BLACKS ON STAMP
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The Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflections (ESPER)

**Catalog**

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BLACKS ON STAMP
AFRICANA POSTAGE STAMPS
WORLDWIDE

Exhibition
Rowe Arts Side Gallery
February 13-17, 2012
CURATOR’S REMARKS

About three years ago, Chancellor Philip Dubois introduced me to Dr. Esper Hayes via email. About a fortnight later, Dr. Hayes was in my office. In a meeting that lasted an hour or so, she drew me into her philatetic world. A wonderful friendship began. Since then, we have corresponded scores of times. She has also connected me with her vast network of stamp collectors, especially members of the organization she established for promoting Black-themed stamps all over the world – the Ebony Society of Philatetic Events and Reflections (ESPER). This exhibition is the product of networks of collaborative efforts nurtured over many months.

Blacks on Stamp is about preservation of memory and historical reflection. The objectives of the exhibition are to: (1) showcase the relevance of stamps as a form of material culture for the study of the history of the global Black experience; (2) explore the aesthetics and artistry of stamp as a genre of representative art, especially for understanding the Africana achievements globally; and (3) use the personalities and historical issues represented on stamps to highlight some of the defining moments in national and world histories.

We are fortunate to have with us, as part of this week-long exhibition, Barbara Higgins Bond. She is serving as the Africana Artist-in-Residence for spring 2012. A few of Higgins Bond’s artworks are part of this exhibition. Dubbed “Icons”, her selected works focus on the quotidian use of art in the mass print media. Higgins Bond is indeed an accessible everyday artist because her ouvre has profoundly influenced us through books and magazines, postage stamps, and through those recesses of the visualscapes around us. For close to forty years, she has consistently demonstrated the communicative power of iconography in self-reflection and self-understanding at the national and international levels.

This exhibition offers an avenue to expand and enrich our curriculum; and to raise new awareness about the intersections of the arts and Africana Studies. I am very grateful to Dr. Esper Hayes and the president of the North Carolina Chapter of ESPER, Mrs. Beatrice Cox, for lending their stamp collections to this exhibition. My gratitude also goes to Dean Kenneth Lambla of the College of Arts and Architecture and to Dean Nancy Gutierrez of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for sharing the vision that the arts must be a critical component of humanistic inquiry in Africana Studies. Faculty and staff, especially Tanure Ojaide, Jeffrey Leak, Aspen Hochhalter, DeAnne Jenkins, Lynn Roberson, Lacey Ronald, Todd Payne, and Solomon Franklin have provided important support along the way. I commend our graduate student and manager of this exhibition, Shontea L. Smith, for tirelessly working on several fronts, from the conception to the implementation stage of the project. Her dedication deserves special applaud. Finally, Lea, Oyebanji, and Oluremi allowed me (again!) to encroach on their precious time with Babi so that this exhibition may see the light of the day. È se o.

Akin Ogundiran, Professor and Chair, Africana Studies Department
MESSAGE FROM ESPER HAYES
Founder, Ebony Society of Philatetic Events and Reflections (ESPER)

Stamps have been my friends for over thirty years. Welcome to my world of stamps. This philatelic window helps to reflect upon history, and the men and women who helped to make our history as a people, as a nation, and as a global community. This exhibition is a reflection of the African Diaspora from a historic past in history to the present. You will be able to visualize these leaders in connection with great moments in human history.

Philately is the world largest hobby. My deepest passion and moments of enthusiasm have partly centered on building my collection of stamps and promoting the representation of Africa-descended peoples on the stamps of the United States. I have shared my collection since the beginning of my involvement as the founder of the Ebony Society of Philatetic Events and Reflections (ESPER) in 1988. ESPER came into existence as a fulfillment of a promise I made to Olympian Jesse Owens, winner of ten gold medals in the 1936 Olympia Games.

