

Connecting: Art, Belief & Practice

In celebration of Black History Month, we learned about five Black artists whose artwork explores religion, belief, and practice, and connects with art and themes in the Glencairn collection! Each page has a different artist. Here's what we explored...

Artist Bio

Look at a picture of each artist and learn a little bit about them and their beliefs, and the way that they live their lives to put their beliefs into practice.

Art

See a few pieces of art by this artist.

Explore

A few questions to help you take a closer look at their art in detail.

Be inspired by their art to help create some of your own!

Make Art!

Glencairn Collection Connections

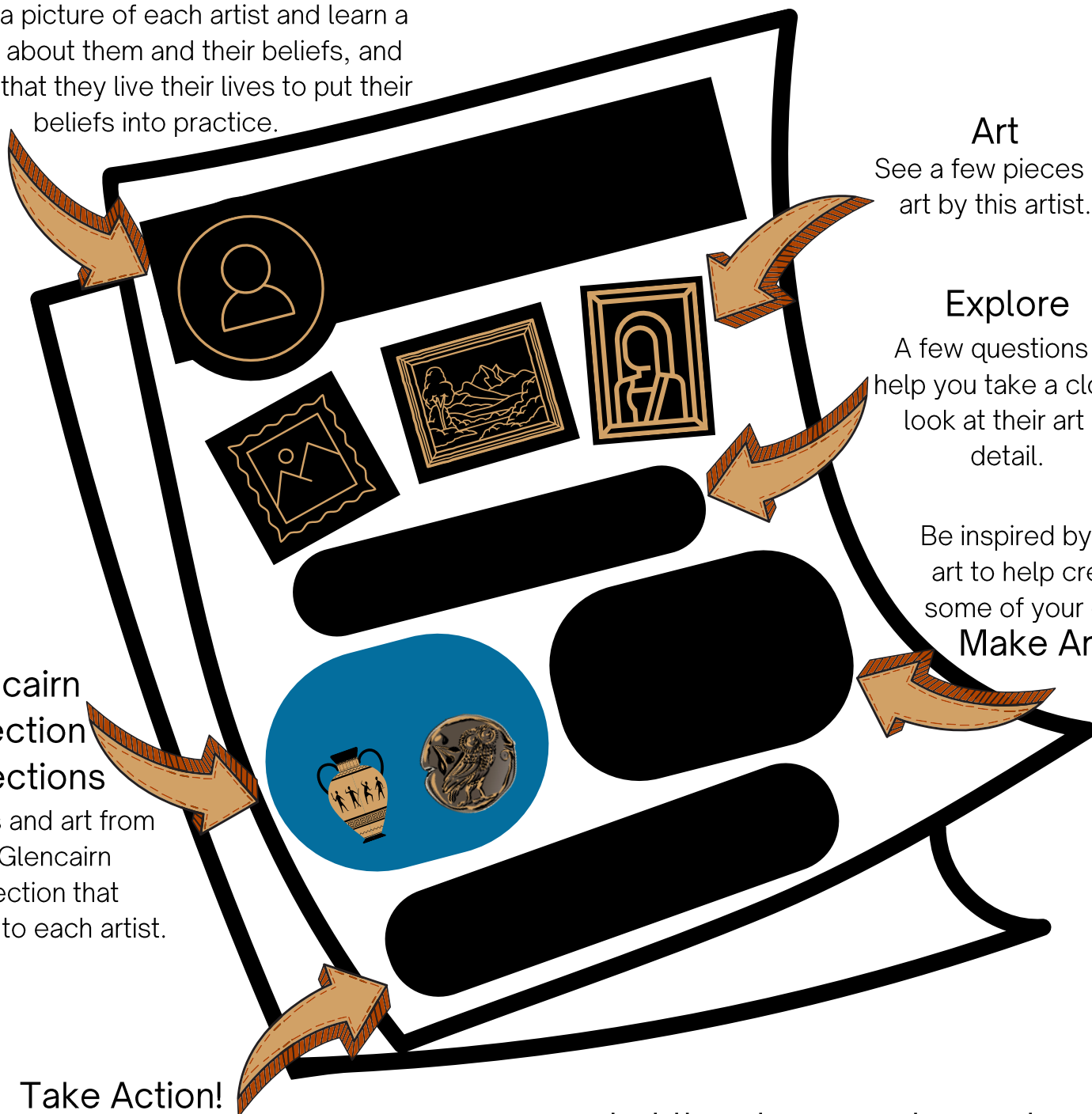
Objects and art from the Glencairn Collection that connect to each artist.

