

# Unconventional Quilts

And all that Jazz

# Harriet Powers (1837-1910)

**Harriet Powers** was an American [folk artist](#), and [quilt](#) maker. She was born into slavery in rural [Georgia](#). She used traditional [appliqué](#) techniques to record local legends, [Bible](#) stories, and [astronomical](#) events on her quilts. Only two of her quilts are known to have survived: *Bible Quilt 1886* and *Pictorial Quilt 1898*. Her quilts are considered among the finest examples of nineteenth-century Southern quilting.<sup>[2]</sup> Her work is on display at the [National Museum of American History](#) in [Washington, DC](#), and the [Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Massachusetts](#).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uP3RP1W1rPA>

[https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah\\_556462](https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_556462)











# Gee's Bend Quilts

The women of Gee's Bend—a small, remote, Black community in Alabama—have created hundreds of quilt masterpieces dating from the early twentieth century to the present. Resembling an inland island, Gee's Bend is surrounded on three sides by the Alabama River. The some seven hundred or so inhabitants of this small, rural community are mostly descendants of slaves, and for generations they worked the fields belonging to the local Pettway plantation. Quiltmakers there have produced countless patchwork masterpieces beginning as far back as the mid-nineteenth century, with the oldest existing examples dating from the 1920s. Enlivened by a visual imagination that extends the expressive boundaries of the quilt genre, these astounding creations constitute a crucial chapter in the history of American art.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUO7GGoH5hc&t=484s>

<https://www.soulsgrowndeeep.org/gees-bend-quiltmakers>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ppajoOX29o>

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUO7GGoH5hc>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLWeW\\_L3aFE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLWeW_L3aFE)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1enOj9wbPMU>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GurMFb66DA>
- <https://www.pbs.org/video/quilts-episode-yhkwcj/>(long)





Arthur Kettler

































GEE'S BEND QUILT **39** USA

2006



GEE'S BEND QUILT **39** USA

2006



# Yvonne Wells (1939-

**Yvonne Wells** is an African-American folk artist and quilter from [Tuscaloosa, Alabama](#). She is best known for her self-taught style and her story quilts depicting scenes from the Bible and the [Civil Rights Movement](#). Her work has been exhibited at the Smithsonian [National Museum of African American History & Culture](#) and at the [International Quilt Museum](#).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1SrfrSq2MA>

<https://www.internationalquiltmuseum.org/exhibition/yvonne-wells-quilted-messages>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zisvfOMtQbl>