One of the most fascinating things in the years of my adventure with stamps and ESPER was the acknowledgement of the American Philatelic Society in 2010 that the Black Heritage Series is the longest running series in the US postal history. I am fortunate and privileged to have been part of this history through my work with ESPER.

This joint undertaking with the Africana Studies Department at UNC Charlotte is a great honor for the members of the North Carolina Chapter of the Ebony Society of Philatetic Events and Reflections. Through these representations of the Black experiences on stamps, I hope viewers will gain an insight into the interconnectivity of nations and peoples around the world.

The Ebony Society of Philatetic Events and Reflections (ESPER) was founded by Esper G. Hayes, now of Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1988 as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. ESPER is dedicated to promoting stamps showcasing African American experience. The Society currently has close to 300 members throughout the United States and in other countries. Reflections, the society’s award-winning quarterly newsletter, is an educational source of information about people of the African Diaspora on philatelic material from around the world. The newsletter also provides an avenue for networking and stamp trading. Many members spend time visiting schools to share their knowledge with children. Others give presentations at stamp shows, local libraries, and civic centers to spread the hobby of philately and the history of African Americans.

For more information, contact esperstamps@esperstamps.org or visit http://esperstamps.org/about.htm
ORIGINS OF POSTAGE STAMPS

The Great Britain is the first country to issue adhesive postage stamp with the release of Penny Black (one penny stamp) on May 6, 1840. The stamp bears the engraved profile of Queen Victoria’s head. This image was to remain on all British stamps for the next sixty years. A schoolmaster in England, Rowland Hill, is credited with the creation of this first adhesive stamp. Before then, letters were hand stamped or postmarked with ink, and it was difficult to administer differential prices for weight. With the Penny Black stamp, it became possible to prepay postage and offer uniform postage rates that were based on weight rather than size. Following the introduction of postage stamp, the number of let-letters increased in the UK by 500% from 76 million in 1839 to over 350 million in 1850.

Other countries soon began to imitate this revolutionary postage process based on their own stamp designs. In 1847, the U.S. created its first official stamps in 5- and 10-cent denominations depicting Benjamin Franklin and George Washington respectively.

Postage stamps were introduced at the period of nascent maturation of the first generation of nation states in Europe and North America, and the emergence of the first wave of national governments in Central and Latin America. National governments have since taken charge of using postage stamps as markers of their nation-state identities using stamps, like printed money, to broadcast the spirit of the nation, its values, and its history.

As vital documents on which the past, present, and future of a country is celebrated and shared across and beyond the boundaries of the nation state, stamps are veritable form of communication and a means for disseminating ideas. Nations generally feature their most prominent citizens on stamps on account of the accomplishments of such individuals and their impacts on the society.

The first African-American to be honored on a U.S. postage stamp issue was Booker T. Washington. This issue was released in 1940 as part of the United States Post Office’s “Famous American” series. And, in 1866 the second stamp celebrating Washington was released – showing his birthplace in Virginia - to commemorate the 100th anniversary of his birth. The achievement of full legal citizenship by African-Americans as a result of the Civil Rights movement has facilitated increase in the representation of African-Americans on the USPS postage stamps. Such issues celebrate the accomplishments of African-American men and women as citizens who have helped build a stronger nation.
The Black Heritage stamp series is one of the most popular U.S. Postal Service’s commemorative series; and the longest running series. Inaugurated in 1978, thirty-five African-Americans have appeared in the Black Heritage stamp series. These are men and women who made significant marks in human rights, social consciousness, education, business, science, arts, as well as exploration and invention. Often, they were pace-setters in their endeavors.