Take Action!

Explore ways that you can be inspired by each artist and their work to take action in your life!

...but there's so much more!

Who else would you like to learn about?
What types of art spark your creativity and curiosity?
What are other actions you are inspired to take?



Henry Ossawa Tanner

Henry Tanner was an artist who lived and worked in both the US and France. He was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1859 and he moved with his family to Philadelphia when he was 10 years old. As a Black artist in the 1800s in America, Tanner faced a great deal of discrimination and racism, and he spent most of his career in Paris.

Early on in his career, Tanner's paintings were mostly of animals, nature, and everyday life. Later in his life he traveled to the Holy Land. His paintings from later in his career became religious and inspired by the Bible. Tanner grew up in a religious family - his dad was a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. This, and his visits to the Holy Land, might have inspired his art.



Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

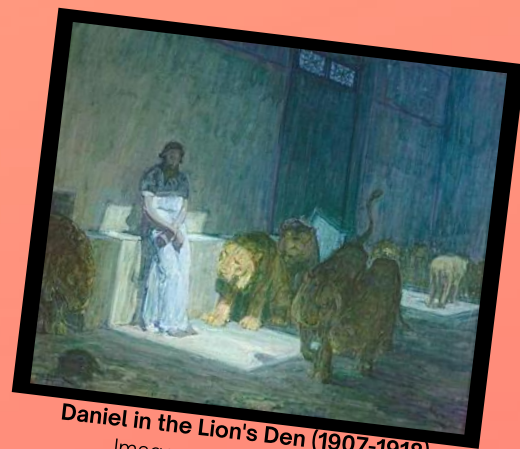
Tanner's Art:



The Annunciation (1898)
Image courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art



Flight Into Egypt (1899)
Image courtesy of Detroit Institute of Arts



Daniel in the Lion's Den (1907-1918)
Image courtesy of LACMA

Explore More!

- What colors and shapes do you notice in Tanner's paintings?
- What animals can you find?
- What do you notice about the texture of Tanner's paintings? Do they look rough or smooth?
- What do you think is happening in each painting?

Explore some of Tanner's other work [here at the Philadelphia Museum of Art](#) and [here on Google Arts & Culture!](#)

Make Art!

Henry Tanner painted using oil paints, and his art is well known for its realism. Realism is an art style that focuses on painting things in a very realistic and careful way.



This is not the only style that he painted in, and sometimes his artwork is full of rough brushstrokes. He became known for a collection of colors that were called the "Tanner Blues". They were colors like dark blue, purple, and turquoise, like the colors in this painting called [Christ and His Mother Studying the Scriptures](#).

Image courtesy of Dallas Museum of Art

Glencairn Museum Collection Connection

Check out some of the art in the Glencairn Collection that we noticed has connections with Tanner's work! Can you see how each piece below connects to one of Tanner's paintings above?



Capital with Daniel in the Lion's Den (1100-1125)
Northern Spain



The Flight Into Egypt (1145)
Abbey of Saint-Denis, France



The Annunciation (1210-1215)
Abbey of Saint-Yved, France

Take Action!

Henry Tanner's childhood home in Philadelphia is a National Historic Landmark, and is in need of support to help repair and restore it. You can learn more about it and how to support its preservation at the [Tanner House Friends Instagram page](#) and in the [magazine published by the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia](#).

Try making some art of your own, inspired by the work of Henry Tanner!

- 1 Gather your supplies - you could use oil paints just like Tanner, or find any art making supplies you might already have like paper and colored pencils.
- 2 Decide on an idea! You could choose to base your art on a nature scene or a scene of everyday life. You could also think of your own religious beliefs or a story that is meaningful to you just like Tanner did in his Biblical work.
- 3 Many of Tanner's paintings have light as an important part - sometimes to show an important religious figure, and sometimes just to show time or place. Where can you include light in your art?
- 4 Create your artwork! When you're done, you could display it or gift it to someone.

