

Symbols and Stories

The exhibition *Evolution of the Spiritual* features depictions of the Madonna throughout time and across cultures. The Madonna had many different meanings to different people. Spiritual art often has important themes and meanings that are captured through the use of symbols and images in art. Artists use these symbols to tell stories and create meaning. Looking at the artworks below, what kinds of stories are being told?



Marsden Hartley (American, 1877-1943), *Blessing the Melon (The Indians Bring the Harvest to Christian Mary for her Blessing)*. c. 1918, Oil on paperboard.
Philadelphia Museum of Art: The Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949. (1949-18-13)



Audrey Flack (American, born 1931), *Lady Madonna*, 1972, lithograph, Allentown Art Museum: Gift of Samuel Mandel, 1986. (1986.39.19)

Spot the Symbols:

- Flowers ● Melons ● Candles ● Stars ● Halos
- Vases ● Gold ● Jewels ● Tears

Create an artwork inspired by a person that you admire and look up to. Use symbols and images that are important and tell a story about that person. Draw, paint, sketch and color. Try painting and coloring on tinfoil to imitate the gold leaf used in the artworks above.

Share your artwork on social media using #AAMatHome