Harriet Tubman (1978)  
Martin Luther King (1979)  
Benjamin Banneker (1980)  
Whitney Moore Young (1981)  
Jackie Robinson (1982)  
Scott Joplin (1983)  
Carter G. Woodson (1984)  
Mary McLeod Bethune (1985)  
Sojourner Truth (1986)  
Jean Baptiste DuSable (1987)  
James Weldon Johnson (1988)  
A. Phillip Randolph (1989)  
Ida B. Wells (1990)  
Jan E. Matzeliger (1991)  
Percy Lavon Julian (1993)  
Dr. Allison Davis (1994)  
Bessie Coleman (1995)  
Ernest E. Just (1996)  
Benjamin O. Davis, Sr. (1997)  
Madam C. J. Walker (1998)  
Malcolm X (1999)  
Patricia Roberts Harris (2000)  
Roy Wilkins (2001)  
Langston Hughes (2002)  
Paul Robeson (2004)  
Marian Anderson (2005)  
Hattie McDaniel (2006)  
Ella Fitzgerald (2007)  
Charles W. Chesnutt (2008)  
Ana Julia Cooper (2009)  
Oscar Micheaux (2010)  
Barbara Jordan (2011)  
John H. Johnson (2012)

Today’s Constitution is a realistic document of freedom only because of several corrective amendments. Those amendments speak to a sense of decency and fairness that I and other Blacks cherish.

I am a woman who came from the cotton fields of the South. From there I was promoted to the wash-tub. From there I was promoted to the cook kitchen. And from there I promoted myself into the business of manufacturing hair goods and preparations. I have built my own factory on my own ground.
OTHER GREAT AMERICANS
Distinguished African-Americans have also appeared in other USPS stamp series, especially in *The Great American* series as representatives of their race in different categories such as the civil rights, sports, education, science, politics, the arts, and music.


Many of the USPS stamp issues also tend to occur on occasions of commemoration, such as the set of four stamps illustrating four of Romare Bearden’s (1911–1988) most important collages: *Conjunction* (1971); *Odysseus: Poseidon, The Sea God — Enemy of the Odysseus* (1977); *Prevalence of Ritual: Conjure Woman* (1964); and *Falling Star* (1979). Romare Bearden is acclaimed as one of the 20th Century’s most distinguished American artists. The new stamp set was unveiled in New York City on September 28, 2011 to commemorate the 100th year of his birth.
Above. In February of 2009, the USPS issued a signature set of *Civil Rights Pioneers* postage stamps to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The set consists of six stamps, each bearing the images of two Civil Rights pioneers: Ella Baker, Daisy Gatson Bates, J.R. Clifford, Medgar Evers, Fannie Lou Hamer, Charles Hamilton Houston, Ruby Hurley, Mary White Ovington, Joel Elias Spingarn, Mary Church Terrell, Oswald Garrison Villard and Walter White. These men and women are celebrated for their contributions to the work of NAACP in fighting for basic human freedom, dignity, respect, and social and economic equality for African Americans and the other minorities in the US.

Right (*clockwise*). Commemorative Stamps — The landmark 1954 Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Supreme Court Decision that paved the legal way for integration and the Civil Rights Movement; The 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott; and The 1965 Selma March.
While most stamp issues in the US generally celebrate the accomplishment of individuals as part of racial and national pride; there are also stamps that have celebrated the idea of cultural heritage that links the past to the present, and the present to the future. Such stamps tend to be issued annually during the period of celebration. The Kwanzaa stamps epitomize this genre. The first Kwanzaa commemorative stamp was issued in 1997, and since then three more stamp designs have been released for Kwanzaa.

Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday tradition created by Dr. Maulana Karenga (activist-scholar) in 1966 to foster and celebrate self respect, community support, historical awareness, and empowerment as the foundation of Black socio-economic and political progress in the United States. The holiday tradition, observed from December 26th through January 1st, grew out of the Black Nationalist/Civil Rights Movement. Its principles are rooted in African traditions. Kwanzaa, a Kiswahili word for “the first fruits of the harvest,” is based on seven principles, each celebrated on each Kwanzaa day of the holiday season:

- **UMOJA** - Unity
- **KUJICAHGULIA** - Self determination
- **UJIMA** - Collective work and responsibility
- **UJAMAA** - Cooperative economics
- **NIA** - Purpose
- **KUUIMBA** - Creativity
- **IMANI** - Faith

Collectively, these principles are expected to guide each celebrant throughout the year.

