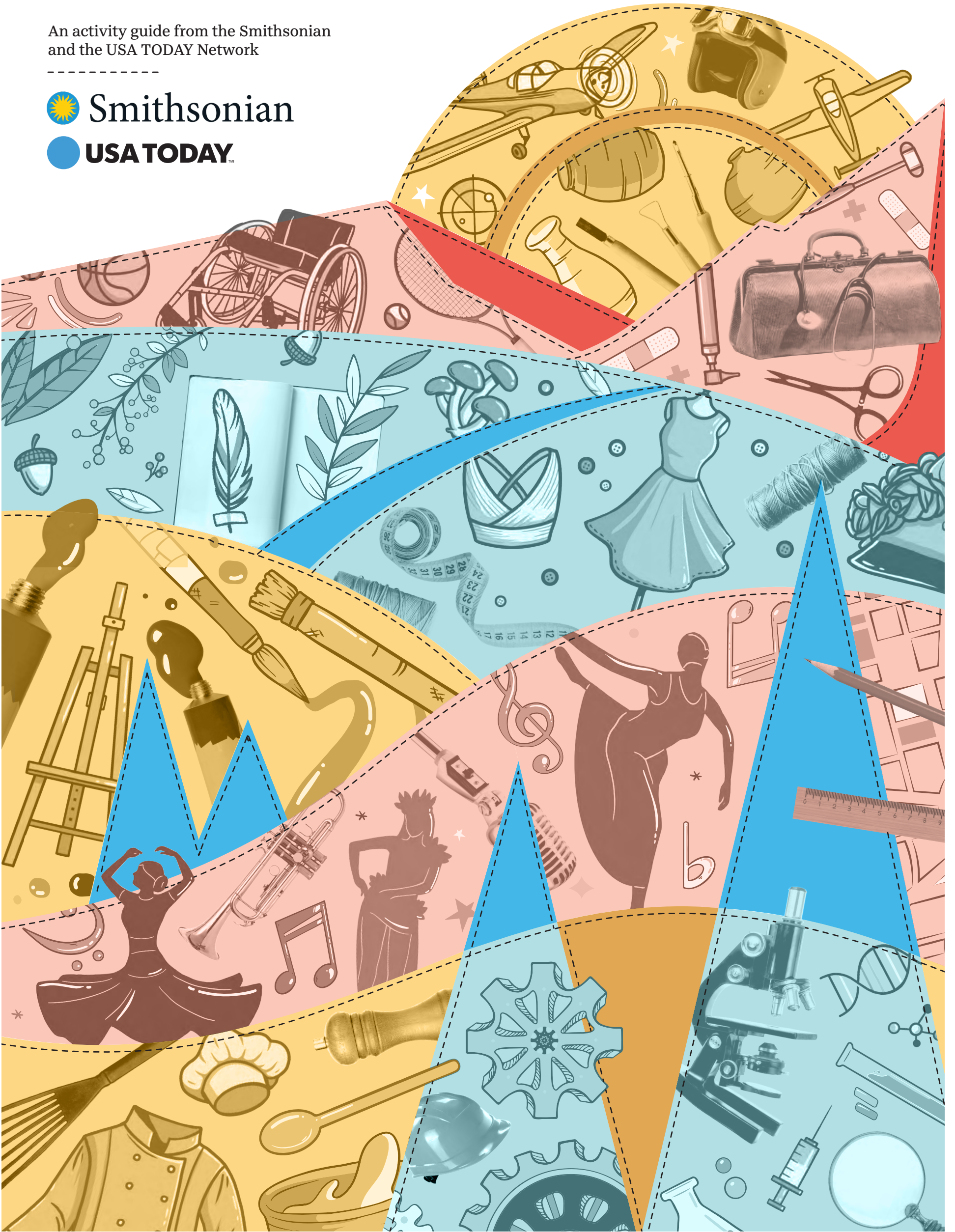
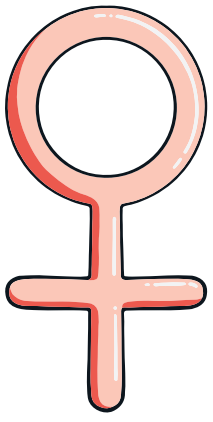


WE BUILT THIS: How Women Innovators Shaped The World



An activity guide from the Smithsonian
and the USA TODAY Network





Judith Jamison in "Cry" - 1996/1977 photo © Jack Mitchell

"Cry" Judith Jamison/NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

Historically, American women have played an important role in innovation. Innovation, the process of developing and implementing new things, is central to our culture and society. Art, design, technology, medicine, education, law, and communication - these fields rely on creative thinkers (innovators) to develop and improve some of the most important objects, ideas, and experiences in our lives. American women's innovative contributions will continue through the 21st century and beyond, improving and enriching lives around the globe.



Lonnie G. Bunch III
Secretary of the Smithsonian

Women's stories are woven into the American tapestry, integral to the character and history of the nation. For too long, the contributions of women—the prominent and the obscure, the pioneers and the innovators, the artists and the activists—have been overlooked. The Smithsonian is changing that narrative. Since 2018, the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative has done so by researching, disseminating, and amplifying the histories of American women. This collaboration with USA TODAY can help create a more equitable representation of America by bringing some of those stories to a wider audience. This guide for learners of all ages draws upon the Smithsonian's robust content, collections, and programming from our museums, libraries, educational units, and research centers. Its activities are organized into four categories: **Leading Lights, Amplifiers, Divergent Minds, and Inspiring the Future.**

I am confident this collection will surprise, challenge, and inspire you. It exemplifies the American Women's History Initiative. It also provides a glimpse of the kinds of stories you will discover when one of our newest museums comes to the nation's capital, the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum.

A dream decades in the making, Congress enacted legislation in 2020 to realize that dream, a museum that will recognize women's accomplishments, the history they made, and the communities they represent. Although building it will take several years, it will become a virtual presence long before then. The intellectual and educational framework created by the American Women's History Initiative will underpin the museum's direction. I hope this collection will excite you for what is to come when the American Women's History Museum becomes a reality.

Congratulations to the educators who worked on this activity guide, as inspirational as it is educational. It beautifully illustrates the indelible impact women have made on our country. I encourage you to learn more about the women contained within and the countless others who have been instrumental to our nation.

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Smithsonian

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What is the Creative Process?

This “map” highlights each of the stages of the creative process. These stages are meant to guide the creator from start to finish. While the map appears to be one-directional, creators know that you must often move between stages--forward, backward, sometimes even skipping ahead. Explore these women creators and their innovations as you consider the decisions made at each stage of the process.

Preparation

Getting started - Brainstorm, gather materials, initial research, jot down ideas



Incubation

Let it grow - Step back and create space for your idea to develop



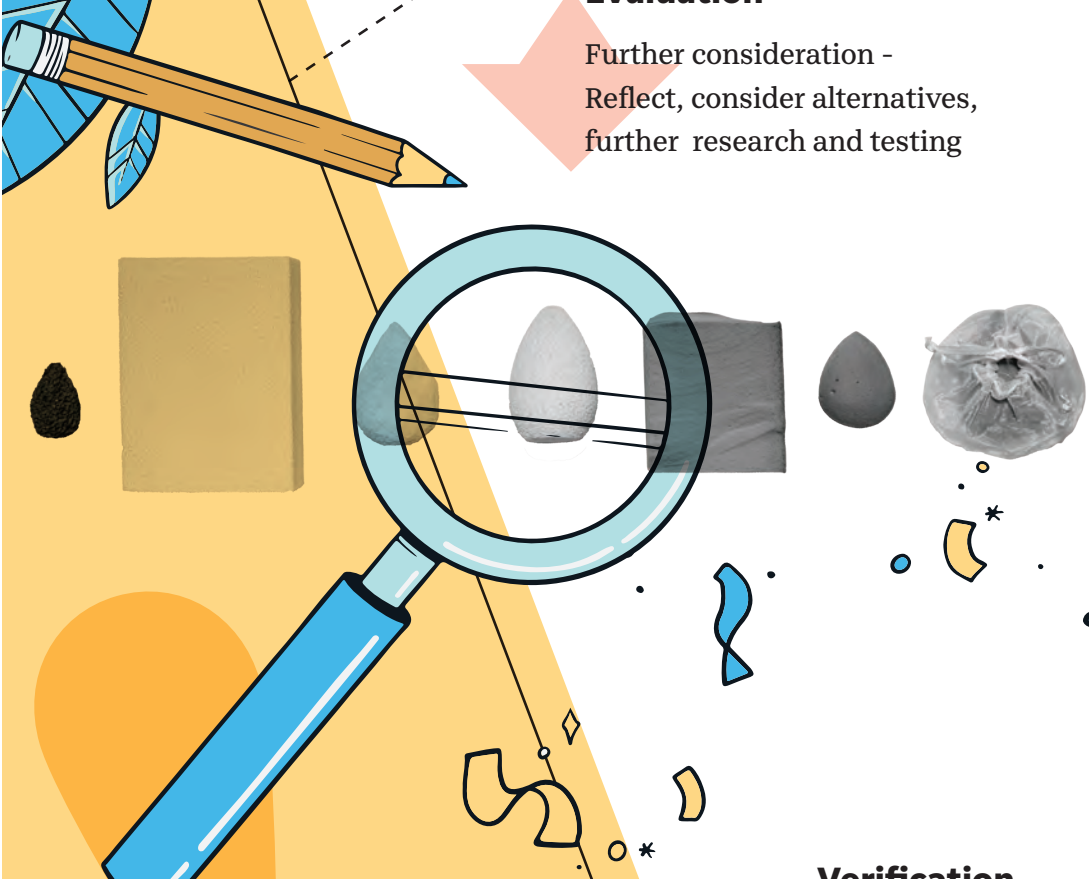
Illumination

Eureka! - That lightbulb moment where insight is gained



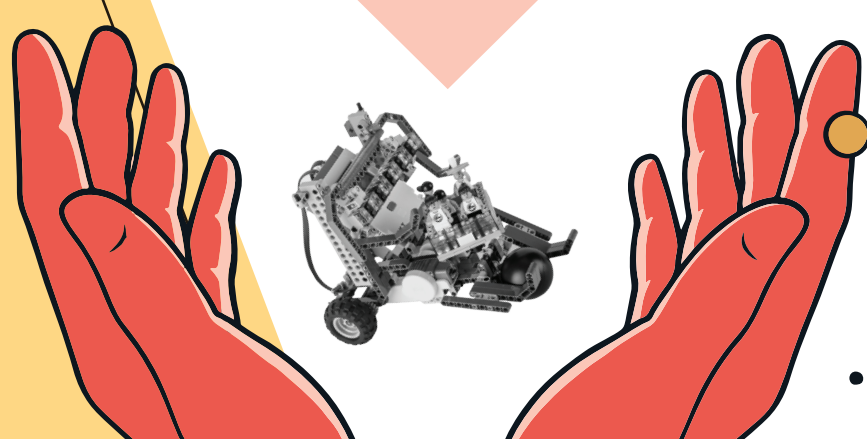
Evaluation

Further consideration - Reflect, consider alternatives, further research and testing



