

## **Visualizing Literature: Handmade Books Inspired by Poetry, Politics & Art from the Civil Rights Movement after 1950**

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“True social change--the kind that profoundly transforms deeply held views—comes slowly over decades.” --Elizabeth Broun.<sup>1</sup>

### **Introduction**

On three separate occasions I have been on a Civil Rights Trip through Georgia and Alabama once with faculty members and the other times with students. When my students find out that I have been on a trip of this nature, I sense a bit of respect from them. I hope that they see that I care enough to learn about the struggles of their ancestors or that of others who have struggled. The knowledge gained thus far from the experiences has just scratched the surface and I want to know more. I plan to go on many more trips especially with students. It has changed how I see others giving me a better understanding of the culture I grew up in.

I am a white woman who grew up in North Carolina, born the night John F. Kennedy was assassinated. My life was somewhat sheltered from the events happening in the 1960s and 1970s as I grew up in Charlotte, NC. As a young child there were many things I did not understand. I could have black friends but not a black boyfriend. My mother pointed out an inter-racial couple with their child (the first mixed child and couple I remember seeing). I remember her saying, “That child will have a hard life.” My father took a job in the mountains of North Carolina in 1974 where there were very few black people. One of the reasons for the move was the school integration busing issues in Charlotte. As an adult I was aware of the different treatment of African Americans, but really did not begin to experience it until I moved back to Charlotte to teach in 1999.

This unit will focus on artists, politics, music, and literature from 1955 to 2000 for my Visual Art Proficient (formerly Art III), and International Baccalaureate Diploma Art II classes. I want poems, stories, and music to inspire the students and evoke images for works of art. They will print their images in multiples, share with each other, and assemble the prints into a book. Reading poetry and stories, listening to music, and watching historical videos and interviews will further stimulate ideas for images.

The focus of this unit is on the feelings of oppression, desire for freedom, self-respect, dignity, and peaceful resistance in order to increase a positive response to the negative situations African Americans survived during this segment of American history. We will step through the Civil Rights Movement for fodder of images.

## **Rationale**

The school where I teach has a majority African American population (48%), White (24%), Hispanic (17%), and many other countries represented to round out the rest, respectively. It mirrors the population of a very international Charlotte today. Our school is an International Baccalaureate magnet school. The faculty and students embrace our diversity. Through my students, I have learned much from them and their experiences discovering how naive I am to what they and their families have experienced.

Several years ago, before I had a chance to experience the Civil Rights field trip, a group of my students came back from one talking about the experience they had had. They were shocked at how much racism is still out there. The girls (one African American, one Asian, and two White) were eating lunch together at the same table in Montgomery, AL when a white man said something mean to them. Another occasion several students I know were unbelieving when Bobby Howard from the Moore's Ford Memorial Committee told them he had been kidnapped a few times. When a student asked how long ago the last time was, he responded two years ago. I had seen this man speak a year prior to his recent kidnapping. This man believes in making people aware of one of the last lynchings in the United States and for some resolution of a crime that has never been brought to justice.

Recently, Kaneisha Gaston, a young African American woman attending Davidson College, spoke to our seminar group of teachers about the literature that relates to her identity which was lacking in our school system. She is a graduate of our school system. This has solidified my commitment to incorporating this part of American history into my curriculum.

This unit will have students study this part of American history to inspire them to create handmade art books from prints they make while reading and listening to poetry, letters, and music. We will look at why the movement happened at the time it did and how it changed. The whole unit taught to one class may take ten or more 90 minute class periods.

## **Objectives**

The students will learn about the American Civil Rights Movement during the latter half of the twentieth century through poetry, music, and videos clips. Students will be encouraged to visit to exhibits in museums like the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African American Arts + Culture. The exhibits on display at the time could enhance the lessons. A field trip to an appropriate exhibit when possible would add to the experience of the unit. Included throughout the unit will be discussions on current issues and views of the future.

The students will sketch and jot down notes while listening and watching readings and videos. We will be stepping through the Civil Rights Movement with some of the background of the movement, the violence and oppression, then changes in the movement concluding with a contemporary artist's look back on the Antebellum South. Their sketches and notes will be used to generate images for prints. We will use relief printmaking methods (woodcut, linoleum, and/or collograph). After the prints are made, the students will exchange some so they have a collection to work with. They will assemble the prints into a book.

The students will create covers and bind their books together using various bookbinding techniques and will explore more ways to make books. They may use mixed media materials to enhance their books.