Dr. Maulana Karenga

*Professor and Chair, Department of Africana Studies, California State University--Long Beach*
European colonialism introduced postage stamps to Africa. It is therefore not surprising that the earliest stamps associated with these African colonial states portray European interests and personalities. Thus, the early stamps (between 1901 and 1911) in British colonies such as Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda bear the portrait of Queen Victoria and King Edward VII.

However, just as postage stamps were used to proclaim the European acquisition in Africa and other colonized world during the late nineteenth century and the periods before the end of the second world war, the independent African states also used stamps to proclaim their sovereignty and the new dawn of political freedom from the 1960s onwards. In this regard, postage stamps became an important media for showcasing the cultural, environmental, and historical heritage of the different African countries, to announce their commitment to modernization, and to project the images they wish to be known for. For the most part, from 1960 to 1980, many African and Caribbean countries touted their achievements and potentials in education, health, industry, and agriculture as shown in these stamps from Nigeria and Liberia. The stamp from Kenya (below) shows Jomo Kenyatta taking the oath of office as the first prime minister of independent Kenya.

Likewise, historical monuments were utilized by the nationalists as a source of pride and as focal point for rallying citizens (former subjects) for nation-building. Rock-art paintings, archaeological artifacts, and historical monuments that demonstrate the antiquity of African cultures and the great ancestral legacies therefore found their presence on the stamps of many newly independent African nation-states. Postage stamps have also served the purpose of advertising the cultural heritage of African and Caribbean countries in order to attract western tourists.
Africana countries have also paid attention to external relations, events, and personalities in their stamp issues. That a number of these countries have adorned African-American icons on their national stamps indicates the influence of the United States in the world and the importance that many Africana countries attach to the plight of African-Americans. Hence, postage stamps invite us to explore the ceremonial, symbolic, and political importance of Pan-African consciousness in post-colonial Africa and the diaspora.

Of course, the Inter-Government Philatetic Agency (IGPA) has played important roles in influencing countries all over the world to issue stamps that will be of interest to stamp collectors, especially in the US and Europe. Seeing the financial benefits of issuing such externally-sensitized stamps, many African and Caribbean countries have become avid issuers of stamps mainly for the economic benefits associated with collectibles. For this reason, economically weak countries have been noted to issue more varieties of stamps than the stronger and stable countries. Liberia, Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, the Gambia, and Guinea, for example, have the highest issues of stamps in recent years. In 1999 alone, these countries between them issued 2,493 new stamps. This is not surprising. They are all client countries of the world’s largest stamp organization network – IGPA. In this area, market, arts, national pride, and globalization converge as these countries issued stamps for global consumption in order to raise money for domestic needs.
LIBERTY, EQUAL RIGHTS, AND SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE AFRICANA WORLD

The ideas of liberty and freedom are not far from the themes historically covered by many Africana countries – especially in the Caribbean and Africa, given their entanglement in the history of slavery, colonialism, racial segregation, and unfair labor practices. From stamps that celebrate the Haitian Revolution and self-liberation from slavery, to the Emancipation Proclamation in the US, to the Civil Rights and the Anti-Apartheid Movements, philatelic practices allow us to see the genealogies of the struggle for human rights trans-continentally. Many of these commemorative and advocacy stamps show that the freedom from slavery was connected to the freedom from colonialism, apartheid in South Africa, Jim Crow in the United States, and the socio-economic deprivations caused by global capitalism.

Upper left: **USA**: Commemorative Stamp (1963) - Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863.

