

Hi, I'm
Harriet.



TALKING HISTORY

with

Harriet and Roxanne™

Black Visual Artists

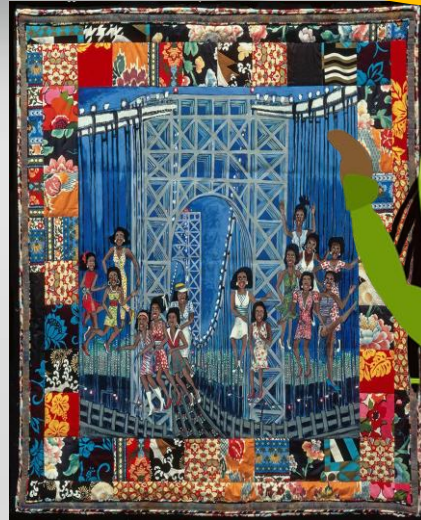
And I'm
Roxanne.
Join us for...



Harriet, where are we, and what is our next Lesson?



Beverly McIver

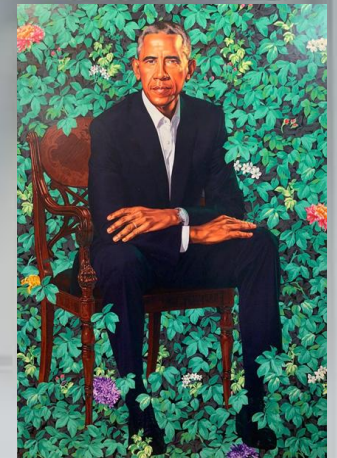


Faith Ringgold

This is an art gallery, and these are the works of four artists, out of eight, that we will study today.



Kerry James Marshall



Kehinde Wiley



Henry Ossawa Tanner 1859-1937



Henry is the first artist we will discuss. On my left is his studio.

Tanner was the first Black artist to gain international acclaim. He moved to Paris in 1891 to paint. Let's look at some of his paintings.





Before we look at Henry's paintings, can you tell me about his family?



Henry's mother, Sarah Elizabeth Miller, was a former slave and escaped with the help of the underground railroad. His father, Benjamin Tucker Tanner, was a Bishop in the AME Church. Benjamin expected Henry to become a minister.

Henry went to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and was taught by Thomas Eakins. His father influenced Henry's religious subject matter. Eventually, Henry went to Paris to paint and escape racism.

Now, let's look at his some of his paintings.



The Banjo Lesson, 1893

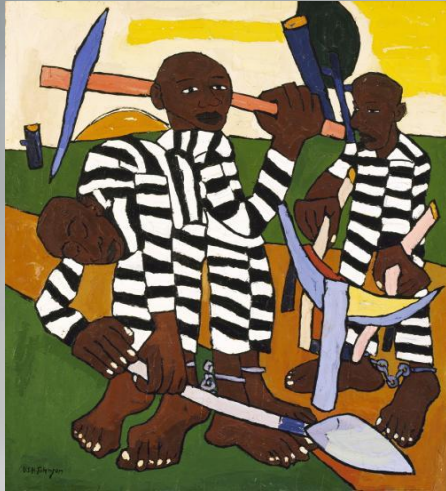


The Thankful Poor, 1894

Henry O. Tanner is known for his religious art. Here are some rare genre paintings that capture 19th century Black America. The Banjo Lesson is a sensitive interaction between a grandfather and his grandson, teaching the boy how to play the banjo.



The Three Marys, 1910



Chain Gang, 1939



Off to War, 1942



Breakdown With Flat Tire



Going to Church, 1941

I love these paintings!

This artist is William H. Johnson (1901-1970). His story is very interesting.



William used a limited palette of four or five colors and usually painted on burlap or plywood to create these beautiful paintings.

William H. Johnson explored many different art styles before he settled on a flat, consciously naïve style of folk art. Johnson focused on subject matter that was predominantly powerful scenes of African American life. Political themes such as **The Chain Gang** exposed the abusive convict leasing system that many states in the South used for free labor in the early 20th century. After his wife died in 1944, Johnson became less prolific in his art career. The Smithsonian American Art Museum has 1,000 of his paintings. He is one of the most influential Black artists of his generation.



Do you like this artwork?

I'm not sure I understand it. Who is this artist?



The Twenties, Mecklenburg County, School Bell Time



Three Folk Musicians



All the Things You Are

This is Romare Bearden (1911-1988), known for his photomontage compositions made from cut images from magazines & photographs. The work is a collage of different materials and is not meant to be realistic.

Romare wanted to create art about the life of his people. He loved vibrant colors in flat shapes. Does this help you understand his work?



The Twenties, Mecklenberg County, School Bell Time

Thanks, Harriet! I love the colors, the collage materials he used, and the paint.

