

The title 'HARLEM RENAISSANCE REMIXED' is centered within a large, 3D gold diamond frame. 'HARLEM' and 'RENAISSANCE' are in white, and 'REMIXED' is in a gradient of purple to gold. The background features a city skyline on the left and a vinyl record on the right, all set against a dark purple and black background with a grid pattern.

# HARLEM RENAISSANCE REMIXED

Community Foundation  
FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN



# STUDY GUIDE



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# WELCOME,

We are so excited to have you with us for Season 33!

This season, we're exploring Stories That Shape Us—the narratives that define who we are, where we come from, and where we're going. And few stories have shaped American arts and culture as powerfully as the ones born from the breakthroughs of artists who refused to be silenced.

Music has always been a conversation across time.

When you hear a beat drop in your favorite song, when you feel the rhythm of spoken word, when you see dancers move in perfect sync—you're experiencing breakthroughs that didn't start today. You are part of a legacy of creative people who refused to be silent, who demanded to be heard, who transformed sound and movement into power.

The music you're about to experience in Harlem Renaissance Remixed is a living dialogue between generations of artists who each claimed their voice, told their stories, and changed what was possible. Jazz musicians who improvised new sounds. Poets who turned words into weapons of beauty and truth. Dancers who made their bodies speak. These artists didn't ask for permission, they created breakthroughs and opened doors.

We stand on those shoulders, building on that foundation while creating something entirely our own. When contemporary sounds blend with jazz melodies, when modern choreography meets classic swing, something electric happens. We see how the past lives in the present, how yesterday's innovations become today's inspiration, how each generation of artists takes what came before and remixes it into something bold and new.

And here's the most important part: you are part of this conversation too. The voices rising today—your voices—are shaping what tomorrow's creative change makers will build on. The stories you tell, the art you create, the breakthroughs you make will echo forward, just as the voices of the past echo in this performance.

So as you experience Harlem Renaissance Remixed, ask yourself: **How does today's art and culture build on the past while creating its own breakthroughs—and how will the voices of today influence the future?**

The answer is unfolding right now, in this moment, in this music, and in you.

**TUNE IN.**



**DELASHEA STRAWDER**

Executive and Artistic Director



# THE ART OF THE MASHUP:

## A CONVERSATION WITH THE DIRECTOR *Nik Huey*

Nik Huey is an African-American singer, producer, arranger and composer from Detroit, MI. He started singing at a very young age in multiple choirs, and became passionate about creating music at age 11, making a cappella arrangements to cover songs. Nik was a member of Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit from 2011-2017, and graduate of Berklee College of Music, Contemporary Writing and Production.

Nik has written, produced, and mixed songs for many music groups including: Mosaic Youth Theatre, Last Gasp Collective, Coventry City of Culture, and many more.

He's performed alongside acts such as Jamila Woods, Josh Groban, Foreigner, and Bobby McFerrin. As a freelance musician, he strives to enhance his creativity while providing production and engineering services to local clients.



### **1. What's one breakthrough or innovation from the Harlem Renaissance era that you made sure to honor in your arrangements for this show?**

I wanted to honor how Harlem Renaissance artists used music to challenge perceptions, shape identity, and make room for their voices. Their storytelling, showmanship, social commentary, and cultural expression shaped generations that came after. In each arrangement, I tried to let that influence shine and show how their spirit is still alive in music today.

### **2. You studied Contemporary Writing and Production at Berklee College of Music. How has your education shaped the way you approach directing and arranging?**

Studying CWP at Berklee taught me to think about the purpose of every part of a song. I try to give each instrument and melody its moment or have it supporting another, working together like a team instead of everyone fighting to be the star player.

I bring the same approach when directing. I try to be intentional, “trim the fat” when needed, and make sure every element has a purpose so the production works as a team to support the story, message, or experience I want the audience to take away.

That mindset became really important when creating mashups. Bringing songs from different eras together was a balancing act. You want each one to keep what makes it special while still creating chemistry.