**TUSCALOOSA**  
ESTABLISHED  
1910

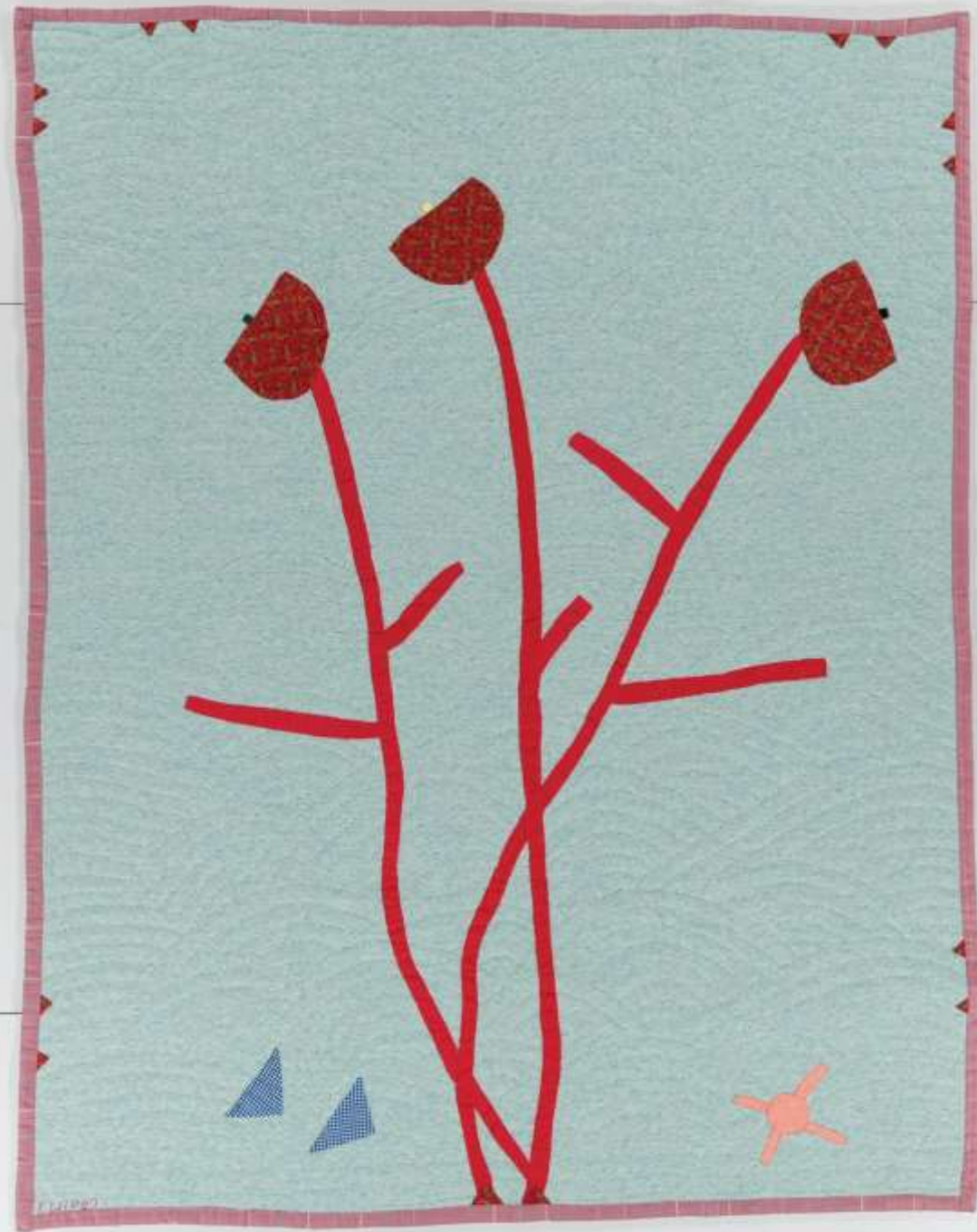
ESTABLISHED  
1919

**BAMA**







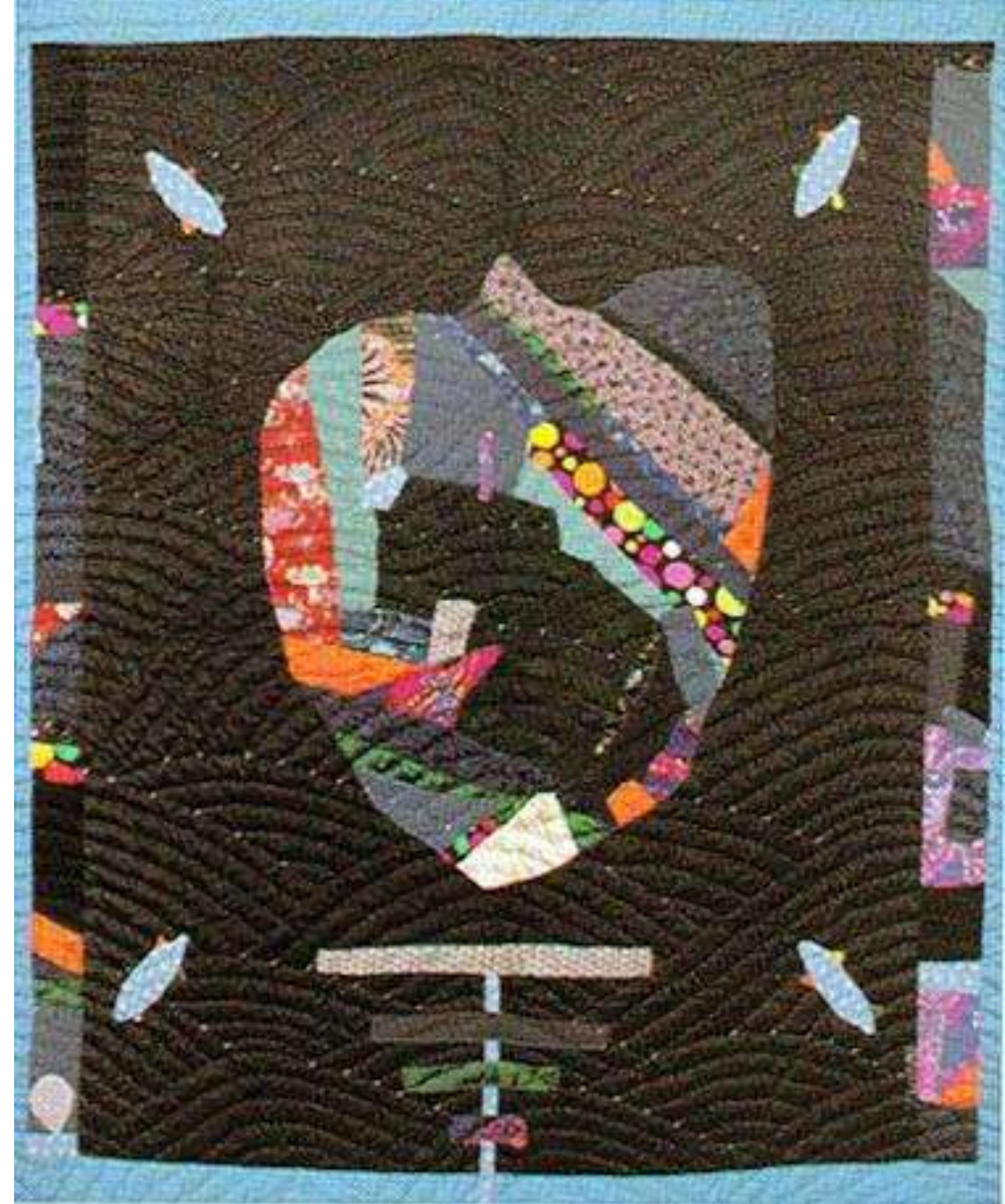












# Faith Ringgold (1930-

Faith Ringgold is an [American](#) painter, writer, [mixed media sculptor](#) and performance artist, best known for her narrative [quilts](#). While working as an art teacher in public schools, Faith Ringgold began a series of paintings called *American People*, which portrayed the civil rights movement from a female perspective. In the 1970s, she created African-style masks, painted political posters and actively sought the racial integration of the New York art world. During the 1980s, she began a series of quilts that are among her best-known works, and she later embarked on a successful career as a children's book author and illustrator.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RscpfkvVaP4&feature=emb\\_rel\\_end](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RscpfkvVaP4&feature=emb_rel_end)

