

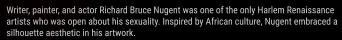
## HAR LEM RENAISSANCE

THROUGH AN LGBTQ LENS



A talented singer, dancer, and pianist, Gladys Bentley achieved great fame and wealth while at the same time transgressing gender norms. Dressed in her signature top-hat and tuxedo, Bentley headlined shows in the Cotton Club and the Apollo Theater.

Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture



Richard Bruce Nugent (American, 1906-1987). Dancing Figures, ca. 1935. Gift of Dr. Thomas H. Wirth, gift of Frederick J. Adler, by exchange, bequest of Richard J. Kempe, by exchange, and gift of Abraham Malkawitz, by exposure





Poet Countee Cullen was educated, religious, and able to appeal to both Black and White audiences. Several of his poems alluded to same-sex relationships. Cullen married, and later divorced, W. E. B. Du Bois's daughter, Yolande.

Carl Van Vechten Photographs, Library of Congress



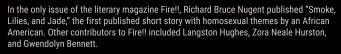
A'Lelia Walker's townhouse and beauty parlor





Bessie Smith was known as the "Empress of the Blues." According to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, she "was the highest-paid black performer of her day and arguably reached a level of success greater than that of any African-American entertainer before her." Smith had relationships with both men and women.

Carl Van Vechten, photographer. Portrait of Bessie Smith, Library of Congres



Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, published in 1926, with artwork by Aaron Douglas



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