In the books they create the printed image may be coupled with the phrase or passage that inspired the image during journaling time on the same page or opposing page. The students will cite their sources and will create a colophon for their book in keeping with book making standards.

### **Strategies and Activities**

During the introduction of the unit, The Movement, students will have a warm up to complete in their sketchbooks with a Guiding (or Essential) question, "Why did the American Civil Rights Movement happen?" I will generate a PowerPoint for the unit that will include definitions and images related to the poems. In the introduction it will include the separate definitions of civil, rights, and movement. We will also discuss the definitions of segregation, desegregation, lynching, and nonviolence. We will review a timeline of the events and some background on the Jim Crow Laws to set the stage for what was to happen in the latter half of the twentieth century.

The students will be prompted to sketch and jot down information in their sketchbooks when poems are read and videos are played for ideas of images they may create later. After a period of time for reflection and journaling, discuss the poems, ideas, and sketches they have achieved. Allow more time after the discussion for planning images for prints.

To transition from the introduction I will read to the class "Alabama Clergymen's Letter to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr." For homework assign the students to read Rev. King's response in "Letter from Birmingham City Jail". It is a very lengthy letter so break it into sections and assign it to small groups to read. Instruct the students to highlight parts of the letter that they respond to or have questions about. In their sketchbooks they should fill at least two pages with reflection verbal and/or pictorial for sharing in the next class.

During the next class, discuss what the students discovered in and thought about their reading assignments. Separate students into small groups to discuss the homework assignment. Have each group report what they have discovered to the class in sequence of the original letter. Emphasize to the students the struggle of what was “just” and “unjust” in the laws of the time. Ask them if there were any such laws today. Conclude this day’s lesson with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech.

For the next section begin by reading Paul L. Dunbar’s “We Wear the Mask”. Discuss the meaning of the poem. Do they wear a mask in certain situations? Then read (or watch her perform it on YouTube) Maya Angelou’s “The Mask” which was inspired by Dunbar’s poem. After discussion of the poems show an image of Lorna Simpson’s *Vantage Point*, 1991. Emphasize to the students that the poetry has influenced different generations inspired others to create other art forms. Some of the students have read *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe in their English class. Discuss and compare the use of masks in spiritual religious ceremonies in Africa. (See the background knowledge section for biographies of the poets and researched information.)

The next phase of the unit focuses on violence and oppression of African Americans. Start with reading and discussing the lyrics to “Strange Fruit” by Lewis Allan. Show Billie Holiday singing the song. Provide background information on the song. Continuing with the subject of lynching, play either both or one of the songs on YouTube about Emmett Till by Emmylou Harris and/or Bob Dylan.

Next read the poem “Ballad of Birmingham” by Dudley Randall. Discuss what happened in the days that followed. There were protests by students and the police and fire departments came out to stop the protesting. Show images of the church and from the newspaper reports. Andy Warhol’s *Mustard Race Riot* depicts police attacks on Civil Rights demonstrators is also a good example. (See Teacher Resources for more suggested websites for images.)

Introduce Relief Printmaking to the students and have them prepare some of their drawings for printing. Have them print Artists Proofs before proceeding with the next section of the unit. To conserve resources keep the prints small. Also consider the shape of the plate. Square will cause less grief when assembling the books. Terry Schupbach-Gordon’s website has good pictures of examples.

Start the following class with the YouTube video of Walter Cronkite’s CBS News report April 4, 1968. Then read poems “Assassination” by Don L. Lee (Haki R. Madhubti) and “The Funeral of Martin Luther King Jr.” by Nikki Giovanni.

Allow time to write in journals. Play the YouTube of Creedence Clearwater Revival’s song “Fortunate Son” to set the tone of the time period. You may want to play the updated version of the video to show the juxtaposition of the Vietnam War to the Iraq

War.

Read “Poem (No Name No. 3)” by Nikki Giovanni and “Malcolm Spoke/Who Listened?” by Don L. Lee to emphasize the change in the movement. Information on the people mentioned in Giovanni’s poem is included in the background knowledge section. More protests are happening including the Vietnam War. The poetry is reflecting more of the climate in the United States. Next play Marvin Gaye’s “What’s Going On” to illustrate the transition in the movement.