<https://www.faithringgold.com/>



3/1/20

No Sunflower Quilting Be at Lutes

Judith Kuylenstierna



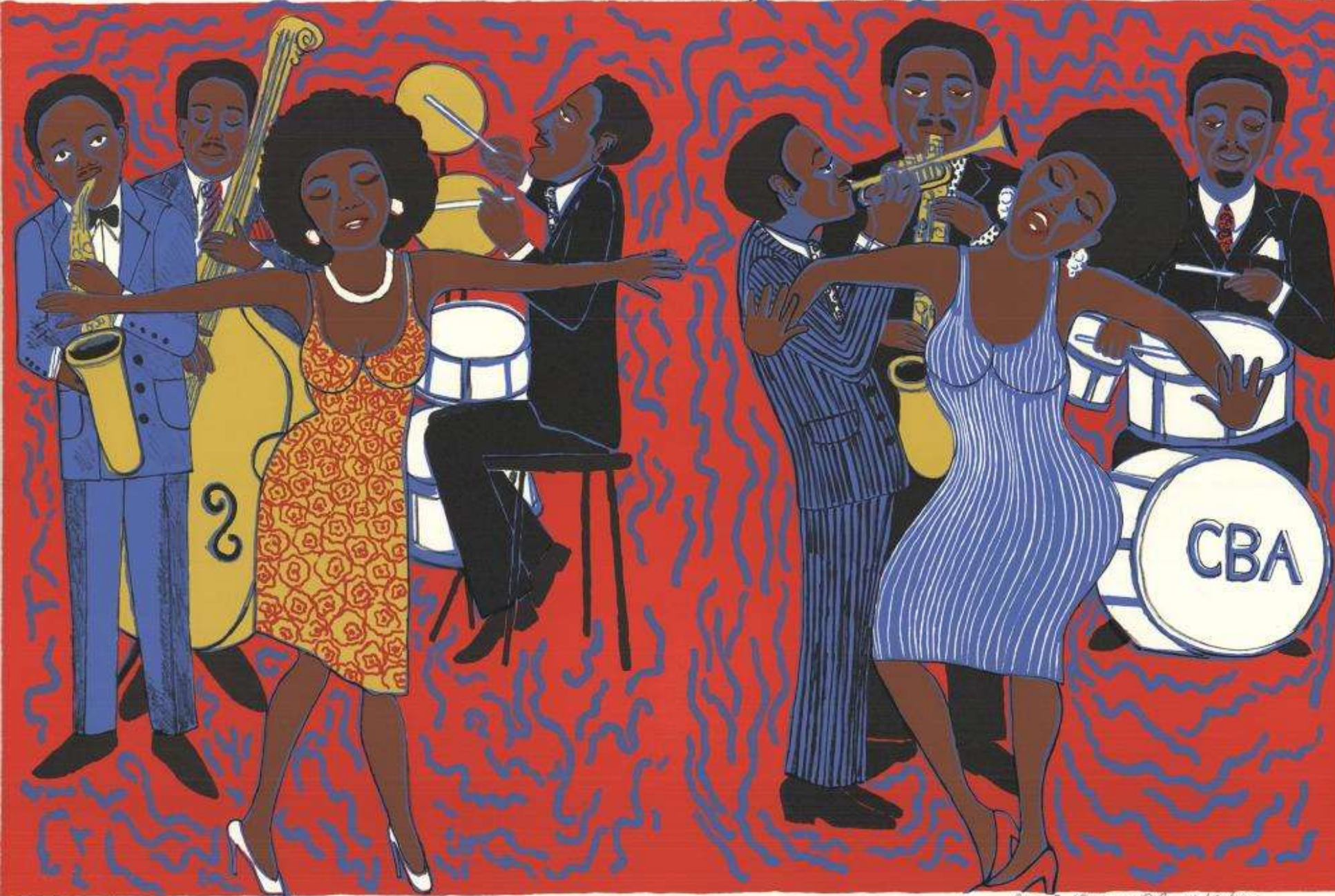








Somebody stole my broken heart. Washed my tears down the drain. Sun shining through the rain. Chased the blues straight out the



door. Don't hear me crying no more. Never used to see me smile. Now I'm laughing all the while. Somebody stole my broken heart.

Faith Ringgold 12/6/04

1. One day the ancestors of children from all over the world came to them in their dreams, singing songs of joy, love and understanding, forgiveness, hope and peace. They had heard that our children had forgotten how to play and had taken to their beds to escape a world full of hunger, pain, violence and war.