**3. You brought your DJ skills into creating the mashups for this show. When you were blending jazz standards with contemporary hits, what were you listening for? How did you decide which songs belonged together?**

Blending jazz standards with modern songs was all about chemistry and a little bit of musical matchmaking. Sometimes I could hear a match before even trying it, and other times the mashup surprised me. I looked for connections in the chords, lyrics, or rhythm so the transitions felt natural. It took a lot of trial and error, and there were definitely moments of error along the way. If two songs just didn't want to be together, I stopped forcing them. In the end, it was important that the music always got the final say.

**4. What do you hope young people take away from hearing these remixed sounds—about music, about history, or about their own creative possibilities?**

I hope young people take away that learning history is never a waste of time and that it's important to remember where we come from. So many ideas, questions, and discoveries have already been explored, and knowing that can make figuring out who you are and what you want to create feel a lot less intimidating. You can be inspired by the past and still be unique. History gives us culture, culture shapes our identity, and that identity helps build the communities we're part of.



# TUNING IN:

## A YOUTH SOUND TECH'S STORY

### *Meet Nahla*

Nahla is in 11th grade, and this is her 4th year in Mosaic and her 1st year as a technician.



**1. What drew you to working on the technical side of theater, specifically sound?**

I moved to the technical side because I like designing and making dresses for my dogs. I also like special effects. After doing a sound workshop with Mosaic, I wanted to learn more.

**2. For someone who's never thought about sound design, what does a sound technician actually do to make a show like Harlem Renaissance Remixed come to life?**

Sound design helps in the making of the songs themselves but also for the actors to be able to hear what's going on, even when they are off stage. They make it so large groups of people can hear and enjoy the show with all the different voices.

**3. Can you describe a moment during a rehearsal or performance when you solved a tricky sound problem? What did that feel like?**

There was one point where we were assembling the wireless rack, and we had plugged everything in but were missing a cable and couldn't find it. We had to trace the cable to find the problem. It was exciting when we fixed the problem and the sound worked.

**4. How does working on sound for a show about musical history and innovation influence the way you think about your own role as a technician?**

It feels like we are using technology in a way that makes our job easier and that we can reach more people than they could during the Harlem Renaissance because of amplification that we have.

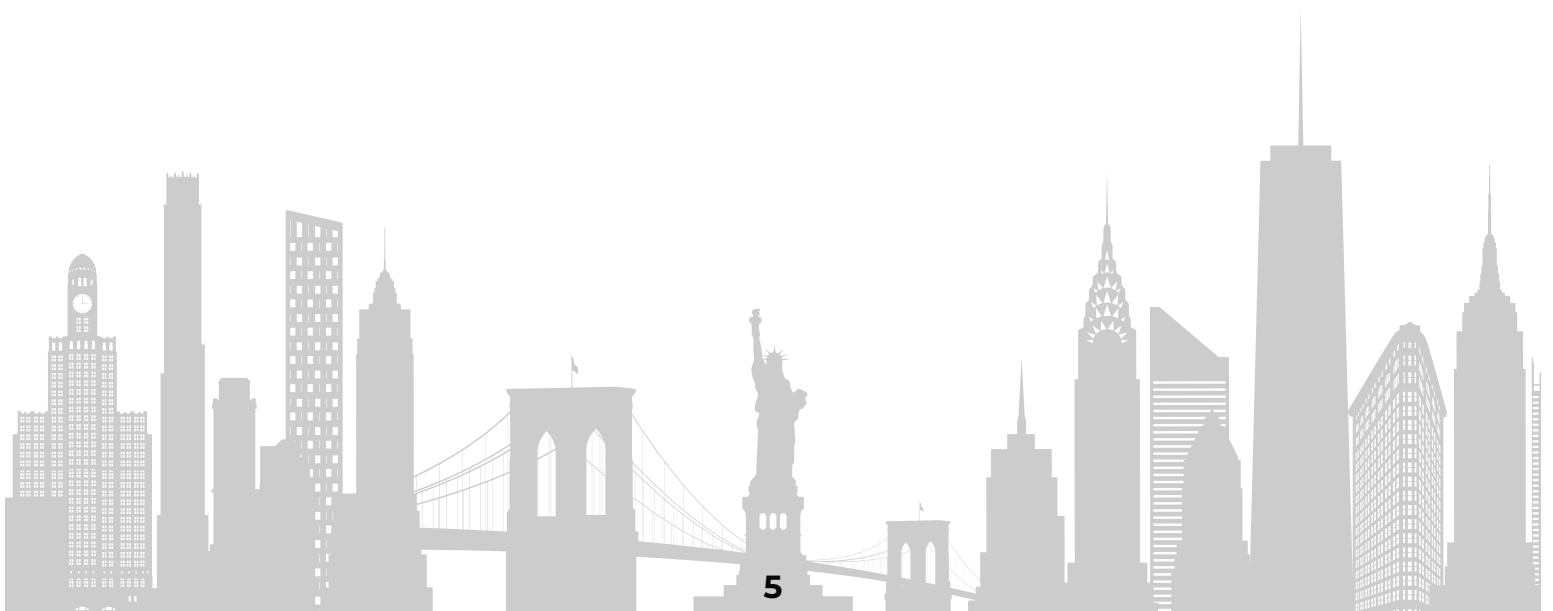
**5. What's one thing you've learned through working on this production that you'll carry with you into future projects?**

