

# PIECES OF YOU

Betye Saar, *Fragments*, 1976. Color lithograph from an aluminum plate. UCLA Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, Hammer Museum. Gift of Linda Levi and Barbara Leif. © 1976 Betye Saar



Betye Saar is very interested in cosmology, or the study of the universe. The sun depicted in the upper right-hand corner of *Fragments* is an image that appears frequently in her work and speaks to her interest in this subject. Her personal history is another recurring theme in her work. The torn photographs here are believed to be of members of Betye Saar's family. Saar incorporated a lot of American history into her work, including aspects of the Black American experience like the civil rights movement and the Great Migration. The fact that the photographs are in pieces is a reminder of how many Black families have been separated in America due to racism and oppression.

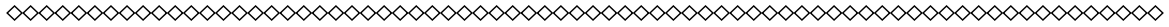
## WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Which objects can you identify?

What do you think those objects tell us about this part of the artist's identity?

## RECOMMENDED FOR AGES 7 AND UP

In *Fragments* (1976) the artist Betye Saar creates a visual representation of Black womanhood by arranging materials owned or collected by her great-aunt. For this project, you will create an image using objects that represent your identity.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

**Think** about how Betye Saar represented parts of her identity through her work. What is an area of your identity that is important to you? Are you a sibling, a dancer, or a scientist? Gather at least six objects that represent one part of your identity. These could be tools you use as you're doing a task like writing or singing or beloved objects like pictures or toys that represent someone meaningful in your life.

#### Supplies:

scissors, glue stick, a smartphone or tablet and Google Snapseed or another photo-editing app (adult guidance may be needed)

**Place the objects** on a flat surface. Think about how to arrange them: do you want to cover the surface evenly or keep the objects on one side? Look back at the artist's work. Do you notice a mix of shapes? How would you describe how she arranged the different objects? Try to mirror the way that she mixes objects of different shapes and sizes.

**Take a photo** of your assembled objects. Then use the Google Snapseed app or another photo editing app to add a filter to the image.

**Rearrange your objects** to create a different composition. What if you took one object out and then rearranged the ones that remain? What if half the objects were upside down? You can use scissors and a glue stick to change the objects themselves, similar to how Betye Saar cut the photographs in her work. Each time you rearrange them, take a photo with a different filter.

**Select your favorite image** and share it with your loved ones. Why is it your favorite? What artistic choices did you make?