Verification

Final development - Your idea, plan, or vision comes to life



Leading Lights



Tey Marianna Nunn
Director,
Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative



Women make history in different ways. Creating new pathways and lighting the way for others to follow is one way to make and shape history and communities. Can you imagine being the first woman to work in a job or profession that had always been for a man? Think of the challenges! One has to have a lot of moxie and gumption (two retro words), and courage to create your own place in history. Dr. Eloise Gerry's research on lumber affected the study of pine trees in the first half of the 20th century. Teenager Daisy Bates was one of many women leading the charge for civil rights in the 1950s. Whether through running a newspaper and advocating for the integration of students in schools or supporting creative and culinary culture by activating a restaurant to be a much-needed community center, these women shaped the future! Aviator Alverna Williams did just that, stating "I have no legs, but I do have wings."

All the extraordinary women in this section made history by being courageous and challenging the status quo of their time. They all lead fundamental change so that others can follow. Enjoy these stories, don't forget to dream and think to yourself, "How can I make history?"



Portrait of Dr. Susan La Flesche Picotte
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Pioneering Indigenous Doctor & Reformer

Born on the Omaha reservation in Nebraska, **Dr. Susan La Flesche Picotte** was the first Native American woman to earn a medical degree. She excelled as a student and spoke English, her native tongue, French, and Ojibwe. La Flesche Picotte overcame sexism and prejudice to achieve her dreams and wanted the same for her people, saying "We who are educated have to be pioneers of Indian civilization... We are only beginning; so do not try to put us down, but help us to climb higher. Give us a chance." Returning as a physician to the reservation of her childhood, she treated the sick, led temperance campaigns, and eventually raised enough funds to build the first modern hospital in Thurston County, Nebraska.

Celebrated Puerto Rican Poet



44c Literary Arts Single
NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM

Penning over 200 poems, **Julia de Burgos** tackled themes of love, feminism, equality, and social justice in her writing. The poem "El Río Grande de Loíza" celebrated the river of her childhood in Puerto Rico. Her groundbreaking works were an extension of the activism and advocacy that defined her life. Julia de Burgos often brought to light the struggles of the oppressed - women, minorities, the poor, and dispossessed - while advocating for personal and political freedom. Her writing paved the way for many contemporary writers. This stamp, issued in 2010 by the U.S. Postal Service, was the 26th issued in the Literary Arts series.

Daisy Bates & The Little Rock Nine

This black-and-white photograph depicts seven of the Little Rock Nine, from left to right, **Melba Patillo, Carlotta Walls, Jefferson Thomas, Elizabeth Eckford, Thelma Mothershed, Terrence Roberts** and **Gloria Ray**, meeting at the home of **Daisy Bates**, local NAACP leader and Civil Rights activist. The seven are discussing the Little Rock integration crisis.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

Advocate for Disability Rights



Kitty Cone's 504 SF Unchanged D.C. T-Shirt
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

There was no governmental legislation ensuring equal rights for Americans with disabilities in the late 1970s. **Kitty Cone** and her fellow disability rights activists helped change that with a sit-in and occupation of a federal building in San Francisco for more than 25 days. They demanded the government protect their rights by enforcing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which said no program receiving federal funds could discriminate against people with disabilities. Kitty Cone made this hand-drawn T-shirt of a person in a wheelchair and the words "504 Unchanged, SF, DC" while inside. The 504 occupation galvanized people and created a strong sense of purpose and pride. Thanks to national attention given the protests, on April 28, 1977 the government finally released the regulations granting equal access for individuals with disabilities.



Scan the QR code for a video on Kitty Cone's motivation to protest for disability rights.



Eloise Gerry (1885-1970)
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION ARCHIVES

Trailblazer in Wood Technology

The U.S. Forest Service had no interest in hiring a woman. However, **Eloise Gerry** was the only research scientist both qualified for and willing to do the work. Bringing her on to the agency proved to be the right decision. Though her supervisors opposed it, Gerry set out to conduct her research in the Mississippi pinelands - traveling by foot, horseback, and Model T. She was considered one of the foremost investigators in wood technology in America and one of few female scientists specializing in research on lumbering, wood utilization, and the turpentine process. Her work rescued the struggling turpentine industry, while increasing output and extending the working life of resin-yielding trees. Gerry's studies were also significant to the paper, pulp, and preservative industries and she is regarded as the Forest Service's first female scientist.

Self Portrait of a Modern Artist

Anne Goldthwaite, known for her work as a painter and etcher, was born during Reconstruction era in Montgomery, Alabama. Goldthwaite's work and association with painters like Matisse and Picasso helped to introduce modern art to the United States. She established herself principally as a recorder of the South's past and many of her paintings include scenes of rural African Americans. An advocate, she fought for equal rights in the South and women's rights. Goldthwaite painted this self-portrait in oil on fiberboard-mounted wood.



Anne Goldthwaite, Self-Portrait
SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

LA's Top Chefs

These small dishes were used to hold spices at **Mary Sue Milliken and Susan Feniger's City Café** in Los Angeles, California. Like the brightly hued chef's coats donned by Milliken and Feniger, the dishware at City Café signaled the lively and appealing environment cultivated by the chefs at their first restaurant. City Café opened in 1981 on Melrose Avenue and held 39 seats. Though the duo outgrew the original space and moved on to other endeavors in the mid-1980s, they continue to honor their first eatery with CITY Night celebrations featuring City Café-inspired menus. Milliken and Feniger donated these items along with several others to the National Museum of American History after receiving the Julia Child Award in 2018.

Leah Chase

A red double-breasted chef jacket worn by Chef **Leah Chase**. Yellow embroidery on the right reads [Leah Chase] in script. Her restaurant, "Dooky Chase's," became a gathering spot for civil rights activists in the 1960s.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

Visionary of the Arts & Crafts Movement

Like many women in the late 19th century **Alice Cordelia Morse** established a career in the arts by designing book covers, illustrations, and stained glass. This title-page design, while never published, appears to have been intended for *What Women Can Earn: Occupations of Women and Their Compensation* (1899), a collection of essays on the various professions available to women in America. The design demonstrates the increasing sense of power and independence that women like Morse were experiencing as more career opportunities opened up for them.



Design for Title Page, (*Occupations of Women and Their Compensation*) COOPER HEWITT, SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM

Ethnobotanical Researcher

Gladys Tantaquidgeon (right) brought an Indigenous worldview to her ethnobotanical research among the Delaware, Nanticoke, Cayuga, and Wampanoag tribes of the East Coast. Born to Mohegan parents, Tantaquidgeon trained in Indigenous practices with Mohegan knowledge keepers Emma Baker, Mercy Mathews, and Fidelia Fielding. She published significant works on tribal knowledge and on the use of local natural resources to create traditional herbal medicines. She also worked with Nanticoke leaders to successfully lobby at the Delaware State Capitol for a school where Native American children could receive a modern education and learn traditional values. Gladys is seen in this photograph with a young Nanticoke woman (Jane or Janie Harmon or Harman) in Millsboro, Delaware.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

This mounted plant specimen is an example of the types of vegetation Gladys Tantaquidgeon collected for use as traditional herbal medicines. The running brier (*Rubus hispidus*) was collected at Martha's Vineyard island in Massachusetts. Notes for the specimen state, "Leaves and stems steeped and used as drink in case of fever, followed by a physic."

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN



Paving the Way for Labor Laws

In the 1910s–1920s, radium was all the rage. A glowing radium watch was a must-have item. In factories, young women painted face dials with radioactive material. Unaware that the paint was harmful, they would place the brush tip on their lips to achieve a fine point. After suffering from radium poisoning, several young women sued their employers and brought national attention to the safety of workers. These young women helped create new laws to protect all workers. Shown here is a New Haven Motor brand pocket watch with black faceplate and radium painted numbers and clock hands.



Radium Painted Watch NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Taking Flight

Alverna Williams poses on the wing of her Ercoupe 415CD, circa 1977. Williams was the first American pilot with disabilities to earn a pilot's license.



NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM

Start a Nature Journal

A nature journal can be used to document the plants and animals you encounter in the world. Your journal can take any form - a notepad and pencil, even the note app on your phone. Use this template to start your nature journal.

Take time to observe nature in your neighborhood. What do you see? Note the plant or animal you observe, the date, and time. Jot down a few notes. What colors do you see? If it's a plant, are there flowers? If it's an animal, what does it eat? Finally, sketch your observations!

