

## Self-Portrait Silhouettes

Subject: Visual Arts

Grade Level: Grades K-5

**Guided Instruction** (To be done with teacher, parent, caregiver, older sibling, etc.)

Look at a selection of contemporary portraits from the Nasher's collection: *Ivenlaw III (study)* by Kehinde Wiley, and *Demolition (Ping'an Avenue Beijing)* by Zhang Dali, *Black Widow with Brothers Fighting* by Noah Davis – all printed on page two or viewable online here: <https://bit.ly/2VxiNpi>

**Discuss the portraits by asking:**

- What is going on in this picture?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What more can we find?

What features of the portraits do they like? Discuss the shapes, colors, textures, and background details.

## Art Making

A **silhouette** is a profile portrait of a person that focuses only on the outline, often depicted as a solid black color against a white background. For example:



Have an adult or older sibling help create a silhouette of you by using a bright directional light source (flashlight, table lamp in a dark room, even the bright afternoon sun) to cast a shadow. Trace the shadow outline of your head, neck, and shoulders (if room) onto any piece of paper. A deconstructed paper grocery bag would work great for this project.

Using whatever art materials you have available, fill in your silhouette – be creative! You could collage pictures from magazines and catalogs! Use markers, crayons, or paint! If you have a lot of patience, even ballpoint pen can make a great art medium!



(Left) **Kehinde Wiley**, *Ivelaw III (study)*, 2006. Pencil and oil on paper, 27 1/2 x 21 1/2 inches (69.9 x 54.6 cm). Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC, USA. Promised gift of Blake Byrne in honor of Raymond D. Nasher, L.4.2007.36. © Kehinde Wiley Studio. Photo by Peter Paul Geoffrion.

(Right) **Zhang Dali**, *Demolition (Ping'an Avenue Beijing)*, 1999. C-Print, 35 3/8 x 23 5/8 inches (89.9 x 60 cm). Collection of the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC, USA. Museum purchase with funds provided by The Lori and David Arthur Fund for Asian Art, 2008.10.1. © Zhang Dali. Courtesy Eli Klein Fine Art.



**Noah Davis**, *Black Widow with Brothers Fighting*, 2008. Oil on canvas, 52 x 60 inches (132.1 x 152.4 cm). Collection of the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, USA. Gift of Marjorie and Michael Levine, 2009.4.1. © Noah Davis. Photo by Peter Paul Geoffrion.