner Samuel Fosso. Included in his major retrospective, the project *African Spirits* is a series of self-portraits featuring Fosso embodying prominent figures in history. These include Angela Davis, Martin Luther King Jr., Patrice Lumumba and Kwame Nkruma. *Who* is inspiring to you?



Figure 2, Samuel Fosso, Self-portrait (Angela Davis, from the series *African Spirits*, 2008©)



Figure 1, Samuel Fosso, Self-portrait (Martin Luther King Jr, from the series *African Spirits*, 2008©)

What you'll need:

- Camera phone or camera
- A picture of someone you find inspiring
- Craft material (optional!)
- Props (hats, scarves, wigs)

Instructions:

- Think about someone you find inspiring – why do they inspire you?
- Find a portrait of this person that you think you'd be able to replicate as yourself
- Find props that you may need to recreate the photo
- Tip: You could manipulate the photograph afterwards to recreate if you don't have all the props e.g. drawing a hat into the image!
- Try to imagine you're in the shoes of your inspiring figure – what do you think you might be feeling? Show that emotion through the image.
- Place yourself in front of the camera – how will the camera frame you? What position will you hold – stoic or floppy?
- When you're finished – give your work a title, eg. *Self Portrait as...*
- Share your photographs #TPGActivity

Tip:

Have fun with it! See if others can guess the inspirational person you are embodying.

Example:



Figure 4, Greta Thunberg, 2003



Figure 3, example of activity outcome