Amplifiers



Jennifer A. Schneider
Program Manager,
Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative

Think of your favorite song. How does it make you feel? Excited or calm? Does it make you feel like dancing? Or does it make you want to sing or play a guitar?

Women and girls have been moved to express themselves through music and dance since the earliest days of humankind. Whether singing as they worked to composing pieces for orchestras and from dancing at gatherings to choreographing dances for the stage, women have been movers and shakers in the world of dance and music.

In these pages, you'll learn about Ella Sheppard Moore, one of the founders of the Fisk Jubilee Singers who used her voice to preserve songs sung on plantations and uplift African Americans in the eyes of the world. You'll also learn about Isadora Duncan, an unconventional dancer, who taught dance and toured Europe and America. A child prodigy on piano, Mary Lou Williams would work closely with jazz greats Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman, and dancer and director Alvin Ailey was inspired to choreograph a ballet to Mary Lou's *Mass*. Judith Jamison, a member of the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, performed in the 1971 premiere of *Mary Lou's Mass* and went on to become the artistic director of the company in 1989.

We hope you're inspired by these stories to choreograph a dance or compose a new song! Turn on some music and create something unique.



Mary Lou Williams' Record: "Lullaby Of the Leaves; St. Louis Blues"
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

First Lady of the Piano

Teaching herself to play the piano at the age of 3, **Mary Lou Williams** would go on to be an important contributor to American popular music as a pianist, arranger, and composer. Williams touched every jazz era, from boogie woogie to bebop. She collaborated with all of the jazz age greats, including Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Art Blakey, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonious Monk. This shellac record contains recordings from 1944 by Mary Lou and Her Chosen Five. The track "Lullaby of the Leaves" is on side one of the record, and "St. Louis Blues" on side two. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings has reissued many of Mary Lou Williams' recordings.

The Mother of the Blues

Born **Gertrude Melissa Nix Pridgett**, "Ma" Rainey, joined the black vaudeville troupes touring the South at age 14. Shortly after she married William "Pa" Rainey, she began to tour with the "Rabbit Foot Minstrels" and incorporated plaintive tunes she had first overheard a young Missouri woman sing. Among her most memorable songs are "See See Rider," "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom," and "Bo Weavil Blues." "Ma" Rainey and several other jazz and blues legends were honored with 29-cent stamps in the Legends of American Music Stamp Series issued in 1994 at the Delta Blues Festival.



29c "Ma" Rainey single
NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM



NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

In 1871, a student singing group was formed to fundraise for Fisk University. Soon to be called the **Fisk Jubilee Singers**, the a capella group was composed mostly of formerly enslaved people. At first met with skepticism, it was not long before their tours gained in popularity and raised substantial amounts of money. The Fisk Jubilee Singers appeared at the White House before President Ulysses S. Grant and toured Great Britain, where they performed for Queen Victoria. Ella Sheppard, a descendant of President Andrew Jackson, was born into slavery in 1851. Considered the matriarch of the original Fisk Jubilee Singers, Sheppard (fourth from the left) was a soprano and pianist. She was a talented musician and helped to compose and arrange the group's repertoire of spirituals and acted as mentor for the group.

Sometimes You Win, Sometimes You Lose

Carole King, the creative and talented singer, songwriter, and musician, defined a generation. Regarded by many for her significant contributions to pop music, she continues to influence artists today. Her achievements include writing or co-writing 188 hits on the Billboard Hot 100, recording 25 solo albums, winning four Grammy Awards, and being inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame (1987) and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (1990, 2021).



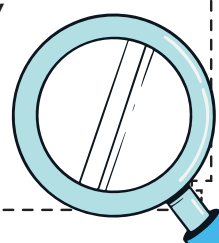
Carole King's Record, "Sweet Seasons; Pocket Money"
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

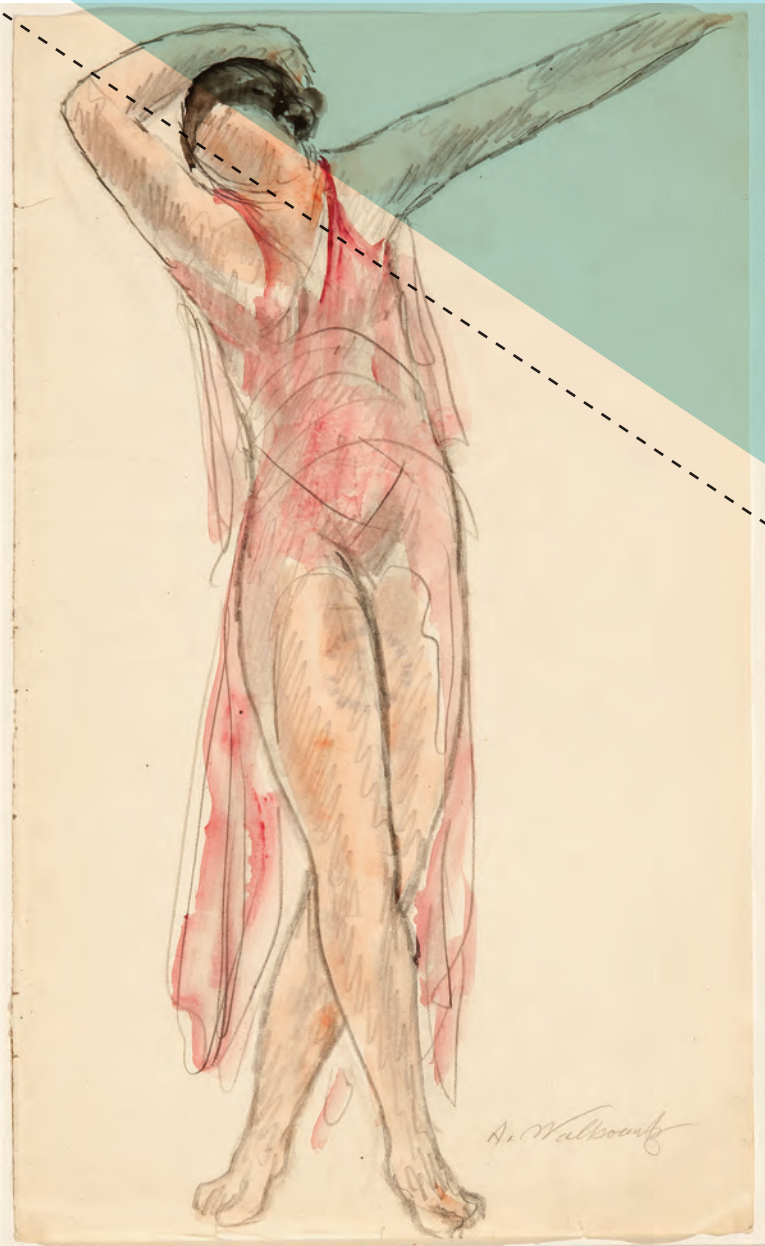
WORD SEARCH

Search, up, down, forward, backward, and on the diagonal to find the following hidden words.
Solutions on page 11.

T O Z Q G H T X Q Y J E D T C
O R I N N O V A T I O N E C H
C T A G W J O I Y P Z O S H O
S X U N K V V S I Z P Y I E R
B K S R S I U A R A Z E G F E
O I T W T F N W U K H A N U O
N Q P A F I O J C V B A J Z G
E Q E R S Y D R Z C G T M B R
P R A T O C C H M Y U S M O A
C G H U M A N I T A R I A N P
E T S I N R E D O M T V G O H
S W E E T G R A S S S I A W E
T N I R P N E E R C S T O R R
E K I W K P Q K L R M C E N T
R O T C O D B E E J W A F M P

- INNOVATION
- JAZZ
- TRANSFORMATION
- CHEF
- DESIGN
- CHOREOGRAPHER
- HUMANITARIAN
- POET
- MODERNIST
- SWEETGRASS
- SCREENPRINT
- DOCTOR
- ACTIVIST
- STEM
- OMAHA
- PENOBSCOT
- CREATIVITY
- SUFFRAGE
- PIANIST





HIRSHHORN MUSEUM AND SCULPTURE GARDEN

The Light of Tomorrow

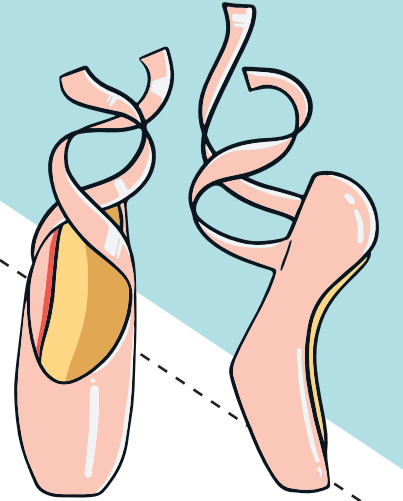
This watercolor of dancer **Isadora Duncan** captures her passion. Duncan's objective, she explained, was to harmonize "the natural language of the soul" with "the movement of the body." Extolled as "the Light of Tomorrow" and "a torch that lights the path of progress," she said of her work, "I see America dancing."



