



### Late Bloomer

After more than 35 years as a D.C. public school teacher, Alma Woodsey Thomas retired to focus on painting. She developed her signature style in her mid-70s. At 80 years old, Thomas became the first African American woman to have a solo exhibition at New York's Whitney Museum of American Art.



## Iris, Tulips, Jonquils, and Crocuses, 1969

### Take a closer look

**Alma Woodsey Thomas (1891–1978)** created paintings that appear quite structured, but individual brushstrokes reveal her spontaneity. Find evidence of her working process, including faint vertical pencil lines and overlapping colors. Observe the overall effect of the palette and pattern.

### Something to talk about

Thomas believed in the expressive quality of color. What mood or idea do her hues convey? How would we experience the work differently if it were monochromatic?

### In her own words

“My paintings reflect my communion with nature, man’s highest source of inspiration.”

Alma Woodsey Thomas, *Iris, Tulips, Jonquils, and Crocuses*, 1969; Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 50 inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay; © Estate of Alma Woodsey Thomas; Photograph by Lee Stalworth

