

# Family Heritage Experience

 American Ancestors.

## Family Heritage Experience—Commissioned Works



### *Fanfare for the Common Person*, 2024

Stainless steel, LED light, and acrylic composite  
Commissioned by American Ancestors, 2024-022

To create this light sculpture, Fred Liang took inspiration from *Fanfare for the Common Man*, Aaron Copland's tribute to Americans who work selflessly toward a hopeful future. The musical notations come from that work.

The Constitution's opening words, "We the People," appear in many of the languages spoken by immigrant and Indigenous Americans. The DNA double helix suggests the rich heritage passed down to all of us, over many generations.

### About the Artist:

Fred H.C. Liang received his BFA from the University of Manitoba and his MFA from Yale University. His honors include Massachusetts Cultural Council Arts Grants in both painting and works on paper. Liang's work is in numerous public and private collections, including Fidelity, the Gund Collection, the Addison Gallery of American Art, and the Rose Art Museum. He has exhibited at the Addison Gallery of American Art, Milwaukee Art Museum, and the Chao Art Center in Beijing, and had solo exhibitions in Berlin, Germany; Jerez, Spain; and Beijing, China. He was awarded the Addison Gallery's Edward E. Elson Artist-in-Residence program, a residency at Swatch Peace Art Hotel in Shanghai, and the Molten Capital Residency at the Museo de Arte Contemporanea De Chile. He is a professor and the printmaking coordinator at Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, MA.



Artist (Fred H.C. Liang), courtesy image

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American Ancestors' Family Heritage Experience

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### *Family Bridges*, 2024

Gouache, pastel, and gel pen on paper

Commissioned by American Ancestors, 2024-021

The tradition of making family trees inspired Yuko Okabe to create this artwork, which “shows how our family ties connect across time, space, actions, passions, special objects, and unexpected encounters,” revealing “the joy in these small moments, which make us a part of an ever-growing and everlasting lineage.”

### About the Artist:

Yuko Okabe Okabe (she/they) is an illustrator and cultural worker playing at the intersection of “h-whimsy” and community engagement. She has used art and design in her many cross disciplinary experiences in affordable housing, healthcare, and community development. She also likes making characters, stories, curriculums, murals, and other colorful things. Okabe holds a BFA in Illustration from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). Their illustration practice received recognition from the Society of Illustrators NYC, Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles (SILA), *Creative Quarterly*, and *3x3 The Magazine of Contemporary Illustration*. Through grants and fellowships, Okabe’s community arts practice received support from the New England Foundation for the Arts, Tufts University Collective Futures Fund, Rhode Island School of Design’s Maharam STEAM Fellowship, and the Enterprise Community Partners’ Rose Fellowship. She is currently a studio artist at the Boston Center for the Arts. She’s an amateur oatmeal influencer [@yukoats](#) and a member of her niece’s highly exclusive sticker club. Website: [YKook.art](#), Linktree: [linktr.ee/ykookart](#)



Artist Yuko Okabe, image by Bob Packert

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### ***Sisters In Stitches Joined By The Cloth: Sharing Our Family Heritage, 2024***

Cotton and polyester, with appliqué, antique buttons, beads, and photo transfers. Stitched by machine and by hand. Commissioned by American Ancestors, 2024-023

A double-sided quilt made in 2023-24 by 13 Sisters In Stitches Joined By The Cloth guild members. Squares were created by individual artists depicting a story from their family history. The silhouettes are the depictions of the makers.

*Both sides of this quilt feature 12 individual blocks. One member did not make an applique block for the front but did for the back and vice versa for another member on the silhouette blocks on the back side quilt. Guild quilters contributing to this work include: Tarsha, Tina, Juanda, Jennifer, Donna, Josie, Lesyslie, Sheila, Karmela, Christle, Kimberly, Susi, Afiya. Another reproduction quilt appears in the exhibit by the same Guild.*

### **About the Artists:**

Sisters In Stitches Joined By The Cloth, (SISJBTC) is a quilt guild that is dedicated to preserving the art, history, culture and traditions of African American quilting. They were formally established in Massachusetts in 1997, where they currently meet in Arlington. SISJBTC members are joined together by their shared experience in quilting which focuses on the group's black history perspective. Quilting is the art of stitching layers of cloth together like one who writes and binds the pages of a book. It is the catalyst that connects them to their ancestors who survived the middle passage and honors their memories stitched in cloth. Sisters In Stitches Joined by the Cloth celebrates their heritage which reinforces the link that binds them to their collective history, share their sorrows and joy and share their knowledge within their community.



*Sisters In Stitches Joined By The Cloth guild members:  
(L to R) Jennifer Jennings, Donna Clark, Susi Ryan,  
Christle Rawlins-Jackson, Lesyslie Rackard, Sheila  
Lutz, Tarsha-Nicole Taylor, image by Charlotte James*

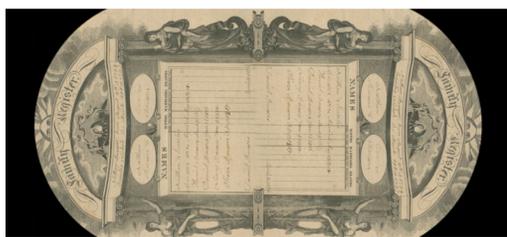
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### *Echoes of Our Heritage*, 2024

Video installation, 2024-024

*Echoes of Our Heritage* showcases several pieces from American Ancestors' extensive collection of manuscripts, art, photographs, books, and historical objects. This dynamic work prompts us all to reflect on our history, both personal and collective, and the diversity of the American experience.



### About the Artist:

Pamela Hersch is a Mexican-American visual artist focusing on motion design, projection design, and interactive installations. She has collaborated with a multitude of producers, artists, nonprofits, art galleries, museums, and commercial organizations. Notable highlights include the “Float” installation at Boston’s Government Center, the “Boston Marathon Light Up the Night” projection at the Fairmont Copley Plaza, animated content for Rob “Problak” Gibbs’ mural, and “Breathe Life Together” in Dewey Square, Boston.

Her work draws inspiration from the organic movements found in nature, including its colors, patterns, and textures. She aims to create experiences that shift perspectives, foster human connection, and raise awareness of our impact on each other and the world.

In addition to her artistic work, she manages Installation Space, an art gallery on historic Eagle Street in North Adams, Massachusetts, steps from MASS MoCA. Pamela holds a Bachelor of Music in Electronic Production and Design and a Master of Arts in Creative Media and Technology from Berklee College of Music.



Artist (Pamela Hersch), courtesy image

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