



OGDEN MUSEUM  
OF SOUTHERN ART

## O-original Art Activities: Calligraphy Self-Portrait Inspired by Sister Gertrude Morgan



Sister Gertrude Morgan, *Self-Portrait / Revelations*, 1965, Mixed media on paper

**Sister Gertrude Morgan** was born in Alabama in 1900 and moved to New Orleans in the 1930s, where she was a street preacher for several years. Along with two other female street preachers, Sister Morgan used the contributions she received from her sermons to build a chapel and open a childcare center that provided food and shelter to women and children in need. Sister Morgan later became a self-taught artist, and is known for her use of calligraphy in her mixed media paintings that convey spiritual or scriptural messages.

**Create your own self-portrait with an important message!**

**SEE SISTER GERTRUDE MORGAN'S SELF-PORTRAIT / REVELATIONS IN THE VERNACULAR VOICES (PAST EXHIBITION) AT THE [OGDEN MUSEUM ONLINE](#) !**

**QUESTIONS? EMAIL [EDUCATION@OGDENMUSEUM.ORG](mailto:EDUCATION@OGDENMUSEUM.ORG).**

### Supplies

Mirror, Paper, Pencil, Colored Pencils, Black Pen

### Instructions

**Step 1:** Think of a message that you would like to share. It can be an idea you have, something you believe in, a story you wrote, a passage from your favorite book or poem, or even just a journal entry about how you're feeling today. Get out a sheet of paper and practice writing your message in some different handwriting styles - like cursive, capital letters, or bubble letters - and pick out your favorite.

**Step 2:** Get out your mirror and a new piece of paper. Look at yourself in the mirror, studying the shapes of your face and/or body. Using your pencil, draw your self-portrait. Feel free to experiment with different poses and objects. Do you want to be sitting in a chair? Wearing a cool hat? Holding your pet?

**Step 3:** Use your colored pencils to color in your self-portrait and whatever other items you decided to include in your drawing.

**Step 4:** Using your black pen, fill in the background of your drawing with the message that you wrote down earlier in the handwriting style you chose. Make sure to write around your portrait, and not on top of it.

**Step 5:** Give yourself a pat on the back, because you've created your very own revelatory self-portrait!

### Vocabulary

**Self-Taught Artist** - an artist who did not go to art school or receive any formal artistic training

**Calligraphy** - the art of decorative handwriting

**Self-Portrait** - an image that depicts the person who created it

