

LYB

IS FOR LYNETTE YIADOM-BOAKYE

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I once read a quote about Lynette Yiadom-Boakye's paintings that the source of light in them comes from the people in the paintings themselves. Have a look, do you agree?

I do.

In fact, the more I look at them the more I really do, I think it makes the people in these paintings appear both really every day and ordinary and at the same time like angels; calm, thoughtful and somehow otherworldly.

This quote about light reminded me of a lyric of one of my favourite songs; a cover of The Beatles song 'Blackbird', sung live by one of my favourite artists – Sylvester – at the San Francisco Opera House in 1979, recorded onto an album called Living Proof.

The lyric goes

'into the light of the dark black night'

and when Sylvester and his two backup singers Martha and Izora sing it, it is amazing.

Note:

In this activity Jessie Mclaughlin invites us to join them in an internal dialogue with Lynette Yiadom-Boakye's paintings.

Jessie shares the music and lyrics that come to their mind and invites us to do the same and share our ideas with our peers and the paintings.

ACTIVITY DEvised BY
ARTIST JESSIE MCLAUGHLIN
in collaboration with Schools
and Teachers Tate London Learning



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What songs or lyrics (the words that make up a song) do you love?

Do any of them come to mind as you look at these paintings?

What can you remember of the song?
Is it all the lyrics, just a few words or the beat?

If nothing comes to mind, make up your own song or lyric.

Note down your lyrics, words or beats.

Make a list if you have more than one.

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I once had a primary school teacher who told us that humans are probably the only animals who can make sounds in our heads, without making a sound that anyone else can hear.

The ability to use our imagination, I guess.

In these current times, I feel like our ability to imagine has become even more important.

1. Take a moment to be calm and thoughtful as you look at one of the paintings.

Stay with it longer than you usually would, imagine you are standing in front of the real thing.

2. Choose a song or lyrics from your list and try singing or talking to the painting in your head. How does it make you feel about the painting?

Now try a completely different song. Maybe with a different speed, a different mood, or lyrics that describe a completely different feeling or scene.

What (if anything) about the painting changes?

What (if anything) about the painting remains unchanged?

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3. Choose one lyric or even a beat that you feel really makes sense with your chosen painting.

When you're ready come out of your head and transform your lyric using materials such as your body, pen and paper, a phone, a camera or a laptop, or collaborate with someone else. Try making a movement, a drawing, a photo, a sculpture or a soundscape.

Find a way to place what you have made with the artwork that inspired it.

Show it to someone and give them space to do the same.

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