

EXHIBITION COMPANION GUIDE

Threads of History: Quilts by Carolyn Mazloomi

June 12 – September 12, 2026

THE DR. ROBERT L. BRANDT, JR. FAMILY GALLERY
THE IRA AND SUSAN THOMSEN FAMILY GALLERY
THE JACK W. AND SALLY D. EICHELBERGER FOUNDATION VIDEO GALLERY



*Harry and Henrietta Moore:
Freedom Never Dies, 2026*
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
71.5 x 71 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Harry T. Moore was a pioneer African American civil rights activist who helped register Black voters and fought against racial injustice, voter suppression, and lynching. Moore helped found NAACP branches throughout Florida as a teacher and organizer. He was determined to register Black voters at a time when many black Americans were threatened and prevented from voting.

Moore also investigated lynchings and worked to bring justice to Blacks killed by white mobs. In 1949, four Black boys were accused of beating and raping a white woman. They became known as "The Groveland Four." All four were sentenced to death and one boy was lynched while in custody of prison guards. Moore was strongly outspoken about this injustice which led to threats against him and his family.

On December 25, 1951, Harry and his wife, Henrietta's house was bombed by the Klu Klux Klan. Harry died from his injuries and Henrietta died a few days later. Their story was seen around the world and became one of the first casualties of the modern Civil Rights Movement. Today Harry Moore is known for his bravery and contributions to just education as a teacher and leader.



Black Panther Party, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
80 x 81 inches
Courtesy of the artist

The Black Panther Party was a Black political party founded in 1966 to challenge police brutality against Black communities. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale founded the group in Oakland. Images of both leaders are found on the quilt. Huey P. Newton sitting in his chair holding a spear in one hand and a rifle in the other. During the Civil Rights era when Jim Crow laws were still rampant, many blacks were victims of police brutality, segregation, poverty, inadequate housing, and education.

Black Panthers wanted Black communities to have the power to police and improve their own neighborhoods. They wore black berets and leather jackets, carried around law books, and monitored the police as they worked to stop brutality against Black people.

They published what they called a "Ten-Point Program" with demands for freedom, justice, and equality. They wanted freedom and self-determination for Black communities. The Panthers called for fair housing, quality education, jobs, and economic justice. They wanted an end to police brutality and for Black men to not be drafted to fight in the Vietnam war. Lastly, they wanted justice in the courts.

The Black Panthers combined political activism with serving their communities. Many historians give credit to the Panthers for creating community outreach programs that served thousands. They would provide free breakfast for school children before they went to class. All across the country thousands of children were receiving meals daily. The Panthers set up free medical clinics in poor neighborhoods that didn't have access to good healthcare. Teaching self-defense classes is just one of the many things they did.

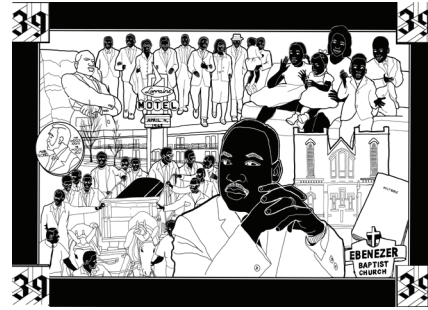
The Black Panther Party opened liberation schools and also set up voter education and political education classes. The Party promoted African American culture and history through their programs. During this time, Black history was often overlooked in schools. The Panthers encouraged Black pride and learning about African heritage. They were very active in the community organizing many helpful programs. They set up free clothing giveaways for the community. There were food distribution programs and senior transportation programs.

The Panthers also set up prison support programs for families whose loved ones were incarcerated. They still stand today for empowering black communities and challenging segregation. Many now study the Black Panther Party as a civil rights movement as well.



Buried Rights: Uncle Sam's Graveyard, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
75 x 78 inches
Courtesy of the artist

No explanation needed. This is where our current leaders have America...

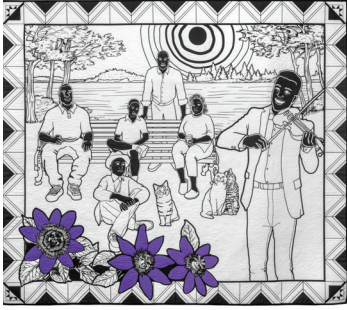


Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: He Had a Dream, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings; hand
stenciling; hand painting; machine quilted
80 x 110 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Baptist minister and civil rights leader. Dr. King led the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. He is well known for his fight against segregation and discrimination against Black people using nonviolent protest.

