
Rodney Lawrence Hurst, Sr. Stamp Collection

Rodney Lawrence Hurst, Sr. Papers

10-26-2007

American Commemorative Panels: Kwanzaa

United States Postal Service. Stamp Division

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/hurst_stamps



Part of the [African American Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

American Commemorative Panels: Kwanzaa. 2007. Rodney Lawrence Hurst, Sr. Papers. University of North Florida. Thomas G. Carpenter Library. Special Collections and Archives. UNF Digital Commons. https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/hurst_stamps/66/

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Rodney Lawrence Hurst, Sr. Papers at UNF Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Rodney Lawrence Hurst, Sr. Stamp Collection by an authorized administrator of UNF Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [Digital Projects](#).

© 10-26-2007 All Rights Reserved

Kwanzaa

KWANZAA IS AN ANNUAL seven-day festival honoring family, community, and culture that takes place from December 26 to January 1. Drawing on African traditions, it is celebrated by millions of people in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and England. Though invented in the United States, where it was introduced in 1966, Kwanzaa is now celebrated by some Africans.

As with other holiday celebrations, Kwanzaa has its symbols: mazao (crops), mkeka (mat), kinara (the candle holder), muhindi (corn),

zawadi (gifts), kikombe cha umoja (the unity cup), and mishumaa saba (the seven candles). In addition, each of the seven days of Kwanzaa represents one of the Nguzo Saba, or seven principles to live by. These principles are Umoja (Unity); Kujichagulia

(Self-determination); Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility); Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics); Nia (Purpose); Kuumba (Creativity); and Imani (Faith).



The design created by stamp artist Daniel Minter portrays seven figures that represent the seven days and seven principles of Kwanzaa. The figures wear flowing robes; two have head wraps intended to identify them as mothers. Minter describes their head wraps as "crowns of fabric." On top of each crown is a bird identified by the artist as a Sankofa bird that is known for looking to the past to understand the present. Minter says this bird "never forgets from where it came."

First issued in 2004 as part of the Holiday Celebration series, this stamp is the second to commemorate Kwanzaa. The first Kwanzaa stamp was issued in 1997.

Symbols of Kwanzaa

- MAZAO (crops)
- MKEKA (mat)
- KINARA (the candle holder)
- MUHINDI (corn)
- ZAWADI (gifts)
- KIKOMBE CHA UMOJA (the unity cup)
- MISHUMAA SABA (the seven candles)



background: © Melanie Taylor/istockphoto.com; left: Royalty-free/Purestock/Getty Images; right: Stephen Chernin/Getty Images

Stamps printed by Ashton Potter (USA) Ltd. (APU) / No. 807 in a series / October 26, 2007 / Printed in U.S.A. / © 2007 United States Postal Service