Harmonia Rosales

Harmonia Rosales is an Afro-Cuban artist that works in Los Angeles. She was born in Chicago in 1984 and grew up in Illinois. Her dad is from Havana, Cuba and her mom is a Jewish Jamaican artist and children's book illustrator.

Her work is well known for centering Black women and people of color, and retelling the stories shown in old and famous European paintings of religious scenes and myths. Some of Rosales' paintings connect ancient Greek myths to the stories of the Santería or Lucumí religions in Cuba and the Yorùbá people who were enslaved from West Africa. These are stories about *orishas* - spirits sent to help humanity, often shown with gold haloes.

[Image courtesy of harmoniarosales.art](https://www.harmoniarosales.art)



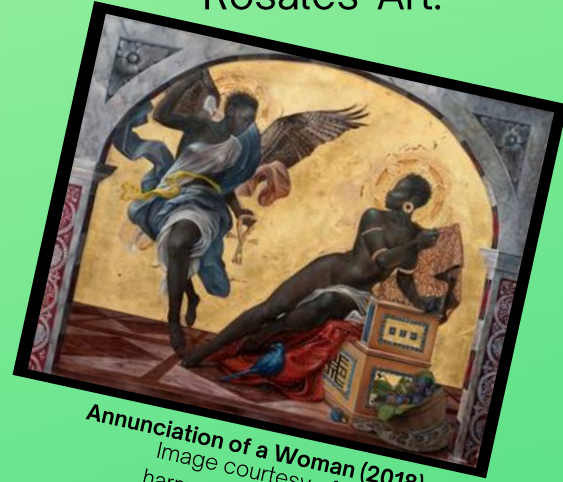
Rosales' Art:



Oya's Betrayal (2020)
Image courtesy of [harmoniarosales.art](https://www.harmoniarosales.art)



Lady of Regla (2020)
Image courtesy of [harmoniarosales.art](https://www.harmoniarosales.art)



Annunciation of a Woman (2018)
Image courtesy of [harmoniarosales.art](https://www.harmoniarosales.art)

Explore More!

Click the icons to visit Harmonia Rosales website and Instagram.



- Rosales' art includes lots of intricate patterns. How many different patterns can you see in each painting?
- Gold is also a big part of her art! What does the gold make you feel and think of?
- What symbols can you find in each painting? Do you recognize them?

Glencairn Museum Collection Connection



Female from Grave Relief (3rd century BCE)
Cyprus

"Oya's Betrayal" (above, left) tells a story from the religion of the Yoruba people of Western Africa. It tells the story of three *orishas* - Oya, Shango, and Oggun, and the love and war that was shared between them. This story has parallels with the Greek myth of Vulcan, Venus, and Mars. By Oya's feet in the painting are pomegranates, which were a symbol of death and fertility in ancient Greece. In this Greek sculpture (left) the woman is holding a pomegranate; a common feature in Greek funerary art.



Relief with Virgin and Child (1400-1499)
Italy



The Annunciation (circa 1300)
Italy

Can you find the connections between Rosales' other paintings and these artworks from the Glencairn collection?

Make Art!

Harmonia Rosales draws on stories and myths from different cultures, and her paintings are often in the European Renaissance style. In this style of art, geometry and shapes play a big part in how the painting is organized. Think of stories from your culture, family, and religious beliefs, or stories you enjoy for their meaning and lessons. Try to imagine yourself in that story. Use the images of Rosales' works above and the well-known artworks below to get inspiration. You could even try your best to imitate these works of art. Be sure to include yourself in the image!



The School of Athens (1509-1511)
Raphael



Madonna of the Book (1480)
Sandro Botticelli



Doni Tondo (1507)
Michelangelo

Take Action!

You can learn more about the history of enslavement of West African people, the Yoruba traditions of West Africa, and the many different faiths that have evolved from them in the [Pluralism Project of Harvard University](https://www.pluralismproject.org/).