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

"Cry": Judith Jamison

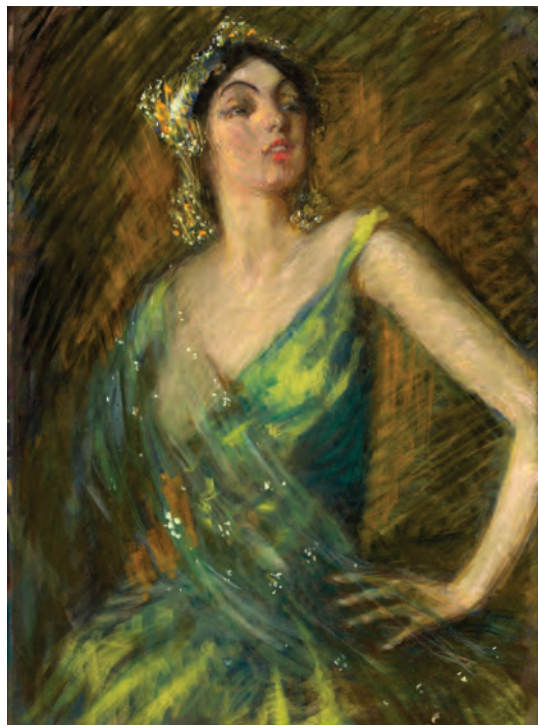
Dancer **Judith Jamison** mid-dance, with right leg and arm stretched down and head tilted upwards. Choreographer Alvin Ailey recruited Jamison to the Alvin Ailey Dance company in 1965 and served as the principal dancer in until 1980. She was later appointed the artistic director of his company.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

Pioneer of American Modern Dance

Born in Newark, New Jersey in 1879, **Ruth St. Denis** began to study movement and dance at a young age. After seeing an ad portraying an Egyptian goddess, St. Denis became fascinated with Egyptian dance and culture and later dances of India. While she did have critics in her time, many were captivated by her innovative incorporation of Eastern-influenced movements and costumes. She co-founded the American Denishawn School with her husband Ted Shawn in 1915, training such young dancers as Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, and Martha Graham. Researchers and historians today have considered whether her work perpetuated the stereotyped ideals of Orientalism and exemplified cultural appropriation. This portrait of Ruth St. Denis, seen in brilliant green costume, was painted by American artist Alice Pike Barney in 1910.



SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM

Creator of the Dunham Technique

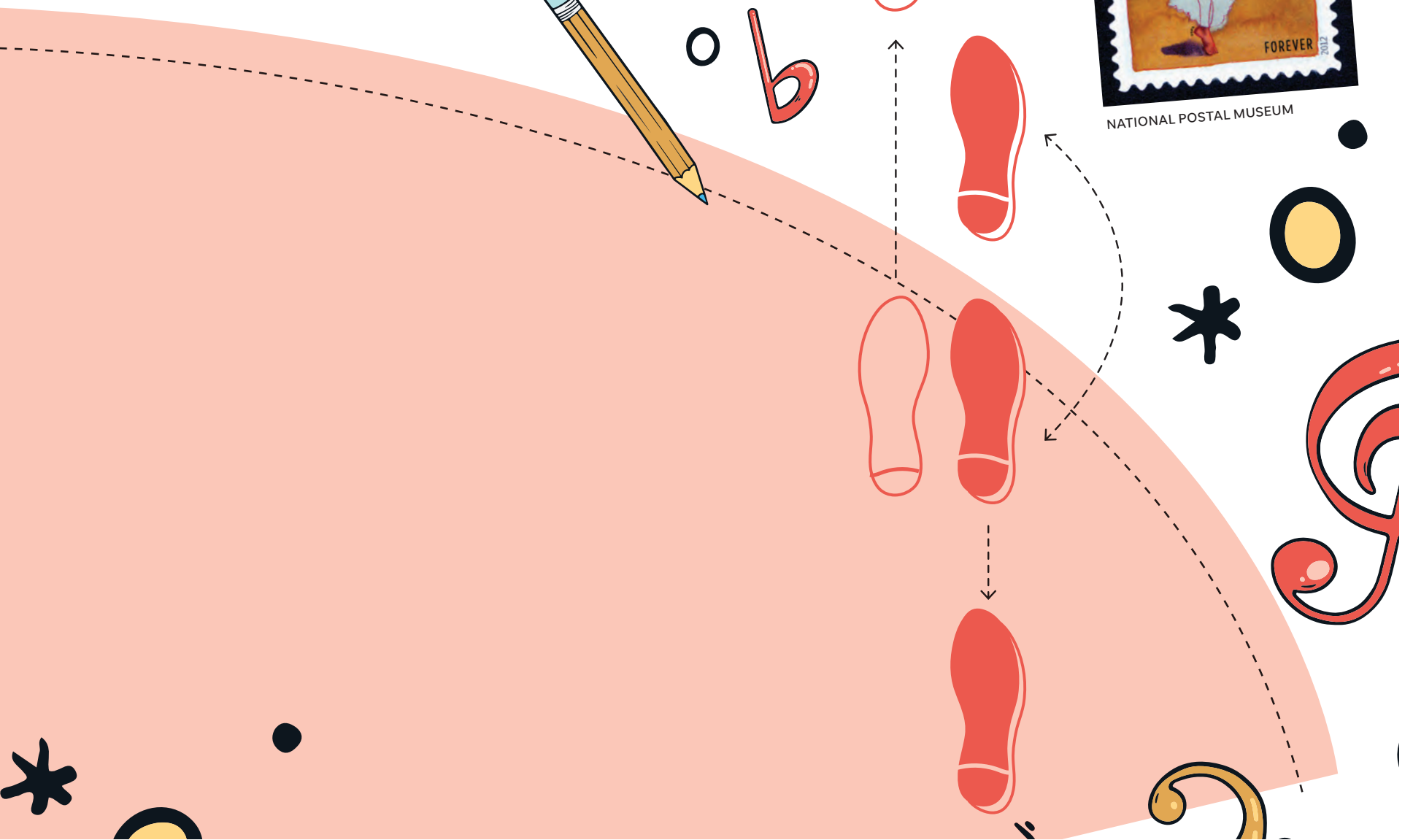
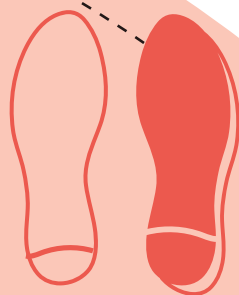
A true revolutionary, **Katherine Dunham** was one of the founders of the anthropological dance movement. She distilled Caribbean and African dance elements into modern American choreography. A pioneering educator, dancer, and choreographer, Dunham created more than ninety dances. She once wrote, "I am only interested in dance as an education, a means of knowing people." This forever stamp was released on July 28, 2012, as part of the U.S. Postal Service's National Dance day tribute to innovative choreographers.



NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM

Get Up and Move!

Back in the day, choreographers regularly used dance step diagrams to plan and teach new dances. While these diagrams are still used today, it is more common to use social media to spread new dances. Create your own dance and share it using the #BecauseOfHerStory hashtag.

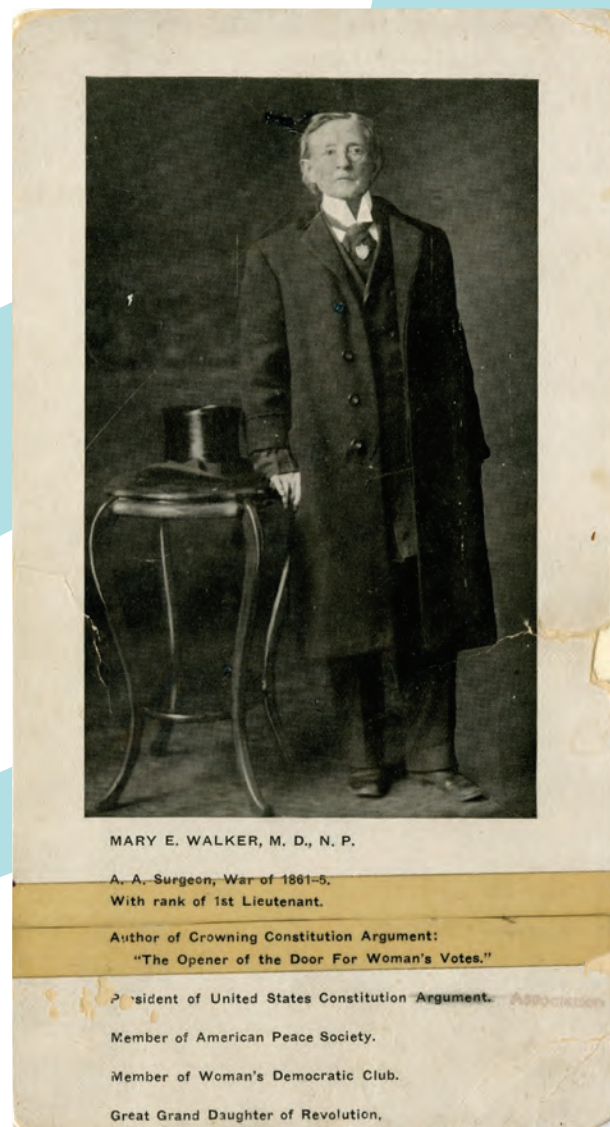


Divergent Minds



Chanelle Pickens
Education Assistant,
Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative

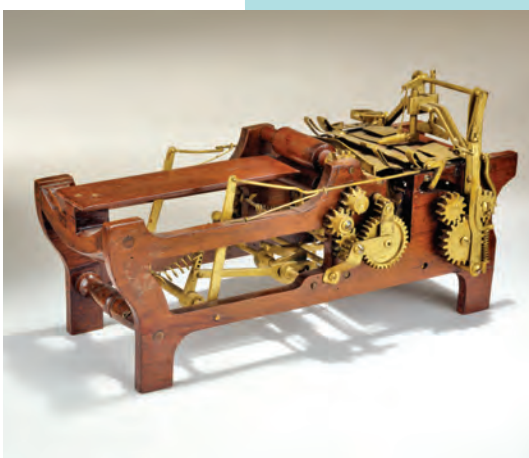
There isn't always one solution to a problem, or one path to a destination. Innovation often requires one to step back and consider alternatives. Two examples of women in science and medicine who took creative approaches to solve real-world problems are Dr. Ruby Hirose and Dr. Patricia Bath. Though she was looking for a vaccine for diphtheria, an infection caused by bacteria, biochemist and bacteriologist Ruby Hirose found a solution for something else. Through her research, Dr. Hirose developed improved treatments for allergy sufferers. Ophthalmologist Dr. Patricia Bath had already established herself as a pioneering academic, researcher, and humanitarian before her contributions to laser cataract surgery. While the use of lasers to perform precision eye surgery was not new, Dr. Bath improved on existing designs and patented her own device – contributing to restored vision for people worldwide. With time, materials, and support these creative women branched out to transform their fields and industries and, as a result, change the world. They are proof that without deviation innovation is limited. Read about more creative minds on the following pages and ask yourself if you can take a unique approach to develop a new and innovative idea, object, or solution!



