



# Ikon Activity Pack

## KS3

Ikon's activity packs are designed for creative learning at school or home. Inspired by Ikon's exhibition *Faster Than Ever* (4 December 2020 – 2 May 2021), the packs include links to artists' films you can watch online. Created by Birmingham artist [Farwa Moledina](#), they include questions for thinking and talking about art in relation to other subjects, including global cultures and environments. Share your creations with [learning@ikon-gallery.org](mailto:learning@ikon-gallery.org) or via social media #ikongallery.

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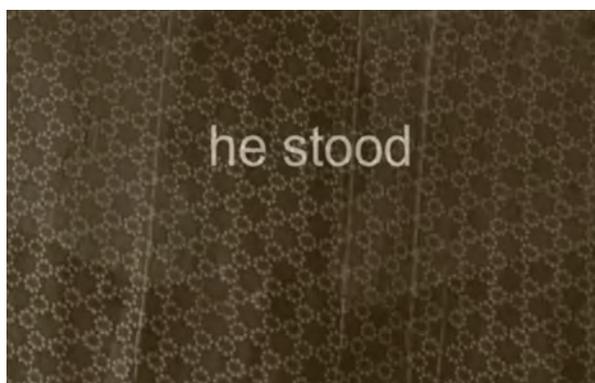
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# Grace Ndiritu - *The Nightingale* (2003)

## About the artist

British Kenyan artist Grace Ndiritu (b. 1982) is known for her hand-crafted videos. The beginning of *The Nightingale* (2003) is peaceful and serene, showing the artist slowly moving a cloth that covers her head and shoulders. The quiet African music suddenly changes as the artist becomes animated, with eyes wide open, focused on the viewer. Ndiritu twists, wraps and folds the fabric in a sequence of fast paced, simple movements. Each of these actions references another identity, the fabric performing the function of blindfold, hijab, headscarf, burka, veil, bandanna, purdah, gag and turban.



Grace Ndiritu, *The Nightingale* (2003). Stills from video.



## Key words and themes

Identity, textile, culture

## Method

Film, performance

## Materials

Textile, film, music

## Related Artists

Maud Sulter, Sonia Boyce, Peju Alatise, Zanele Muholi



Look at the images of Grace Ndiritu's work in this pack and watch the film [The Nightingale \(2003\)](#).

## Ideas for discussion

Ndiritu's *The Nightingale* (2003) is an example of performance art. What actions does the artist use e.g. wrapping a scarf, staring at the camera? What message do you think the artist is trying to communicate to the viewer? How does it make you feel?

The artist wraps the scarf in styles inspired by different cultures and religions. What are some of the types of headdress you recognise in the video e.g. hijab, turban?

The video features music by Senegalese singer Baaba Maal. How does the music make you feel? Do you think the artist's movements are responding to the rhythm of the music?

The video ends with a shot of birds flying, what do you think this means?



Grace Ndiritu, *The Nightingale* (2003).  
Installation view, Ikon Gallery 2020-21.

# Creative Activities

## 3D scarf prop

Grace Ndiritu bought the red and white scarf while she was travelling in India. She uses the scarf as a prop in her artwork. Using card, make a cut-out of your favourite scarf. This can be a winter scarf, a hijab, a turban, or any other type of scarf.

**You will need:** Card, a pencil, paint, paintbrush, glue, scissors

1. Draw an outline of yourself wearing a scarf.
2. Paint a design on your scarf.
3. Cut it out using scissors.



# Identity Portrait

Grace Ndiritu explores culture and identity in her work. She adds music and text to her videos to give the work deeper meaning. Draw a picture of yourself expressing your cultural identity.

**You will need:** Pencil, paper, colour pencils.

1. Draw an outline of your portrait.
2. Use the pencils to add colour.
3. Use glue to stick down your scarf props on your portrait. You can layer different scarves like a headscarf and a winter scarf.
4. Add your favourite quote to the artwork. This could be anything, a line from your favourite song, book, or a phrase that your parents use often.



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