

Mondays with MoMA



MoMA

Step 1 Look closely

To get a closer look, visit this website, then click on the image for a larger view:

[moma.org/collection/works/195260](https://www.moma.org/collection/works/195260)

Questions

1. What do you notice about the pose of the figure?
2. What is the connection between the American flag and the figure?
3. What might the artist be trying to convey?

Step 2 Learn more

This piece is part of David Hammons' "body prints" series. He made these works by smearing grease or margarine on his body and clothes, pressing them against a board or a sheet of paper, and then sprinkling the surface with graphite or pigment. For this print, he draped his figure in the American flag, with his hands joined in prayer. He created it in 1969, during a time of nationwide protests, race riots, and demonstrations against the Vietnam War. He titled it *Pray for America*, and spoke to his "moral obligation as a black artist to try to graphically document what [he felt] socially." Hammons continued to make artwork in response to social events through the 1980s and 90s.

Step 3 Considering community

1. Think of some current social issues in your community that concern you.
2. Choose one of these issues. How would you like your community to address this issue.
3. Write a phrase or a sentence that captures this wish.
4. Optional: Create a drawing or collage that illustrates your phrase
5. Share your wish with a classmate, family member, or friend and talk about how this wish could be realized in your community. Or, you can email it to us at MoMA: schoolprograms@moma.org



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Image: David Hammons. *Pray for America*. 1969. Screenprint and pigment on paper. Gift to The Museum of Modern Art and The Studio Museum in Harlem by the Hudgins Family in honor of David Rockefeller on his 100th birthday. © 2020 David Hammons