



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 18, 2025

Textile Center presents **STITCHING BLACK LEGACY: THE QUILTS OF CAROLYN MAZLOOMI** April 22 – July 12, 2025

Artist Reception and Arts Speak talk with Carolyn Mazloomi set for Friday, May 16, 2025, 5:30 to 8 pm



(Photos: Quilts by Mazloomi at [Claire Oliver Gallery](#) in Harlem, NY. Photos by Karl Reichert, taken September 2024.)

For more than 55 years, Carolyn L. Mazloomi has dedicated her work as a historian, curator, author, and lecturer to bring the unrecognized contributions of African American quilt artists to the attention of the American people. When she founded the Women of Color Quilters Network (WCQN) in 1985, she helped propel the careers of many African American quilters into the contemporary art world.

Mazloomi is now dedicating time in her busy schedule to prioritize her own creative work by creating an impressive series of large-scale art quilts reflecting the lives of Black civil rights activists, leaders, and revolutionaries who shaped American history.

Textile Center is proud to present *Stitching Black Legacy: The Quilts of Carolyn Mazloomi*, which will be on view in all Textile Center galleries from April 22 through July 12, 2025, and it will be the largest solo exhibition ever of Mazloomi's work under one roof.

During the second week of May, Mazloomi and members of WQCN will convene in the Twin Cities to celebrate the exhibition. Festivities include:

- **Reception + Artist Talk:** Friday, May 16, from 5:30 to 8 pm, with an Art Speaks talk with Carolyn Mazloomi at 6 pm. (Free and open to the public.)
- **Workshop:** [Improvisational Quilting with Ed Johnetta Miller](#), Tuesday – Thursday, May 13-15, from 10 am to 1 pm. Tuition: \$700 (\$630 for Textile Center members) *
- **Workshop:** [Collage Quilted Portraits with Sylvia Hernández](#), Friday, May 16, from 1 to 4 pm. Tuition: \$220 (\$198 for Textile Center members) *

- **Workshop:** [Sew Your Story: Quilted Portraits with Sylvia Hernández](#), Saturday, May 17, from 10 to 11:30 am (All ages workshop). Tuition: \$45 (\$40.50 for Textile Center members) *
- **Trunk Show:** Sylvia Hernandez will sell her Portrait Quilts in a Trunk Show at Textile Center's Shop, Tuesday - Saturday, May 13-17.
- **Artist-in-Residence:** WCQN member Dorothy Burge of Chicago will be an artist-in-residence during this week, participating in community engagement activities related to African American quilting and her work as multi-media artist and community activist.

Textile Center's exhibitions are always free and open to the public.

"Carolyn is a treasured member of our Textile Center community," says Executive Director Karl Reichert, "and we are honored that she chose our venue in Minneapolis for this exciting solo exhibition.

"We have enjoyed a long affiliation with Carolyn," Reichert adds, "and among her greatest gifts to our community was the role she played in curating [We Are the Story](#) five years ago. When Minneapolis became the epicenter of the nationwide protest movement against police brutality and racism in America following the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, it was Carolyn who proposed we join forces with Women of Color Quilters Network to create [We Are the Story](#). The result was a multi-venue series of art quilt exhibitions that ran from September 2020 to June 2021 and included an exhibition catalog that is now in its fourth printing. We look forward to welcoming Carolyn back to Minneapolis in May."

Stitching Black Legacy: The Quilts of Carolyn Mazloomi at Textile Center follows her successful gallery exhibition last fall – [Whole Cloth: Narratives in Black and White](#) – at Claire Oliver Gallery in New York City. This spring's exhibition will premiere Mazloomi's newest quilts created earlier this year.

"Quilting is a tradition and a mode of expression that is both intimate and esteemed," says Mazloomi. "Every human being has an intimate relationship with cloth. It is the first thing we are swathed in at birth, and the last thing that touches our body upon our death. Through the nuance of textile, difficult stories can reach audiences across identities and generations from a place of care, hearth, peace, and nurture."

