




African American Women in Georgia:


**Making and Shaping
History While Walking
Out Their Destiny**



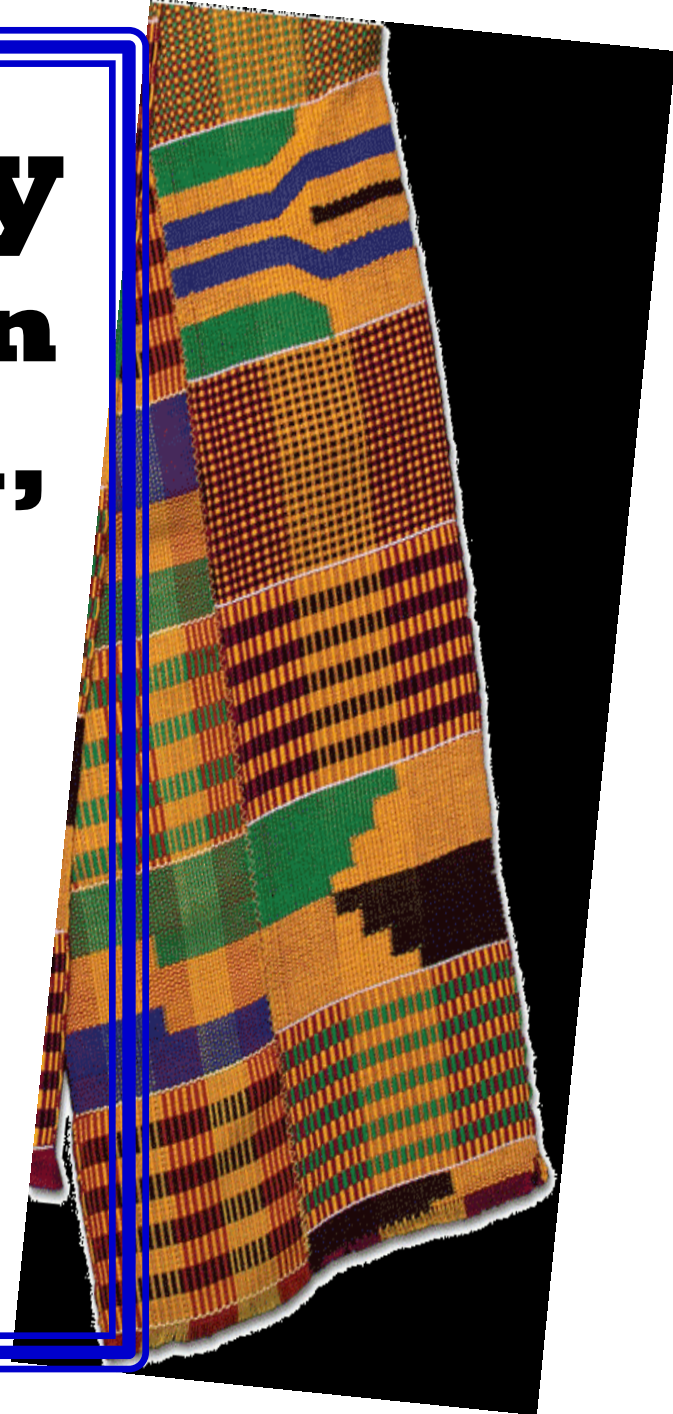
**“I Will Find a Way . . .
OR
. . . Make One.”**



**If life's highest calling is to
serve others . . . then
special honor is due those
whose service to others
inspires others to serve.**



**Odum Library
Celebrates African
American women,
both native
Georgians and
transplants, who
have served and
inspire others to
serve.**



Calling Dreams

**The right to make my dreams come true
I ask, nay, I demand of life,
Nor shall fate's deadly contraband
Impede my steps, nor countermand.
Too long my heart against the ground
Has beat the dusty years around,
And now, at length, I rise, I wake!
And stride into the morning break!**

