

Kwanzaa



The artist chose vibrant colors for the stamp design. "I wanted to incorporate the colors of the pan-African flag: black, red, and green," he explains. "To bring a more festive flavor to the image, I added the colors gold, yellow, and blue to the robes. The gold is used to represent prosperity and wealth, the blue to represent the oceans from which we are all born, and the yellow represents the sun, the future, and progeny."



KWANZAA IS A SEVEN-DAY festival honoring family, community, and culture, taking place from December 26 to January 1. It draws on African traditions and 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.

Stamp artist Daniel Minter created his illustration from a linoleum block print and then added color using computer software. The image's seven figures wear flowing robes; two have head wraps intended to identify them as mothers. The head wraps are tied in the front in knots that make the shape of a dove.

Each figure in the design represents one of the seven days of Kwanzaa, and each day 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).



- UMOJA** (unity)
- KUJICHAGULIA**
(self-determination)
- UJIMA** (collective work
and responsibility)
- UJAMA**A
(cooperative economics)
- NIA** (purpose)
- KUUMBA** (creativity)
- IMANI** (faith)

left: Mark Adams/Getty Images; right: Daniel Minter

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