

Mondays with MoMA



MoMA

"Love Letter"

Charles White — 1971

We acknowledge with deep gratitude, Charles White's consent to the use of his magnificent new lithograph "Love Letter". We also wish to thank the Heritage Gallery, Los Angeles, and its Director, Benjamin Horowitz for their generous cooperation.

Dear Governor Reagan:

Because we love Justice and Freedom;

Because we truly believe that she is being denied the presumption of innocence and equal protection under the law, as guaranteed by the Constitution of these United States;

Because we are alarmed by the effect this pre-trial, punitive imprisonment is having on her health and well-being,

We ask you, as Governor, to intercede for the release of Angela Davis on reasonable bail.

Sincerely,

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

Step 1 Look closely

Questions

1. How would you describe the expression and pose of the figure?
2. How does the artist use color?
3. How do you think that the figure and flower relate to each other?

Step 2 Learn more

Charles White believed that art had a role to play in changing the world: “Art must be an integral part of the struggle. It can’t simply mirror what’s taking place. It must adapt itself to human needs.” *Love Letter #1* was the image on a postcard used in a letter-writing campaign to free Angela Davis, a political activist and academic who was arrested in connection with the 1970 murder of a judge in northern California (she was acquitted in 1972). The postcards had a pre-printed message to California Governor Ronald Reagan. The message said:

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Volkswagen of America is proud to be MoMA's lead partner of education.

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Image: Charles White. *Love Letter #1*. 1971. Lithograph, composition and sheet: 30 1/16 x 22 3/8" (76.4 x 56.8 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. John B. Turner Fund. © 2021 The Charles White Archives

Step 3 Activity: Advocate for change

Materials: Cardstock paper, writing utensil, crayons, colored pencils, or markers, postcard stamps (40 cents apiece).

1. Advocate for change about an injustice that is affecting you or your community.
 - a. Think of an issue that is important to you.
 - b. Who has the ability to change this policy or issue? The teacher? The principal? The mayor? The governor? The president?
 - c. Write a message to this person to share your views, and let them know how they can act to make a change.
2. Cut your heavy cardstock paper into postcard size (4"x6" or 5"x7").
3. On one side, create an image that illustrates your issue—you can use symbols or words.
4. On the other side, write your message and the name and address of the person you are writing to.
5. Put a stamp on your card and mail it.

Step 4 Share!

Create multiple cards or photocopy your artwork and message and distribute them to your friends and family so that they can also advocate to address this injustice. You can email us a photo to show what your postcard looks like before you mail it: schoolprograms@moma.org.