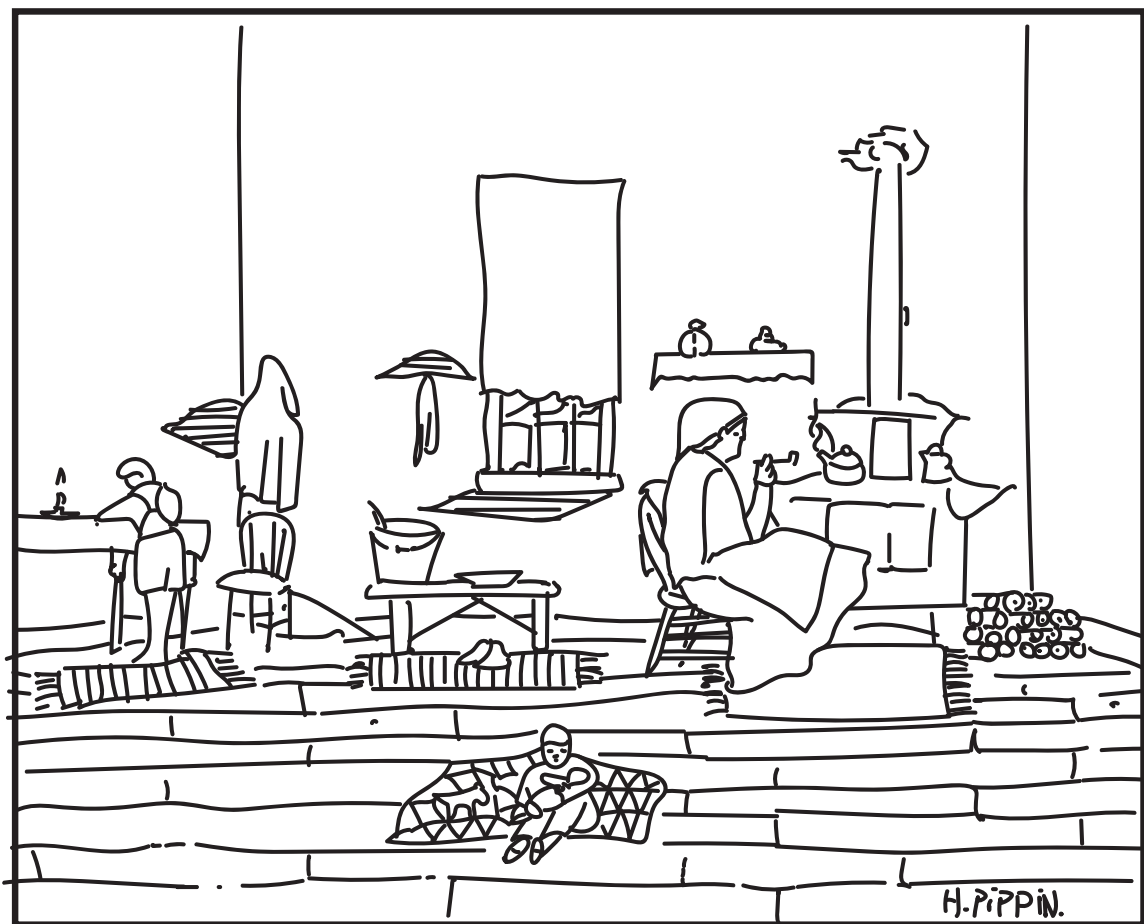


# OBSERVANCE

FEBRUARY

## *African Americans and the Arts*



**Black History Month** is an annual observance originating in the United States, where it is also known as African American History Month.

Each year the Department of Defense (DoD), along with the rest of the Nation, recognizes the important contributions and rich culture of African Americans.

*“... We’ll observe how the burdens braved by humankind are also the moments that make us humans kind;*

*Let every dawn find us courageous, brought closer;  
Heeding the light before the fight is over.*

*When this ends, we’ll smile sweetly, finally seeing  
In testing times, we became the best of beings.”*

**Amanda Gorman** is an American poet and activist. She was born on March 7, 1998, in Los Angeles, California.

Her work has been praised for its themes of hope, resilience, and perseverance.

She has become a role model for many young people around the world, inspiring them to use their voices to create positive change in their communities.



# African Americans and the Arts

**Alma Woodsey Thomas** was an African-American artist and teacher who lived and worked in Washington, D.C., and is now recognized as a major American painter of the 20th century.

She did not become a full-time, professional artist until she was in her late 60's after she retired from teaching art at Washington's Shaw Junior High School.

She is known for the "exuberant", colorful, abstract paintings.

*"Creative art is for all time and is therefore independent of time. It is of all ages, of every land, and if by this we mean the creative spirit in man which produces a picture or a statue is common to the whole civilized world, independent of age, race and nationality; the statement may stand unchallenged."*