Advance Publicity Card. (Mary E. Walker, M.D., N.P.)
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Improving on Earlier Designs

Margaret Knight's first patented invention, inspired by her work at a Massachusetts paper company, was a machine for improving paper-feeding. It was given patent number 109224 in 1870. She applied for another patent using the model in this image to demonstrate her machine that folded and pasted flat-bottomed paper bags, and was granted patent number 220925 in 1879. As stated in her patent specification, the design is an improvement on another earlier patent granted in 1871. Her concept continues to be used in the manufacture of today's paper grocery bag. Knight received patents for inventions having to do with the paper bag, shoe manufacturing, and rotary engine industries.



Knight's Patent Model for Paper Bag Machine
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Surgeon, War Hero, Fashion Reformer

Born into a world with clearly defined gender roles, **Mary Walker** defied them all. Dr. Walker was the second American woman to earn a medical degree, making her one of America's first female physicians. She worked as a field surgeon for the U.S. Army during the Civil War and is, to this day, the only woman to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Following the war, she continued to advocate women's rights and dress reform. Dr. Walker believed that restrictive clothing such as the corset encumbered healthful movement. She wore and advocated for the "reform dress" - a shortened dress and pants - before she abandoned the skirt altogether, though she was physically attacked and arrested for wearing pants in public.



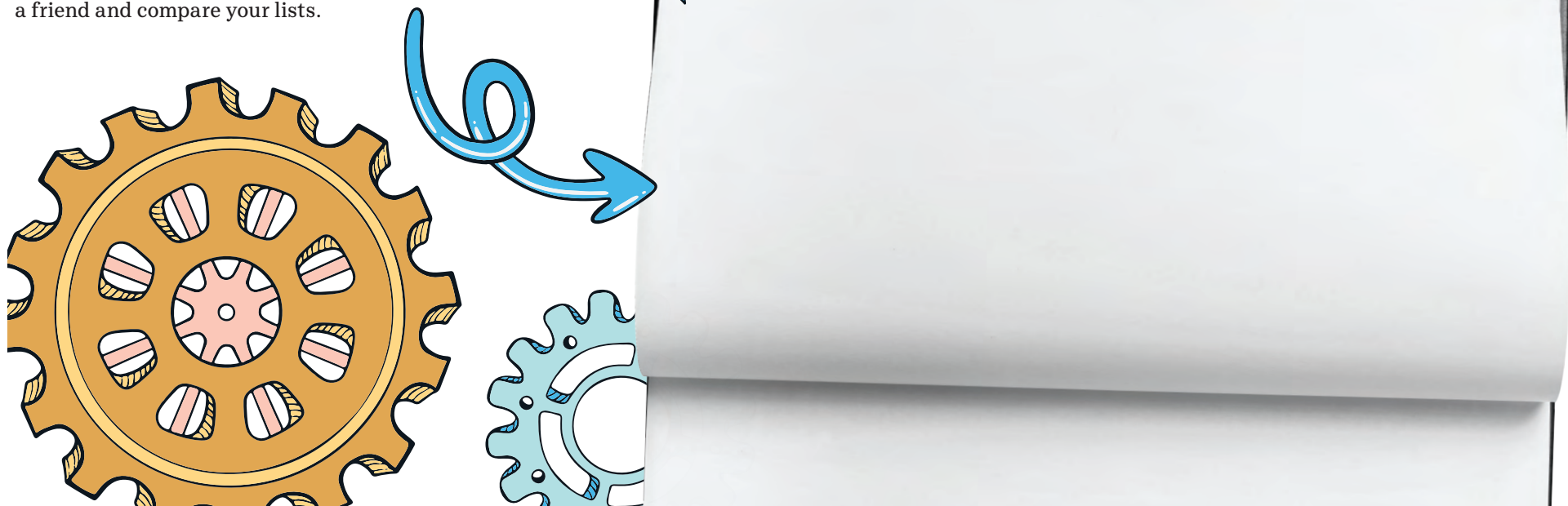
Gilbreth Stopwatch

Using custom stopwatches, specialized timers, and still and moving pictures, **Lillian Gilbreth** and her husband created a system for analyzing human motion in time. Their main clients were industrial managers, who sought to increase worker output while saving time and money. Their study subjects were workers, whose job satisfaction the Gilbreths hoped to increase as they decreased wasted motions. The Gilbreths did not invent stopwatch studies. Instead, in their system of motion study, watches were secondary, in direct reaction to worker resistance to earlier stopwatch studies conducted in industrial workplaces. Although the stopwatch no longer provokes the passions it once did, scientific management's compelling emphasis on standardization, order, and efficiency and its obsession with time persists in our own age.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Creative Thinking Challenge

A creative thinker is someone who can see the uncommon, contradictory, or unique in their everyday experiences. Creative thinkers ask: what other ways can everyday objects be used? For example, an old checkbook can be used as a coupon organizer or dry coffee grounds as an odor eliminator. Try creative thinking with this challenge. Make a list of as many uncommon or unusual uses for an everyday object in 3 minutes. Try it with a friend and compare your lists.

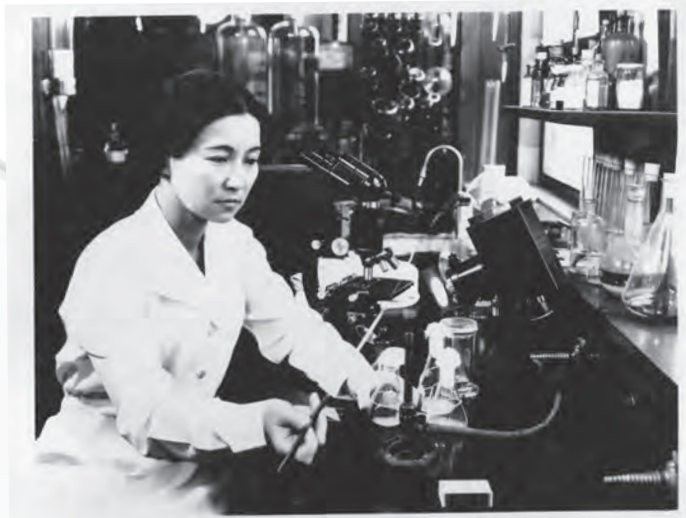


Physicist, Chemist, Inventor of “Invisible” Glass

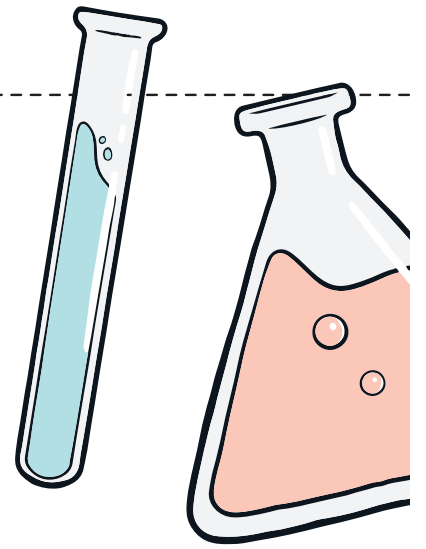
Katharine Burr Blodgett was the first woman to be awarded a PhD in physics from the University of Cambridge. She was also the first female research scientist hired by General Electric Laboratory in Schenectady, NY. Working with chemist, physicist, and engineer Irving Langmuir, Blodgett was able to enhance Langmuir’s techniques. Blodgett’s breakthrough work in surface chemistry led to the development of a nonreflective glass coating called Langmuir–Blodgett film. Among its many applications, the film has been used as a coating and in projector, camera, and periscope lenses. Blodgett received many honors for her work, including induction into the National Inventors Hall of Fame. In this publicity photo, Blodgett is seen demonstrating lab equipment.



SMITHSONIAN LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

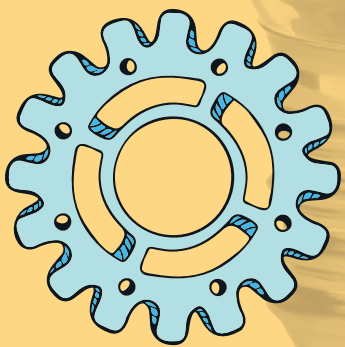


SMITHSONIAN LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES



Genius Hours

Genius hours are structured, hour-long creative times led by children. Kids are encouraged to explore their interests using their imaginations. The hour includes time for discussions, research, and sharing based on topics selected by kids themselves. Set an hour aside for nonfiction reading, writing, drawing, debating, and reflecting. Use all the tools at your disposal – a tablet and stylus, clay, paper and pencil, sticky notes, a dry eraser board and markers. Parents and caregivers can encourage children to track their “genius hour” ideas in a notebook, journal, or note app.



Problem Solvers

Solutions to everyday problems can sometimes be found in unlikely places. Co-inventors **Hinda Miller**, **Lisa Lindahl**, and **Polly Palmer-Smith** learned this when struggling to find a product women could wear when running to reduce breast soreness. Miller and Palmer-Smith were costume designers and tried creating a solution using different materials. Lindahl’s then-husband suggested they sew together two jock straps. After some laughter, the trio realized he was onto something and the JogBra was born. The JogBra was the first example of the garments now known generally as sports bras, an industry that has grown in direct proportion to the increased participation of women in athletics generally since 1977. This image is a representation of the JogBra with two jock straps sewn together to a wide elastic band, with two narrow pieces of stockinette sewn as straps to the elastic band and the jock straps.