He led major protests such as the Montgomery Bus Boycotts and the Birmingham campaign. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's teachings, Dr. King led the 1963 March on Washington. During his speech he told the world he had a dream that one day we will all be judged by the content of our character and not the color of our skin.

Dr. King played a huge role in the Civil Rights Act being passed in 1964. The act banned segregation in public places and banned employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. He helped pave the way for the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Dr. King won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 and was assassinated in 1968.



Elijah Plays a Concerto for the Dead, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
69 x 78 inches
Courtesy of the artist

This quilt honors the life of Elijah McClain and others whose lives were cut short by police and mob violence. Elijah McClain was a 23-year-old Black man who died in August 2019 after a confrontation with police in Aurora, Colorado. He was walking home from a store when someone called 911, reporting a suspicious person. When police arrived, they stopped McClain, who was reportedly unarmed and wearing a ski mask, which he wore because he often got cold.

During the encounter, officers attempted to restrain him, and he struggled, leading them to use a chokehold. After he became unresponsive, paramedics injected him with ketamine to sedate him. He suffered cardiac arrest and was later pronounced dead in the hospital.

McClain's death sparked widespread protests and calls for justice, particularly in the context of increasing scrutiny over police practices and systemic racism. In 2021, a grand jury indicted several officers and paramedics involved in his death on charges including manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide. On the back of the quilt are his last words to the police. I was struck by the pure innocence of the words spoken. Heartbreaking. In the park he plays the violin for Emmett Till, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, George Stinney and Breonna Taylor. All the victims of murders. Present in the park are cats. Elijah used to go to the local animal shelter and play his violin for the cats. He felt the music calmed them in their cages.

The boy sitting in the middle of the bench is George Stinney, the youngest person in America to be sentenced to death in the electric chair. He was sentenced in 1944 for the murder of two young white girls. There are Passion flowers around the border of the quilt. A witness reported to the police they saw the two young white girls stop Stinney and his sister to ask if they knew where they could find Maypops. Maypops are the edible fruit of the Passion flower.

In 2014, seventy years after Stinney's execution, his conviction was vacated by a South Carolina court ruling that he did not receive a fair trial, and was wrongfully executed. Seventy years later!



Emmett Till: The River Couldn't Take the Essence of His Soul, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
80 x 80 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Emmett Louis Till was a 14-year-old boy lynched in Mississippi after being falsely accused of offending a white woman. Till was born on July 25, 1941, in Chicago Illinois. During the summer of 1955, Till was visiting family near Money, Mississippi. Till, while in Mississippi, allegedly whistled at, touched, or spoke to 21-year-old white married woman Carolyn Bryant at her family's grocery store.

How severely Till supposedly violated Carolyn is debated. However, no matter the severity he broke an unspoken law that a black man was not to upset a white woman. What happened to Carolyn by Till, whether a minor or not, was unacceptable in the Jim Crow South. Several nights later, Carolyn's husband Roy along with his half-brother JW Milam came to the home Till was staying at with his great uncle. Both men were armed and abducted Till, who was 14 years old.

They proceeded to beat him, torture him, mutilate him and then shoot him in the head. After shooting Till they tied a metal milkshake box to Till's neck with barbed wire and threw him in the Tallahatchie River. Three days later his murdered body was discovered floating in the river. Till's killer opened fire on the crowd trying to retrieve his body, but police eventually managed to recover Emmett's body.

Till's mutilated and swollen body was shipped back to Chicago, Illinois where his mother held a funeral with an open casket. Mother Till revealed her son's battered body to the world. What shockingly happened next would rally support from all around the country and shatter the mentality that racism was only a Southern issue. Millions learned of Emmett Till's murder and looked at the horrific images of his injuries. Blacks were motivated by the injustices that happened to Till and many whites were in disbelief that such cruelty was possible in modern society.

The all-white jury acquitted Bryant and Milam of Till's murder. Protected by double jeopardy if the FBI ever brought charges, the murderers told a magazine writer in 1956 that yes, they murdered Till. The murderers sold their story to the magazine for \$4000 dollars.

Till became what many consider the catalyst for the modern civil rights movement. If you would like to learn more about Emmett Till I recommend watching the movie "The Killing of Emmett Till" on Netflix.

The quilt pictures Till's accuser, as well as his mother at his funeral. Also pictured is the barn where Till was tortured, and the store where he supposedly interacted with the white woman who owned the store.



