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This I Accomplish: Harriet Powers' Bible Quilt and Other Pieces

Kyra E Hicks

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The powerful quilts of Harriet Powers (1837-1910), a former Athens, Georgia slave, continue to capture our imagination today. Her two-known creations, the Bible Quilt and the Pictorial Quilt, have independently survived since stitched more than a century ago. Over the years, thousands of museum visitors to the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston have stood transfixed viewing her artwork. Powers' two quilts are arguably the most well-known and cited coverings in American quilt history. But, until today, no one has told the entire, dramatic story of how these two quilts, one of which initially sold for $5, were coveted, cared for, and cherished for decades in private homes before emerging as priceless, national treasures. This I Accomplish: Harriet Powers' Bible Quilts and Other Pieces brings to light new, exciting facts - many never before published: complete exhibition history for both known quilts; proof Harriet Powers was a literate, award-winning quilter, who stitched at least five quilts and promoted her own artwork; profiles of the two nineteenth century women who sought to purchase the Bible Quilt; profiles of the three men who once owned the Pictorial Quilt; unveiling of a young artist who embellished the Pictorial Quilt; and the name of the person who first made the connection in the twentieth century that Harriet Powers stitched both quilts. This I Accomplish: Harriet Powers' Bible Quilts and Other Pieces is the most comprehensive resource guide on this influential African American quilter. The book includes nearly 200 bibliographic references, most annotative, including books, exhibition catalogs, newspapers, plays, poetry, interactive map and more. For the first time ever, readers are provided with clues and encouraged to search for Harriet Powers' lost 1882 Lord's Supper Quilt. This I Accomplish: Harriet Powers' Bible Quilts and Other Pieces is written by Kyra E. Hicks, a quilter whose story quilts have appeared in over forty group exhibitions in places such as the Fenimore Art Museum in Cooperstown, NY, the Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C., and the American Folk Art Museum in NY. Hicks is the author of Black Threads: An African American Quilting Sourcebook and Martha Ann's Quilt for Queen Victoria. She lives in Arlington, Virginia.

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