

EMMY THE GREAT



CHRIS ILLINGWORTH



Barbican Box 2022

Learning Resource

RUBY TURNER

VASHTI BUNYAN



EMMY THE GREAT



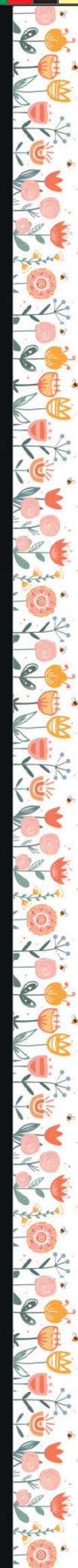
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Introduction

This learning resource is a practical and creative guide to the 2022 Barbican Box programme, curated by Detta Danford and 8 other artists who have performed during the spring season Barbican contemporary music programme.

This year's Barbican Box is a portable box filled with the ingredients for making and creating original music. Teachers will be supported to develop their own teaching practice through training, access to new activities for the classroom, and collaboration with an Artist Mentor - a professional artist working in the music industry.

Using the Box and Resource as your starting point, teachers will compose an original track with their students, supported by their Artist Mentor. Your students will then perform the work to your school community, and at EarthH in Hackney, a professional music venue. In addition, all teachers involved in the project will be asked to deliver a session for other colleagues in their school or borough to share their learning on this programme.

Exploring this year's theme of 'empowerment' from the initial creative process to the final track, we encourage participating teachers to explore what 'empowerment' means to you and your students. To inspire the process, we asked 8 artists from the contemporary music programme: *"If you could choose one object that has empowered you in your artistic practice, what would it be and why?"*

Each object that appears in the Box is specific to the artists that have contributed them and reflects the experiences, memories and stories that are personal to them. We aim for you to bring your experiences, memories, inspirations and stories to the process as well.

Accompanying each object, you will find a corresponding section in the learning resource which gives details of the artist, the object they've chosen, why they have chosen it and some ideas for creative tasks.

Objects and tasks can be explored, experimented with individually, connected together or left unturned. Like a record collection, this Box is a gathering of distinct personalities, ideas and perspectives. It offers the freedom to choose, to interpret, to explore. Feel free to dip in, try out, switch over, leave to the side. We encourage you to feel empowered to use the Box as you see fit depending on your preference, how you feel and what you are making.



Emmy the Great

Object: Quote from Joan Didion




Singer-Songwriter Emmy the Great (AKA Emma-Lee) has released the albums *First Love*, *Virtue*, *Second Love* and *April/月音*. As a composer, she has worked on music and lyrics for theatre and original film soundtracks, among other genres.

Emma-Lee often appears on BBC Radio and is currently working on a musical for radio based on her time in China as part of the British Council and PRS for Music's 'Musicians in Residence, China' programme.



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 Emmy the Great -
A Window / O'Keeffe





'I have placed a quote into your record box. Pursuing your art as a profession can be exhilarating, but also confusing. This thing you did naturally from pure instinct becomes part of an industry. Suddenly other people have opinions on it, and you have to think about an audience, about practicalities, about finances. That's why I like to remind myself why I write songs, and why I started making music. That's what the quote I have provided is to me - a chance to return to base.

No matter how far you travel on your journey as an artist, the golden seeds of your beginnings are always there. Stay true to your own voice, and you will go on and on.'

Themes of Empowerment

- Self-confidence
- Inquiry, exploration
- Authenticity, knowing yourself

Creative Music Making Task:

This object can be used in conjunction with any of the other objects in the Box. The following tasks use the quote from Joan Didion as a lens through which to observe and explore the objects and materials created.

Thinking in partnership

- Asking students to work in pairs, read the quote to each other, then take around 5-10 minutes to speak to each other about their journey as a musician and then switch round.
- Students might want to use the following questions to guide their discussion: What began your journey with music? What has inspired you along the way? What musicians or composers have been important to you and why? What musical experiences have had an impact on you and why? How has music empowered you? Where are you now on your journey as a musician and where do you want to be next?
- As they are listening, ask each student to write down any words, phrases or images that jump out to them. Once both partners have had a turn speaking, ask them to share what they have written down and have a short discussion about what they have noticed.

90 second pause

- Ask students to choose three different moments in their day to consider the quote from Joan Didion.
- In each of these moments, they should pause wherever they are, and give themselves around 90 seconds to consider: What are they thinking, feeling, seeing, noticing?
- Ask your students to document what they find.


Zara McFarlane

Object: Recording device

Zara McFarlane is a multi award-winning vocalist and songwriter from London who has released four critically acclaimed albums and toured all over the world.

She has worked within theatre with Royal Shakespeare Company and at the famous Opera House Glyndebourne, and as a music educator at music conservatories globally. Zara currently helps creative business women find their voice using singing and performing techniques to empower themselves through her company 'Singtivate'.



