



Speaker 1: It was a slow journey, but after the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation, African-Americans gained a small foothold in the middle class. The industrial cities of the North attracted former slaves with its job prospects. This created a migration of African-Americans from the southern states to the northern cities.

An area of New York City called Harlem became a hotbed of African-American culture and artistic creativity. There were fabulous nightclubs like the Cotton Club and the Apollo Theater. Some of the best-known musicians of the day performed at these clubs. Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Nat King Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, and my favorite because I actually met him and chatted with him backstage when he was still alive, Cab Calloway.

Intellectuals gathered in Harlem in cafes and diners, just like their European counterparts were doing. This created dynamic energy that promoted innovation and individualistic expression in the arts. Poetry, novels, visual arts, and dance, all flourished during this period, which was roughly between 1924 and 1931. Its impact was felt in every major urban center throughout the United States. It also had an international impact as performers from the Harlem Renaissance were welcomed into Paris.

Additionally, Blacks who came to New York from the Caribbean took this spark back with them, infusing many island nations with this creative impulse. Jacob Lawrence is probably one of the most famous visual artist to come out of a Harlem Renaissance. He's also shared with the American Regionalism movement.

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