Mazloomi's black-and-white quilts catalyze ideas illustrated in her diaries and sketchbooks, where she embarks on in-depth explorations into the lives of freedom fighters. From these pages, her drawings are printed onto cotton fabric in rich, black ink reminiscent of the bold graphics captured in woodblock prints and indelible photographs reproduced in newspapers. During the labor-intensive process of appliqué — a technique for creating shapes by sewing on fabric patches — Mazloomi builds the compelling and complex narratives of Black trailblazers, memorializing their stories for the future generations. Each quilt is framed by a patchwork border — kaleidoscopic, geometric patterns that celebrate the quilting community and those craft traditions that she has made significant contributions to as a curator, author, and community organizer.

As in a newspaper, the clear and bold black color ensures that no dimension of decoration distracts from an impactful and memorable portrait of these individual's lives. Throughout the quilts, circular motifs recur — symbols of perpetual, enduring life cycles. In a time where the histories of race, gender, and class are at risk of being erased from education by conservative forces in politics, Mazloomi's works serve as a seminal teacher. She is an artist who activates her practice to ensure that no oppressive body can suppress, or erase, the legacy of Americans who put their lives at risk to ensure a brighter future for their people. These quilts are shrines to acts of inimitable bravery, resilience, compassion, brilliance, and kindness.

ABOUT CAROLYN L. MAZLOOMI

Based in West Chester, Ohio, Carolyn Mazloomi is an artist, curator, and writer. Her practice is rooted in the quilting tradition, using textiles — a personal and metaphorical material — to communicate the stories of individuals who have made significant contributions to social justice and landmark events that have shaped American history. She is the founder of the African American Quilt Guild of Los Angeles and the Women of Color Quilters Network, and a board member of the Studio Art Quilt Associates and Alliance for American Quilters. Over the course of her career, Mazloomi has had solo exhibitions at institutions and galleries across the country including the Los Angeles Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Kenyon College, Gambier, OH; Kent State University, Kent, OH; Malcom Brown Gallery, Shaker Heights, OH; University of Michigan, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, Ann Arbor, MI; and Quilters Hall of Fame, Marion, IN.

Mazloomi's work is in the public collections of the American Folk Art Museum, New York, NY; Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Birmingham, AL; Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, OH; Cleveland Public Library, Cleveland, OH; Museum of Fine Art, Boston, MA; Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN; Museum of Art and Design, New York, NY; National Civil Rights Museum, Memphis, TN; National Endowment for the Arts Washington, D.C.; Quilters Hall of Fame Museum, Madison, IN; The Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Smithsonian Museum of African American Culture and History, Washington, D.C., among others. Mazloomi is the author of several books, and has most recently published *Visioning Human Rights in the New Millennium* (2019), *Yours for Race and Country: Reflections on the Life of Colonel Charles Young* (2019), *We Who Believe in Freedom* (2020), *We Are the Story: A Visual Response to Racism* (2021), and *Black Pioneers: Legacy in the American West* (2022).

TEXTILE CENTER – A NATIONAL CENTER FOR FIBER ART

Textile Center is unique as America's national center for fiber art, with a mission to honor textile traditions, promote excellence and innovation, nurture appreciation, and inspire widespread participation in fiber arts. The Center's resources include exceptional fiber art exhibitions, an artisan shop, the region's only accessible professional-grade dye lab, a natural dye plant garden, and one of the nation's largest circulating textile libraries open to the public. Textile Center produces more than 200 classes a year for all ages and skill levels through its youth, adult, older adult, and outreach programs. A dynamic hub of fiber activity for 30 years, Textile Center brings people together in community to learn, create, share, and be inspired by fiber art. textilecentermn.org

PRESS CONTACT: Mia Finnamore, Director of Marketing + Communications
mfinnamore@textilecentermn.org 612-436-0464

*** To register for workshops, visit textilecentermn.org/guest-teaching-artists. Payment plans and scholarships are available.**



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.