



# Souls Grown Deep like the Rivers

**Black Artists from the American South**

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- Discover the Black artists from America's southern states who created some of the most spectacular and ingenious works of the last century
- Published to accompany an exhibition organised by the Royal Academy of Arts, London, in collaboration with the Souls Grown Deep Foundation, Atlanta, running from March 17 to June 18, 2023

For generations, Black artists from the American South have forged a unique art tradition. Working in near isolation from established practices, they have created masterpieces in clay, driftwood, roots, soil, and recycled and cast-off objects that articulate America's painful past – the inhuman practice of enslavement, the cruel segregationist policies of the Jim Crow era, and institutionalised racism. Their works date from the early twentieth century to today and respond to issues ranging from economic inequality, oppression and social marginalisation, to sexuality, the influence of place, and ancestral memory. Among the sculptures, paintings, reliefs and drawings included here are works by Hawkins Bolden, Thornton Dial, Sam Doyle, Bessie Harvey, Lonnie Holley, Ronald Lockett, Joe Minter, Nellie Mae Rowe, Mary T. Smith, Henry and Georgia Speller, Mose Tolliver, Charles Williams and Purvis Young. Also featured are the celebrated quiltmakers of Gee's Bend, Alabama, among them Mary Lee Bendolph, Marlene Bennett Jones, Loretta Pettway and Martha Jane Pettway.