Frederick Douglass, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
72 x 71 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Fredrick Douglass was an American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer and statesman. He was a leader of the abolitionist movement, which fought to end the practice of slavery of African Americans.

Douglass escaped slavery in 1838 and went on to become a leader of abolitionists in Massachusetts and New York. He gained renown for his eloquence and incendiary writings against slavery. Many northerners could not believe that such an articulate man was once a slave. This is what inspired Douglas to write his first autobiography.

Douglass wrote three autobiographies detailing his experiences as an enslaved man. Douglas understood the importance of alliances despite differences. He built relationships with white allies to help gain support for the abolitionist movement.

In the quilt there is an image of Ida B. Wells and Douglass sitting in his office. Both were interested in getting women the right to vote.



Little Rock Nine: Profiles of Courage, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
80 x 80 inches
Courtesy of the artist

The Little Rock Nine were a group of nine African American students who became a pivotal symbol of the civil rights movement in the United States when they integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957. Their courage and determination in the face of extreme hostility marked a significant moment in the struggle for desegregation and equality in education following the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which ruled that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional.

In 1957, the Little Rock School Board decided to comply with the federal mandate to desegregate schools, beginning with Central High School. The students were met with fierce resistance from white segregationists, both in the community and among their peers. Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus called in the National Guard to block the students from entering the school, defying the federal ruling. President Dwight D. Eisenhower intervened by deploying the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army to escort the students into the school, ensuring their safety and enforcing federal law.

The students endured relentless verbal and physical abuse from white students and community members throughout the school year. They endured and their bravery galvanized the civil rights movement and demonstrated the federal government's commitment to upholding civil rights, though progress was slow. Their story is now recognized as a landmark event in the fight against segregation, with Central High School designated as a National Historic Site to honor their courage and the broader struggle for equality. My quilt is a tribute to their courage.



The Loving Family, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
71 x 71 inches
Courtesy of the artist

When you see "The Loving family of Virginia" pictures probably come to mind of Richard and Mildred Loving. Richard was a white man, and Mildred was Black and Native American. Their marriage was illegal in the state of Virginia because of anti-miscegenation laws.

The couple got married in Washington D.C. and decided to return to Virginia. Upon their return, the police raided their home and arrested them. The charge was "cohabiting as man and wife, against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth."

The Lovings were found guilty and sentenced to one year in prison. The judge suspended the sentence on the condition that they leave Virginia and not return for 25 years. They moved to D.C. but wanted to return to their home in Virginia. The case made it to the Supreme Court in 1967 under the case name *Loving v. Virginia*.

The court ruled that laws prohibiting interracial marriage were unconstitutional. Richard and Mildred didn't set out to change the world, they simply wanted to be married and live as a family in their home. The Loving family became a symbol of peaceful resistance. Richard and Mildred Loving are now known as one of the most influential Supreme Court cases supporting marriage equality.



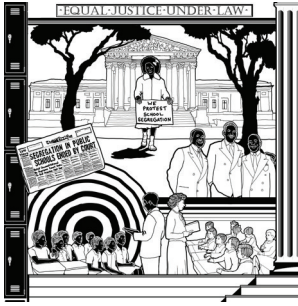
Malcolm X: I've Been Changed, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
80 x 80 inches
Courtesy of the artist

This quilt is dedicated to the life of Malcolm X. Malcolm X was a prominent African-American leader, civil rights activist, and human rights advocate. He played a significant role in the struggle for racial justice and empowerment of Black people in the United States during the mid-20th century. In the quilt there's an image of the state of Nebraska because Malcolm X was born in Omaha. At the time Malcolm X went on the Pilgrimage he and his wife had two daughters. That Pilgrimage was very transformative for Malcolm X.

He was a follower of the Nation of Islam. As a minister and national spokesperson for the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X became known for his fiery rhetoric and uncompromising stance on racial justice. He advocated Black pride, self-reliance, and the need for Black people to defend themselves against oppression.

Initially, Malcolm X promoted Black separatism and criticized the mainstream civil rights movement's focus on integration. His famous quote, "By any means necessary," encapsulated his belief in taking proactive measures to achieve freedom and equality. After a pilgrimage to Mecca, Malcolm X embraced Sunni Islam and adopted the name El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. This experience broadened his perspective, leading him to advocate for racial unity and collaboration across racial and cultural lines. Written around the edges of the quilt is a quote by Malcolm X after his Pilgrimage. He saw pilgrims of every color from all over the world displaying unity.

