



Raggin' On

An Aminah Robinson Inspired Activity Journal

*Raggin' On: The Art of Aminah Brenda
Lynn Robinson's House and Journals*

11.21.2020 - 10.3.2021

Columbus Museum of Art



Name:

Date:

Aminah Robinson hoped that her work would “rag on,” as those who view it add to the story.

Carry on her artistic legacy by using this activity journal to “rag on” in the exhibition and at home.

Each section of the exhibition highlights an aspect of Aminah Robinson's life and art.

Try out some of the creative thinking prompts below to dive deeper into those sections.



Memorize All That Detail.

Section: Beginnings

Find a work of art by Robinson that has a lot of detail. Spend thirty seconds looking closely at it, then turn around and try to name as many details about it as you can.

Find a Gupa.

Section: Material Matters

"Gupa" is Robinson's invented word for drawings of imaginary figures representing the world of legends and spirits. Find the display case full of gupas in the *Material Matters* section of the exhibition.

If you were to make a gupa, what imaginary creature would you draw?



Honor Black History and Culture.

Section: Ancestral Voices

Find a work of art that you feel expresses endurance, the spirit to withstand adversity and hardship. Consider what draw you to this work.

What about it communicates endurance to you?

Through her art, Aminah Robinson strived "to celebrate the everyday lives and culture of Black people and their endurance through centuries of injustice."

— Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, 2012



Take a Trip.

Section: *Raggin' On*

Find a landscape or scene in the exhibition.
Close your eyes and imagine stepping inside the picture. What do you think it would smell, feel, and sound like?

“ I believe that traveling is one of the highest forms of obtaining a formal education. ”

— Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, *Journal*, 1963



Image: Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, *Gupas*, dates unknown, pen and ink on parchment, Estate of the Artist



Write and draw along with Aminah at home.

The following pages of this activity journal highlight aspects of Robinson's creative journey.

“It is **impossible to separate** the writing from the drawing, or the drawing from the writing.”

—Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, Journal, 1974-75

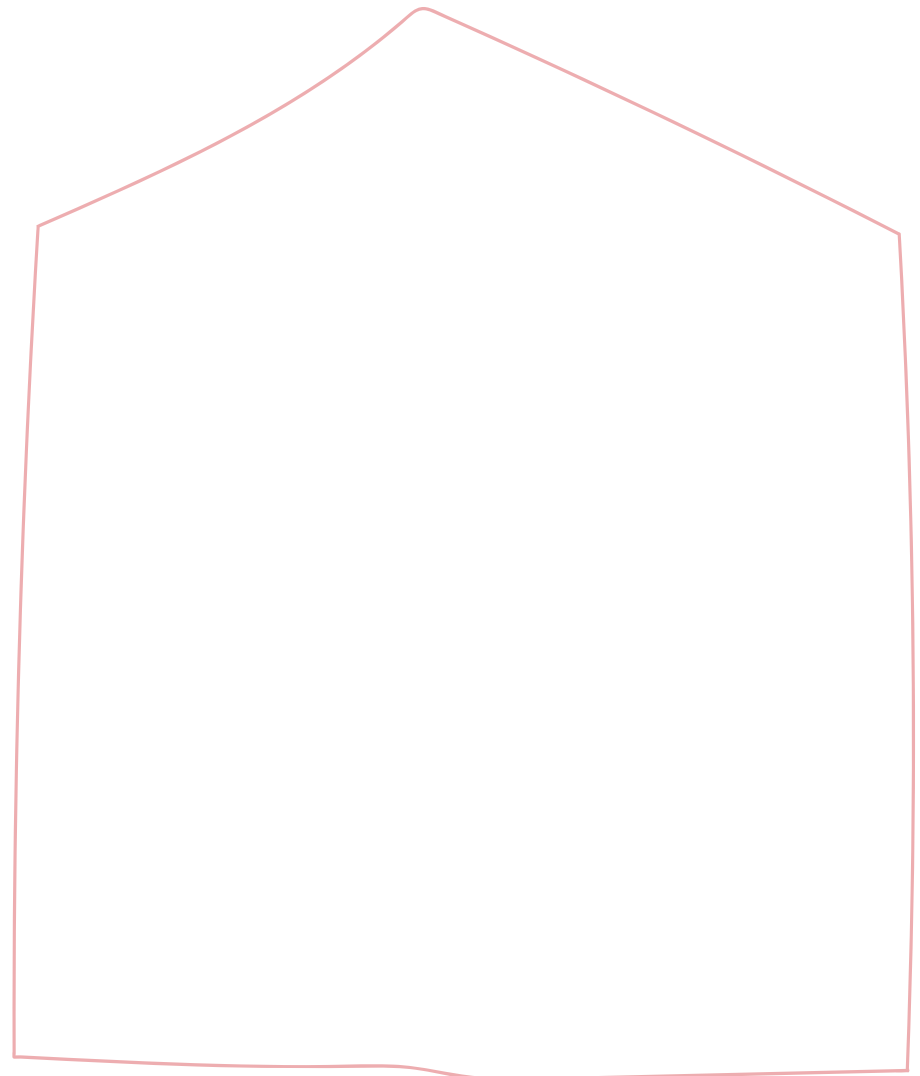
Image: Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, *A Street Called Home*, detail, 1997, mixed media on cloth, 28 × 89½ in., Columbus Museum of Art, Museum Purchase with funds donated by Wolfe, Associates, Inc., 1997.010a–g

