

How Do You Rest?

"Rest Is Power" Exhibition
Center For Black Visual Culture at NYU

Ms. Stein's

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| <p>Title: <i>My Mother Named Me Beloved</i></p> <p>Artist: Kalila Ain</p> <p>Year: 2021</p> <p>Dimensions: 24 in x 36 in</p> |  <p>Catalog photo</p> |  <p>Ms. Stein's photo</p> |
| <p>Accompanying text: "My mother named me Kalila, Ain (meaning: beloved, apple of my eye) because my birth brought her abundance and a new capacity for love that was so all encompassing, she had previously thought it inconceivable. Namesake of Toni Morrison's 1987 novel, <i>My Mother Named Me Beloved</i> centers the deep, unwavering love between mother and daughter, water as a source of reconnection, and exhalation as a result of this union."</p> | | |

Description

Note: This was my first verbal description! It was challenging to write! There is a lot of room for improvement.

My Mother Named Me Beloved by Kalila Ain (2021) is a three-foot wide, two-foot high painting. The painting's background is blue and white. There are a lot of different shades of blue. The brush strokes and even the brush hairs are visible in many places. Some strokes come together to form peaks, giving the background the appearance of water over about $\frac{3}{8}$ of the canvas. A much darker blue item on top of the water appears to be a blanket or towel. Two figures, appearing like a woman and a girl, lie on the blanket with their eyes closed. The woman covers about $\frac{3}{8}$ of the canvas, and the girl $\frac{1}{8}$. The woman is visible from head to midthigh. The girl is visible from her head to part of her backside. They are lying close together, but it is unclear if they are touching. The woman is on her right side, and the girl is on her stomach. Their faces are towards the viewer.

From the viewer's perspective, the woman's body is curved, with her left thigh in the upper right corner and her right hand extended into the lower left corner. The figures have similar hair colors and golden brown skin. Based on the painting's title and the accompanying text, the child and woman may be the artist, Kalila Ain, and her mother. The woman appears to be wearing a blue one-piece swimsuit, and the girl a sparkly blue two-piece. The girl has goggles resting over her eyebrows. The blanket comes apart at the edges. At two points at its bottom, it drips down. It fades

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around its upper edge. The blue shadowing on the figures' left arms suggests their bodies are slightly in the water. The reflection of the woman's left hand is visible in the water.

Personal Connection

Growing up, my father and I went to the public swimming pool most days after my summer camp and his work day. I loved it. Even though I was in the pool at camp, this was much more fun. In the evenings, I did not have swim lessons. When I was little, my father and I would play together in the pool. When I got older, I would play with other kids, and he would swim laps. Then we would relax by the pool. We often had a snack. Sometimes, we napped like Kalila Ain and her mother. Sometimes, we read our books side-by-side. I love swimming. But, most of all, I loved spending that time with my dad. Those summer evenings are some of my favorite memories.

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Your Turn!

Spending a few minutes looking around to find an artwork you feel strongly connected to.

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|---|---|
| Title: Artist: | Year: Dimensions: Accompanying text? |
|---|---|

Description

- How would you describe it to someone over the phone (when you can't video call or send photos!)?
- Try to be objective and descriptive. *Example:* Instead of “a beautiful day,” say, “the sun is in a light blue sky with no visible clouds.”
- Try to avoid making significant assumptions. *Example:* I wrote that “[b]ased on the painting's title and the accompanying text, the child and woman may be the artist, Kalila Ain, and her mother” because it does not say that they are, but it seems like a reasonable guess.

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Personal Connection

Explain why you feel strongly connected to this artwork. Choose whatever format you prefer.

Examples: a poem, a song, a drawing, one or more paragraphs.

Assignment Details

Due: _____

For the exhibition catalog, go to cbvc.nyu.edu/about/about-the-black-rest-project and click the “View the Exhibition Catalog” button.

Type up your work.

- Times New Roman 12pt font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins.
- Remember to *italicize* the title of the work of art.
- Include the work’s photo from the exhibition catalog. You will probably need to take a screenshot of the image to include it.
- If the work has an artist “statement” in the catalog, include that in quotes.
- Aim to make your **description** at most two pages. There is no minimum length, but remember you must be thorough. The work’s photo and the artist’s “statement” do not count.
- Use correct [Standard American] English spelling and grammar.
- *Note on the personal connection part:*
 - Standard spelling and grammar are not required in your song or poem.
 - If yours is visual, such as a drawing or collage, include it separately.

Before turning in your work, you will **share both** parts in small groups in class on the due date.

- This informal presentation will not be graded.
- At the start of group time, you should have the photo of the exhibition artwork you chose on your computer ready to be shown to your group as you share your description.
- If your personal connection part is visual, you *must* have it ready to be shared.
- You can prerecord the reading and play it for your group instead of reading it out loud in real time. Prerecording is *optional*. If you decide to, you *must* have it ready at the start of the group time. Remember to test it *before* class!
- I will select the groups. Each group will have around six people.