In sequence, read the poems “Nikki-Rosa” by Nikki Giovanni, “A Message all Black People can Dig (& a few Nigroes Too)” by Don L. Lee (Haki R. Madhubti), “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou, and play the YouTube of the song “To Be Young Gifted and Black” by Nina Simone. Discuss the need for dignity and how that is communicated in these pieces.

Talk about Sly & the Family Stone and their significance. Play the song “Everyday People” to conclude the journaling and sketching process of the unit.

Have students proof additional images and print final editions of their final images. After the prints are made the students will exchange so they have a collection to work with. Students can request prints from others or use (with permission) the others plate to print.

Students will be asked to reflect on the questions “What does freedom mean?”, “Where do you find your freedom?”, and “Do you have Freedom?” before they begin assembling the books.

They will assemble the pages into a book organizing their story of the Movement. The students will create covers and bind their books together using various bookbinding techniques and will explore more ways to make books.

In the books have the printed image coupled with the phrase or passage that inspired the image during journaling time on the same page or opposing page. At that time we will talk about copyright and make sure the students cite their sources. That citation can be on the same page or in a list in the back. We will create a colophon for their book in keeping with book making standards.

The students will write a reflection on the information they learned. They should write about things that surprised them or did not. Are things better today? What needs to be done today in order to make their community a better place to live?

An option is to conclude the unit by viewing Art:21 video on Kara Walker (or other suggested artists). They will see and compare a contemporary artist’s ideas for her work with the work they have created from literary sources.

## Background Knowledge

### The Movement

Why did the American Civil Rights Movement happen? If we look at American history and dig beneath the textbooks, there is a story of suppression, racism, and violence against a group of Americans. This story has been gleaned over for decades. Today in 2012 the story is opening up wider than before. There is hope for the people that have struggled for their rights as equal citizens of the United States. They have contributed much to the forming of this young nation without much recognition at all.

Jim Crow Laws came after the American Civil War where most states in the South passed anti-African American legislation. “This included laws that discriminated against African Americans with concern to attendance in public schools and the use of facilities such as restaurants, theaters, hotels, cinemas and public baths. Trains and buses were also segregated...in many states marriage between whites and African American people” was illegal.<sup>2</sup>

*The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* by Aldon D. Morris is a wonderful source of in-depth information on why and how blacks began their movement.

“By the 1950’s Southern Whites had established a comprehensive system of domination over blacks. This system of domination protected the privileges of white society and generated tremendous human suffering for blacks. In the cities and rural areas...blacks were controlled economically, politically, and personally.”<sup>3</sup>

The difference from today’s American workforce was that “blacks were heavily concentrated in the lowest-paying and dirtiest jobs in the cities had to offer...[such as] janitors, porters, cooks, machine operators, and common laborers....50 percent of black women in the labor force were domestics...and lowly paid services workers, while less than 10 percent of white women were so employed.”<sup>4</sup> Most white women did not work outside the home.

More than during the 2012 presidential election, blacks excluded from the political process of voting with such measures as the poll tax, all-white primaries, the ‘grandfather clause,’ intimidation, and violence. Law and order were usually maintained in the black community by white police forces and the courts were controlled by white judges and juries. This and brutality controlled the status quo.<sup>5</sup>

During this time in history, “Segregation meant more than separation...blacks had to address whites in a tone that conveyed respect and the use of formal titles.”<sup>6</sup> Segregation

separated the community. There were separate schools, entrances, bathrooms, waiting rooms, and water fountains to name a few. When a white person was walking on the sidewalk it was expected that a black person step off the sidewalk and keep their gaze down. These are reasons why they found refuge in their churches where they could relax and celebrate their community.

The black church functioned as the institutional center and provided the movement with an organized mass base. The clergymen were “largely economically independent of the larger white society and skilled in the art of managing people and resources” The church had a “financial base through which protest was financed; and meeting places where the masses planned tactics and strategies and collectively committed themselves to the struggle.”<sup>7</sup> It was truly amazing that economically deprived blacks could support these churches and the protests to come. It showed an amazing allegiance to the church.

