



**WOMAN / WOMEN / DEEPA MEHTA** 1950-Present

Deepa Mehta is an Indo-Canadian director and screenwriter. She initially directed documentary films for the Indian government and later children's films after she married and moved to Canada. Since 1991 Mehta has made several award-winning films, most famously her Elements Trilogy: *Fire* (1996), *Earth* (1998), and *Water* (2005), which critically explore human rights issues and social injustices, particularly the unjust experiences of women in traditional Indian culture. Her films have drawn angry reactions, including death threats, and have sparked protests by Hindu fundamentalists. In May 2012, Mehta received the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement.



**WOMAN / WOMEN / ODETTA** 1930-2008

Odetta was an American singer whose folk music has been called "the soundtrack of the Civil Rights Movement." From a young age, Odetta was fond of hitting keys on the family piano and listening to work songs of laborers. She received a formal music education but always insisted her real education came from listening to folk music. She considered music a way of communicating pain and anger over experiences with racism, without being considered antisocial. Her first solo album was an instant classic. During the pivotal years of the Civil Rights Movement, Odetta sang at rallies, demonstrations, benefit concerts, and the 1963 March on Washington.



## WOMAN / WOMEN / YAYOI KUSAMA 1929-Present

Yayoi Kusama is a Japanese poet, writer, and one of the world's most influential avant-garde artists. Kusama was drawn to European avant-garde styles after becoming frustrated with the rigidity of traditional Japanese art forms. Kusama was part of the pop art movement in New York during the 1960s. She has used a broad range of media, including painting, performance art, and sculpture, usually featuring psychedelic colors and patterns, to explore psychological and sexual content. Today, Kusama is still creating art for display in her gallery in Tokyo, Japan and writing novels and poetry collections, while voluntarily residing in the Seiwa Hospital for the Mentally Ill.



## WOMAN / WOMEN / JOSEPHINE BAKER 1906-1975

Josephine Baker was an African-American expatriate who became an enormous celebrity in 1920s Paris as a singer and dancer. Known for energetic performances, exotic beauty, and sensual appeal, she became one of the most popular and highly-paid entertainers in Europe. During World War II, she served as a Red Cross nurse and worked as a spy with the French Resistance. She visited the United States occasionally throughout her life but was always upset by the racism she encountered. Baker participated in the 1963 March in Washington and spoke during the preliminary offerings.



## WOMAN / WOMEN / FRIDA KAHLO 1907-1954

Frida Kahlo was one of Mexico's greatest artists, known as the master of self-portraits. Kahlo began painting to pass the time during her recovery after a traumatic bus crash when she was 18. Over her career she painted mainly self-portraits, which featured bright colors and symbols from indigenous Mexican culture and legends. The portraits represented Kahlo's personal and taboo experiences, including miscarriages and affairs. Kahlo also painted herself, unibrow and all, with no shyness or concern over traditional beauty standards. Today she is internationally acclaimed; but during Kahlo's lifetime she was mainly known as the wife of famous painter Diego Rivera, and her own work was not recognized until the late 1970s.