“ **Home Studio** is the most descriptive phrase for Aminah Robinson’s two-story house in Columbus’s Shepard neighborhood, because **she turned every square foot of her house into an artmaking space.** Everything that surrounded her supported her drive to create. ”

—Deidre Hamlar, Sacred Sanctuary, 2020
Raggin’ On exhibition catalogue, p. 21

Imagine Your Home Studio.

What environments, objects, and colors inspire your creativity? In the area provided, map out your ideal creative space.



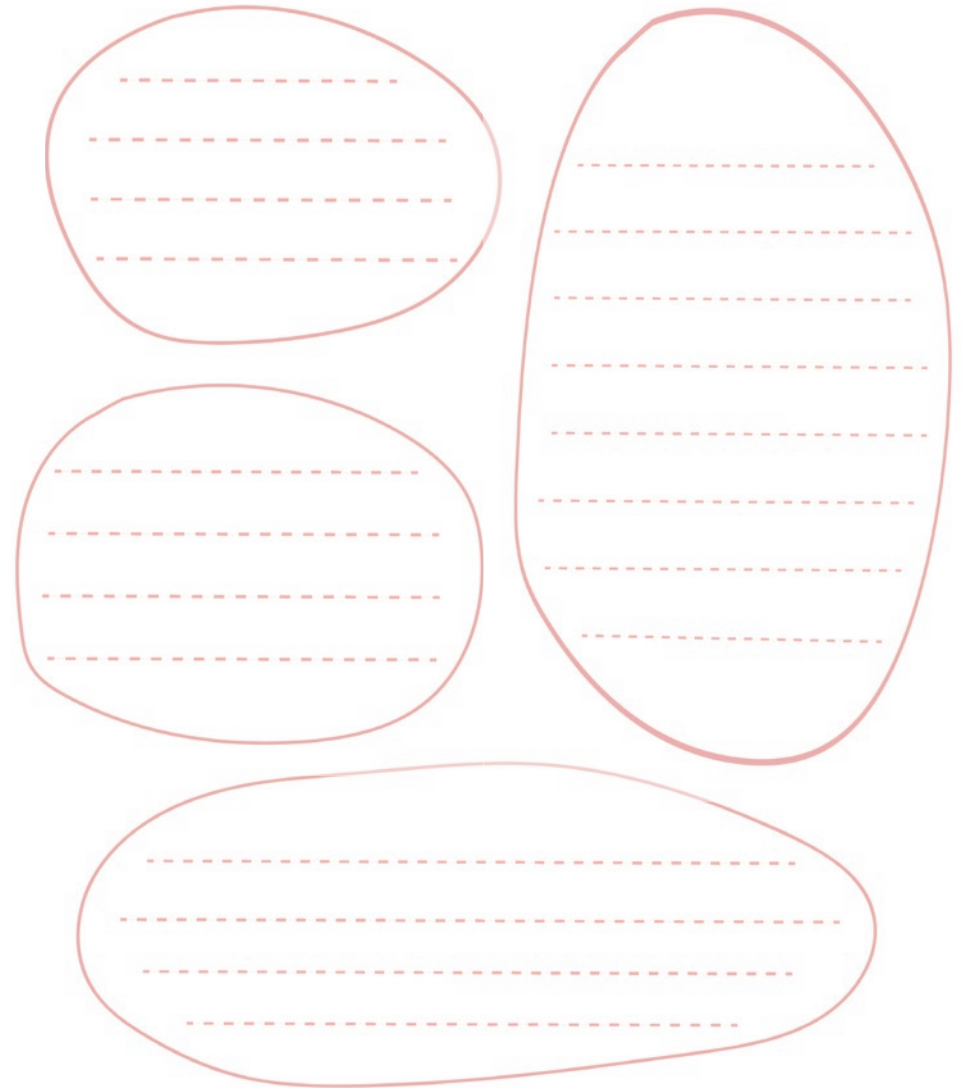
“ Memories, woven together like the threads of treasured family cloths, are protected and loved through generations; the sharing of memories becomes the story of all our lives.