The ministers were great leaders. They were college graduates from “black colleges and universities under the direction of leading black educators and theologians of the day...who themselves had struggled to get an education...” The values that were stressed in their education such as human dignity, personhood, manhood, and courage became the core values of the movement.<sup>8</sup>

“The words and actions of such leaders as Martin Luther King, Jr., Fred Shuttlesworth, and C. K. Steele seemed to radiate the qualities required to jar loose the...system of domination that paralyzed the black community. Their displays of courage, dignity, integrity, and burning desire for freedom earned the approval of the black masses, because such values were deeply embedded in the social fabric of black society.”<sup>9</sup>

## Masking

Paul Laurence Dunbar was born in Dayton, Ohio, in 1896. He wrote a large body of work before he died at the age of 33. He was the first African-American poet to gain national critical acclaim. “His work often addressed the difficulties encountered by members of his race and the efforts of African-Americans to achieve equality in America.”<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Maya Angelou was born Marguerite Ann Johnson on April 4th, 1928, in St. Louis, Missouri.<sup>11</sup> Angelou was raised in St. Louis and Stamps, Arkansas. As a teenager, she received a scholarship to study dance and drama, but later at 14, she dropped out of school. She later finished high school. Then “as a young single mother, she supported her son by working as a waitress and cook; however her passion for music, dance, performance, and poetry would soon take center stage.”<sup>12</sup> She met both Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. right before they were assassinated.

Often my students ask how an artist started out and what they went through before they became well known. They are also curious if the person is married and/or has

children. I have included some of this information about the authors.

Show students an image of Lorna Simpson's *Vantage Point*, 1991. Richard J. Powell in the catalog *African-American Art* quotes part of Paul Lawrence Dunbar's poem "We Wear the Mask" then he compares it to Simpson's *Vantage Point*, 1991. Her gelatin silver prints are shown with plastic plaques "inside" under a carved wooden mask seen from the backside and "out" under a female figure. The female figure is shown from the back medium shot. She has short curly dark hair.

Powell says, "the talismanic power of the mask and its purported ability to transform or symbolize are presented...rendering of the chipped-away insides of a West African mask (the part in immediate contact with the masquerader)...in the companion photograph of an anonymous woman/potential masquerader, identifiable to some from only from behind and, ultimately, through the exterior trappings of race and gender."<sup>13</sup>

The masks used in the ceremonies in *Things Fall Apart* represent the spiritual ancestors. The person wearing the mask becomes the spirit. When the mask is taken off by another person in the book, the people believe that the spirit has been killed. They then destroy the un-masker's home and the Christian Missionary church they feel is responsible for the action, to appease the spirit.

### Violence and Oppression

"Strange Fruit" was first recorded by Billie Holiday in 1939. It has been called the original protest song. "[T]he song depicted lynching in all of its brutality....The juxtaposition of a beautiful landscape with the scene of lynching, the smell of magnolias with that of burning flesh, the blossoms more typically associated with the Southern climate with the 'strange fruit' produced by racial oppression..." When released the song quickly became famous. "It was written...by New York City public school teacher, Abel Meeropol, who was at that time a member of the American Communist Party."<sup>14</sup>

"Meeropol was born in New York in 1903 into an immigrant family. Like many of his background and his generation, he was radicalized by the Russian Revolution, the danger of fascism, and the Great Depression." After seeing a gruesome photo of a Southern lynching he wrote the poem. "[H]e was teaching at De Witt Clinton High School in the Bronx. 'Strange Fruit' was first printed as 'Bitter Fruit' in the January 1937 issue of *The New York Teacher*, the publication of the Teachers Union...under the pen name of Lewis Allan."<sup>15</sup>

Meeropol got the song to Barney Josephson, the owner of a newly opened nightclub in lower Manhattan where Billie Holiday was performing. He asked if she could sing it. At first Holiday was not "impressed by the lyrics and perhaps not fully aware of the meaning of the song. Her rendition, however, made an enormous impression. She began singing it



nightly, and then recorded it in April of that year.”<sup>16</sup>

“‘Strange Fruit’ was played only rarely on the radio. This was a period in which the segregationist...played a leading role in the Democratic Party as well as the Roosevelt administration. It would take a mass movement to finally dismantle the apartheid system that played a key role in setting the stage for lynchings. There were, by conservative estimates, at least 4,000 lynchings in the half century before 1940, the vast majority in the South, with most of the victims black.”<sup>17</sup>

Emmett Till was a black boy who was brutally beaten and murdered for saying something to a white woman. He was visiting the South from Chicago. His mother bravely displayed his beaten body at his funeral. The song lyrics from Emmylou Harris and Bob Dylan tell the story. Some students have studied this event in history class and because it is so horrific I choose to not go so in depth. This is used to put in context some information they may have already learned.