-Georgia Douglas Johnson, 1922

Georgia Douglas Johnson

1890 - 1996

Atlanta, GA

- **Educator**
- **Harlem Renaissance Poet**
- **Feminist Writer**
- **Playwright**
- **New Negro Movement Leader**
- **First Black woman poet to garner national attention since Frances Ellen Watkins Harper**
- **Best known and most widely published African-American woman poet of her time**
- **Georgia's most famous black woman writer before Alice Walker**





**“Your world is
as big as you
make it.”**


-Georgia Douglas Johnson

Octavia Victoria Rogers Albert



1853 - c.1899
Oglethorpe, GA

- **Slave**
- **Author**
- **Religious Leader**
- **Educator**
- **Saw teaching as a form of worship and Christian service**
- **Chronicled Slavery in the United States**
- **Compiled one of the first post-Civil War books of slave narratives, fifteen years after emancipation**



***“Claim what is yours . . . you
belong anywhere on this
earth you want to.”***

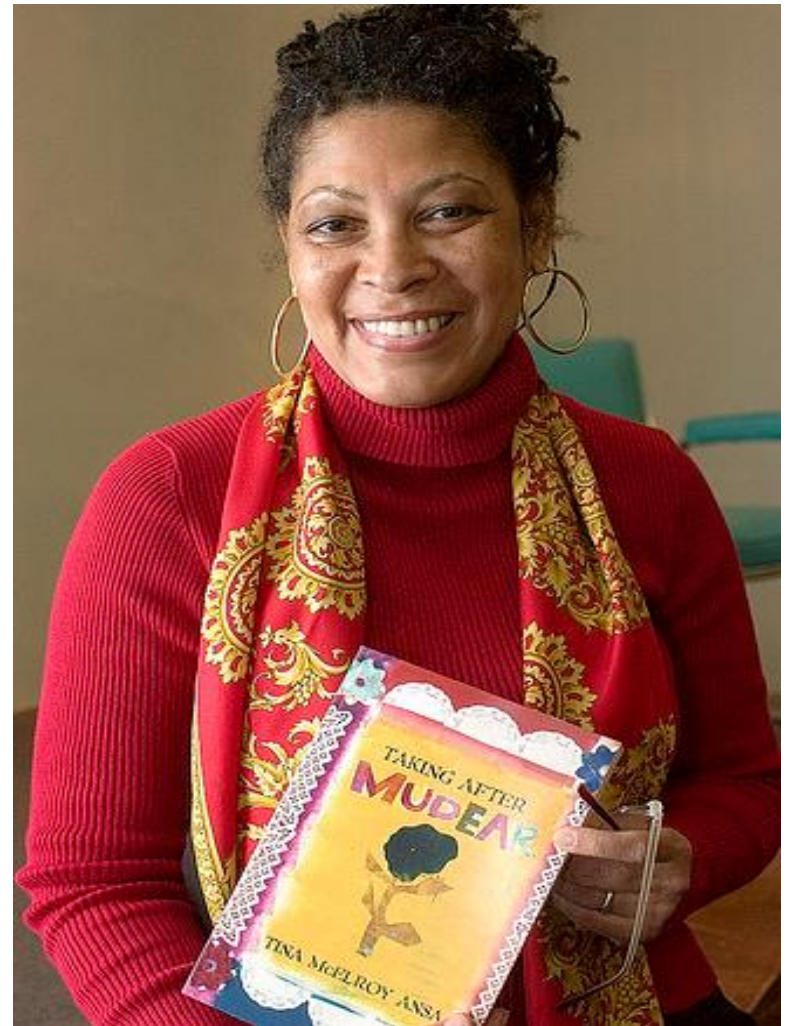
**-Tina McElroy Ansa
In The Hand I Fan With**