QLab (software for designing and playing back sound, video, light, and show control cues) isn't as hard as it looks, it looked like an airplane cockpit at first. I will take what I learned at our visit to Eastern Michigan University with Jeromy Hopgood to the next show.

**6. What advice would you give to other young people who are interested in the technical side of performance but aren't sure where to start?**

Just do it. Go in with confidence and don't worry about what you don't know.

No matter where you look on stage, there is always something technical to see even if you don't realize it.

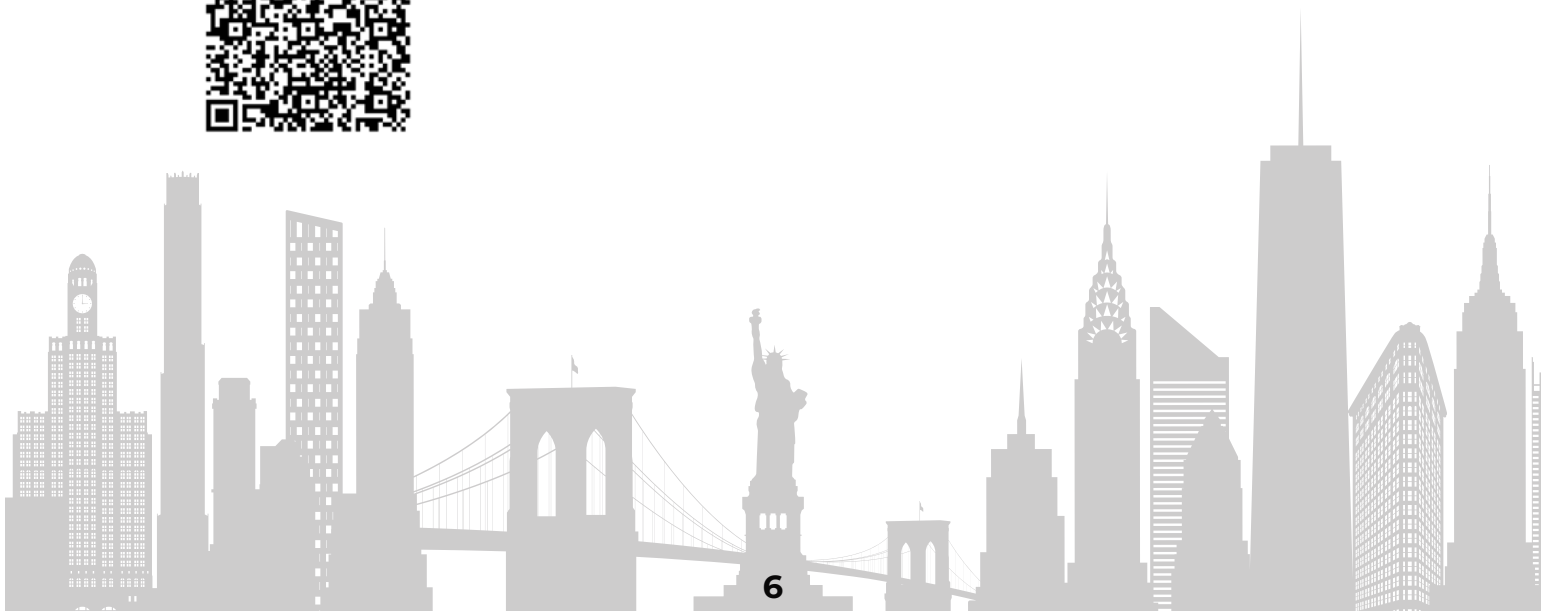


# LISTEN UP:

## SONGS THAT INSPIRED HARLEM RENAISSANCE REMIXED (A PLAYLIST)

Follow the links below to listen to some of the songs that inspired Harlem Renaissance Remixed. To hear a more comprehensive list check out [Listen Up \(Spotify playlist\)](#)

1. [Drop Me Off In Harlem- Ella Fitzgerald](#)
2. [Jumpin Jive – Cab Calloway](#)
3. [Aint Misbehavin – Fats Waller](#)
4. [God Bless The Child – Billie Holiday](#)
5. [Minnie The Moocher – Cab Calloway](#)
6. [A Zoot Suit – Dorothy Dandridge, Paul White](#)
7. [It Don't Mean A Thing – Duke Ellington](#)
8. [What A Wonderful World – Louis Armstrong](#)
9. [Summertime – Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald](#)
10. [Freedom – Jon Batiste](#)
11. [Tightrope – Janelle Monae](#)
12. [A Change Is Gonna Come – Sam Cooke](#)
13. [Waiting On The World To Change – John Mayer](#)



# THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

The Harlem Renaissance was a great time for African American art.

Literature, music, paintings, sculptures, poems, films, and fashion all played a great part.