Buffalo Soldier

Stamp issued in 1994 to celebrate the African-American regiments formed after the Civil War by the Congress as the first peacetime all-black regiments in the regular U.S. Army. Buffalo Soldiers is reportedly the nickname given by Native Americans to these African-American regiments. Buffalo soldiers fought in the US wars of westward expansion, especially in the US-Indian Wars (1866-1890s). They also fought in the Spanish American wars (1898), the Philippine-American War (1899-1903), the Mexican Expedition (1916), and the Battle of Ambos Nogales in the First World War, in addition to several peace-keeping missions at home.

Lyrics of Bob Marley's Buffalo Soldier

Buffalo soldier, dreadlock Rasta:
There was a Buffalo soldier in the heart of America,
Stolen from Africa, brought to America,
Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival.

I mean it, when I analyze the stench -
To me it makes a lot of sense:
How the dreadlock Rasta was the Buffalo soldier,
And he was taken from Africa, brought to America,
Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival.

Said he was a Buffalo soldier, dreadlock Rasta -
Buffalo soldier in the heart of America.
If you know your history,

Then you would know where you coming from,
Then you wouldn't have to ask me,
Who the 'eck do I think I am.

I'm just a Buffalo soldier in the heart of America,
Stolen from Africa, brought to America,
Said he was fighting on arrival, fighting for survival;
Said he was a Buffalo soldier win the war for America.

Dreadie, woy yoy yoy, woy yoy-yoy yoy,
Woy yoy yoy yoy, yoy yoy-yoy yoy!
Woy yoy yoy, woy yoy-yoy yoy,
Woy yoy yoy yoy, yoy yoy-yoy yoy!
Buffalo soldier troddin' through the land, wo-ho-ooh!
Said he wanna ran, then you wanna hand,
Troddin' through the land, yea-hea, yea-ea.

Said he was a Buffalo soldier win the war for America;
Buffalo soldier, dreadlock Rasta,
Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival;
Driven from the mainland to the heart of the Caribbean.

Troddin' through San Juan in the arms of America;
Troddin' through Jamaica, a Buffalo soldier;
Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival:
Buffalo soldier, dreadlock Rasta.

Written by Bob Marley and Noel G. Williams; and released in 1983.
This Bob Marley and the Wailers’ song is dedicated to the Black US regiments. It casts the African-American involvement in the Indian Wars as a heroic struggle for survival, citizenship, and dignity.

Jamaica: Bob Marley—Reggae Music Icon and Advocate of Black Consciousness. Stamp issued to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the artiste’s birthday.
Many commemorative postage stamps have been released all over the world to celebrate the historical significance of the inauguration of Mr. Barack Hussein Obama as the 44th president of the United States. These stamps have come mostly from the countries of the Global South, especially in Africa and the Caribbean. Some of these stamps are not only portrait representations of the president. In some cases, these countries have demonstrated the power of images in story-telling as they present Mr. Obama’s presidency in relation to different aspects of American history. By juxtaposing the images of Mr. Obama with the images of the U.S. Civil War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the long history of American presidency, we are provided with the parameters to consider the historical milestones that the US has covered, and the key events in American history that indeed made his presidency not only thinkable but a reality.

Among the African/African Diaspora countries that have issued stamps to commemorate Mr. Obama’s presidency are: Antigua and Barbuda, Benin Republic, Chad Republic, Dominica, The Gambia, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Mozambique, Papau New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Tuvalu, and Uganda.
RUSSIAN SON, AFRICAN GREAT GRANDSON

But, as it is, this pied collection
begs your indulgence — it’s been spun
from threads both sad and humoristic,
themes popular or idealistic,
products of carefree hours, of fun,
of sleeplessness, faint inspirations,
of powers unripe, or on the wane...

_Eugene Onegin_ (1833) by Alexander Pushkin

Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin (1799-1837) has been described as the “greatest Russian poet,” celebrated as “the greatest single progenitor of Russian literature,” and has even been referred to as “the soul of Russia”. Arguably, no one has had as much impacts on modern Russian literary and cultural life as Pushkin. And, through his writings, he crafted new vocabularies and new identity for his beloved homeland. This great son of Russia however had a multiplex of ancestral origins, one of which is Africa.

