



# @tribute

**Tribute** [trɪbyʊt] noun 1 an act, statement, or gift that is intended to show gratitude, respect, or admiration.

**Attribute** [ˈatrɪbyʊt] noun 1 a quality or feature regarded as a characteristic or inherent part of someone or something. - a material object recognized as symbolic of a person, especially a conventional object used in art to identify a mythical figure.

## @tribute: C4K's Identity & Empowerment Artist-in-Residency Project

C4K's mission is to empower underserved youth by bringing together technology and imagination through supportive mentoring, youth-driven programming, and skill building for life success. We provide a creative and safe out-of-school learning environment where local low-income middle and high school youth work with mentors and staff to build college and work readiness skills in science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math.

@tribute is the first artist-in-residency project launched by C4K. Research has shown that arts participation makes a significant difference to all youth, especially youth from low income backgrounds. Our project was inspired by C4K members' response to Kehinde Wiley portraits and was planned to engage them in the creation of self-portraits within a broader context of identity, empowerment, and artistic skill-building.

With project concept and design help from C4K board member Lisa Hogan, and support from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, New York city-based artists Matthew and Liz Kieberg were selected for their artistic excellence, experience in portraiture, and history of working with underserved youth. The artists traveled to Charlottesville in August 2016 to work in-residence at C4K helping members create panels that served as backdrops for their large-scale self-portraits. Charlottesville photographer Eze Amos joined the team to take portraits of C4K members in front of their personalized panels.

Members identified how visual language communicates personal meaning as they created 36"x48" self-portraits using digital photography and their own selected media. Guided by the artists, they examined and reflected on the social, political, economic and cultural factors that influence works of art and design. Throughout the camp, youth engaged in the steps of the design process and used a creative problem solving approach for their self-portraits. Using journals and portfolios, members brainstormed, sketched, planned, researched, reflected, and refined their ideas with support from artists and C4K staff.

Of central importance to the project were questions around identity and what it means to be both an individual and part of a society. Group discussions led to questions about how personal experiences influence critical interpretations and evaluations of art and how people create perceptions of themselves and of each other. Members explored current media and popular art to identify the symbols that best related to their own identities and how those symbols were portrayed and interpreted. They worked together to expand their communication to include new forms of symbolic language and to employ it in their art.

Expanding into arts programming allows C4K more opportunities to empower underserved youth to reach their full potential. @tribute: C4K's Identity & Empowerment project was a journey of artistic skill-building and self-exploration for C4K members. The portraits from that exploration are the product of this life-changing journey.



**First Friday's Opening Reception**  
September 2, 2016 · 5 - 7 PM  
Studio IX · 969 2nd Street SE