Timbuktu Manuscripts

Timbuktu is a city in the West African country of Mali. Mali is known for its rich religious and economic history. In medieval times, the Mali Empire was one of the richest in the world and was a center for Islamic culture and learning. The Timbuktu Manuscripts date between the 11th and 20th century. Over 400,000 written works are known to exist! These manuscripts discuss a variety of different topics like religion, law, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and mathematics. Many are written as poetry, music, or stories. The Timbuktu Manuscripts were preserved for centuries by local families, until the official preservation practices were adopted over the course of the past 50 years.

There were many different Malian artists who contributed to the creation of these thousands of manuscripts!



Image courtesy of SAVAMA-DCI



The Facilitation in the Sciences of Revelation
Image courtesy of SAVAMA-DCI



A page from the Holy Quran
Image courtesy of SAVAMA-DCI



A page about music
Image courtesy of SAVAMA-DCI

Explore More!

Click the icon to launch the Google Arts & Culture Timbuktu Manuscript Experiment!



As you explore the manuscripts, think about these questions:

- How many different calligraphy (writing) styles can you find?
- What do you notice about the kinds of paper each manuscript is written on?
- Can you find any colorful designs or illustrations on different pages?
 - Some books are religious and others are not - what differences do you notice?

Glencairn Museum Collection Connection



This massive medieval manuscript song book comes from a monastery in Spain. The reason it is so large is because manuscripts were time consuming and expensive to make.

Making one large book that multiple monks could read from was easier and cheaper. Like the Timbuktu Manuscripts, this song book was a valued text and served the monastery for many years. We even know the name of the monk who wrote most of it - Mata!

Learn more about it on [Glencairn's website here](#).

Check out this activity for it here.

Make Art!

The art of manuscript making has many different aspects to it! The many different artists who worked on the Timbuktu Manuscripts were highly skilled writers, poets, painters, mathematicians, and scholars. Many pages include beautiful and intricate designs and patterns along with carefully written words.



Try creating your own manuscript page, inspired by the Timbuktu Manuscripts!

- 1 Think of a topic for your page. Malian manuscript writers wrote poetry, passages from the Qur'an, laws, and many other things. Think of something that is important to you or maybe part of your faith.
- 2 Collect your materials. You'll need something to write on (paper, card, maybe even fabric!) And something to write with (pen, pencil, marker, even a paintbrush!) Supplies to decorate with like colored pencils or paint are always fun!
- 3 Organize your page. Decide where your writing will go, where any illustrations will go, and make sure to rule straight lines to help keep things organized.
- 4 Create your page! Take your time - this is careful and slow work that requires attention to detail!



Explore more about Malian art, music, history and more at [Mali Magic on Google Arts and Culture!](#)

Take Action!

Political conflict in Mali in the past 10 years has threatened the safety of valuable cultural artifacts like the Timbuktu Manuscripts. But people and organizations in Mali, and around the world, have been working hard to protect and conserve them.

Check out this [article about SAFE \(Saving Antiquities For Everyone\)](#) that shares more info about the conservation work in Mali

These resources provide info on things that you can do to support this work:

[Ways to Protect Cultural Heritage](#)

[Organizations and Agencies](#)

[Learn more about the SAVAMA-DCI organization in Mali](#)

Genesis Tramaine

Genesis Tramaine is a painter who grew up in Brooklyn, New York. Her artwork is heavily inspired by her Christian faith, as well as her mother and grandmother who were important people in her upbringing. Many of her paintings show people and stories from the Bible, and she has described how she wants to change the way that Christian art has left Black people out.

Tramaine describes her art as devotional and created in response to God and to prayer. Her paintings can look quite abstract, and often include lots of symbolism. She uses several different types of art materials including oil paints, acrylic paint, spray paint, and often lists Yeshua - meaning Jesus - in the list of materials used, because of how important her connection with God is to her art.

[Image courtesy of artnet.com](#)



Giving Glory to God (2019)
[Image courtesy of artsy.net](#)



The Portal is Prayer - Diptych (2019)

[Image courtesy of artsy.net](#)



Your Jesus (2018)

[Image courtesy of artsy.net](#)

Explore More!

- What kind of art materials can you notice in each painting?
- Can you see any faces or recognize any symbols?
- What shapes and colors stand out to you?
- How does each painting make you feel? What does it make you think of?

