

Patricia C. Coleman's '63 Suffragists of Color' Quilt

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Artist Patricia C. Coleman began this project as Indiana Suffragists of Color, a piece to be included in a group showing organized in cooperation with WILPF and the Bloomington Quilters Guild. Finding only a few Indiana women, the project focus was expanded to include what was thought to be 54 suffragists which then grew into a piece focusing on 63 suffragists including Native American, Latin Americans, Asians and others. The ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution in 1920 allowed white women in the US to vote, but it was not until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that Black women were ensured their voting rights. Suffragists are at work today to ensure that all Americans can use their right to vote.

This is only the beginning of honoring suffragists of color, as there are many more out there, and then there are those at work today. During her research it became very clear why family members have not been able to connect with ancestors who were Native Americans choosing to live off the reservation in Lynchburg, VA. Legislation at that time removed tribal rights and reclassified the indigenous living off reservation as colored persons.

Facing the dilemma of not meeting the submission deadline, Patricia asked herself whether to allow this piece to become a UFP (unfinished project) or go forward with finishing the quilt. She is very pleased to have finished the piece whose foundation is mainly cotton fabric pleated in a tessellated pattern with machine stitching applique and quilting. The applique of the suffragists covers the orderly geometric pleated and stitched pattern and is symbolic of unseen paths these women travelled. The lower portion of the quilt contains a listing of the featured 63 suffragists, and a few select quotes. On the quilt's reverse side is a Suffragist of Color Timeline dating from 1792 to today.

A forthcoming blog piece will be posted to Quilter's Comfort and will include the list of suffragists featured in the quilt, and the 63 Suffragist of Color Timeline. Other information about the quilt, videos, display, etc. will be posted to the [Quilters Comfort website](#). A few images of the quilt in various stages are posted to the artist's Instagram page, [@patriciacolemanart](#). The '63 Suffragists of Color' are available to order as prints on fabric in the Quilter's Comfort [Spoonflower shop](#), and will also be available soon in large poster format.

For more information about the artist Patricia C. Coleman, visit the links below. You can send her a message through [@patriciacolemanart](#) on Instagram.

Patricia C. Coleman

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