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# Masculinities: Liberation through Photography



20 February – 17 May 2020  
Activity Sheet

**GUILD  
HALL  
SCHOOL**

# INTRODUCTION

Masculinity is the word we use to describe how boys and men are expected to behave in order to be a man. Since the 1960s, people have begun to challenge what it means to be masculine. This has led to multiple ways of being a man, or multiple 'masculinities'. Use this Activity Sheet to explore how artists have been some of the most important people challenging these ideas around identity\*.

Turn to the back page for some useful definitions!  
Where there's an \* there's a description of the word on the back page!

## DISRUPTING THE ARCHETYPE\*



Can you find examples of different traditional male roles in the artworks?  
Write down one example where an image in this section shows a man or a woman in a way that you've never seen before.



# MALE ORDER: POWER, PATRIARCHY\* AND SPACE

This section explores the 'toxic masculinity' of straight\*, white men in positions of power. Some men have been brought up expected to behave in ways that are not very healthy, such as behaving aggressively and not sharing their feelings. These men have often not allowed other types of people into power.



Why is it important that people can share their feelings?

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Why is it important that all types of people are allowed to be in positions of power?

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# TOO CLOSE TO HOME: FAMILY & FATHERHOOD

Family can be very important for some boys and men in helping find out their own identity.\*



These days, families come in all shapes and sizes! What does your family look like? You can draw them below:



# QUEERING MASCULINITY

Queering is to take something, like a leather jacket, and adjust it so it helps to identify the person as a member of the LGBT\* community.



Because homosexuality\* used to be illegal (and still is in many countries), members of the LGBT\* community had to be secretive, so they used special fashion codes to communicate with one another.



Can you find some of these amazing outfits? Be inspired and create your own below:



# RECLAIMING THE BLACK BODY

For a long time, the image of black men was controlled by white people in power.



Increasingly, black men have been able to describe what it is to be a black man themselves, with black artists demonstrating their individuality and uniqueness.



Find the work of Samuel Fosso!

Why is it important that people are able to define themselves?



# WOMEN ON MEN: REVERSING THE MALE GAZE

Lots of art is full of images made by men about women, where the women aren't shown as powerful. Lots of men also feel like it's OK to stare at women, even though they know it can feel intimidating to be stared at.



Women artists have tried to show how this is a problem by flipping this around and having men experience the discomfort of being stared at. Others like Laurie Anderson have taken away the male gaze in their photos.



Find the photos by Marianne Wex. Ask someone you're with, 'How do you think men and women move and act differently?' Do you think this is fair?



# HELPFUL TERMS!

## **Identity:**

A sense of who you are and the qualities that make a person different from other people.

## **CIS Gender:**

CIS Gender is when someone with a boy's body is born feeling like a boy inside; or when someone with a girl's body is born feeling like a girl inside.

CIS is Latin for 'on this side of'.

## **Transgender:**

Transgender is when someone is born feeling like a boy inside but is born with the body of a girl; or when someone is born feeling like a girl inside but is born with the body of a boy.

## **Homosexual:**

When men are sexually attracted to men, or women are sexually attracted to women. Homosexuality is common amongst humans and lots of other animals too!

## **Straight/Heterosexual:**

Straight or heterosexual describes men who are attracted to women, or women who are attracted to men.

## **LGBT Community:**

Often extended to LGBTQ+, standing for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), and others who aren't from the straight/heterosexual community.

## **Patriarchy:**

Patriarchy is the word we use to describe when men are in power at the expense of others, such as women or non-straight men.

## **Archetype:**

An archetype is the most common image or understanding of something that springs to mind. The Archetype of a fireman is a man who is big and strong; and this influences what we expect a fireman to look like, even though not all firemen are big, or strong, or men – in fact, many are women.

**Design and illustration by Aleesha Nandhra.**

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