It was in some ways a result of the **great migration**, Where many Black people fled to northern parts of the nation.

It started around the end of World War I, all the way until World War II, In Harlem, New York, many other cities, and even the Caribbean and Paris too.



It was a time that celebrated Black expression, Discussed the Black experience and the need for **progression**. There were many other topics like city life, Black southern life, and race, For so many Black creatives it was the first time they felt like they had their own place.

It was a time where Black voices were uplifted, And some of the stories about who we were, were shifted. There were still many problems that happened during that time, But it created **opportunities** for Black people to climb.

It was a time marked greatly by Black pride, A time where great artists were able to make **strides**. There were many famous people like Zora Neale Hurston, Augusta Savage, Jacob Lawrence, and Langston Hughes.

Who created literature and art, paving the way for you.

*By Alexis Barnes*



## GLOSSARY

### **The Great Migration:**

The movement of six million Black people from rural areas of the Southern States of the United States to urban areas in the Northern States between 1916 to 1970.

**Progression:** The process of developing over a period of time.

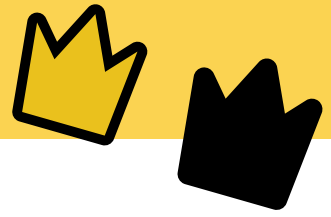
**Opportunities:** An amount of time or a situation in which something can be done.

**Strides:** To walk with very long steps.

**Theme:** The main subject that is being discussed or described in a piece of work.

**Collage:** a piece of art made by sticking various different materials such as photographs and pieces of paper or fabric on to a backing.