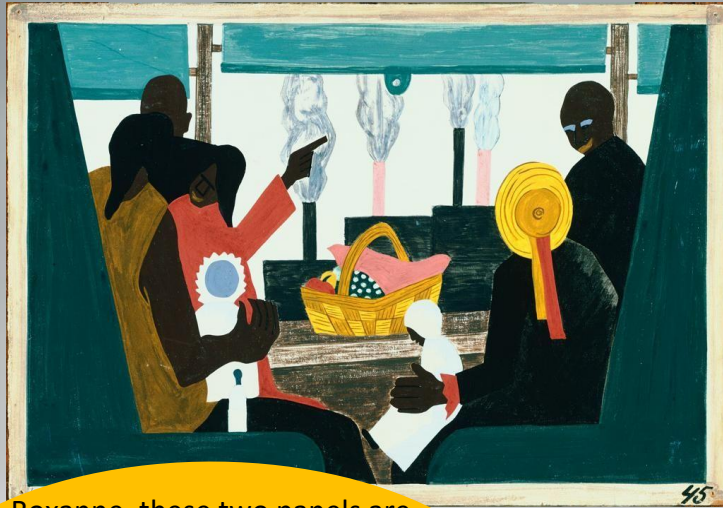


Three Folk Musicians



Roxanne, This is Jacob Lawrence (1912-2000). He was one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. We will look at his “The Migration of the Negro Series.” During the early 20th century, many Blacks left the South for more opportunities in the North.





Roxanne, these two panels are enlarged so our students can see them better. These are from the Great Migration Series of 60 panels of small tempera paintings that chronicle the migration of Blacks from the South to the North.

Jacob was only 22 when he created this epic narrative of our people.



I wish I could see all 60 panels!



Tar Beach 2



Dancing on the George Washington Bridge

Faith Ringgold was a talented story quilt maker. Her quilts tell the stories about Black communities.

Roxanne, did you know that quilt making has its roots in the pre-Civil War slave culture.

That is interesting.



Meet our next artist, Kerry James Marshall (1955-). He is one of the most successful living artists in America.



In 1997, Kerry sold **Past Times** to McCormick Place in Chicago for \$25,000. The painting was resold in 2018 for \$18,500,000.



Untitled, 2016



Past Times, 1997

Awesome!



Kerry is one of the most successful contemporary Black artists in America. He reduces the figures to blackness to create visual narratives of Black life in America. His monumental paintings combine painterly realism with elements of collage and pattern. In **Past Times**, Kerry uses a narrative of Black figures in activities typically assigned to white suburbia.



The Light Within



Happy Times



Untitled



Harriet, these paintings are beautiful!



This is Beverly McIver (1962 -). Her paintings explore her life through autobiographical self-portraits. She chronicles her life and others to illustrate personal histories and struggles in the African American experience. These paintings are very expressive.



Kehinde Wiley

Harriet, that's a portrait of Barack Obama!

Kehinde Wiley (1977-) was the artist selected to do the presidential portrait of President Obama. Kehinde's style is painted with highly naturalistic compositions of Black people. His art brings a different perspective to the audiences' understanding of the Black experience.



Roxanne, Kehinde Wiley was the last artist we will visit today.

What did you think of the artwork today?

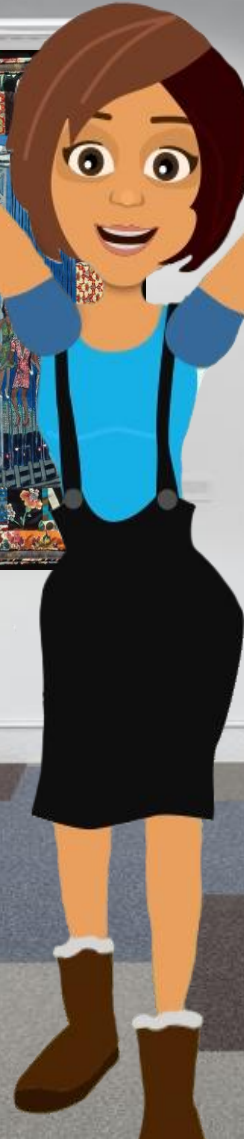
Harriet, I learned so much about art. I can't wait to get back home and create my artwork!



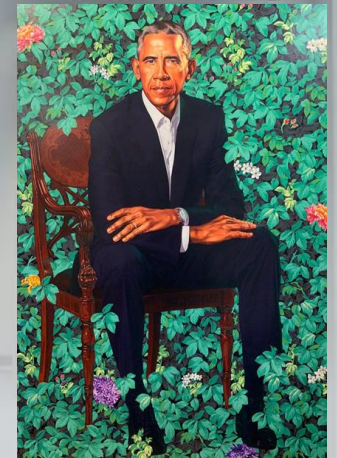
Beverly Mclver



Faith Ringgold



Kerry James Marshall



Kehinde Wiley

Thanks for joining us today for our lesson on artists.

Please come back soon for more **Talking History with Harriet & Roxanne.**





Help us keep educating America about black history. To keep this information coming, consider supporting us by donating at

<https://www.yocumblackhistory.org/donate/>