Over time, memories become our history, telling us who we have been and who we are becoming.”

—Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, *The Teachings*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992

Robinson wrote about the importance of passing on memories to future generations.

What memories would you share? Talk with your family and friends to record significant stories and events in the spaces below.

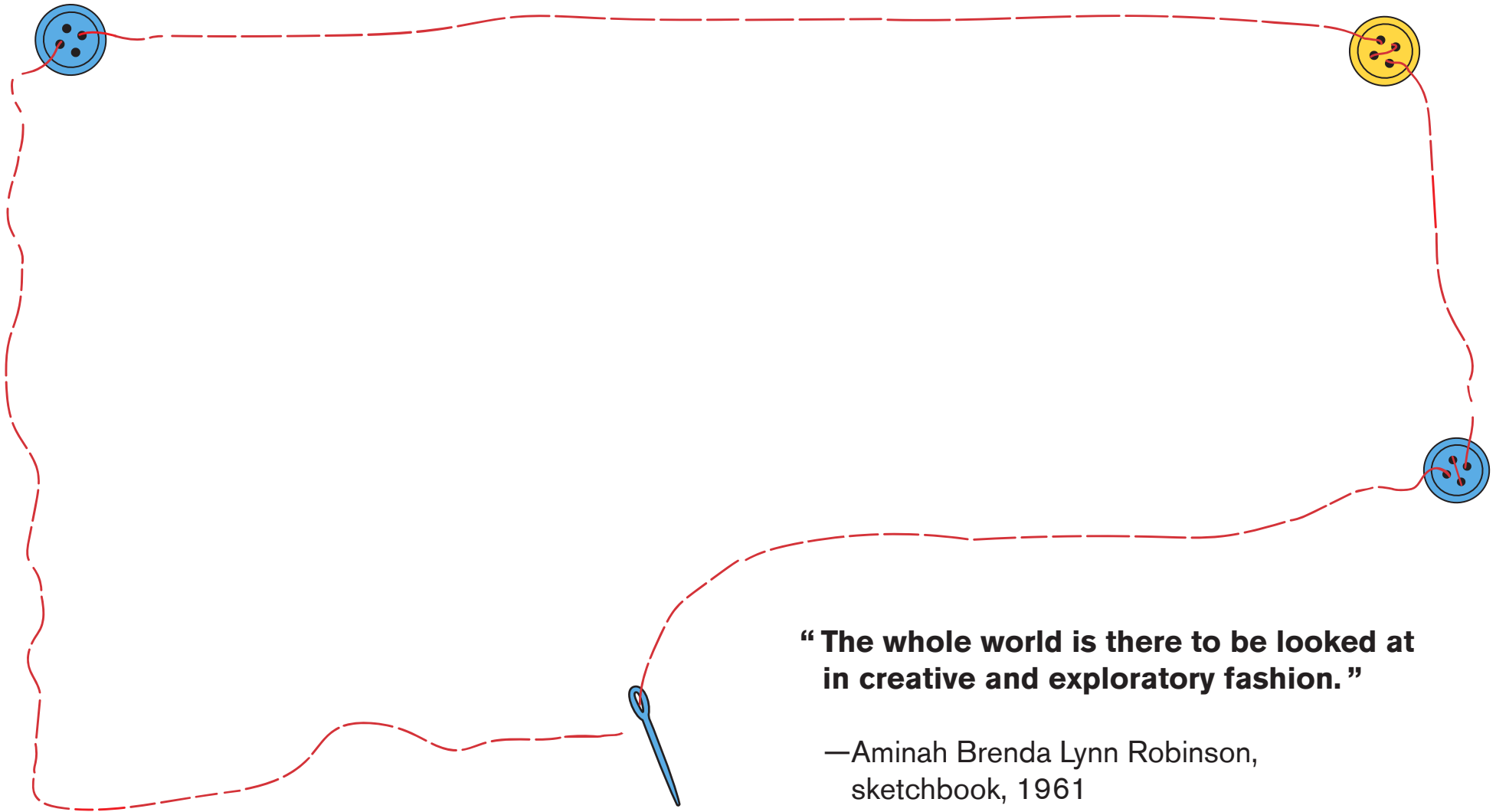


The form consists of three large, hand-drawn oval shapes arranged in a 2x2 grid (with the bottom-right position empty). Each oval contains four horizontal dashed lines, providing a guide for writing. The ovals are drawn in a reddish-brown color.

Map your neighborhood.

In colorful, scroll-like “memory maps,” Robinson captured the unforgettable people and soul of her childhood neighborhood on Mount Vernon Ave in Columbus, Ohio.

Take this journal and drawing materials with you one day as you safely explore your neighborhood. Record the people, smells, colors, buildings, and unique characteristics that stand out to you.



“The whole world is there to be looked at in creative and exploratory fashion.”

—Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson,
sketchbook, 1961

In many journal entries, Robinson reflected on racial inequity in America and her participation in meetings, marches, and demonstrations organized by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Congress for Racial Equity (CORE) in Columbus.

“The Civil Rights struggles of the late 1950s and the 1960s in Columbus, Ohio as well as throughout Amerika, was truly a time of change—changes demanded by the people—to open up public facilities and equal opportunities for all.”

—Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson

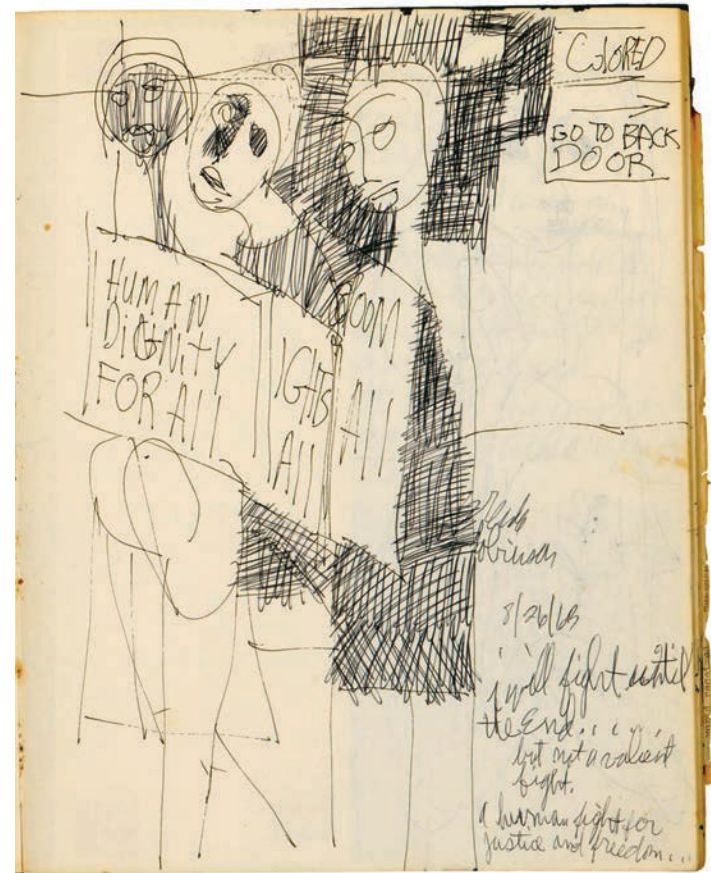


Image: Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, *March on Washington*, 1963, pen and ink in journal, 11 × 8½ in., ABLR 19-11, Estate of the Artist



Image: Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, *The Teachings (cover)*, 1992, pen and ink, buttons, beads, thread, and fabric on paper, 26 × 20 in., Columbus Museum of Art, Gift of the Artist, 2014.050.024

In the summer of 2020, a wave of demonstrations erupted in Columbus and worldwide to protest for racial justice.

