

Landmarks Guide For Older Children



Howardena Pindell

American, born 1943

Autobiography: Circles

2026

Ceramic frit on architectural glass

Subject: Personal identity

Activity: Make a mobile

Materials: Cardstock, string, markers, and embroidery hoop

Vocabulary: Autobiography, identity

i Introduction

Howardena Pindell's *Autobiography: Circles* is a visual **autobiography**. That means that it tells the story of the artist's life through shapes, colors, and symbols. In this work, Pindell includes dots, numbers, and arrows. These forms have been used in her art for years and are connected to important memories. For example, Pindell's father was a mathematician who inspired her love for math and science, which is reflected in her use of numbers and arrows. Circles are also tied to memories from her childhood. Together, these elements create a colorful story about the artist's life and career.

? Questions

What shapes or symbols stand out to you?

How do they help us understand Howardena Pindell's **identity**?

What shapes would you include to tell your story?

Howardena Pindell, continued



Activity

- Cut out five circles using cardstock. Take 15 minutes to decorate your circles with everything that reminds you of YOU. Your favorite number, your favorite color, maybe where you're from. Fill the space as much as you can!
- Punch a hole at the top of your circles and loop and tie a string through the hole.
- Once you have all your pictures, decide the best way to display them on your embroidery hoop. Make some strings longer than others to create an interesting mobile.
- Tie the other end of the strings to the embroidery hoop.
- Hang your mobile up for everyone to see!



Vocabulary

Autobiography – The story of a person's life written or told by that person.

Identity – Who a person is.