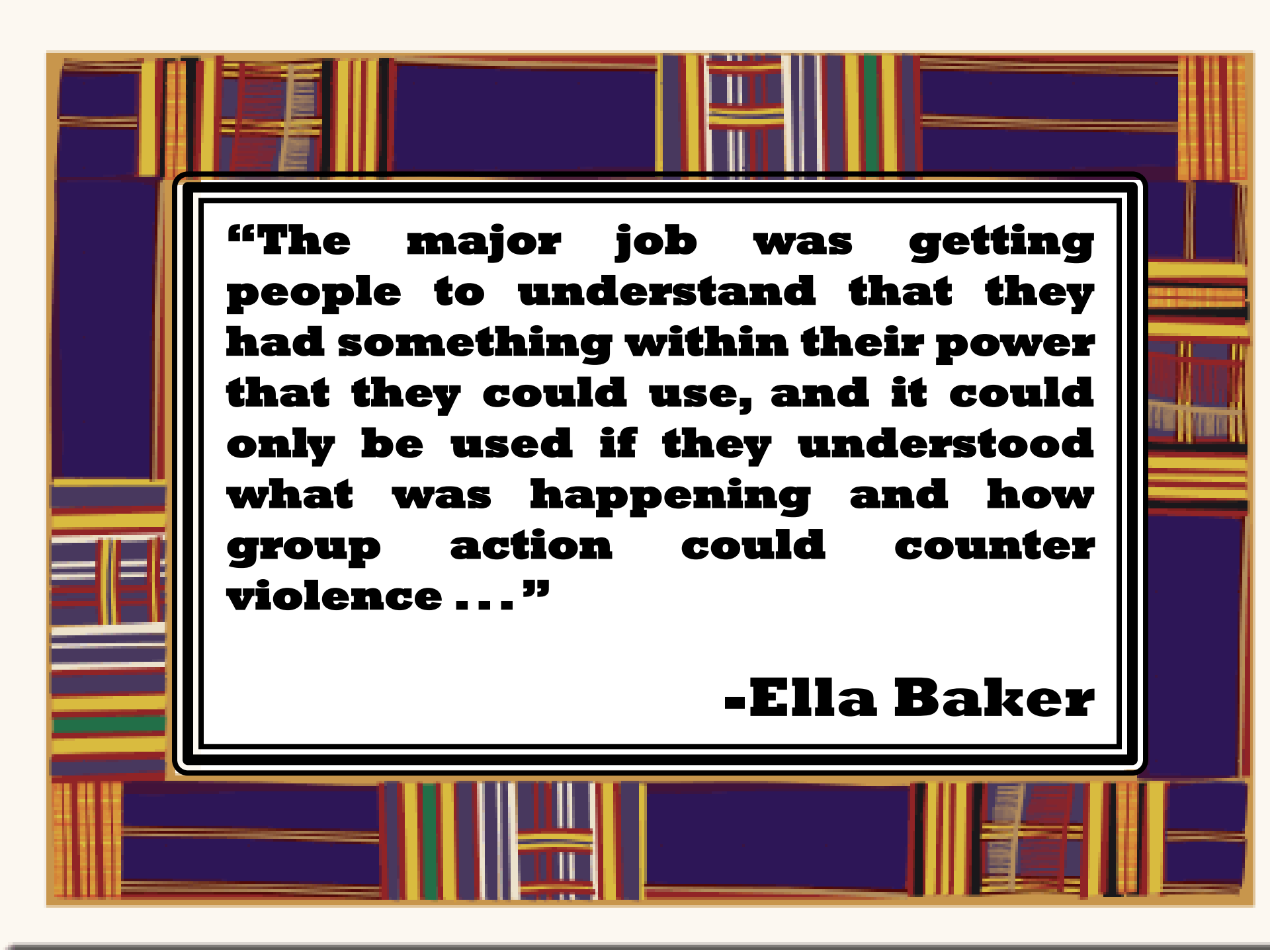


Tina McElroy Ansa

**1949 -
Macon, GA**

- **Novelist**
- **Journalist**
- **Essayist**
- **Short-Story Writer**
- **Publisher**
- **Filmmaker**
- **Teacher**
- **Storyteller**
- **Launched an independent publishing company, DownSouth Press, focusing on African-American literature 2007**
- **Produces and directs the Georgia Sea Island Festival, a 30-year-old grassroots festival that seeks to preserve the crafts, music, slave chants, games, food and spirit of the African-American people who lived and worked as slaves on the rice and cotton plantations along the Georgia coast**