Malcolm X was assassinated on February 21, 1965, during a speech in New York City. Members of the Nation of Islam were implicated in his murder, though questions remain about the full extent of the conspiracy. Malcolm X remains a symbol of resistance, empowerment, and the fight for justice. His life and ideas continue to inspire movements for social change worldwide.



No to Segregation: Brown vs Board, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
71 x 68 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Brown v. Board of Education was a U.S Supreme court case that ruled public school segregation was unconstitutional. Prior to this case black and white schools were considered "separate but equal." In reality, schools were far from equal as Black schools had fewer resources.

Brown v. Board was a case that was made up of five different lawsuits. The plaintiffs were black families who argued that their children were not receiving equal education. The lead plaintiff was Oliver Brown from Kansas along with many other families.

The case was ruled in favor of the families involved and led to the end of segregation in public schools. The Supreme Court declared that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal. This was a victory for the Civil Rights Movement and started the integration of public schools.



Sojourner Truth, 2025
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
80 x 81 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Sojourner Truth was born into slavery in New York around 1797. She changed her name from Isabella Baumfree to Sojourner Truth after becoming a Christian. Sojourner chose the name to represent her mission which was to "travel and speak the truth."

Sojourner Truth is well known for her speech she gave in 1851. Many know the speech as "Ain't I a woman?" Truth spoke at a women's rights convention. During her speech she talked about how the treatment of women and Black people were unfair.

She fought for abolition, women's rights, and was a supporter of women's suffrage. Truth helped recruit black troops to fight for the union during the Civil War. She spent her life speaking out against slavery and for equal rights for Black Americans and women.



Good Trouble II, 2024
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
67 x 51 inches
Courtesy of the artist

John Lewis was one of my heroes. He was a leader of the Civil Rights Movement and played a key role in the struggle for racial equality in the United States. Lewis was a strong advocate for nonviolent protest and civil disobedience as tools for social change. He was a leading figure in the voting rights movement and was instrumental in the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. John Lewis was a highly respected and admired figure in American politics and civil rights history. His lifelong dedication to fighting for equality and justice has left a lasting impact on the nation. I had the pleasure of meeting him in 2014 in Washington, D. C. and presented him with one of my quilts. It was one of the highlights of my life.

The quilt depicts John Lewis crossing the John Pettus bridge during the Selma to Montgomery March. Another image pictures him as a Freedom Rider and being arrested for marching.



The Green Book, 2024
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
77 x 77 inches
Courtesy of the artist

As a young person growing up in Louisiana, I remember my father having a copy of *The Green Book*. As we traveled the South visiting relatives, we had to be prepared. My mother packed food to eat, because we could not buy food in segregated restaurants. *The Green Book*, formally known as *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, holds significant historical and cultural importance for African Americans. Published from 1936 to 1966, *The Green Book* provided essential information for African American travelers during a time of widespread racial segregation and discrimination in the United States. It listed safe places to eat, stay, and refuel, helping to navigate a landscape where many establishments refused service to Black patrons. *The Green Book* empowered African Americans by offering them a tool to reclaim their right to travel freely. It helped foster a sense of agency, allowing Black families to plan trips with some assurance of safety and hospitality.

The listings in *The Green Book* often highlighted Black-owned businesses, promoting economic solidarity within the African American community. It encouraged travelers to support Black entrepreneurs, helping to strengthen local economies during a time of systemic exclusion. *The Green Book* serves as a historical document that preserves the experiences and challenges faced by African Americans during the Jim Crow era. It reflects the resilience and ingenuity of Black communities in creating solutions to systemic racism. The existence of *The Green Book* is a testament to the creativity and resourcefulness of African Americans in the face of oppression. It symbolizes resistance against segregation and discrimination, showcasing the determination to travel and explore despite the risks.

Today, *The Green Book* is studied as an important artifact in discussions about race relations, civil rights, and American history. It provides insights into the social dynamics of the time and serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggles for equality and justice. *The Green Book* is significant to African Americans as a historical tool for safe travel, a symbol of empowerment and community support, and a testament to resilience in the face of systemic racism. Its legacy continues to resonate in contemporary discussions about race, travel, and the importance of preserving cultural history.



The Immortal Legacy of Henrietta Lacks, 2024
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
70.5 x 55 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Henrietta Lacks was an African American woman who became known as the “Mother of Modern Medicine.” In 1951 she went to Johns Hopkins Hospital to treat her aggressive cervical cancer. Doctors at Hopkins took samples from her cancer cells without her knowledge or consent.