Born into a family of Russian nobility on 6 June 1799 in Moscow, Pushkin’s maternal great-grandfather was the great African scientist and soldier - Abram Petrovich Ganibal (1697-1781).

Pushkin came of age at the very time that scientific racism established foothold in the Euro-American world. He used some of his writings to contemplate his African ancestry while at the same time expressing pride in his Russian heritage. His historical fiction “The Blackamoor of Peter the Great” is based on the life of his African maternal great grandfather Abram Petrovich Ganibal; and he wrote the poem “My Genealogy” to proudly defend his part-African ancestry as a response to the racial slurs aimed at him by his critics in the literary and aristocratic circles.

Though born into nobility and lived the later part of his life in the royal court, he identified more with the spirit of the emerging petit bourgeois in Russia; was committed to social reform; rallied against autocracy; and spent his youth as a member of an underground revolutionary movement.

Pushkin was touchy on the issue of honor and respect; and he fought many duels to defend his honor. He died at the age of 37 from the fatal wounds he sustained in his last duel fought for the honor of his wife, of his name, and of his four children.

In order to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Pushkin’s birth, the Russian government issued, between 1997 and 1999, a series of stamps bearing Pushkin’s portraits and illustrations of themes from his books.

Recent research posits that Abram Petrovich Ganibal, Pushkin’s great grandfather, may have been born in the walled town of Logone in present-day northern Cameroon. At the age of seven (c. 1703), Ganibal was taken as a slave to the court of the Ottoman Sultan in Constantinople. Ganibal was ransomed a year later and brought to Russia. He was adopted by the Russian Emperor, Peter the Great, who raised him as one of his children. Ganibal was celebrated for his talents in mathematics, engineering, and cryptology; and he also rose to become Peter the Great’s most beloved military general.
SOME OF THE FREQUENTLY USED PHILATELTIC TERMS

Adhesives: Stamps intended to be affixed to postal items as distinguished from postage printed or hand stamped directly on the cover.

Bisect: A stamp which has been cut in half (usually diagonally) to be used as two separate stamps. This method was utilized during the 19th century when lower denomination stamps were unavailable.

Block: Four or more unseparated stamps forming a square or rectangular shape.

Booklet: A small convenient book containing stamps of one or more denomination. Often sold through vending machines.

Cachet: A design or picture printed on an envelope to illustrate an event or occasion.

Canceled To Order (CTO): Stamps that have been canceled without having been postally used. Usually lightly corner canceled with full glue on reverse.

Cancellation: The ink mark or other defacement on a stamp indicating that it has been used and cannot be used again.

Carrier Stamps: Stamps used in the United States from 1851 to 1863 in payment of mail delivered to the actual addressee from the postal receiving station and carried by private local carrier. During these years regular postage only covered delivery from one Post Office to another.

Cinderella Stamp: Postally invalid adhesive labels, usually sold to raise money for various charities or for promotional purposes. Christmas Seals are an example of a Cinderella Stamp.

Classic: A term usually referring to older (19th century) engraved stamps of a country.

Commemorative Stamp: A stamp issued in remembrance of an event or as a tribute to an individual.

Condition: The actual material state of a stamp as determined by its centering, freshness, cancellation, gum condition, etc. Stamps are general graded as Gem, Superb, Very Fine, Fine, Average, or Space Filler.

Cover: A complete envelope or post card that has gone through the mail with the stamp or stamps and/or cancellation intact.

Crease: A line or mark on a stamp caused by folding which greatly decreases the value of said stamp.

Dead Country: A country which no longer issues stamps either because it has ceased to exist or has changed its name.

Definitives: Regular issue stamps used for ordinary postage and kept in general circulation for a number of years as differentiated from commemoratives which are issued for a relatively short period of time.

