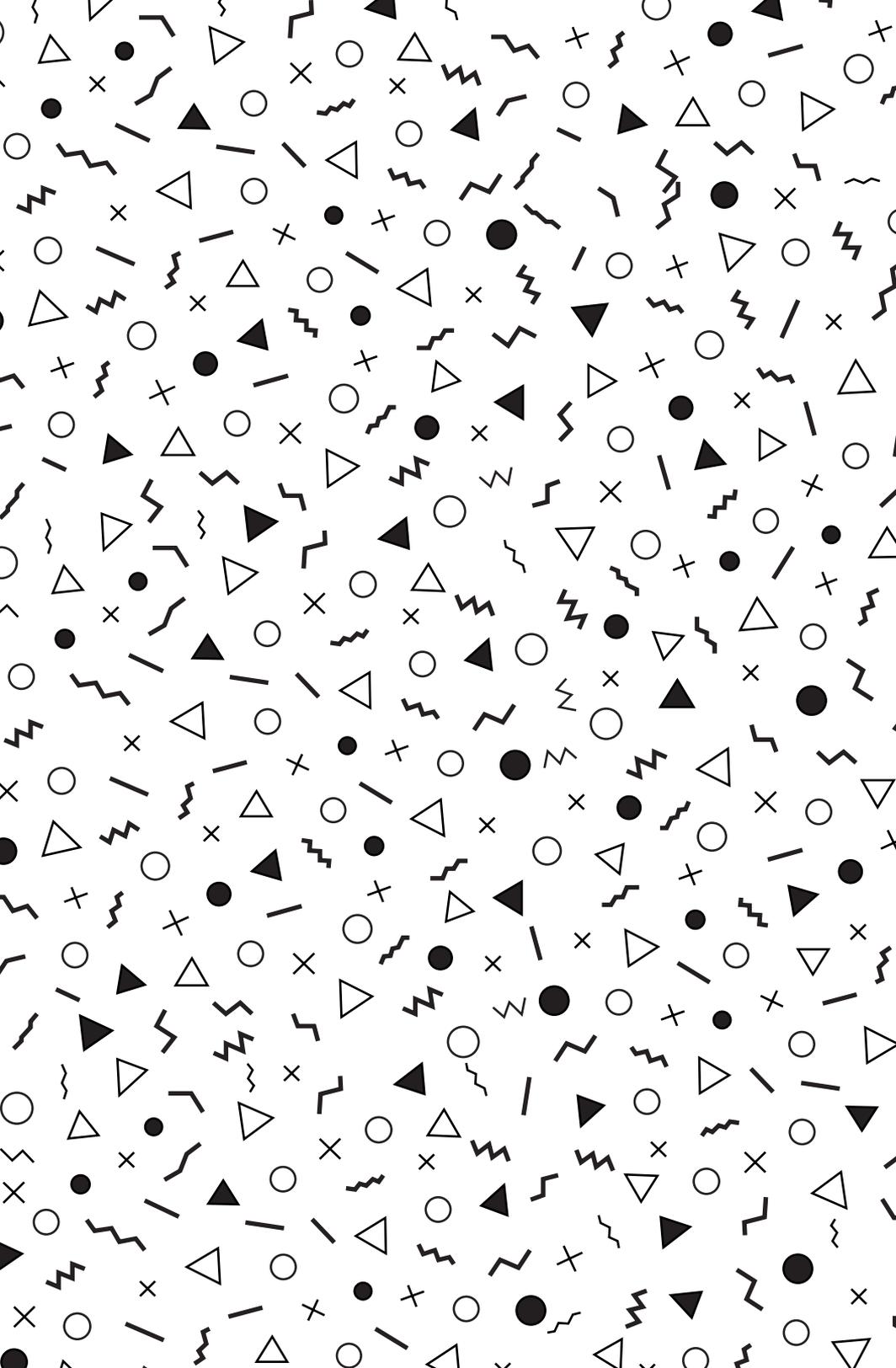


# To View a Plastic Flower

Family Guide



Los  
Angeles  
Municipal  
Art  
Gallery



*To View a Plastic Flower* features new video and multimedia **installations** that refer to the teachings of Buddhist monk and anti-war activist, Thích Nhất Hạnh. Thích's teachings include the idea of "inter-being," which suggests that nothing can exist alone, and everything has to "inter-be" with everything else. The figure of the "flower," from one of Thích's well-known sayings, suggests that by touching a flower one also touches the clouds and rain that were necessary to make the flower.