Emmylou Harris was born “April 2, 1947, in Birmingham, Alabama. Harris' father was a decorated Marine Corps pilot who spent 16 months as a prisoner of war in Korea during the early 1950s. The family moved a great deal, and while Harris spent most of her childhood in North Carolina, she attended high school in Woodbridge, Virginia; on the outskirts of Washington, D.C. Harris studied drama at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro before dropping out to move to New York City and pursue a musical career.”<sup>18</sup>

On Sept. 15, 1963 (days after three all-white schools had been forcibly desegregated), a bomb exploded before a Sunday morning sermon in the predominantly black 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., killing four girls and injuring others. Birmingham was one of the most segregated cities in the South, partly because of the anti-integration tactics of Gov. George Wallace and Bull Connor, the Birmingham police commissioner. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who, five months before the church bombing, wrote his famous “Letter From a Birmingham Jail” after being arrested for leading a desegregation campaign in the city. This was “one of the most horrific chapters of the civil rights movement, it called attention to the brutality employed by the Ku Klux Klan and men like Wallace and Connor in their defense of segregation.”<sup>19</sup>

A series of assassinations happened. First President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963, Malcolm X on February 21, 1965, The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. April 4, 1968, and then on June 6, 1968 Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated. In the summer of 1963 President Kennedy proposed the Civil Rights bill to Congress. Senator Robert Kennedy was also not only a supporter of Civil Rights but human rights across the world.

During Freedom Summer in Neshoba County, Mississippi, Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, and James Chaney were lynched on June 21, 1964, because of their

association with CORE (Congress of Racial Equality). Schwerner was the “first white civil rights worker based outside of the capitol of Jackson, had earned the enmity of the Klan by organizing a black boycott of a white-owned business and aggressively trying to register blacks in and around Meridian to vote.” Goodman, also white, and Chaney, a local young black man, were victims killed by the KKK. These killings brought national attention to the cause because of the deaths of the young white men. The movie “Mississippi Burning” is based on the event and trial of the murders.<sup>20</sup>

“Haki R. Madhubuti is a poet, professor, and founder of Third World Press, the nation's oldest publisher of Black thought and literature. Madhubuti was born Don L. Lee in Little Rock, Arkansas, on February 23, 1942.” He served in the Army and earned a MFA from the University of Iowa. He changed his name to Haki Madhubuti in 1973. “His mother's struggle to overcome poverty, addiction, and degradation while raising her children had a powerful impact on Madhubuti's life, and he credits her as the wellspring of his intellectual development.” She died from an overdose when he was sixteen.”<sup>21</sup>

Nikki Giovanni was born in Knoxville, Tennessee in 1943. “She gained an intense appreciation for her African-American heritage from her outspoken grandmother.” Giovanni has a B.A. in history from Fisk University and attended graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University in New York. Her “first published volumes of poetry grew out of her response to the assassinations of such figures as Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, and Robert Kennedy, and the pressing need she saw to raise awareness of the plight and the rights of black people.”<sup>22</sup>

In the poem “Nikki-Rosa” she mentions Hollydale. In 1952 “Giovanni’s parents had hoped to be able to build a home in a new all-black housing development called Hollydale. But after having had their money tied up in this real estate venture for several years, they realize that obtaining a loan to build a home was not going to be possible in the foreseeable future; racist lending practices simply could not be circumvented.”<sup>23</sup>

### Changes in the Movement

Creedence Clearwater Revival an American rock band consisted of members John Fogerty, brother Tom Fogerty, Stu Cook, and Doug Clifford. Their best years were from 1968 to 1972. “The group combined elements of rock and roll, rhythm and blues, blues, country, gospel and various bayou styles - despite the fact that they emerged in El Cerrito, a suburb in San Francisco Bay Area, and had never even seen the Mississippi bayou.”<sup>24</sup>

The song *Fortunate Son* “is an anti-establishment song of defiance and blue-collar pride, both anti-Washington and against the Vietnam war. John Fogerty and Doug Clifford were both drafted in 1966 and discharged from the army in 1967.” When John Fogerty wrote this song Richard Nixon was president. “Fogerty was not a fan of Nixon and felt that people close to the president were receiving preferential treatment.”<sup>25</sup>

“When interviewed by *Rolling Stone* magazine, John Fogerty was once asked: ‘What inspired ‘Fortunate Son’?’ His response: ‘Julie Nixon was hanging around with David Eisenhower, and you just had the feeling that none of these people were going to be involved with the war.’”<sup>26</sup> Julie and David, daughter and grandson of Presidents, married in 1968 before her father took office.