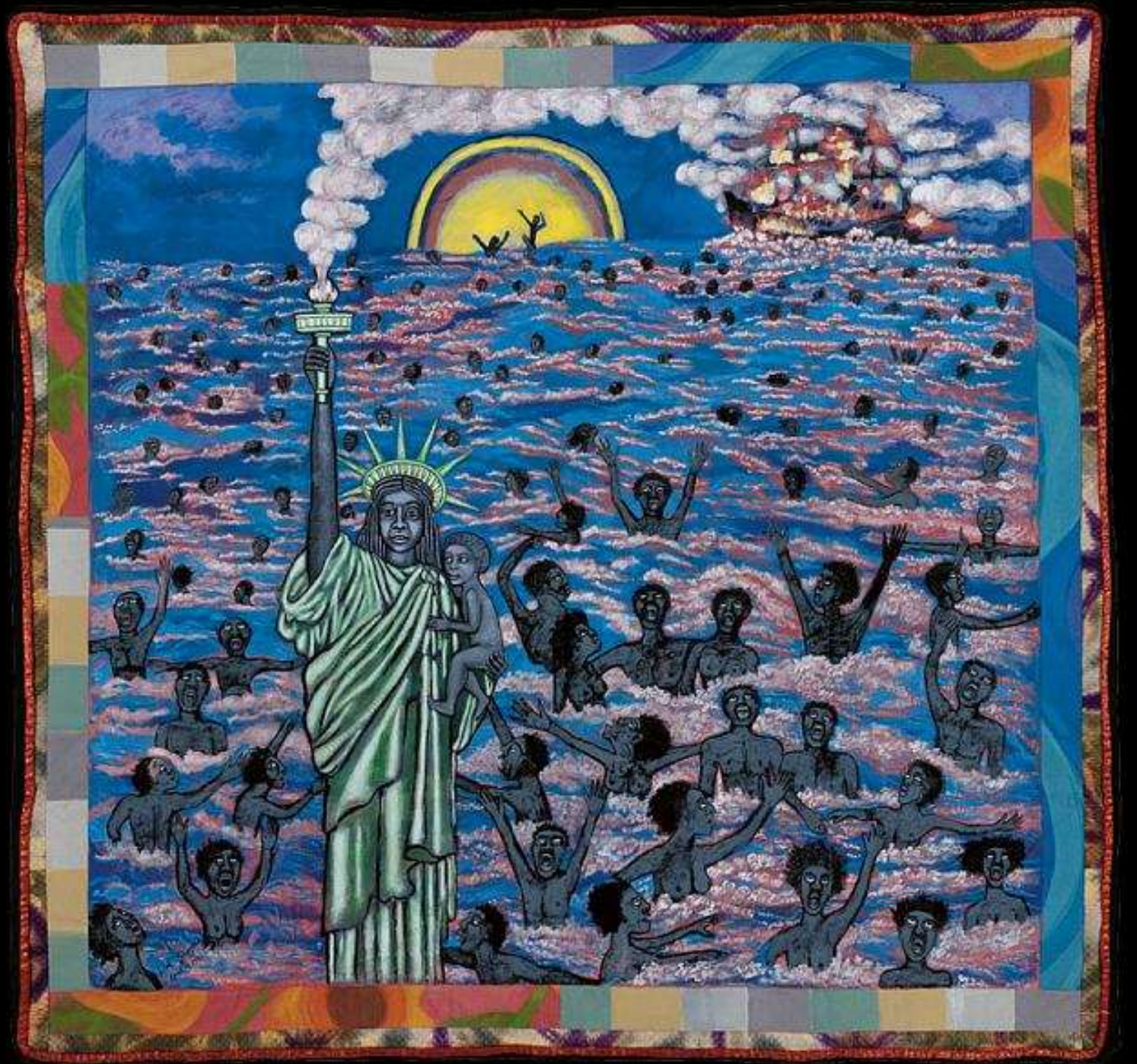


2. We listened, curious, ethnic, sexual and gender hatreds of others who are different from them with respect, will over the world.

4. Now when the children from all over the world close their eyes to dream their ancestors want dreams of a happy life.

The children all over the world were inspired to rise up from their beds to join their ancestors in their song and dance for a better world. The children sang, "We are young but we are many filled with love not hate, poverty is no work for a world of peace. A beautiful peaceful world no war for any."