Take some time to reflect on these events.

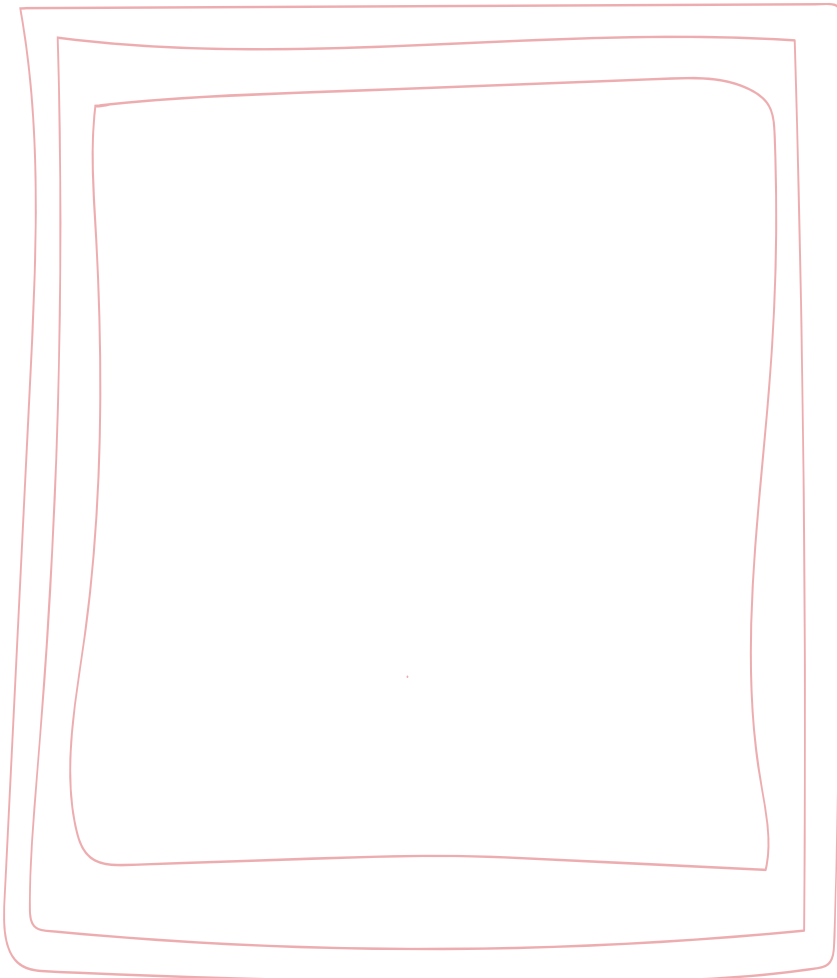
A large rectangular box with a red border, containing several horizontal lines for writing.

" For 61 years, I have given my life to celebrating Afrikan People, I also disclose the racial and discriminatory practices that have haunted Black people to this day —not FAR have we come. The injustices, even today as I pen this Memoir, are still present in our daily life. "

— Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, Journal, 2001-06

In the 1990s series, *A Clutch of Blossoms*, Robinson uses portraiture to honor the influential women in her life.

Inspired by this series, draw a portrait of an important woman in your life.



“ *A Clutch of Blossoms* is a body of work about women I have known and women who I have admired through the years. It’s mothers and daughters—it’s a **celebration of womanhood. ”**

— Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson, *Symphonic Poem* exhibition catalogue, 2002



Continue Your Journaling Path.

Aminah Robinson kept journals her whole life. From the time she attended the Columbus College of Art & Design until she passed away in 2015, she created over 125 journals that overflow with her writings and drawings.

Continue to fill up new journals with your daily observations, sketches, reflections, imaginings, and memories.