Demonetized: A stamp that has been declared no longer postally valid by the issuing authority.

Denomination: The monetary and postal value of a stamp.

Error Stamp: A stamp with the wrong design, color, printing, paper, perforations, or overprinting. Error stamps because of their relative rarity can be quite valuable.

First Day Cover: An envelope bearing a cancellation date that represents the first day of issue for that stamp. First Day Covers can be acquired from the issuing Post Office for a period of 30 days after the actual issue date.
**Issue:** A stamp or a related series of stamps, released by a post office department during a certain period of time.

**Mint condition:** A stamp in the same condition as when it left the mint or printing source. A stamp which has never been soiled, stained, creased, marked, or torn. Usually with Full Original Gum.

**Overprint:** Any additional printing added to a stamp after the stamp itself has been printed.

**Reissue:** A stamp which has been withdrawn from circulation and reprinted and reissued at a later date by postal authorities.

**Souvenir Sheet:** A sheet (pane) of one or more stamps specifically printed by a government for a specific event or purpose. The Margins usually contain an inscription describing the purpose of the issue.

**Surcharge:** A stamp that has been overprinted with a new denomination.

**Topical Collecting:** The practice of collecting only stamps relating to a single subject or theme, such as, Ships, Seashells, Birds or Trains.

**Vignette:** The main portion of a stamp design, usually the portrait or picture inside the border.

**Wallpaper:** A disparaging term used to describe stamps which have little or no Philatelic Value.

**Want List:** A list of some or all of the stamps a collector is missing from his collection. A want list is usually presented to a dealer by the collector, specifying the stamps needed and listing their catalog number, desired condition and quantity needed. A suggested price range is also sometimes submitted.

**Wove Paper:** The most commonly used paper for the printing of stamps. It has a finely netted texture created during the paper's manufacture.
Postage stamps also serve to draw attention to issues of public interest or to raise funds in support of a social cause, or to achieve both. The Sickle Cell stamp issue, for example, brings the sickle cell anemia to the public attention. This type of anemia is a disease caused by an abnormal type of hemoglobin called Hemoglobin S [Hemoglobin is a protein inside red blood cells that carries oxygen]. Hemoglobin S changes the shape of red blood cells from disk-like to crooked, sickle-shaped, especially when the cells are exposed to low oxygen levels. The red blood cells become shaped like crescents or sickles. The fragile, sickle-shaped cells are stiff and sticky, and deliver less oxygen to the body's tissues. These cells, because of their shape, often get stuck in small blood vessels, and break into pieces thereby interrupting healthy blood flow. It is this blocked blood flow that causes the severe pain, serious infections, and organ damage that patients of sickle cell anemia often experience.

Sickle cell anemia is inherited from both parents. If you inherit the hemoglobin S gene from one parent and normal hemoglobin (A) from your other parent, you will have sickle cell trait. People with sickle cell trait do not have the symptoms of sickle cell anemia. However, if one inherits the hemoglobin S gene from both parents, one will have sickle cell anemia. Sickle cell disease is much more common among peoples of African descent than any other population groups. However, small populations of the Mediterranean and Indian origins also tend to have this disease. Though incurable, medical science has developed a good treatment that can lessen the pains often associated with the disease.
ICONS
by
HIGGINS BOND

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by
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1. Frederick Douglass
2. Girl in the Flowers
3. Barack Obama
4. America the Beautiful
5. The Black Phenomenon
6. Harlequin Frogs
7. Liu
8. World Trade Center
9. Michelle Obama
10. Roy Wilkins
11. Alex Haley Meets the Griot
12. Shimmering Reef Dwellers
13. Young Martin’s Promise
14. Night Reading Lessons
15. Top 100 Black Businesses
16. Crisis Icons
17. For Sale—Whites Only

