



A TIMELINE OF THE WOMEN
WHO CHANGED AMERICA



November 2023 Her Story ENewsletter 2024 Quarters #2

In last month's ENewsletter, we profiled Patsy Mink, Pauli Murray, and Mary Edwards Walker – three of the five women whose likenesses will be on the 2024 Quarters. This month we tell you about the others who are planned for 2024: Celia Cruz, and Zitkála-Šá. In addition, we now know who the women are who will be featured on the 2025 quarters. We will profile them during 2024.



The most popular Latin artist of the twentieth century, **Celia Cruz** was born in Cuba. Her family wanted her to become a teacher, but she was encouraged by one of her teachers to become an entertainer instead – to earn more money! In 1947, she was a frequent contestant (and contest winner) on the radio in Havana. In 1950, Cruz was selected to replace the lead singer in one of the biggest bands in Cuba; she soon became more famous than the band! The band was in Mexico when Fidel Castro assumed control of Cuba and the band members did not return. Cruz and her husband became U.S. citizens, and she continued her career performing around the world. However, she never gave up her dream of returning to Cuba.

She performed at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay thirty years after she left Cuba and returned to the U.S. with a fistful of soil that was buried with her in Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx, New York. A recipient of the National Medal of the Arts and the winner of Grammy awards, she has been inducted into the Latin Music Hall of Fame and the International Latin Music Hall of Fame. Cruz was featured on a U.S. postage stamp in 2011.



Zitkála-Šá (Red Bird), of Yanktown Sioux heritage, was known as an activist, musician, and author. She was eight and living with her mother on the Yanktown Sioux reservation when she went to an Indiana missionary school for Native American children. When she returned to the reservation, both she and others on the reservation had changed, exhibiting more traits of the dominant culture. Red Bird attended Earlham College in Indiana with a scholarship but dropped out only weeks before she would have graduated, due to both health and financial issues.

Later she studied violin at the New England Conservatory of Music, before teaching at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. When she was sent to recruit students at her reservation, she began to understand the conflict between Native American culture and the dominant culture. After meeting and marrying, she and her husband lived on the Uintah-Ouray reservation in Utah where she wrote and advocated for Native American's rights to culture and language. She wrote the first Native American opera, titled *The Sun Dance Opera*. She served as an officer and advocate of Native American organizations including the National Congress of American Indians. She was also the editor of the *American Indian Magazine*. She has been called the most influential native activist of the 20th century.

Celia Cruz, and Zitkála-Šá are among the more than 850 women profiled in our book *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America*. Women's accomplishments continue to inspire and encourage us all. Continue to help us tell women's stories!

Charlotte Waisman and Jill Tietjen

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