Normal human cells cannot live long in a petri dish but Henrietta’s could. Scientists discovered they could be used to study the human body and help with testings such as drugs. Her cells were distributed around the world for research and doctors even patented them without her family’s knowledge.

HeLa cells have been used for scientific breakthroughs such as developing the polio vaccine, cancer research, gene mapping, HIV/AIDS research, and helped with in vitro fertilization. Henrietta Lacks died in 1951 from her battle with cancer but her cells are still alive today. Because her identity was not revealed for many years her cells were bought and sold worldwide.

Henrietta Lack’s story would kick off discussion about many issues we still deal with today in medicine such as informed consent, patient rights, and racial injustice.

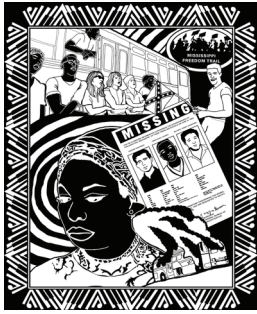


I Wear the Mask: Paul Dunbar, 2024
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
71 x 68 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Paul Laurence Dunbar was born in Dayton, Ohio to parents who had been enslaved. Paul Dunbar was one of the first African American poets to gain national recognition. Dunbar wrote about the lives of African Americans around the turn of the century. He used both a formal “standard English” and the African American dialect of his day.

Dunbar wrote about the struggles that Blacks faced and also wrote about Black joy. Dunbar is best known for poems such as *We Wear the Mask* and *Sympathy*. *Sympathy* contains one of the most famous lines in American poetry “I know why the caged bird sings.”

Dunbar faced racial discrimination from American society even though he was acclaimed by prominent authors such as poet Walt Whitman. Dunbar’s writing mainly focused on racial discrimination and the challenges African Americans faced but suffered from underneath a veil that hid their true emotions.



Mississippi Goddam: Remembering Mississippi Burning, 2024
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
78 x 78 inches
Courtesy of the artist

This quilt was inspired by Nina Simone's song *Mississippi Goddam*. Simone's *Mississippi Goddam* is a searing protest song and one of the most potent compositions to come out of the Civil Rights Movement. Written in 1964, it was penned in response to the assassination of civil rights activist Medgar Evers and the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing which killed four young Black children.

At the beginning, the song feels catchy and lively – it could almost pass as a Broadway tune. But lyrics about racial injustice, bloodshed, and suffering cut through the veneer, expressing Simone's fury at being told to wait any longer for equality. Simone wanted Black people to know that they had waited long enough for their civil rights. Simone understood that Black Americans could not wait any longer for their freedom. Whenever she sang about being told to "go slow," she was calling out politicians and the rest of society for not instituting major civil rights changes by then. She wasn't going to wait any longer either. *Mississippi Goddam* became her declaration.

In addition to calling out America to speed things up, *Mississippi Goddam* was a criticism of Mississippi itself. By saying those two words over and over again at the end of each verse, Simone wasn't just referring to that state; she was speaking about the oppression that affected Black people all across the country. Mississippi was ground zero for the Civil Rights Movement. Many Black people were killed in the state during that time, including three male Civil Rights Workers.

Mississippi Goddam was banned by some radio stations across the country. Records were destroyed in parts of the South. Despite its controversial nature at the time, it became an anthem for resistance and established Nina Simone as one of the most powerful artistic voices of the Civil Rights Movement.

Today, *Mississippi Goddam* is powerful because of how unapologetically honest it is. Simone took her anger and suffering and turned it into art that spoke for so many other Black people during the Civil Rights Movement. She used her voice and art to motivate others to stand up to inequality and injustice.



Ruby's Courage, 2024
Cotton fabric, thread, and batting;
textile ink; commercial paintings;
hand stenciling; hand painting;
machine quilted
68 x 67 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Ruby Bridges is known for being one of the first black children to desegregate public schools in America. At the age of six Ruby was the first Black student to attend William Frantz Elementary in New Orleans, Louisiana. Ruby was forced to go to school with federal marshals due to protests by racist whites.

White parents pulled their kids out of school when Ruby started, and she spent many days learning alone with her teacher. Ruby became a symbol of the Civil Rights Movement and shows how far we have come. Ruby Bridges Hall is the wife of Ruby Bridges and a famous activist herself.