JogBra Prototype
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY



Scan the QR code for an interview with the JogBra inventors.

The Wonder Fiber

Chemist and inventor **Stephanie Kwolek** began her career at DuPont in 1946, one of a few women scientists. While working to create a material that would help tires last longer, Kwolek instead “stumbled” on a new material. After many tests, she and her colleagues realized the synthetic fiber she had developed had surprising features. What was the strong, lightweight polymer fiber Kwolek created? Kevlar®. Five times stronger than steel, the material is used in sports equipment, fiber-optic cables, tires, helmets, gloves, and of course bullet-resistant vests. Kwolek once said, “To invent, I draw upon my knowledge, intuition, creativity, experience, common sense, perseverance, flexibility, and hard work.”



Stephanie Kwolek Innovative Lives Presentation
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY



Scan the QR code for a special tribute to the life and contributions of Stephanie Kwolek.

Innovative Vaccine Researcher

Sometimes, when searching for solutions to one problem, we’re presented with answers to another. **Ruby Hirose**, a Japanese American biochemist and bacteriologist, made a career of studying antitoxins and serums as a researcher at Ohio’s Merrell Labs. While investigating medicines for protection against diphtheria, Hirose identified a method to improve pollen extracts used to ‘desensitize’ those suffering from hayfever. One of ten women recognized by the American Chemical Society in 1940, she was not exempt from the xenophobia of the time. Three of her family members were held in internment camps during World War II, though Hirose was spared due to living in Ohio. Despite facing adversity, Hirose’s ongoing research later made major contributions to the development of vaccines against infantile paralysis.



BeautyBlender Prototype Makeup Sponge
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Evolution of the BeautyBlender

This object represents the history of the Beautyblender Company, which was founded by **Rea Ann Silva**. Silva began her career as a make-up artist in 1989. After spending more than a decade honing her craft, Silva became one of the first make-up artists to begin working on clients in high definition TV. She began creating what is now the original Beautyblender sponge in 2002. Her sponge replicated the effects of airbrushing, but without cumbersome equipment. By 2003, she incorporated the company and the iconic hot pink sponge hit the commercial markets. Silva, a Latina, has never shied away from asserting her pride in being a woman of color. In fact, she credits her heritage, personal background, and perseverance through adversity as contributing factors to her success.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Trailblazer, Inventor, Role Model

Before her invention of the Laserphaco Probe in the 1980s, a laser used to remove cataracts, **Dr. Patricia Bath** forged the way for women and African Americans in medicine and science. After finishing high school in two-and-a-half years, she began her medical training at Howard University - graduating with honors. During her time as an intern at Harlem Hospital, she proposed a new discipline, Community Ophthalmology, to address blindness and visual impairment in underserved populations. Dr. Bath soon became the first African American resident in ophthalmology at New York University, and then the first woman faculty member at UCLA’s Jules Stein Eye Institute. She would later develop and patent the invention to remove cataracts, becoming the first African American woman doctor to receive a medical patent.



Scan the QR code to hear Dr. Bath discuss the power of ideas.

Inspiring the Future



Ashleigh Dior Coren
Acting Head of Education,
Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative

How do you imagine the future? Virtual worlds? Human-like robots? What if for some, the future holds the promise of living authentically and dreaming big?

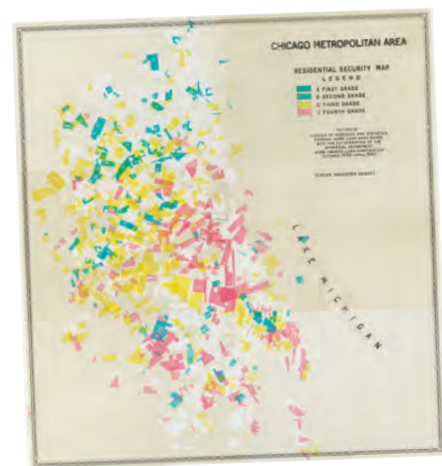
At the Smithsonian, my fellow educators and I have the privilege of using Smithsonian collections to share the stories of brilliant women. They had the foresight to carry out new ideas while battling cultural and social barriers. These imaginative thinkers pushed the boundaries in their respective professions and empowered future innovators to create and share their ideas of the future. In this final section you will discover women like architect Norma Sklarek, a pioneering African American architect who co-led a women-owned architectural firm in the 1980s, and Toshiko Takaazu, whose grand ceramic triumphs changed the art world. Their stories show us that when we tap into our power and believe in ourselves, when we try new things, it transforms the world around us! These women saw past the limitations of the world they lived in and invented new visions and processes. They inspire us all to improve and enrich lives not just in our communities, but also around the globe.

Award-Winning Sci-Fi Writer

This Olivetti Studio 46 Typewriter belonged to **Octavia E. Butler**, who wrote science fiction when few black writers did. Butler began writing at age 10 and eventually used a computer to compose. Butler's blue typewriter dates to the 1970s. It is manual, not electric; fingers must make metal letters leap to leave an inky imprint on paper rolled into the machine by hand.



ANACOSTIA COMMUNITY MUSEUM



COOPER HEWITT, SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM

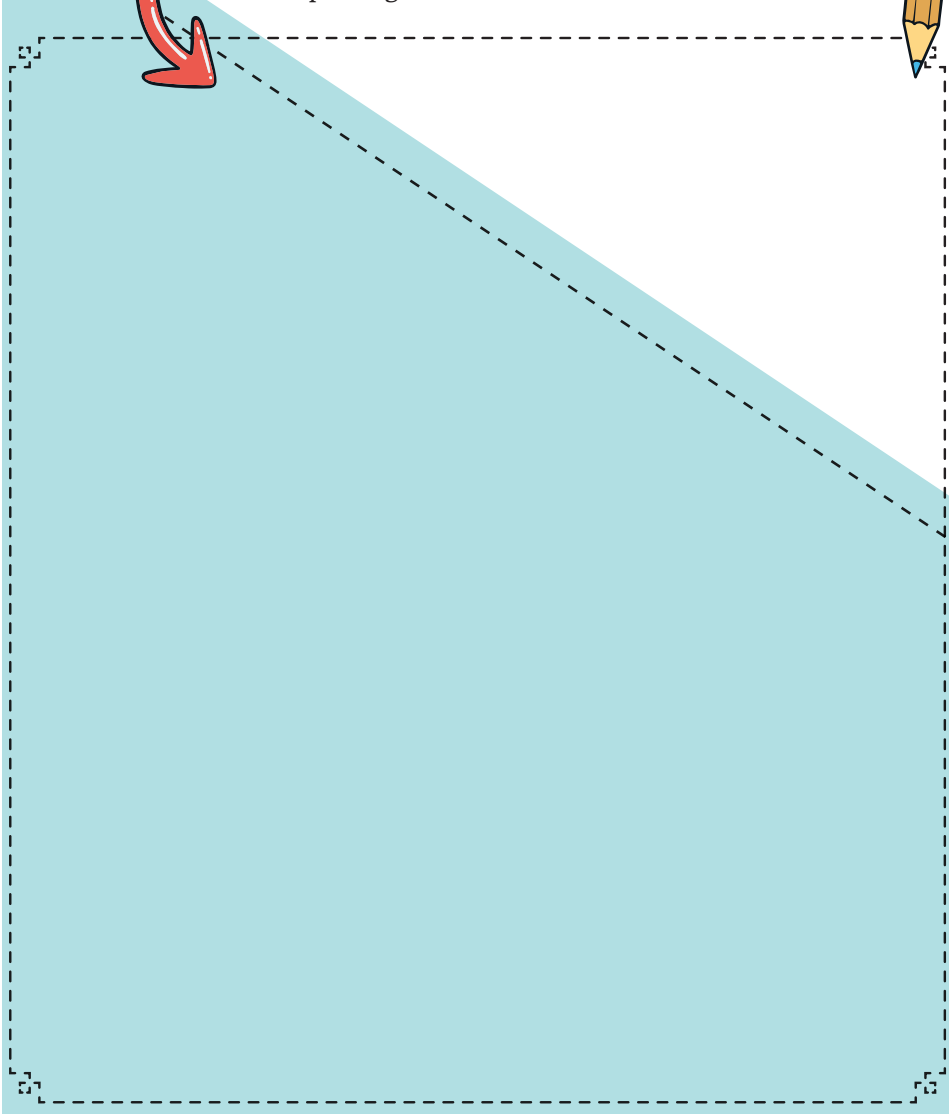
Amanda Williams' Cadastral Shaking

A map of the Chicago metro area, broken into multicolored sections which represent residential security grades throughout the city. Made in collaboration with members of the Chicago printmaking community at Spudnik Press Co-Operative, Cadastral Shaking reimagines a 1930s Federal Housing Authority Map, "shaking up" redlined zones that have segregated Black communities for generations.

Design a Public Space

How can public spaces be more enjoyable? How can we make our communities more eco-friendly and sustainable? How can our environments be more inclusive? Design a public space of the future for your community. Walk your neighborhood and decide what is needed. What's missing? What do you need more of? What can be excluded? Why?

Complete the zone map provided using different colors to show each type of land use. For example, where we live (residential areas) might be yellow; government buildings and schools blue; where we shop (commercial areas) purple; and public spaces or parks green. Include markers for key features, such as roads, sidewalks, and parking lots.



NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

Investing in the Human Soul

Born in Mayesville, South Carolina to formerly enslaved parents, **Mary McLeod Bethune** believed deeply in education as the main route out of poverty for herself and other African Americans. She founded the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute for Black girls in 1904. By 1929, that institution became Florida's Bethune-Cookman College. Perhaps Bethune's greatest impact came in the mid-1930s with her service as a director for the National Youth Administration. She spoke out powerfully against racial discrimination throughout the federal government. When President Roosevelt issued an executive order in 1941 requiring equal consideration for African Americans seeking jobs in the government and in the nation's defense industries, there was little doubt that Bethune's lobbying had played a major role in bringing it about.