# Marion Coleman

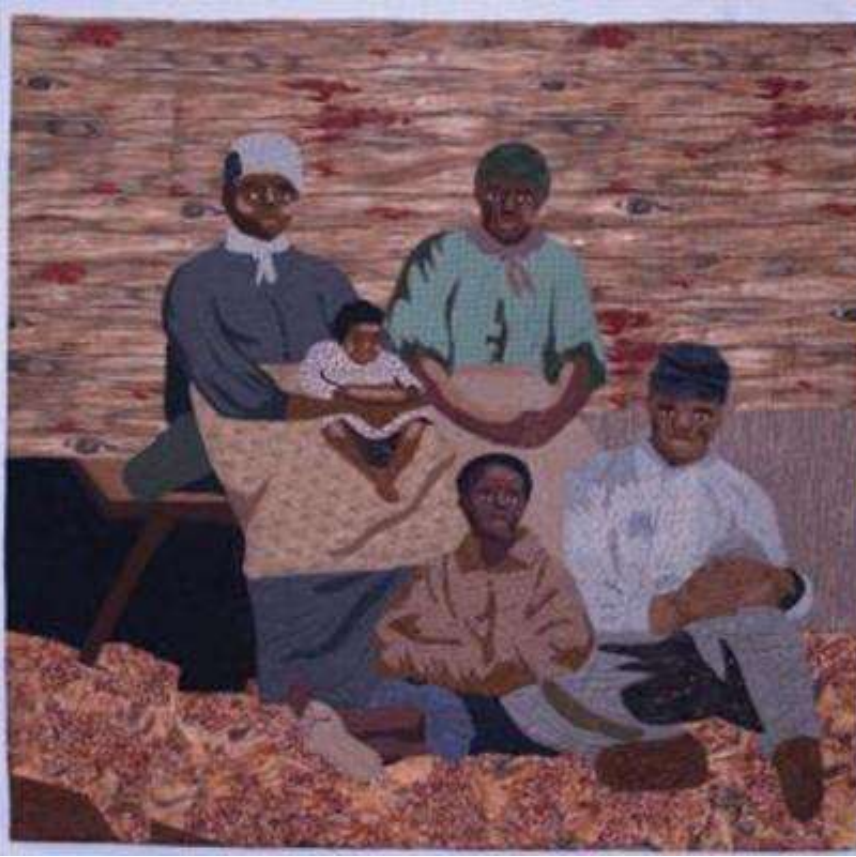
Memory, family stories, cultural change, and a world filled with color serve as inspiration for San Francisco Bay Area quilter **Marion Coleman**. For over thirty years, Marion worked in youth and family services and now she combines this experience with her art to create work that explores memory, social change, and community. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Marion was awarded the National Endowment for the Arts' [National Heritage Fellowship](#), the nation's highest honor for folk and traditional artists, in 2018 for her contributions to the art of quilting.

Marion learned to quilt by emulating the quilts of her great aunts Corine Miller and Mary Porter and the narrative quilts of Nora Ezell. Growing up in Texas, she learned to sew from her grandmother, Carie Porter, who taught her to make clothes. Marion began to quilt in the 1980's, and her work has since been exhibited in the United States and internationally. She has completed public art commissions and received artist residencies throughout the Bay Area and beyond. She has served on the board of the [African American Quilt Guild of Oakland](#), the African Advisory Council of the Oakland Museum, and the board of the Textile Arts Council of the deYoung Museum. She is about helping others learn about quilting and is an active teacher.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0T63u3iytM>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uz66Lv0vOoc>

















