

## Textile Treasures at Creative Growth



*Image courtesy of Creative Growth and Monica Valentine.*

## Project Description

MCD is honored to collaborate with [Creativity Explored](#) artists and showcase their work in [Mode Brut](#), and have extended our outreach and conversation to include designers working in disability arts organizations across the country.

This MCD@Home brings you a curated look into the textile-based work taking place at [Creative Growth](#) in Oakland, CA. Creative Growth is a non-profit organization that has been supporting and advocating for artists with disabilities since 1974, providing a professional studio environment and gallery representation.

This MCD@Home highlights the incredible work of [Monica Valentine](#), [Christine Szeto](#), and [Tanisha Warren](#). Explore these artists' portfolios, creative processes, and interviews and dive deeper with MCD@Home reflection questions and prompts.

Creativity Explored and Creative Growth are nonprofit organizations founded by artist Florence Katz and psychologist Elias Katz that provide developmentally disabled artists the human right of creative expression. A collaborative effort helmed by both organizations, the MCD@Home projects celebrate their long-held history together, highlighting various art practices by prominent Creativity Explored and Creative Growth artists.

### **Recommended Age Level**

Recommended for ages 5 with adult supervision.

### **Materials**

Computer or phone with internet connection

### **Image Gallery**



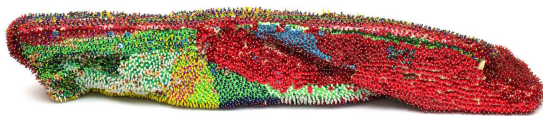
*Photo Credit: Courtesy of Creative Growth and Tanisha Warren.*



*Photo Credit: Courtesy of Creative Growth and Tanisha Warren.*



*Photo Credit: Courtesy of Creative Growth, Monica Valentine, and featherweight.*



*Photo Credit: Courtesy of Creative Growth and Monica Valentine.*



Photo Credit: Courtesy of Creative Growth, Christine Szeto, and Terri Loewenthal.



Photo Credit: Courtesy of Creative Growth and Christine Szeto.

## Instructions

[Tanisha Warren:](#)

"I celebrate Black History all year, because February is the only time we get to celebrate and the other months we don't celebrate, and February only has 28 days. I Google heroes for Black History Month and find out who the superheroes are, and there are a lot of them! I read up on them and, if I like them, I do a

portrait of them and hopefully get to know more about them and what they did in the past. It's a good way to learn about black history." (Warren)

For Tanisha Warren, who joined Creative Growth in 2013, embroidered quilts and portraits are just two of many areas of expertise. Warren's powerful art - be it textiles, drawings, or ceramics - often celebrates Black icons in America.

Warren's embroidery includes portraits of Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and Aretha Franklin and a quilt inspired by both Michael Jackson's *Thriller* and Halloween. Warren's drawings include depictions of Booker T. Washington, Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth. On many occasions, Warren's detailed work is accompanied by written descriptions of accomplishments and quotes of the Black historical figures she portrays.

Learn more about Warren's practice:

- Explore more of Warren's art on [Creative Growth's Instagram](#)
- Listen to [Warren's Artist Talk](#) about her embroidered quilt
- Browse pictures of Warren's work and...
  - Research and reflect on the Black icons portrayed.
  - How do you interpret Warren's embroidery and illustrated pictures?

[Monica Valentine:](#)

"I like to dress in red. Dress in green, dress in blue, dress in yellow, dress in purple, dress in white and black. Red is HOT. Yellow and orange feel warm. Green feels kinda freezing, blue feels very cold. I can tell by the feel of them with my hands. I lost my sight. I had my eyes removed. First the left one and then the right one. I can feel the colors when I lay out my clothes." (Valentine)

The highly dexterous, creative, and intuitive Monica Valentine creates captivating sculptures by densely covering foam shapes with beads and sequins. Having lost her sight in early childhood, Valentine developed a unique relationship with colors - sensing hues with her hands.

Diligently threading beads and sequins before using her sense of touch to feel where to position pieces, Valentine creates powerful designs that have captivated viewers from around the world. Since starting at Creative Growth in 2012, Valentine's work has been exhibited in the [Outsider Art Fair](#) in New York, Paris, and Tokyo, at the Creative Growth Gallery, and [Art Osaka](#) amongst many others. For a full list of exhibitions, projects, and press publications, please visit [Valentine's portfolio](#) on Creative Growth.

Learn more about Valentine's practice:

- Watch [Monica's Journey to Creative Growth](#)
- Explore Valentine's [Viewing Room](#) at *Creative Growth*
- Browse pictures of Valentine's practice and ask yourself:
  - What feelings do you associate with what colors?
  - What do Valentine's sculptures evoke in you?

### [Christine Szeto](#)

An aficionado of both pop culture and cross-stitching, Szeto creates colorful and complex quilts and clothing. Incorporating language, many of Szeto's designs appear in both English and Cantonese - either as a synthesis of the two or in direct translation. These linguistically diverse art pieces are a celebration of blended cultures. Expressing herself through both embroidered words and drawings, Szeto often intersperses patches of text with patches of stitched images to create truly unique quilts.

Recognized for her skill, Szeto's work is part of the permanent collection of Lincoln Nebraska's [International Quilt Study Center and Museum](#). Since joining Creative Growth in 2010, Szeto's work has also been exhibited in [The Creative Commons](#) and [ArtYard - Frenchtown](#), and [Capital City Arts Initiative](#). For a full list of exhibitions and press publications, please visit [Szeto's portfolio](#) on *Creative Growth*.

Learn more about Szetos practice:

- Watch Szeto introduce her [Taylor Swift-inspired jeans](#) at Creative Growth (minute 3:32)
- Browse pictures of Szeto's work and ask yourself:
  - Do any of the song lyrics evoke a particular feeling in you?
  - How does Szeto's bilingual approach shape how you interpret the art?
  - Is there a specific section of the quilts you are most drawn to? Why?
  - What pop culture figure would you include in a work of art?

### **Related Resources**

- Creative Growth and its artists are incredible, but don't take our word for it! Browse Creative Growth's Publication Packet to learn more about the organization and artists.
- Check out [Beyond Trend](#) - Creative Growth's Runway Program!
- Support the artists and staff of Creative Growth by...
  - [Donating, volunteering, or becoming a member](#)
  - [Purchasing Art](#)