The Rosa Parks of Architecture

Contact sheet of photographs showing Architect **Norma Sklarek**, with two yellow boxes highlighting individual slides. Sklarek was one of the first African American women architects in the United States.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE



SMITHSONIAN ARCHIVES OF AMERICAN ART

Dynamic Ceramicist

Sculptor **Toshiko Takaazu** sitting in front of a brick wall behind a pottery wheel, working on a large ceramic pot. Her distinctive "closed-form" objects helped to elevate ceramics in the art world.

Computing Camp 'Connects' Girls

When few girls signed up for the University of Maryland's computer science classes, **Dr. Jan Plane** realized that something in the high schools wasn't working. So Dr. Plane, a lecturer in the university's computer science department, created a camp for middle schoolers to excite them about computer science by making robots, webpages, and virtual reality games. CompSciConnect, a three-year program, teaches students topics like programming, computing applications, cybersecurity, and cybersecurity. Amber Melton made this LEGO robot at CompSciConnect. The small rover-like robot is made of LEGO bricks and figures, a power pack, LCD screen, and control buttons.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Brought to You By

We Built This: How Women Innovators Shaped the World is a collaboration between the **Smithsonian Institution**, **USA TODAY**, and **Funnel Design Group**. Content for this publication has been contextualized, modified, and adapted for brevity, using Smithsonian sources including object metadata descriptions, relevant blog posts, and magazine articles from experts in the field referenced.

From the Smithsonian: American Women's History Initiative, Office of Advancement, Office of Communications and External Affairs, Office of the Under Secretary for Education, and the Smithsonian community.



si.edu



usatoday.com



funneldesigngroup.com



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Ultralight Wheelchair Design Changes the Game

This yellow sports wheelchair, donated to the Smithsonian's collections by its creator, **Marilyn Hamilton**, was one of the first "ultralight" designs. Inspired by the aircraft industry, ultralights used lightweight aluminum (Hamilton was a hang-gliding enthusiast) and improved maneuverability in ways that revolutionized mobility for wheelchair users in the early 1980s. Hamilton used this chair as a tennis champion and went on to found Quickie wheelchair company. Today, ultralight wheelchairs are durable and low-maintenance options that support both mobility and active lifestyles.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

Fiber Arts Artist and Activist

Theresa Secord has tirelessly taught the art of ash and sweetgrass basketry. As a founding member of the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance, she helped inspire more people to become weavers from the Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot nations. Through her work, the number of basketmakers grew from 55 to more than 200. Secord became the first U.S. citizen to receive the Prize for Creativity in Rural Life from the Women's World Summit Foundation in 2003. This acorn-shaped basket is made of plaited, undyed brown ash and sweetgrass.



Scan the QR code to watch a conversation with Native artists and cultural leaders, including Theresa Secord.

IMAGE CREDITS:

P2: Judith Jamison in Alvin Ailey's "Cry", Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc., Photography by Jack Mitchell, ©Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc. and Smithsonian Institution, All rights reserved; **2:** Lonnie Bunch, Michael Barnes, Smithsonian Institution; Tray with Spice Dishes, Mary Sue Milliken and Susan Feniger, Division of Work and Industry, National Museum of American History; **29c** "Ma" Rainey single, National Postal Museum, Copyright United States Postal Service. All rights reserved.; JogBra prototype, Lisa Lindahl, Hinda Miller, and Polly Palmer Smith; Division of Cultural and Community Life, National Museum of American History; Cadastral Shaking (Chicago VI), 2019 Amanda Williams (b. 1974), Blind debossment, screen and relief printing on archival paper, framed Edition 2 of 3, with 2 APs, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, Museum purchase through the American Women's History Initiative Acquisitions Pool, administered by the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative, 2021-26-1; **P3:** Gilbreth Stopwatch, John M. Gilbreth; Division of Work and

CROSSWORD

Use the clues to complete the crossword puzzle below. Solutions at the bottom of the page.

ACROSS

1. Ancient culture that inspired the works of dancer Isadora Duncan

6. First Hollywood dance film shot in Technicolor ___ of Rhythm (1941)

8. Common name for the plant *Gaultheria procumbens*

11. Region where choreographer and scholar Katherine Dunham conducted her cultural fieldwork

14. Great Comet of 1874

16. Lightweight metal that makes ultralight wheelchairs more maneuverable

18. Florida city where Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune established a school for African American students ___ Beach

21. Actress who portrayed Lillian Gilbreth in *Cheaper by the Dozen* (1950); ___ Loy

DOWN

1. Rea Ann Silva was a makeup artist on this 2000 TV series

2. Form of dramatic expression coined by playwright Ntozake Shange

3. Modern art movement emphasizing abstraction

4. Traditional craft method used to create baskets and other textiles

5. Pennsylvania city home to Mae's Millinery Shop

7. First book in Octavia Butler's *Xenogenesis* series (1987)

9. First major motion picture filmed using nonreflective glass; ___ with the Wind (1939)

10. Tennessee city home to the historically Black university Fisk

12. Cosmetology school founded by businesswoman and philanthropist Annie Malone; ___ College

13. Nickname of Eloise Gerry's wire-haired terrier Penthesilea

15. Term used to describe genetic transposition; ___ genes

17. Radioactive material used to paint face watch dials

19. Number of maize chromosomes

20. Elected in 1952, served for many years as president of the Arkansas chapter of the NAACP; ___ Bates

Industry, National Museum of American History; **P4:** Portrait of Dr Susan La Flesche Picotte, Photo Lot 24 SPC Plains Omaha BAE 4558 Family Photos 00691200, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution; **44c** Literary Arts: Julia de Burgos single, National Postal Museum, Copyright United States Postal Service. All rights reserved; TShirt; 504 SF Unchanged DC, Gift of Kitty Cone; Division of Medicine and Science, National Museum of American History; Eloise Gerry (1885-1970), Image courtesy of Smithsonian Institution Archives; Eloise Gerry (1885-1970), shown at microscope undated, Image courtesy of Smithsonian Institution Archives; Portrait of Jane Harmon and Gladys Tantaquidgeon, Frank Speck photograph collection, N12475, National Museum of the American Indian Archive Center, Smithsonian Institution; Mounted plant specimen, Collected by Gladys Tantaquidgeon (Mohegan, 1899-2005) in 1929, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution; **P5:** Watch, Estate of W. Carl Wyatt; Division of Work and Industry, National Museum of America History; Drawing, Design for Title Page, "Occupations of Women and Their Compensation", ca. 1899, Designed by Alice Cordelia Morse (American, 1863-1961) Brush and gouache on greyish-brown paper, mounted on illustration board 12 1/16 x 8 7/8 in. (30.7 x 22.6 cm), Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, Gift of Alice C. Morse, 2009-6-55, Photo: Andrew Garn © Smithsonian Institution; Anne Goldthwaite, Self-Portrait, ca. 1906-1913, oil on wood mounted on fiberboard, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Lucy Goldthwaite and Richard Wallach Goldthwaite; Alverna Williams and Her Ercoupe 415CD, Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum (NASM 00169525); Photograph of seven of the Little Rock Nine meeting at the home of Daisy Bates, Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of

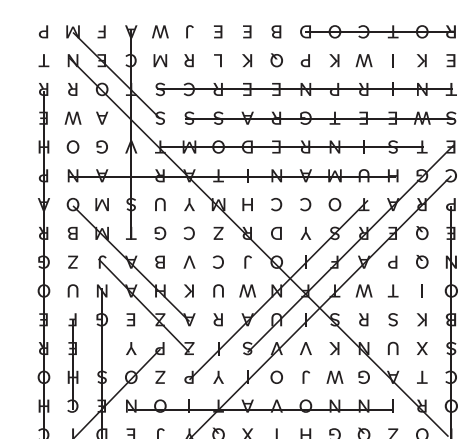
Elmer J. Whiting, III, © Gertrude Samuels; **P6:** Lullaby Of the Leaves; St. Louis Blues, Gift of Lucy C. Shain in memory of James Lewis Shain; Division of Cultural and Community Life, National Museum of American History; Sweet Seasons; Pocket Money, Gift of Robert B. Campbell in memory of Dorothy and William Campbell; Division of Cultural and Community Life, National Museum of American History; Carbon print, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of the Harmon Foundation; **P7:** Isadora Duncan by Abraham Walkowitz, n.d., Watercolor and pencil on paper, 13 1/8 x 7 7/8 in. (33.3 x 19.9 cm), The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Ruth St. Denis by Alice Pike Barney, 1910, oil on canvas, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Laura Dreyfus Barney and Natalie Clifford Barney in memory of their mother, Alice Pike Barney; Portrait of Katherine Dunham Dance Company, Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, © Jack Mitchell, All Rights Reserved; Forever Innovative Choreographers: Katherine Dunham single, National Postal Museum, Copyright United States Postal Service. All rights reserved; **P8:** Model for Paper Bag Machine, Pravel, Gambrell, Hewitt, Kirk, Kimball, and Dodge; Division of Work and Industry, National Museum of America History; Advance Publicity Card. (Mary E. Walker, M.D., N.P.), Division of Political and Military History, National Museum of American History; Lillian Moller Gilbreth (1878-1972) undated, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Accession 90-105, Science Service Records, Image No. SIA2008-1924; **P9:** Katharine Burr Blodgett (1898-1979), demonstrating equipment in lab, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Accession 90-105, Science Service Records, Image No. SIA2007-0282; Ruby Hirose, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Accession 90-105, Science Service Records, Image No. SIA2008-3224; Beautyblender prototype makeup sponge, Division of Work and Industry, National Museum of American History; Patricia Bath Innovative Lives Presentation and Interview, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Stephanie Kwolek Innovative Lives Presentation, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, **P10:** Mary McLeod Bethune by Winold Reiss, c. 1925, Pastel on board, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; purchase funded by Lawrence A. Fleischman and Howard Garfinkle with a matching grant from the National