In the title of our exhibit, the curator chose to add the word "plastic." What are the differences between touching a live flower and a plastic flower? Where does a plastic flower come from? Is one of these flowers better for the environment? Why or why not?

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## ABIGAIL RAPHAEL COLLINS

Abigail Raphael Collins' experimental **documentary** and video installation, *Out of Play*, investigates the relationship between the movie industry and the U.S. military. She explores what happens when there is an absence of information in the official record, such as classified material or a lack of documentation.

In the first episode, Collins interviews her father, a Hollywood actor, and has him read a **redacted** government document. What happens when important details are left out of a story? How do we fill in the blanks?

## Try This!

Fill in the blanks below.

Every night before I go to bed I get ready for school by packing my \_\_\_\_\_ [adjective] \_\_\_\_\_ [noun]. I \_\_\_\_\_ [verb] my pencils and make sure I have enough \_\_\_\_\_ [plural noun] of \_\_\_\_\_ [noun] for the next day. Yesterday I couldn't find my \_\_\_\_\_ [color] \_\_\_\_\_ [noun]. I searched everywhere. I looked in the \_\_\_\_\_ [noun] and the \_\_\_\_\_ [noun]. Then I found my brother \_\_\_\_\_ [name] in his room. \_\_\_\_\_ [exclamation] I said, that's my \_\_\_\_\_ [noun]! No it's mine, he said. See it's \_\_\_\_\_ [adjective] and \_\_\_\_\_ [adjective] so it's mine. We started to \_\_\_\_\_ [verb] and then my mom came in and told us not to fight because there were enough \_\_\_\_\_ [plural noun] for both of us to share.