If struggling to access song via
QR Code please visit:
 Zara McFarlane –
My Story

‘The item that has empowered me the most is my smartphone (or a recording device). This is where I can put down all of my musical ideas easily and effortlessly. It gives me the freedom to be creative anytime, anywhere. Usually, I record melodies that might represent a bass line or trumpet part etc as well as melodies to sing. I don’t record thoughts as audio, but I do use my phone to type in notes for lyrics ideas and things to remember. This reminds me that I am not restrained to create music at home or with a piano or anything outside of this tool. I am free to create and make music and put down my ideas wherever I am in the world. In a car, on a boat, wherever.’

Zara McFaulane
x

Themes of Empowerment

- Creative freedom
- Space and time
- Inquiry, exploration

Creative Music Making Task: Record and Listen


- Ask a small group of students to take the recording device outside of the classroom. Invite them to experiment with recording in different locations around the school.
- What kinds of spaces inspire different kinds of music making?
- Explore recording the environmental sounds that are found in a particular space. What sounds can be heard? Which sounds feel nearer or further away? Louder or softer? More percussive or more melodious? Keeping open to the idea that any sound can be turned into music, how could these sounds be used as starting points for a piece of music?
- Allow the spaces you are in to influence the music you create. What words or sounds connect with the chosen space? Find two or three musical or lyrical ideas that emerge from the space and record them.
- Test out melodies, riffs, rhythms or lyrics that have been created or that could be sung or played on instruments. How does recording these in a different space change the music?

Hannah Peel

Object: Music Box

Hannah Peel is a Northern Irish artist, composer, producer and broadcaster. Her solo record career includes the shortlisted 2021 *Mercury Music Prize* electronic album *Fir Wave* and the space-themed *Mary Casio: Journey to Cassiopeia*. Following her *Emmy*-nominated score for *Game Of Thrones: The Last Watch*, Hannah is currently composing the music for Sky TV's 7-part series *Midwich Cuckoos* and releasing a new album *The Unfolding* with Paraorchestra.



If struggling to access song via
QR Code please visit:
 Hannah Peel – Palace



‘My Music Box has been the most empowering and valuable instrument to my whole career. I found the mechanics of it and the paper reels way back in 2008 - in a magic shop! It came at a time when I needed a break from technology and a reminder of the beauty of making music by hand. The music is made by only using a hole puncher to create holes along the paper reels to create melodies. It taught me to be patient, to enjoy simple acoustic properties again, to relish in the nuances that at times, like life itself, are not perfect - it can break, it can be out of time, it can have sounds that you might not expect. Its simplicity is its beauty.’



Themes of Empowerment

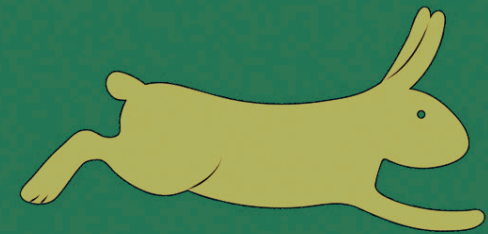
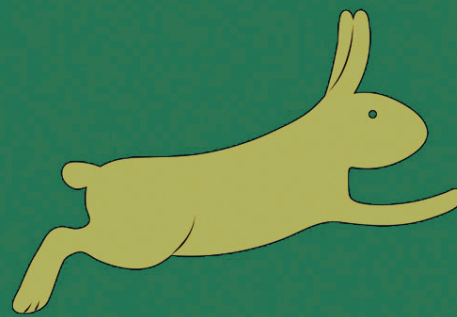
- Simplicity and limitation
- Experimenting with sound
- Making music by hand

Creative Music Making Task: Melody Maker

- Use the music box to explore ways of creating melodies, sound patterns and images. Enjoy the experimental nature of this object - testing out ideas and not worrying if you end up with something unexpected or surprising.
- Use the hole puncher to create an image or pattern of dots - what does it sound like when played through the music box?
- Using the pitch indicators on the paper, create a melody line to play through the music box.
- Try singing the melodies or patterns you have created with your class - how does this feel? What would you change or keep?
- Explore ways of transferring these melodies, musical patterns or rhythms onto pitched percussion, keyboards, guitars or other instruments. Create an ensemble for music box, voice and percussion. What do you need to consider when using the music box in this way?