Endowment for the Arts; Contact sheet of photographs of Norma Sklarek from Jasmin Photo, undated, Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of David Merrick Fairweather and Yvonne Goff; Olivetti Studio 46 Typewriter Used by Octavia Butler, Anacostia Community Museum, Smithsonian Institution; Toshiko Takaezu, 1974. Toshiko Takaezu papers, circa 1925-circa 2010. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution; LEGO Robot, Maryland Center for Women in Computing; **P11:** Quickie Tennis Wheelchair, Gift from Marilyn Hamilton; Division of Medicine and Science, National Museum of American History; Division of Work and Industry, National Museum of America History; Basket with cover by Theresa Secord, 2003, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution; **P12:** 1876 Ellen Harding Baker's "Solar System" Quilt, Gift of Patricia Hill McCloy and Kathryn Hill Mearndon; Division of Cultural and Community Life, National Museum of American History; Costume dress for Lady in Orange from for colored girls... on Broadway, Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of the Black Fashion Museum founded by Lois K. Alexander-Lane; Letter to Lucille Brown from Annie Malone Pope-Turnbo, Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture; Barbara McClintock (1902-1992), Barbara McClintock (1902-1992), Smithsonian Institution Archives, Accession 90-105, Science Service Records, Image No. SIA2008-5609; Girl Scout Sash, Division of Cultural and Community Life, National Museum of American History; Poster, Under the Brooklyn Bridge, 1991, Designed by Lady Pink (Ecuadorian, b. 1964), Printed by Lower East Side Print Shop, Inc. (New York, NY, USA), Produced by Bullet (American, founded 1985), Screenprint on paper, 23 x 20 in. (58.4 x 50.8 cm), Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, Gift of Steven Heller and Karrie Jacobs, 1993-53-118, Photo: Matt Flynn © Smithsonian Institution; Celebrating 15 Years Above Ground: Untitled 1995, Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of the Dondi White Estate, © Lady Pink; Unidentified Woman or Women Tintype of a woman carrying a medical bag 1890s, Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture; Black and pink beehive hat with pink flowers from Mae's Millinery Shop; Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

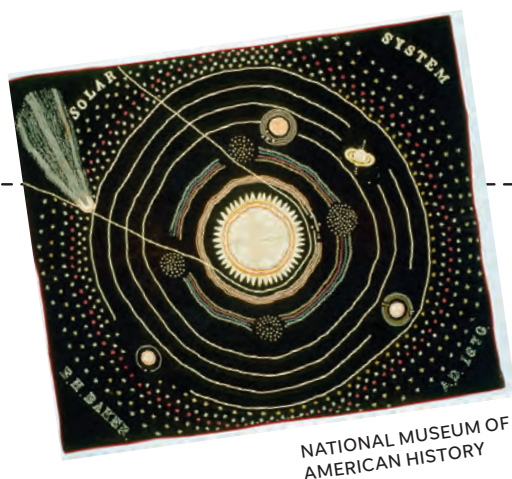
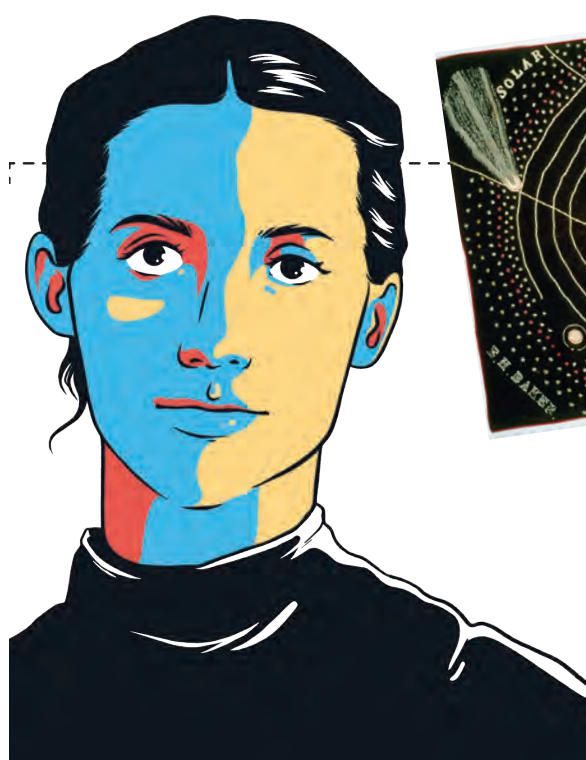
Activity Solutions

- ACROSS**
1. GREEK
 2. CUBISM
 3. WINTERGREEN
 4. WEAVING
 5. PHILADELPHIA
 7. DAWN
 9. GONE
 10. NASHVILLE
 12. PORO
 13. PENNY
 15. JUMPING
 17. RADUUM
 19. TEN
 20. DAISY

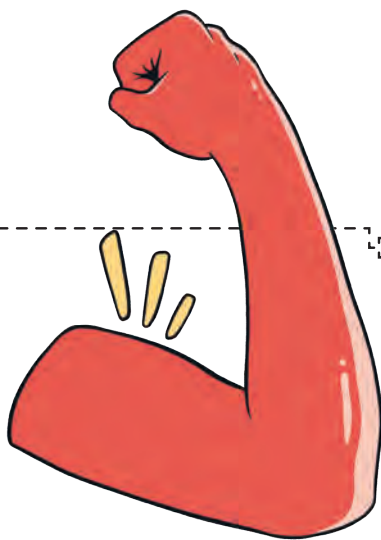
- DOWN**
1. GORE FRIENDS
 2. CHOREOPOEM
 3. CARIVAL
 4. WEAVING
 5. PHILADELPHIA
 7. DAWN
 9. GONE
 10. NASHVILLE
 12. PORO
 13. PENNY
 15. JUMPING
 17. RADUUM
 19. TEN
 20. DAISY



Featured Women & Innovations



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY



Teaching The Solar System

To create this remarkable quilt, astronomer and teacher **Ellen Harding Baker** combined three acceptable activities for women in the 19th century: quilt making, the study of astronomy, and teaching. Baker started the wool-appliqué quilt in 1876, taking seven years to complete. Her inspiration may have come from solar system illustrations found in astronomy textbooks from the 1860s, and her own night sky viewing at Chicago's Dearborn Observatory. Baker used the quilt as a visual aid for lectures she gave across Iowa. Measuring 89" x 106", the quilt features the sun, planets and their orbits, moons, stars, a comet, and the asteroid belt.



Scan the QR code for close-up images of Ellen Harding Baker's "Solar System Quilt".



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE



Ntozake Shange

Sleeveless dress costume for the character Lady in Orange from the original Broadway production of **Ntozake Shange's** choreopoem "for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf."

Annie Malone

This letter is from **Mrs. Annie Malone Pope-Turnbo** who was a pioneer of the African American beauty industry. The recipient Lucille Brown was a graduate of Malone's Poro College, a cosmetology school that used Malone's hair care products.

Nobel Prize-Winning Cytogeneticist

Barbara McClintock's studies of maize were ahead of their time. Maize, or corn, is a domesticated crop whose kernels are found in a rainbow of colors. McClintock's persistence resulted in important details, previously unknown, about the genetic material of maize. She was awarded numerous prizes over the years, including the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1983 at the age of 81 - becoming the first woman to receive the prize individually.



SMITHSONIAN LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

Dedicated, Dutiful & Diverse Girl Scouts

Conflicted about her status as a "woman of ease," **Juliette Gordon Low** looked for a call to service and found it in scouting. From the beginning, membership included girls from different religious, ethnic, and social backgrounds, as well as girls with disabilities. This sash's owner, **Louise Davis**, loved the outdoors and earned many honors, including the Girl Scouts' highest - the Golden Eaglet. Davis and her troopmates broke with tradition by moving their patches from their uniform sleeves to a sash. Inspection of the patches on Davis' sash shows her willingness to challenge the gender roles of her time.



Scan the QR code to learn more about Juliette Gordon Low and Louise Davis through the "Girlhood (It's Complicated)" online exhibit.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY



COOPER HEWITT, SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM

Lady Pink

In the shadows of the Brooklyn bridge, homeless girl spray painting a yellow house onto her home, which is a box. On this box bubble letters, in black: THIS SIDE UP.

Serigraph, or screen print, in the graffiti-style created by the New York graffiti artist **Lady Pink** for the exhibition, Celebrating 15 Years Above Ground, at NEBO Fine Art Studio. The image is of a large bare-chested woman amidst a subway car and urban cityscape on a psychadelic, multi-colored background. The serigraph is signed by the artist on the verso.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

Mae Reeves

Black velvet beehive hat designed by milliner **Mae Reeves** with a wide pink velvet hatband and pink velvet top on the crown. The business pioneer's shop Mae's Millinery was an important community space for African Americans in Philadelphia. Ella Fitzgerald, Eartha Kitt, Marian Anderson, and Lena Horne all donned her hats, a testament to their quality, appeal, and to the reputation that Reeves made for herself.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

Vital Midwives

Curators at the National Museum of African American History and Culture purchased this tintype at auction in 2014 because it provided rare visual evidence of a 19th century black woman as a medical professional. Additional research uncovered a possible identification: **Sarah Loguen Fraser** (1863-1933), an African American female doctor—one of only about 115 in the nation in the 1890s. Loguen Fraser educated black midwives to integrate modern medical knowledge into their traditional routines. Until the early 20th century, midwives, not male doctors, assisted at most births in the United States. In spite of a campaign to replace midwifery in the late 19th century, African American midwives still delivered as many as half of the black babies born in some southern states in the 1950s.

