

Reflection: *I was,* *I am, I will be*



I was, I am, I will be by Chanel Miller, shown here in front of her installation. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, 2020. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

Introduction

“Healing happens when we are able to incorporate the full spectrum of our experiences and integrate our collective selves. Instead of keeping parts of us in the dark, we deserve to live wholly and authentically.” — Chanel Miller

The inaugural work in the Asian Art Museum’s Wilbur Foundation Gallery introduces artist Chanel Miller, author of “Know My Name: A Memoir,” who represents healing as a process with three distinct yet interchangeable parts: reflecting on the past, being mindful in the present, and envisioning the future. In this tripartite wall mural, playful line-drawn figures illustrate the phrases “I was,” “I am,” and “I will be,” encouraging us to think of life as an endless state of becoming.

While the mural is a representation of Miller’s life experience, she also invites us to answer the unfinished sentences and to reflect

on our own life trajectory. How would you answer Miller’s “I was, I am, I will be” prompt? Would your answers look like Miller’s, or would they look different?

[Watch this video](#) of Miller discussing the inspirations for *I was, I am, I will be*. Learn more about [Miller’s work and art on Instagram](#).

DURATION

15–20 minutes

ART WORK

I was, I am, I will be, 2020, by Chanel Miller (American, b. 1992). Process color print on vinyl. *Commissioned by the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, courtesy of the artist.* © Chanel Miller. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



MATERIALS

Reflection: I was, I am, I will be worksheet or a piece of paper
Pencil, color markers, or crayons
Printer (optional)

PROCEDURE

- 1 Print out the Reflection: I was, I am, I will be worksheet, or draw three boxes and label them with the phrases “I was,” “I am,” and “I will be.”
- 2 Reflect on all the changes we’ve been through over the past year, and then fill in the boxes to describe your experiences. You can use words, drawings, or emojis, or a combination.

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Reflect on all the changes we've been through over the past year, and then fill in the boxes to describe your experiences. You can use words, drawings, or emojis, or a combination.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin teal border, intended for the user to write or draw their reflection on the past year.

I was...

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin teal border, intended for the user to write or draw their reflection on their current state.

I am...

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin teal border, intended for the user to write or draw their reflection on their future aspirations.

I will be...