



Henrietta Dwells

A Matrilineal Series

Inspired By:

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks

For the last 12 years, I have investigated the relationships between daughters and their matrilineal ancestry. I've examined issues that involve mental and physical abuses that are neatly woven into patterns on attractive quilts. At that point, the work of art becomes a vessel of secrets, known only by me and the victims.

The Immortal life of Henrietta Lacks presented different challenges, there were no secrets ... it was literally an open book. I was neither surprised nor shocked at how she was treated; so I decided to focus on elements that were not common knowledge... her descendants.



My interest led to Henrietta's family tree and the millennial Lackses. The symbol I selected to convey my idea was the *Nautilus Shell*. The Mollusk that inhabits the shell dates back to prehistoric times and continues to thrive, the same as Henrietta's Cell Line.



As I continued to brainstorm and search for other sources of inspiration, the notion "*To Dwell*" came to mind. My research led to the beneficiaries of Henrietta's Cell Line. The design below is a modified timeline of medical breakthroughs attributed to her cell line.



My work has stopped short of completing the quilts. Should I continue or should I let Henrietta Rest in Peace?

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