# READ & RESPOND



1. What was the Harlem Renaissance and who was involved?

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2. What types of art forms were a part of the Harlem Renaissance?

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3. Why did the Harlem Renaissance occur?

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4. What was the impact of the Harlem Renaissance?

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# "DREAMS"

**DIRECTIONS:** Now it's your turn to write your own poem! Read the Poem "Dreams" by Langston Hughes first, to gather ideas about the topic, structure, and theme. Follow the steps below to get some ideas for how to write your poem.

**STEP 1:** Read the Langston Hughes poem Dreams. As you read, write anything that you notice or wonder, in the notes section.

## *Dreams*

BY LANGSTON HUGHES

Hold fast to dreams  
For if dreams die  
Life is a broken-winged bird  
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams  
For when dreams go  
Life is a barren field  
Frozen with snow.

### NOTES

**STEP 2:** Answer the questions about the poem, below. Brainstorm ideas about your own poem, in the second column. If you have other ideas, be sure to write them down.

LANGSTON HUGHES POEM	YOUR POEM	THINKING SPACE
What is the poem about?	What is your poem about?	If you don't know, write down a list of things that interest you.
How does the poem make you feel?	How do you want people to feel when they read your poem?	What words, movements, or concepts are often used associated with that feeling?  EX: Hearts is a good word to use if you want people to feel love
What image do you see in your head when reading this poem?	What image do you want people to see when reading your poem?	EX: When I picture a "beach" I think of <b>sand</b> and <b>water</b> .  Your turn: When I see a _____  I think of _____
What do you think this poem means?	What do you want readers to learn in your poem?	



# WRITE A POEM!

**STEP 3:** Write your poem. Use one word from your brainstorm to help you, and remember you don't have to rhyme! If you don't want to rhyme, write in the section below. If you want to add rhyme, continue using the following steps.

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**STEP 4:** Write your poem with rhyme. Write your 1st line and then brainstorm some rhyming words.

**Example:** Dreams are our hearts' greatest **love**.

Love is the last word in the line, so we want to think of words that rhyme with love. Here are a few.

**Above      Dove      Shove**

Now, I want to have another line that uses a word that rhymes with love.

Dreams are our hearts' greatest **love**.  
They are gifts that come from **above**.

**STEP 5:** Keep it going until you finish your poem!

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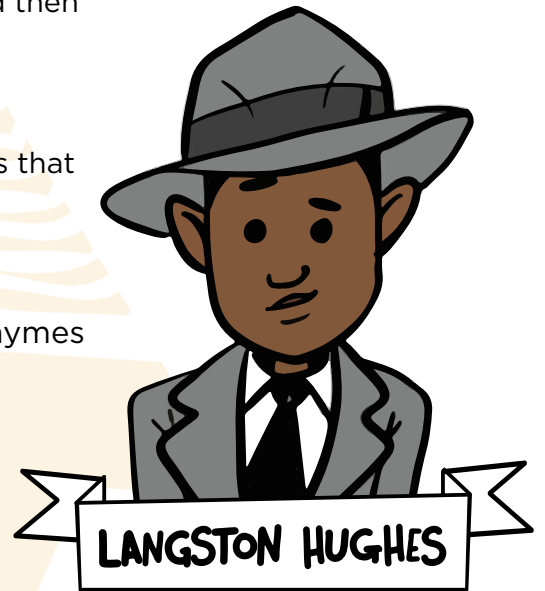
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# MAKE SOME ART

**DIRECTIONS:** There were many works of art that were inspired by the Harlem Renaissance. Paintings and other forms of art are ways to express a topic or theme, just like poetry.

Jacob Lawrence was a Black painter who chose a **theme** of migration and created the *The Migration Series*, originally titled *The Migration of the Negro*. His paintings showcased his life and the experiences of other Black people and he wanted people to see themselves in his work.

Now, you will get to create another art form called a **collage**.