© Marion Coleman

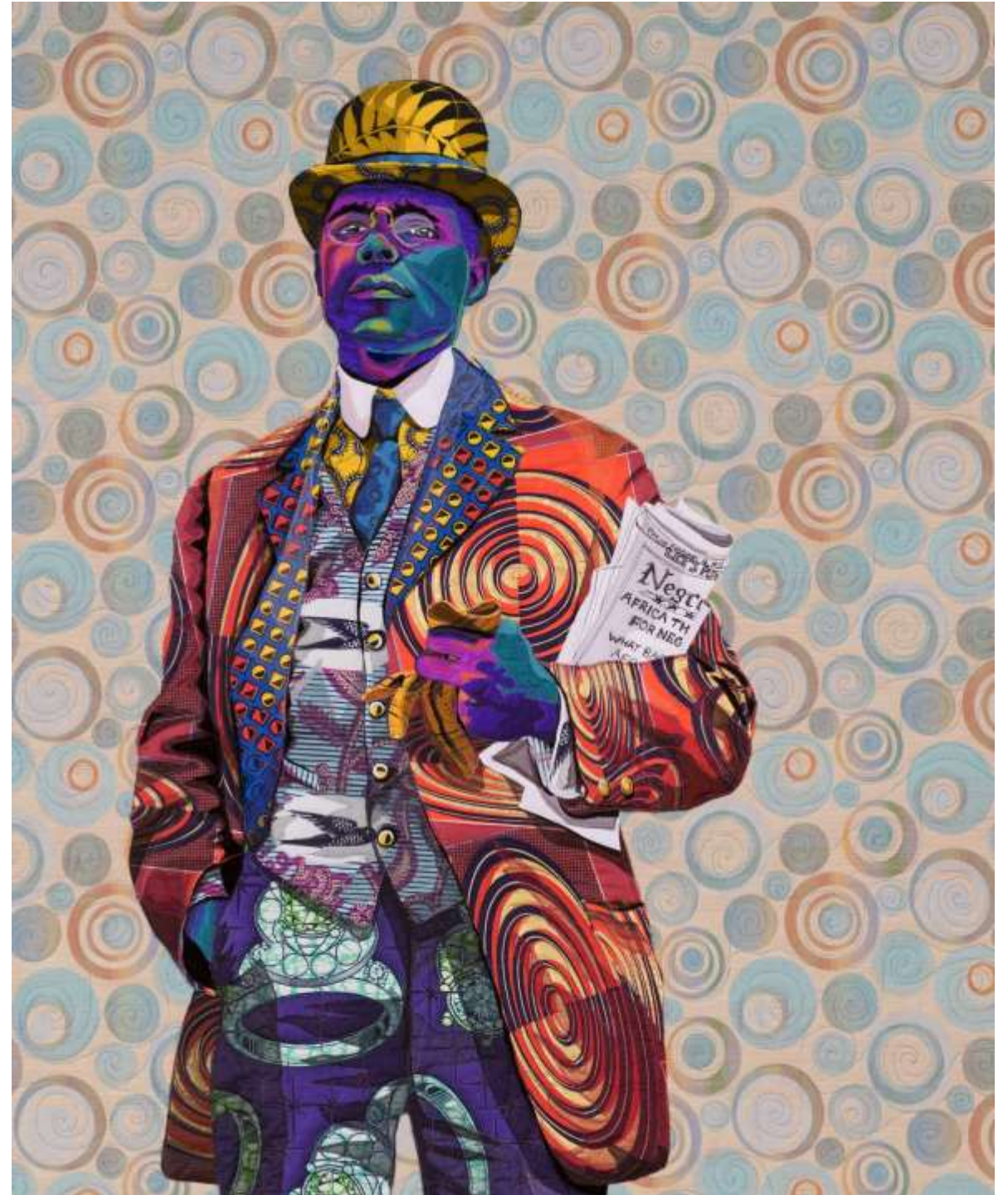


# Bisa Butler (1973-

Bisa Butler is an American fiber artist known for her quilted portraits and designs celebrating black life. She has exhibited at the Smithsonian Museum of American History, the Epcot Center, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, and other venues

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INo8jwfCpIY>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3\\_61nh3xo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3_61nh3xo)

















