Florida artist Selina Román lives and works in the Tampa Bay area. This photograph, Solar Flare II, is part of the Please Disturb series, which explores the colors, textures, and experience of local Florida hotel and motel rooms. Exploring place is often important to artists, who use their art to communicate the experience and the emotions of being in a particular space.

Think about your favorite place in the world. Write down the feelings or impressions you have when you remember that location. Why did you choose that specific location? What memories or experiences have you had in that place that make that location your favorite place in the world?

SELINA ROMAN

Selina Román works with her models to create a persona, or character, using props and pose. In many of her photographs, the face of the model is obscured, or hidden. “People tend to think about being anonymous as this terrible thing, but I think it can also be kind of powerful. I can see you, but you can’t see me—so you don’t know what I’m feeling or thinking,” Roman says, “I can see the oppressive qualities of anonymity, and I revel in the uneasiness. In a way, you’re able to shift the power to the person who’s hidden.” Can you think of a time when you felt powerful while being “hidden,” or hiding your true self? What are the benefits of hiding your identity? What are the consequences of hiding your identity?
Selena Román stages her photographs by working with the models to select props, outfits, and their pose. Collage gives us the opportunity to stage and manipulate an image in a similar way, using composition, or the arrangement of the image, to help convey a message.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Gather collage materials. Collage materials may include magazines, copies of family photos, scraps of fabric or ribbon, patterned paper, dried flowers, etc.

2. Take a blank sheet of drawing or copy paper, and colored pencils, markers, crayons, or other drawing materials. Draw a self-portrait on the paper. Consider the pose and location of your portrait. How will your pose communicate your identity or personality?

3. Near the face of your portrait write a word or phrase that is meaningful to you, but you want to keep private. You will cover this idea later with collage materials.

4. On the same sheet of paper as your portrait, assemble collage materials to fill the background and partially obscure your portrait, including the word you wrote. Choose collage materials that symbolize aspects of your identity, and consider the composition, or how you are placing the collage materials to create a cohesive image.

5. After completing the collage, consider what you chose to hide and what you chose to reveal. How do those decisions imbue, or give, your portrait a hidden power?