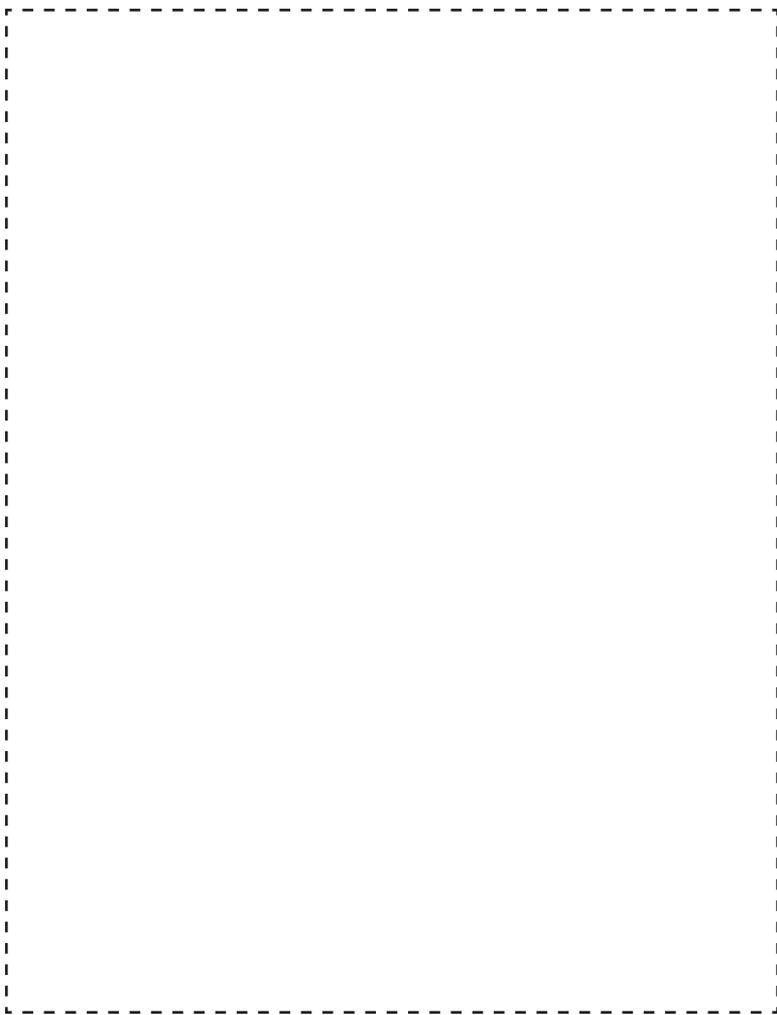
## SAMIRA YAMIN

Samira Yamin's work *Passing Obliquely From One Medium Into Another* combines war photography and carved optical glass to examine the media's portrayal of the Middle East. Pulling pages directly from *TIME* magazine, Yamin's work challenges the image of the Middle East as a site of ongoing conflict. The artist suggests that the images we see clearly are not straightforward at all. Her work complicates the images and stories presented by the media and asks us to spend time considering what may be happening behind the scenes.

**Visit our education gallery to make your own work inspired by the news reports of *TIME* magazine.**

### Try This!

Look closely at Samira Yamin's works. The artist has carved the glass using **dynamic symmetry**, a system of compositional rules for two-dimensional space. What patterns do you notice in the carved glass? Draw them below:

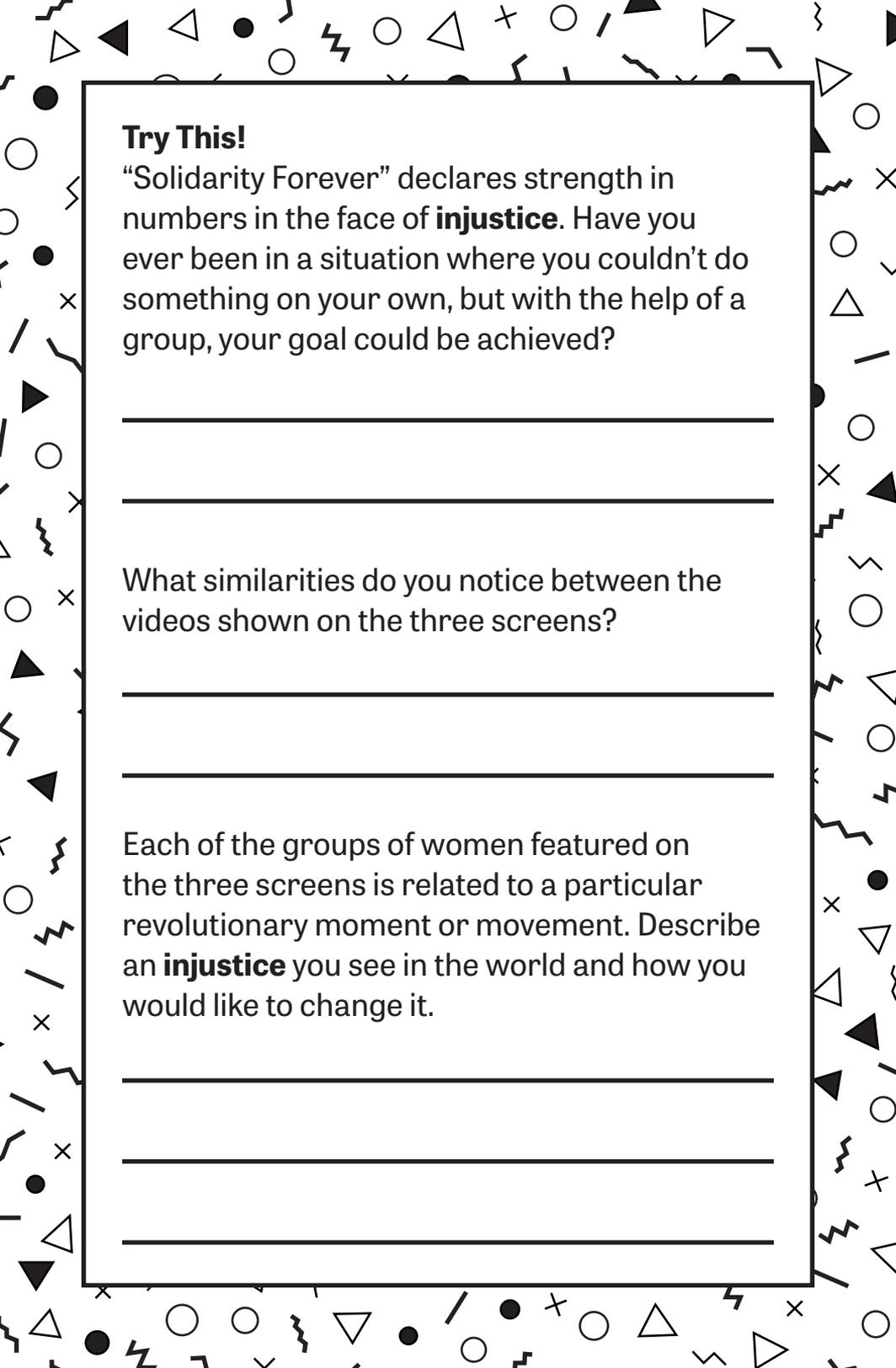


## T. KIM-TRANG TRAN

T. Kim-Trang Tran's three-channel video installation, *Movements: Battles and Solidarity*, connects events during the early 1970s in fashion, worker's rights, and the Vietnam War. Her work empowers the diverse women in each of these movements in an era when media coverage often ignored them. It also asks us to consider the long term impact of war in relation to the garment industry and the implications of **fast fashion**.

Throughout her installation, the popular **union** song "Solidarity Forever" plays in the background. The lyrics of the song state:

*When the union's inspiration  
Through the workers' blood shall run  
There can be no power greater  
Anywhere beneath the sun  
Yet what force on earth is weaker  
Than the feeble strength of one?  
But the union makes us strong*



**Try This!**

“Solidarity Forever” declares strength in numbers in the face of **injustice**. Have you ever been in a situation where you couldn’t do something on your own, but with the help of a group, your goal could be achieved?

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What similarities do you notice between the videos shown on the three screens?

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Each of the groups of women featured on the three screens is related to a particular revolutionary moment or movement. Describe an **injustice** you see in the world and how you would like to change it.

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# REFLECT

The artists in this exhibit explore the ways that difficult events are presented to us. Each of the artists shows us a new way of viewing and understanding these events while sharing their own ideas. Their work examines **media bias** and includes representations of conflict through movies, television, and the news.

## Try This!

Reflect on a time when you disagreed with another person. Imagine the story again, pretending to be the other person. How did the story change?

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Documentary Photography:** Photography that visually records reality or history. It includes a wide range of subject matter from significant historical events to everyday life.

**Dynamic Symmetry:** a grid that is geometrically designed to promote continuity, flow, rhythm and balance within artistic design.

**Fast Fashion:** inexpensive clothing that is mass produced quickly in response to the latest trends.

**Injustice:** Lack of fairness or justice.

**Installation:** The term installation art is used to describe large-scale, mixed-media, often designed for a specific place or for a temporary period of time.

**Media Bias:** Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair. In mass media, this occurs when journalists and news producers select which events and stories to report on and how they are covered.

**Redact:** to remove, censor, or obscure parts of a document that involve sensitive or classified information, prior to publication or release.

**Union:** an association of workers created for the purpose of securing improvements in pay, benefits and working conditions.

# To View a Plastic Flower

February 13 — April 19, 2020

Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery

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#PlasticFloweratLAMAG



[lamag.org](http://lamag.org)



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Cover Image: Abigail Raphael Collins, Still from *Out of Play: In the Frame*, 2019