In Giovanni’s poem “Poem(No Name No. 3)” she mentions several people. Following is background information to share with the students.

“Malcolm X was born as Malcolm Little on May 19, 1925 in Omaha, Nebraska, the fourth of eight children born to Louise and Earl Little. Louise was a homemaker and Earl was a preacher... Because of Earl Little's civil rights activism, the family faced frequent harassment from white supremacist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan...”<sup>27</sup> When Malcolm was young his house was burned to the ground and then his father was killed. His mother had a mental breakdown and was hospitalized. He and his siblings were sent to live with family.

“Malcolm was a smart, focused student. He graduated from junior high at the top of his class. However, when a favorite teacher told Malcolm his dream of becoming a lawyer was ‘no realistic goal for a nigger,’ Malcolm lost interest in school. He dropped out, spent some time in Boston, Massachusetts working various odd jobs, and then traveled to Harlem, New York where he committed petty crimes.”<sup>28</sup>

He eventually was arrested on charges of larceny and sentenced to ten years in jail serving six years before his release. “To pass the time of his incarceration, Malcolm X read constantly... in an attempt make up for the years of education he had missed by dropping out of high school. Also while in prison, he was visited by several siblings who had joined to the Nation of Islam ... Malcolm X converted... he abandoned his surname ‘Little,’ which he considered a relic of slavery, in favor of the surname ‘X’ – a tribute to the unknown name of his African ancestors.”<sup>29</sup>

“Intelligent and articulate, Malcolm was appointed as a minister and national spokesman for the Nation of Islam. Elijah Muhammad also charged him with establishing new mosques in cities such as Detroit, Michigan and Harlem, New York.”<sup>30</sup> “By the early 1960s, Malcolm X had emerged as a leading voice of a radicalized wing of the civil rights movement, presenting an alternative to Dr. Martin Luther King's vision of a racially integrated society achieved by peaceful means. Dr. King was highly critical of what he viewed as Malcolm X's destructive demagoguery.”<sup>31</sup>

Malcolm terminated his relationship with the Nation of Islam and decided to found his own religious organization, the Muslim Mosque, Inc.<sup>32</sup>

“On the evening of February 21, 1965, at the Audubon Ballroom in Manhattan, where Malcolm X was about to deliver a speech, three gunmen rushed the stage and shot him 15 times at point blank range. Malcolm X was pronounced dead on arrival at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital shortly thereafter. He was 39 years old.”<sup>33</sup>

“Imamu Amiri Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones) was born on October 7, 1934 in Newark, New Jersey. He attended Rutgers and then Howard Universities and became a sergeant in the United States Air Force. After his writings led to a dishonorable discharge, Jones moved to Greenwich Village. He became involved in the Black Nationalist poetry and literature scenes and took the name Amiri Baraka after the assassination of Malcolm X. He has taught at several American universities.”<sup>34</sup>

He has authored of over 40 books and is renowned as the founder of the Black Arts Movement in Harlem in the 1960s. “Baraka lives in Newark with his wife and author Amina Baraka; they have five children.”<sup>35</sup>

“Stokely Carmichael was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on June 29, 1941. Carmichael rose to prominence as a member and later the chairman of SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee], working with Martin Luther King Jr. and other Southern leaders to stage protests. Carmichael later lost faith in the tactic of non-violence, promoting ‘Black Power’ and allying himself with the militant Black Panther Party.”<sup>36</sup>

During his last year in high school, Carmichael saw footage of the sit-ins in Greensboro, NC on television. He “felt compelled to join the struggle. ‘When I first heard about the Negroes sitting in at lunch counters down South,’ he later recalled, ‘I thought they were just a bunch of publicity hounds. But one night when I saw those young kids on TV, getting back up on the lunch counter stools after being knocked off them, sugar in their eyes, ketchup in their hair—well, something happened to me. Suddenly I was burning.’” Later in life Carmichael changed his name to Kwame Toure. He died on November 15, 1988.<sup>37</sup>

“Marvin Gaye was born April 2, 1939 in Washington, D.C. He sang in his father's church and in the Moonglows before signing with Motown. He...[became] his own producer on the protest album *What's Going On*.” Gaye was married twice and had three children.<sup>38</sup>

“In 1970, inspired by escalating violence and political unrest over the Vietnam War, Gaye wrote the landmark song *What's Going On* ...the single was released in 1971 and became an instant smash. Its success prompted Gaye to take even more risks, both musically and politically.”<sup>39</sup>