Explore more of Tramaine's [artwork and artistic style here!](#)

Glencairn Museum Collection Connection

Although the art and objects shown here don't look a lot like Genesis Tramaine's paintings, they're still connected! These three objects from the Glencairn collection are all objects related to religious devotion and prayer - directly connecting people with their faith.



This small book is a medieval Book of Hours. It contains prayers for different hours of the day and would have been owned and used by a medieval Christian to say their daily prayers and devotions. It is full of detailed religious images.



This is an Islamic prayer rug. Woven to include intricate geometric patterns, and a central mihrab shape (representing the same shaped niche in a mosque), a prayer rug is designed to be used by a Muslim person to pray five times each day.



[Click here to explore this artwork up close!](#) This is a type of devotional artwork called a retablo. This retablo shows Saint Teresa of Ávila and was made in Mexico. Retablos are important artworks as they connect people with holy and divine figures.

Make Art!

Genesis Tramaine speaks about being inspired to create art by memories of growing up with her mom and grandmother, listening and paying attention to God's presence in her life, reading the Bible, and listening to gospel music. What inspires you to create art?

Try creating your own devotional art, inspired by Genesis Tramaine's paintings:

- 1 Take some time to tune into your thoughts and feelings. Maybe listen to music, read a passage from a book of your faith, or spend some time in nature. What do you find yourself thinking about?
- 2 Collect your materials. Genesis works with lots of different art materials at the same time, so pick a few things to try out!
- 3 Create your piece! Everyone has their own way of showing their devotion to their faith and beliefs. Create some artwork that feels personal to you.
- 4 Genesis' art often has symbolism in it. Are there any symbols that are important to you? Maybe you can include one or two to communicate an idea in your artwork.

Take Action!

Genesis Tramaine's art is often exploring who has been left out of historic artwork of Biblical stories. Read some of these stories for yourself - like David and Goliath, Mary Magdalene, or the miracles of Jesus. Research famous paintings of Bible stories. Who do you notice is included, and who isn't? Are there other well-known stories or artworks that have always been done the same way?

Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller

Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller was born in Philadelphia on June 9th, 1877. Excelling in academics, she went on to study at Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Arts in Philadelphia, and then in Paris. While in Paris, she connected with Black activist, sociologist, and historian W.E.B. DuBois and French sculptor Auguste Rodin. A lot of Warrick Fuller's sculpture focused on the Black experience. She also sculpted artwork that showed Christian scenes and figures from the Bible, as well as images of important Ethiopian figures. Much of her work became known for depicting human emotion and suffering, and even showing horrifying or morbid scenes.



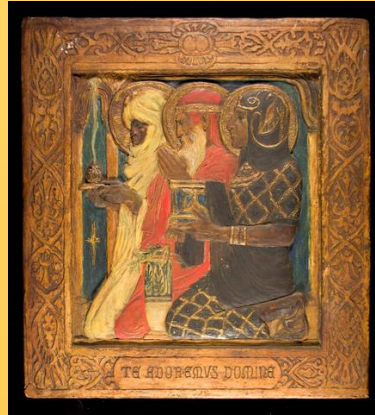
Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Warrick Fuller's Work:



Ethiopia, 1921

Image courtesy of the National Museum of African American History and Culture



Te Adoremus Domine (1921)

Image courtesy of the Danforth Art Museum



Danse Macabre, 1914

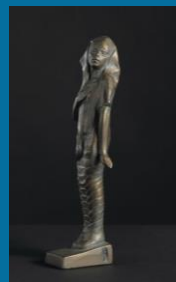
Image courtesy of the Danforth Art Museum

Glencairn Museum Collection Connection



Warrick Fuller's "Danse Macabre" (left) is a modern take on a medieval theme.

The "Dance of the Dead" was a common image during the late Middle Ages. It is a type of "memento mori" which is Latin for "remember that you will die". Built into the walls of Glencairn is this medieval plaque (right) from a monastery in France. The message honors the life and death of a former abbot. At the end it says "What you are I was. What I am you will be." This message acts as a memento mori, a reminder to the reader that they too will die one day.



