

# Quilting: Stitching Together Stories

The art of African American quilting can be traced back to Central and West African wall hangings in the 17th century and has been celebrated annually in March as National Quilting Day. Quilts hung outside safe houses along the Underground Railroad used embedded codes that were sewn into the design, giving an enslaved person on the run vital information on dangers or where to head next. Quilting continued as a way for those in chattel slavery to secretly engage in a visual language, do their part with needle and thread. Quilt making is a tradition that has been handed down over generations. The quilts use large shapes, patterns, symbols and bright colors on separate panels that are sewn together.

**Master Quilter Khristel Johnson** is a student of life, mother of two, and was an educator for over 30 years. As a teacher, she followed American history as presented in textbooks, while often privately questioning the narrative. Yet, years later she faced a significant racially motivated challenge as an administrator, and she began to seek comfort through the stories and history of her African ancestors. What began with a single discovery, transformed into a series of unplanned fabric squares that were constructed into a 3-part series entitled, *From the Plantation to the White House*.



This singular mission broadened as she shared the often-omitted experience of African Americans in the textbooks used in classrooms. It is Khristel's sincere hope that she will in some way inspire others to embark on their own journey and seek a more inclusive, accurate and comprehensive understanding of American history.

Quiltsbykj.com • kjohnson@quiltsbykj.com

## County Wide Installations • February 5-28

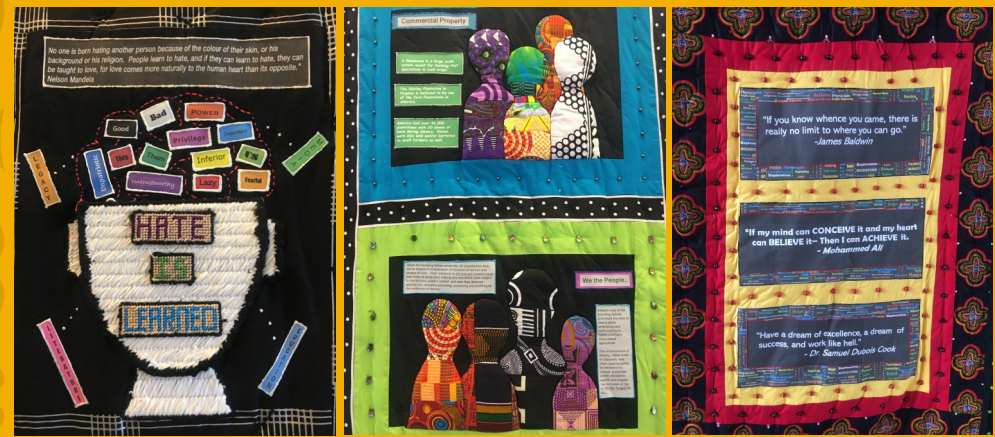
**Arthur F. Turner Community Library**, 1212 Merkley Ave, West Sacramento  
Mon 12-7pm, Tues-Thurs 11am-7pm, Fri-Sat 10am-5:30pm

**Capay Valley Health & Community Center**, 17340 Yolo Ave, Esparto  
Mon, Wed, Fri 8am-5pm, Tues & Thurs 8am-7pm

**Erwin Meier Administration Building**, 625 Court St, Woodland  
Mon-Fri 8am-4pm

**Mary L. Stephens Davis-Branch Library**, 315 E 14th St, Davis  
Mon 12-8pm, Tues-Thurs 9:30am-8pm, Fri-Sat 9:30am-5:30pm, Sun 1-5:30pm

**Winters Community Library**, 708 Railroad Ave, Winters  
Mon & Wed 8am-6pm, Tues & Thurs 8am-8pm, Fri 8am-5pm, Sat 1-5pm



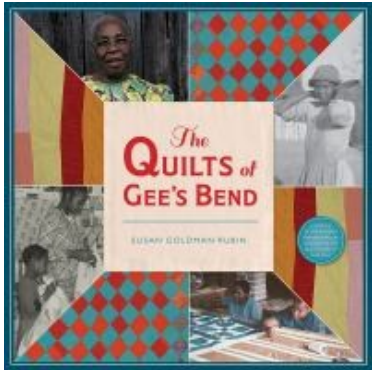
## Stitching Together Stories

Celebrating Black History through Quilts, Education, & Engagement

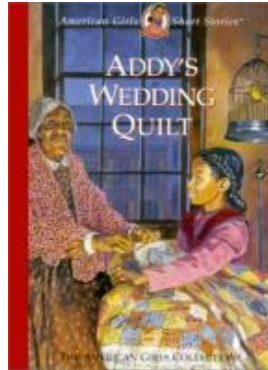




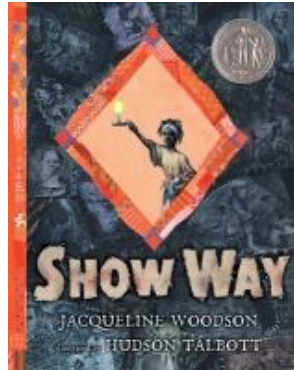
## READING SUGGESTIONS FOR CHILDREN



The quilts of Gee's Bend by Susan Goldman Rubin. J746.4609 RUB



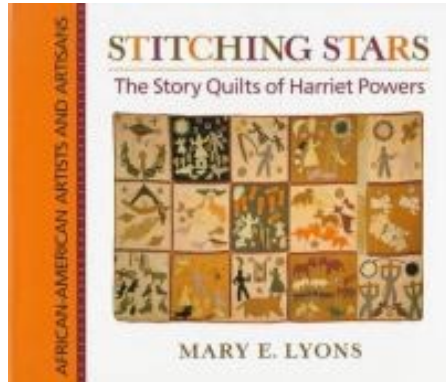
Addy's Wedding Quilt by Connie Porter. J AMERICAN