A collage is a piece of art, made by sticking various different materials such as photographs and pieces of paper or fabric on to a backing.. Cut out old pictures from books or magazines (ask an adult before you cut!) and paste on a piece of paper.



On the left is an example of one we created using the theme of dreams. You can use the same theme for your collage, or a different theme or topic. Use your rhyming brainstorm, to inspire your search for more pictures/words and make a beautiful collage!

## TAKE THE PLEDGE

**I WILL HONOR**  
THE SACRIFICES OF  
MY ANCESTORS.

**I WILL BELIEVE**  
IN ME.

**I WILL PURSUE**  
MY DREAMS.

**I WILL HELP**  
OTHERS ALONG  
THE WAY.

# MATCHING GAME

Match each Harlem Renaissance figure to the clue that describes their work. See how many you can get right.

**A. Duke Ellington**

**B. Josephine Baker**

**C. Langston Hughes**

**D. Cab Calloway**

**E. Zora Neale Hurston**

**F. Fats Waller**

**G. Georgia Douglas Johnson**

**H. Bessie Smith**

**I. Louis Armstrong**

1. Poet and playwright who hosted a famous literary salon supporting Black writers
2. Piano-playing entertainer known for humor, energy, and songs like "Ain't Misbehavin'"
3. Trumpet player whose joyful, swinging style helped spread jazz around the world
4. Writer and anthropologist who traveled the South collecting Black folktales and speech
5. Bandleader who brought elegance and sophistication to big band jazz
6. Performer who became an international star in Paris through dance, style, and charisma
7. Zoot-suit-wearing bandleader known for wild stage presence and "Minnie the Moocher"
8. Known as the Empress of the Blues for her powerful, emotional singing
9. Poet whose work sounded like jazz and blues, celebrating everyday Black life in Harlem

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Harlem Renaissance

## Word Search

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.



AFRICAN AMERICAN

ARMSTRONG

ART DECO

COTTON CLUB

CULLEN

ELLINGTON

GARVEY

HARLEM

HUGHES

INNOVATION

JAZZ AGE

LITERATURE

LOCKE

MANHATTAN

MODERNISM

MUSIC

NEW NEGRO

NEW YORK CITY

PARIS

PHILOSOPHY

REBIRTH

RENAISSANCE

SMITH

SURREALISM

THEATER

TWENTIES

ZOOT SUIT

# WHICH HARLEM RENAISSANCE ICON ARE YOU?

Answer these questions to find out which legendary artist matches your vibe.

## 1. At a party you are most likely to...

- A. Be deep in conversation in the corner
- B. Run the room and make everyone laugh
- C. Perform something just because
- D. Watch and take mental notes

## 2. Your dream project would be...

- A. A book or poem
- B. A big show with music and lights
- C. A bold fashion or dance piece
- D. A research or history project

## 3. When you are fired up about something, you...

- A. Write it out
- B. Say it loud
- C. Show it with your body
- D. Collect the facts

## 4. Your friends describe you as...

- A. Thoughtful
- B. Charismatic
- C. Fearless
- D. Curious

## 5. You feel most powerful when you...

- A. Put words on a page
- B. Have all eyes on you
- C. Break the rules
- D. Discover something new

Tally up your answers and turn the page to see which legendary icon matches your vibe.

A: \_\_\_\_\_ B: \_\_\_\_\_ C: \_\_\_\_\_ D: \_\_\_\_\_



### **Mostly A: Langston Hughes**

You are an observer and a truth teller. You notice small moments that other people miss, and you turn them into something meaningful. Like Langston Hughes, you care about everyday people, real emotions, and honest stories. You believe words can hold power, and you use them to make sense of the world.



### **Mostly B: Cab Calloway**

You bring energy wherever you go. You are expressive, funny, and a little larger than life. You like to perform, entertain, and keep people engaged. Like Cab Calloway, you are not afraid to be bold or playful, and you know how to use your voice and body to make people feel something.