“The major job was getting people to understand that they had something within their power that they could use, and it could only be used if they understood what was happening and how group action could counter violence ...”

-Ella Baker

Ella Josephine Baker



1903 - 1986
Atlanta, GA

- **Civil Rights & Human Rights Activist**
- **Behind-the-Scenes Activist**
- **Career spanned over five decades**
- **Worked alongside some of the most famous civil rights leaders of the twentieth century, including W. E. B. Du Bois, Thurgood Marshall, A. Philip Randolph, and Martin Luther King Jr.**
- **She mentored such then-young Civil Rights stalwarts as Diane Nash, Stokely Carmichael, Rosa Parks, and Bob Moses**

Mathilda Taylor Beasley

1832 - 1903

Savannah, GA

- **Educator**
- **Businesswoman**
- **Pioneer Nun**
- **Georgia's first Black Nun**
- **Established Georgia's first group of black nuns, Third Order of St. Francis in 1889**
- **Established First orphanage for Black girls**

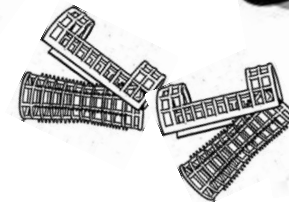


Ruby Parks Blackburn



1901 - 1982
Atlanta, GA

- **Civil Rights Activist**
- **Businesswoman**
- **Beautician**



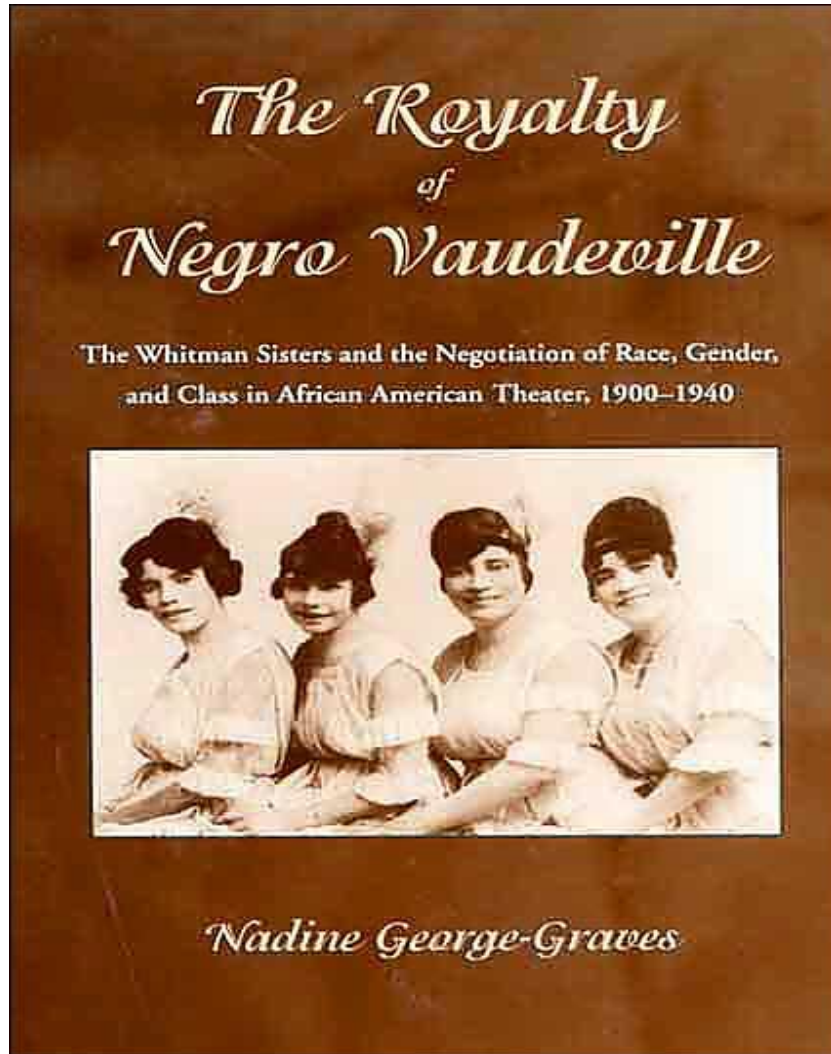
Dorothy Lee Bolden Thompson

1923 - 2002
Atlanta, GA

- **Domestic Worker Union Founder and Organizer**
- **Community and Civil Rights Activist**
- **Set standards for salaries and benefits received by women who were employed as domestic workers**



The Whitman Sisters



1900 - 1942 Atlanta, GA

Mabel Whitman ???? - 1942

Essie Whitman 1882 - 1963

Alberta Whitman ???? - 1964

Alice Whitman ???? - 1969

- **Vaudeville Act**
- **Called “The Royalty of Negro Vaudeville”**
- **Highest paid act in Black Vaudeville during their day because of their fair skin and blond hair**
- **Played White Vaudeville**

Fredericka Carolyn Washington

“Freda Washington”

1903 - 1994

Savannah, GA

- **Dancer**
- **Actress**
- **Civil Rights Activist**
- **Journalist**
- **Founding Member of the Negro Actors Guild of America (NAG) in 1937 to create better professional opportunities**