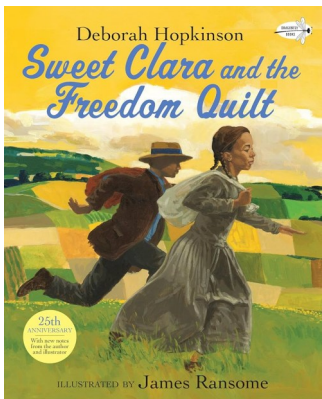
Show Way by Jacqueline Woodson and Hudson Talbott. PICTURE BOOK PEOPLE & PLACES WOO



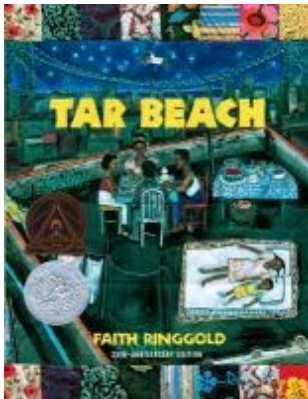
Stitchin' and Pullin': a Gee's Bend Quilt by Patricia C. McKissack. PICTURE BOOK ARTS MCK



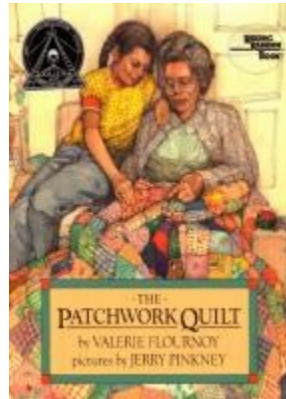
Stitching Stars : The Story Quilts of Harriet Powers by Mary E. Lyons. J746.97 LYO



Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt by Deborah Hopkinson. PICTURE BOOK PEOPLE & PLACES HOP

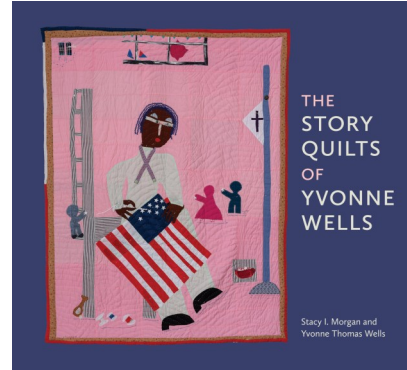


Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold. PICTURE BOOK PEOPLE & PLACES RIN

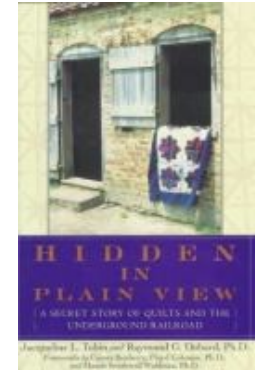


The Patchwork Quilt by Valerie Flournoy. PICTURE BOOK GROWING UP FLO

## READING SUGGESTIONS FOR ADULTS



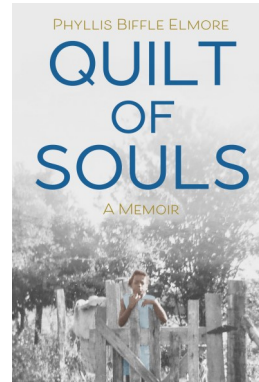
The Story Quilts of Yvonne Wells by Dr. Stacy I. Morgan & Ms. Yvonne Thomas Wells. 746.49092 MOR



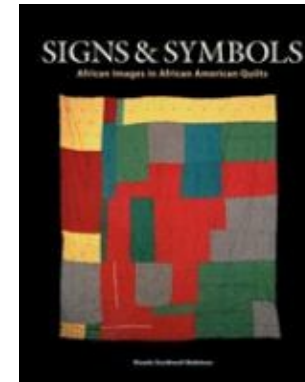
Hidden in Plain View by Jacqueline L. Tobin & Raymond G. Dobard. 973.7115 TOB



Firstborn Girls by Bernice McFadden. B MCFADDEN



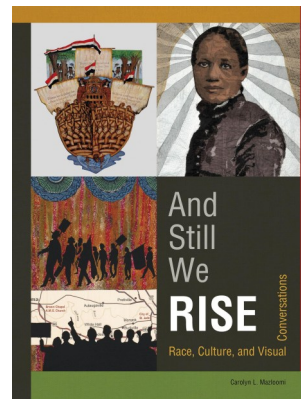
Quilt of Souls by Phyllis Biffle Elmore. B ELMORE



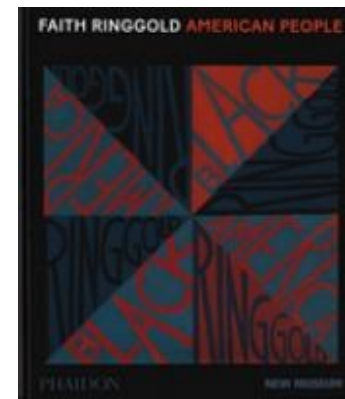
Signs & Symbols: African Images in African Quilts by Maude Southwell Wahlman. 746.97089 WAH



Gee's Bend: The Architecture of the Quilt. 746.46089 ARN



And Still We Rise: Race, Culture, and Visual Conversations by Carolyn L. Mazoomi 746.46089 MAZ



Faith Ringgold: American People. 709.2 RIN



The Thread Collectors by Shaunna J. Edwards and Alyson Richman. FIC EDWARDS