

## Why Bettie?

Bettie J. Durrah's collection of over 40 choreopoems inspired me as a poet and African American woman trying to understand and fight for justice just as she does. She has been internationally recognized for her academic, professional, creative, and humanitarian contributions. A pioneer for Presbyterian women of color for decades, Bettie needs to have the spotlight on her for a change; she deserves it just as much as any of the men represented by these statues. Her representation and the representation of others within our exhibits changes the storiation of PHS, and opens the narrative to be more inclusive and telling of a more colorful history.

## A Vision —Bettie J. Durrah

We are women.

We are always women.

Women who shape history.

Eliminating racism and sexism.

Standing in the vanguard for human rights.

Setting up schools.

Presbyterian women –

Ostracized and lynched.

But still moving on.

We are women.

We have a vision.

A vision of reconciliation.

A vision of shalom pace, peace.

A vision of confluence.

A vision of salam.

A vision of true reflection.

## Building Knowledge; Breaking Barriers

Bettie has spent most of her life using her education, wisdom, and experience to spread her knowledge across the country and the world. She has pioneered for the inclusion of women of color within her presbytery. Her work within the caucus provided a space for representation. She has been a leader, a teacher, a mentor, and the epitome of compassion and "living the polity" to bring a closer relationship to God.

Through discovering Bettie's profound work and talking with the living legend herself, I was greatly inspired to create this tribute to her, to find beauty and value in my own passion and compassion, and to write the following poem. "A Vision Reborn" conveys how Ms. Durrah's work has inspired me and how "Colors of the Human Family" is as relevant now as it was 38 years ago maybe even more.

We have a vision, not a third world, or a second world, or first world, but one world!

We have a vision! We are seekers! We are seekers of that vision! A vision! A vision! A vision!

For more information about Maya Holman's

Building Knowledge Breaking Barriers project,

visit: www.bkbbphilly.org/maya or use your

smart phone to scan this QR code





## A Vision Reborn

A Vision!

A Vision of equality.

Sprung forth like the babes,

Plucked like the flowers and the ribbons, strange fruit.

Placed on pedestals like statues,

beyond the highest powers of mankind and those who aid in their erection.

Facing the crimes of their ungodly inflection and dereliction.

Where color doesn't define status for young boys and girls.

Prerequisites for a future that exists without hatred.

Prototypes and precedents for the age of changed minds, changed times.

Changing the picture that was painted, Bringing the colors together for a bigger picture,

A vision of the bigger picture.

-Maya Holman, 2020