- **Entertainment Editor of People's Voice, a leftist newspaper for African Americans founded by Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. in 1942**
- **Portrayed Peola in the 1934 Academy Award-nominated film *Imitation of Life***
- **Active with the NAACP working to secure better hotel accommodations for black actors as well as less stereotyping and discrimination in acting roles**



Fredi Washington on Being Black

"I have never tried to pass for White and never had any desire, I am proud of my race." In Imitation of Life, I was showing how a girl might feel under the circumstances but I am not showing how I felt."

**-Fred Washington
The Chicago Defender (National edition)
(1921-1967). Chicago, IL: Jan 19, 1935, p. 9**

Janie Porter Barrett



1865 - 1948

Athens, GA

- **Pioneer Social Worker**
- **Social Welfare Activist**
- **Clubwoman**
- **Founded the Locust Street Social Settlement for troubled girls in Hampton, VA**

Annie L. McPheeters

1908 - 1994
Atlanta, GA

- **Librarian**
- **Educator**
- **Civil Rights Activist**
- **Appointed the Assistant Librarian at the Auburn Branch of the Carnegie Library of Atlanta in 1934**
- **Responsible for developing the library's core Negro History Collection**



Alma Woodsey Thomas



1891 – 1978
Columbus, GA

- **Artist**
- **Expressionist Painter**
- **Art Educator**

Carrie Steele Logan

1829 - 1900

Atlanta, GA

- **Child Welfare Activist**
- **Child Welfare Provider**
- **Educator**
- **Called the "Mother of Orphans"**
- **Founded the Carrie Steele Orphan Home in Atlanta**
- **Oldest Predominantly Black Orphanage in Georgia and possibly the oldest organization of its type in the country**



Selena Sloan Butler

1872 - 1964

Thomasville, GA



- **Educator**
- **Organized the first National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers (NCPPT)**
- **Credited with Co-founding the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**



**Exhibit Located in Odum Library
on First Floor, Exhibit Area**

**Exhibit Compiled and
Created by:**

Tamiko D. Lawrence, MSLS