For an exhibition in 1921, Warrick Fuller was commissioned by W.E.B. DuBois to create a piece that expressed the contributions of African American's to the history and development of America. "Ethiopia" shows a woman freshly unwrapped from her linens and waking up from a long sleep. She is dressed in a nemes - the traditional headdress of Egyptian pharaohs.

Warrick Fuller drew on her archaeological interest in Egypt and political awareness of Ethiopia to express the freedom of Black people through a Pan-African identity. This coffin lid (right), in Glencairn's Egyptian Gallery was for a man named Semairdis. He too can be seen wearing a nemes. In Ancient Egypt, it was believed that a person's spirit would continue living, after death, in the Netherworld. For Warrick Fuller, it seems this idea inspired her to think about a new world of freedom for African Americans.

Explore More!

Watch this short video about [Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller!](#)



- When you look closely at Meta's sculptures, what emotions can you see the figures showing?
- How does each sculpture make you feel? What comes to mind?

Make Art!

Warrick Fuller was nicknamed "the sculptor of horrors". She often depicted dark, emotional subjects. Her style of sculpture can be described as *symbolist* and *expressionistic*. Many of her sculptures have an unfinished or rough quality to them, which was part of her art style. Using modelling clay, tin foil, or any other supplies you have to create with, try to create a sculpture that captures a human emotion. It could be a sad feeling, like grief, loss, or fear - or it could be a happy feeling, like love, freedom, or confidence. Don't worry if it looks a little messy - Meta would have enjoyed that! Check out some images of other Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller pieces to get inspired!



The Wretched (1902)

Image courtesy of the [Maryhill Museum of Art](#)

Take Action!

Meta was the first African American woman to receive a federal art commission from the US government in 1907! She was also an advocate for Black women through her art, celebrating and commemorating other women trailblazers. Learn more about some of these women here.

[Charlotte Hawkins Brown](#)

[Sojourner Truth](#)

[Harriet Tubman](#)

Additional Resources Not Linked In Text

Henry Ossawa Tanner

smarthistory.org/tanner-banjo/
cdn.sanity.io/files/f23a1pgq/pma_production/1920c1d5755b87463f885ac6904ded925311c32a.pdf
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Ossawa_Tanner
www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn09/a-missing-question-mark
philamuseum.org/collection/curated/henry-ossawa-tanner
artsandculture.google.com/theme/5-paintings-by-henry-ossawa-tanner/-wLidENBqkXAJw?hl=en
dma.org/art/collection/object/5000380
www.npr.org/2021/09/07/1031027195/henry-tanner-black-artist
www.theartstory.org/artist/tanner-henry-ossawa/

Harmonia Rosales

www.pressreader.com/usa/american-art-collector/20180901/page/5/textview
www.museum.ucsb.edu/sites/default/files/sitefiles/exhibitions/harmoniarosales/Harmonia%20Brochure%20Final_English_web2.pdf
www.brooksmuseum.org/exhibitions/harmonia-rosales-master-narrative
www.latinxproject.nyu.edu/interventions/reclaiming-our-identity-qampa-with-afro-cuban-artist-harmonia-rosales
https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc_2021.66
www.instagram.com/honeiee

Timbuktu Manuscripts

<https://artsandculture.google.com/experiment/the-timbuktu-manuscripts/BQE6pL2U3Qsu2A?hl=en>
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-60689699>
<https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/mali/mali-overview.html>

Genesis Tramaine

<https://www.artnews.com/art-news/artists/genesis-tramaine-almine-rech-interview-1234624240/>
<https://news.artnet.com/the-big-interview/christian-artist-genesis-tramaine-2006470>
<https://news.artnet.com/multimedia/art-angle-podcast-genesis-tremaine-2004850>
<https://www.instagram.com/genestramaine/?hl=en>

Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller

<https://unladylike2020.com/profile/meta-warrick-fuller/>
Hoover, Velma J. "META VAUX WARRICK FULLER: HER LIFE AND HER ART." *Negro History Bulletin* 40, no. 2 (1977): 678–81.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/44176711>.
Ater, Renée. "Making History: Meta Warrick Fuller's 'Ethiopia.'" *American Art* 17, no. 3 (2003): 13–31. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1215807>.
<https://www.themagazineantiques.com/article/the-sculpture-of-meta-vaux-warrick-fuller/>