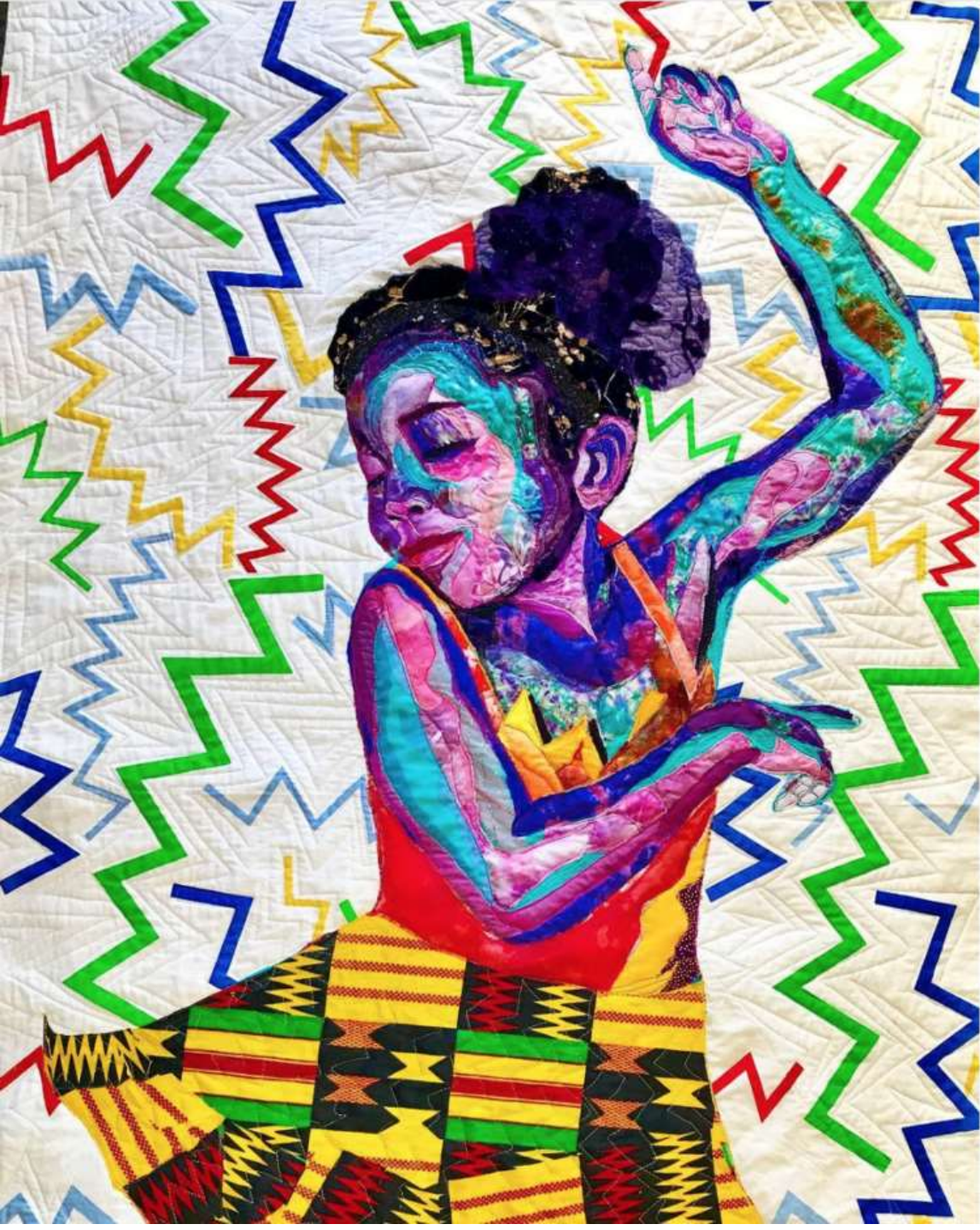




Schedule











# Assignment Suggestions

- Take traditional quilt elements and riff on them incorporating them into an original artwork. (Use any media)
- Create a story quilt with frames using any media (i.e., this can be a painting, collage or photo montage)
- Tell a story in pictures (and words)
- Create an artwork using Kool-Aid colors