“Despite his successful comeback in the early 1980s, Gaye struggled badly with the

substance abuse and bouts of depression that had plagued him for most of his life....he moved into his parents' house. There he and his father fell into a pattern of violent fights and quarrels that recalled conflicts that had haunted the family for decades. On April 1, 1984, Marvin Gaye Sr. shot and killed his son after a physical altercation; the father claimed he acted in self-defense but would later be convicted of involuntary manslaughter.”<sup>40</sup>

Nina Simone, “singer, musician, composer, arranger, civil rights activist. [was b]orn Eunice Kathleen Waymon on February 21, 1933, in Tryon, North Carolina. She took to music at an early age, learning to play piano at the age of 4, and singing in her church's choir. The sixth of seven children, Simone grew up poor. Her music teacher helped establish a special fund to pay for Simone's education and, after finishing high school...”<sup>41</sup>

“Simone received a scholarship to study classical piano at Julliard, but left early when she ran out of money. She turned her interest to jazz, blues and folk music and released her first album in 1958. In the ‘60s, she became identified as the voice of the civil rights and wrote songs about the movement. She died in France on April 21, 2003.”<sup>42</sup>

“Sly and the Family Stone are credited as one of the first racially integrated bands in music history, belting their message of peace, love and social consciousness through a string of hit anthems that fused R&B, soul, funk and rock n roll. On *Different Strokes by Different Folks* a stylistically, culturally and racially disparate group of chart-toppers mirrors that idealistic diversity.... There was no precedent for Sly & the Family Stone.”<sup>43</sup>

Suggestions for Extensions for the Unit

*Black Power MixTape (1967-1975)*. There is so much from here I wanted to include: Angela Davis’ prison interview, Stokely Carmichael, and the 1974 War on Drugs. This is a rich documentary.

Kara Walker or other artists mentioned in the bibliography for teachers in PBS Art:21 could be a good reflective piece on a contemporary artists.

## Resources

Poems and Videos listed in order of use:

1. “Alabama Clergymen’s Letter to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.”
2. “Letter from a Birmingham Jail [King, Jr.]”
3. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s speech “I Have a Dream”, 1963.
4. “We Wear the Mask” by Paul L. Dunbar
5. “The Mask” by Maya Angelou.

6. "Strange Fruit" by Lewis Allan (Abel Meeropol), 1940.
7. "Strange Fruit" performed by Billie Holiday. 1959. YouTube video.
8. Emmylou Harris "My Name is Emmett Till"
9. Bob Dylan "Death of Emmett Till"
10. "Ballad of Birmingham" by Dudley Randall, 1963.
11. Walter Cronkite's 1968 King Assassination Report (CBS News) April 4, 1968. YouTube video.
12. "Assassination" by Don L. Lee (Haki R. Madhubti).
13. "The Funeral of Martin Luther King Jr." by Nikki Giovanni.
14. "Fortunate Son" by CCR , 1969. YouTube video.
15. "Poem (No Name No. 3) by Nikki Giovanni, 1968.
16. "Malcolm Spoke/Who Listened?" by Don L. Lee (Haki R. Madhubti), 1969.
17. "What's Going On" by Marvin Gaye, 1971.
18. "Nikki-Rosa" by Nikki Giovanni, 1968.
19. "A Message all Black People can Dig (& a few Nigroes Too)" by Don L. Lee (Haki R. Madhubti).
20. "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou, 1978.
21. "To Be Young Gifted and Black" by Nina Simone, 1969.
22. "Everyday People" by Sly and the Family Stone.
23. Kara Walker, PBS Art:21Video, Season 2, Stories, 2003.

## Vocabulary

civil	colophon
rights	awl
movement	relief printing
American Civil Rights Movement	brayer
diaspora	ink
negritude	artist's proof
domestic	edition
segregation	plate
desegregation	printing press
lynching	"pulling" a print
nonviolence	registration
napalm	score
dashiki	spine

## Student Resources

Topics for further research: Stokely Carmichael, Angela Davis, Black Panthers, Swan vs, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Huey P. Newton, NAACP, CORE, SCLC, Don Cornelius, Marvin Gaye, Archie Bunker,

Loving Case 1967, Sly and the Family Stone, Mahatmas Gandhi, Lewis Allen (Abel Meeropol), Dr. Maya Angelou, Highlander School.

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