*The painting shows the portrait only—not the small insects
A native of Little Rock, AR, Higgins Bond earned her bachelor of fine arts from Memphis College of Art. She has received prestigious honors including a medal of honor from then-Governor Bill Clinton. She has had exhibitions at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and the DuSable Museum of African American History in Chicago. She is the illustrator of three stamps for the United States Postal Service and four stamps for the United Nations Postal Administration. Some of the largest collector plate companies have published her original images. Higgins Bond’s clients include such notable names as The Bradford Exchange, McGraw-Hill, The Franklin Mint, NBC, Hennessy Cognac, Anheuser-Busch, Frito-Lay, and Columbia House. She has illustrated more than 37 books for children and adults. She is also an adjunct professor of illustration at the Nossi College of Art in Nashville, where she lives.

For more information about the artist visit www.higginsbond.com.

**ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE EVENT CALENDAR**

- Opening Exhibition—ICONS, as part of the BLACKS ON STAMP Exhibition, February 13-17
- Student-focused Seminar: “Interrogating Self: Redemption of Memory and Meaning in My Art”- February 14, 9:30-10:45am; FRETWELL 202 (RSVP Required)
- Faculty Luncheon Seminar: “The Place of Visual Arts in the Africana Studies Curriculum”. February 15 12:30-1:45pm GARINGER 113 (RSVP Required)
- Public Talk: “The Making of National Icons: African-Americans on Postage Stamps” February 15, 5:00-7:00pm, FRETWELL 113 (Free and Open to the Public)
HIGGINS BOND: ARTIST’S STATEMENT

When I was young, I never knew anyone personally who actually made a living as an artist. So drawing and painting was just a hobby that I truly loved. My family and I believed it would always be just that. So inevitably, when I told my parents that I wanted to attend the Memphis College of Art, the only thing they wanted to know was “how will you really make a living?” As if a career in art was merely a fantasy. However, I grew to have faith in myself as an artist. It took a while before my family also believed.

After graduating with a BFA in Advertising Design, I was fortunate enough to get a job at a Park Avenue advertising agency in New York City. All through art school, I signed my work with my maiden name “Higgins.” But when I got married in the final semester, I went back and added my new name to all my work. The professional name of “Higgins Bond” has stuck with me ever since. Hardly a year after graduation, my son was born. At this point I made the decision to become a freelance illustrator, so I could stay at home with him for a while. It was very slow and difficult at first. Now my son is 36 years old and I have illustrated 36 books. That is about one for every year of his life. In between, I have worked for such clients as Anheuser-Busch, The Franklin Mint, Hennessy Cognac, The Bradford Exchange and NBC TV. I have even been a footnote in history, as the first African-American woman to illustrate a stamp for the United States Postal Service.

At first my only concern was just to make a living and pay the bills. Illustrators paint or draw whatever the art director asks them to. But as I grow older, my priorities have changed and I need more urgently to express my own creative passions about nature and wildlife. This passion is already somewhat evident in most of my recent books about wildlife. For most of my career when asked, I would always say that my specialty was limited edition collector’s plates. I have illustrated many plate series about kittens, tropical fish, butterflies, dogs and children. Unfortunately, in this depressed economy, when some people can’t afford to put food on a regular plate, collector’s plates are a luxury. That market has all but dried up for the moment. Thankfully however, people will always read. I was recently honored to illustrate the 30th anniversary edition of Alex Haley’s Roots, The Saga of An American Family. This was particularly gratifying because of the local connection to Henning, Tennessee. This is where Alex Haley’s ancestors settled and near when my late husband was born and raised. And I am looking forward to the publication of my 37th book (A Place For Fish).

Illustration is considered commercial art, but when I began my career, that didn’t matter. I didn’t want to become one of those starving artist you hear about. At least I can still say that I make my living from my art. Even though this past year was rather difficult as we pull out of this painful recession. As an artist, I’m still growing. I don’t seek just to document nature and wildlife like Audubon, but rather to illuminate God’s creations in a way that crosses that difficult but arbitrary barrier between fine art and commercial art.
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