### **Mostly C: Josephine Baker**

You are fearless and unforgettable. You love style, movement, and standing out. You do not wait for permission to be yourself. Like Josephine Baker, you use your presence to challenge expectations and open doors for others. You understand that just being seen can be powerful.



### **Mostly D: Zora Neale Hurston**

You are curious about people and their stories. You love learning where things come from and why they matter. Like Zora Neale Hurston, you are a listener and a collector of culture. You believe stories, history, and traditions deserve to be remembered and shared.







**Billie Holiday**



**BLACK DANCERS: THEN AND NOW**  
**JOSEPHINE BAKER**  
**& MISTY COPELAND**



★ DUKE ELLINGTON ★

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**1. The Harlem Renaissance was a time when Black artists used music to shape identity and claim their voices.**

How do you think music helps people express who they are?

Can you think of a song or artist that makes you feel more understood or confident in who you are?

**2. This concert blends music from the Harlem Renaissance with songs from today to show how the past still lives in the present.**

What do you think might happen when music from different time periods comes together?

Why do you think it is important to remember where music comes from, not just what is popular now?

Harlem Renaissance artists were innovators who took risks and created new sounds.

**3. Why do you think trying something new can be scary for artists?**

What do you think art would be like if no one ever took creative risks



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Detroit Institute of Arts**
  - » [The Harlem Renaissance Educator Resource | Grades 9–12 Subject Areas: ELA and History](#)
- **The Kennedy Center**
  - » [Musical Harlem Educator Resource / Grades 3-5 ELA and History](#)
- **PBS**
  - » [The Harlem Renaissance Educator Resource / Grades 7-12 ELA and Social Studies](#)
- **National Gallery of Art**
  - » <https://www.nga.gov/educational-resources/uncovering-america/harlem-renaissance>
- **Junior Scholastic**
  - » <https://junior.scholastic.com/pages/promotion/navigationlps/020122/welcome-to-harlem.html?language=english#1140L>





# WAYS TO PARTNER

## DONATE

You can create pathways to equity and opportunity for Detroit area youth by making a donation today. Visit [MosaicDetroit.org/Donate](https://MosaicDetroit.org/Donate)

## TELL YOUR FRIENDS

Spread the word to friends, family and colleagues. Follow us and share on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, TikTok, and X.

## GET INVOLVED

- **VISIT** and be our guest at an Empower Hour Tour.  
Visit [MosaicDetroit.org/Tour](https://MosaicDetroit.org/Tour)
- **AUDITION** and join the young artists on stage or behind the scenes.  
Visit [MosaicDetroit.org/Auditions](https://MosaicDetroit.org/Auditions)
- **REGISTER** and join us for Summer Camp.  
Visit [MosaicDetroit.org/Our-programs/summercamps](https://MosaicDetroit.org/Our-programs/summercamps)
- **VOLUNTEER** and enhance outcomes for Detroit-area youth.  
Visit [MosaicDetroit.org/Volunteer](https://MosaicDetroit.org/Volunteer)
- **LEARN** more about our programs.  
Visit [MosaicDetroit.org/Our-programs](https://MosaicDetroit.org/Our-programs)

## BRING THE MOSAIC EXPERIENCE TO YOU

- **Book a Mosaic Performance or Workshop**

For 30+ years, Mosaic has illuminated youth excellence on stage and in life. Want to elevate the impact of your events? Whether corporate, private, or virtual, engaging Mosaic for a performance or workshop provides a transformative experience that your guests will cherish. Mosaic is available to help you bring your vision to life through:

- . Customized workshops and partnerships
- . Mosaic Mobile micro-camps for private or public events
- . Live performances
- . Music Videos or Film Theatrical experiences
- . Audio recordings for commercial use

\* Opportunities are based on availability

To book a performance visit [MosaicDetroit.org/bookmosaic/request-form](https://MosaicDetroit.org/bookmosaic/request-form)

Call 313-872-6910 ext. 4007 for workshop, micro-camp and custom opportunities.



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