Vashti Bunyan


Object: Candle



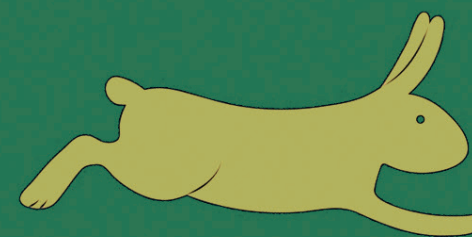
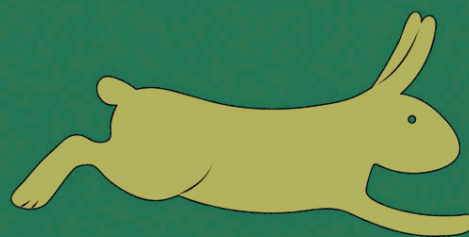
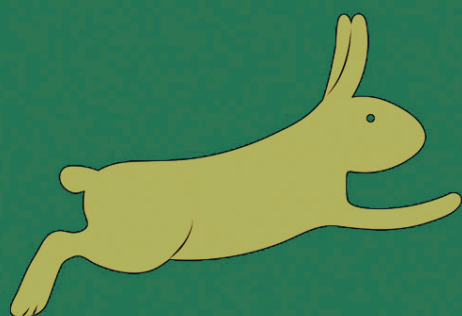
In 1968, Vashti Bunyan left London for a life on the road with a horse, a wagon, a dog and her then partner, heading for some islands off the west coast of Scotland. Along the way, she wrote the songs that would become her album 'Just Another Diamond Day'. Her music found no audience at the time, and so Vashti left the music industry.

Rediscovered in 2000, Vashti started to write music again and recorded *Lookaftering* and *Heartleap*.



If struggling to access song
via QR Code please visit:
 Vashti Bunyan –
Just Another Diamond Day





'When I was young, I was interested to know what people's lives must have been like before there was any electricity. For a while, I lived in an old house on an island off the west coast of Scotland, where the only light at night was from candles. It was a beautiful warm light.

As I learned about this different way of life, I started to write songs about how simple life could be if only we could let it be. Like this one:

<i>Just another diamond day</i>	<i>Just another life to live</i>
<i>Just a blade of grass</i>	<i>Just a word to say</i>
<i>Just another bale of hay</i>	<i>Just another love to give</i>
<i>And the horses pass</i>	<i>And a diamond day</i>

*Just another field
to plough
Just a grain of wheat
Just a sack of seed to sow
And the children eat*

For me, the candle symbolises that simpler way of being. It reminds me to appreciate all that I have now that we mostly take for granted. It allows me to feel safe and strong in the world, remembering that I was able to live quite happily without electric light.

Just a candle, and a guitar.'

Vashti Bunyan

Themes of Empowerment

- Simplicity and limitation
- Appreciation
- Beauty

Creative Music Making Task: Use of Senses

Light the candle and turn all the lights off.

- How does this change the environment and space? What do you feel in this space? What ideas, images, memories or stories come to mind?

'Just a word to say'

- Find one word which captures or summarises this experience. How could you use these words? For lyrics? As a poem?
- Choose one word as a starting point for a new piece of music.
- Listen to a piece of music in this candlelight. This could be a piece from the Box or any other piece of music you choose. What changes in this listening experience?
- Invite students to take a piece of paper and pen and to write freely for 3-5 minutes during or after the listening experience. Write whatever comes to mind.
- In small groups or pairs, ask students to share what they have written. How could this material feed into a new piece of music or song?

'Just a candle, and a guitar'

- In small groups, get instruments out and try out playing music in this light. What kind of sounds come to mind? Vashti talks a lot about simplicity. Try choosing one or two sounds, pitches or chords. How many ways can you find to work with this limited material?


Chris Illingworth

Object: *Mezzanine*, Massive Attack



Chris Illingworth is a pianist, composer and founder-member of GoGo Penguin. From a young age, Chris has been driven by a love of music from classical to industrial, and is especially drawn to electronica and the music of the Esbjörn Svensson Trio. He formed his first trio at the age of 12 and for many years performed as a classical pianist, yet found his element collaborating with other musicians and playing in bands.



If struggling to access song via
QR Code please visit:
 GoGo Penguin - Ascent



'The object I've chosen is a copy of Mezzanine by Massive Attack on CD. I bought it on the day it was released in 1998, I'd saved up some pocket money and had enough to just buy the one CD, very different to now when you can jump online or on Spotify and listen to pretty much anything anytime. Even before I got home to listen to the record it felt like I was holding something special, the cover was like none I'd seen before, no colour just a black and white photo of this huge, mean looking stag beetle, and when I opened it up there's this bright orange disc with no writing on it. Felt like a mystery and when I heard the music it blew me away, so different to anything I'd heard before. It was this record that really made me realise how much I wanted to be a musician in a band, it showed me how much creative freedom you could have (not only with the music but also with the design and the overall message of the record) and how empowering that freedom can be. And even though I had never met any of the guys in Massive Attack (it would be 20 years later before that moment would come along) I felt a connection with them through their music. That connection with other people is one of the most special and incredibly rewarding parts of being a musician'

Themes of Empowerment

- Choice
- Difference
- Inspiration

Creative Music Making Task: What's Your Mezzanine?

- Choose a piece of music or album that has empowered or inspired you.
- Ask your group to organise a listening party to share the music they have each chosen – include yours. Invite each person to playback a short excerpt from the track or album they have chosen and to share what you love about the music: How did you discover it? What does the record/album artwork look or feel like? What has inspired you about this music and how does this empower you in your life?
- You could do this in small groups or as a larger collective. Following this sharing process, it may be interesting to have a larger group discussion: What music is around you and who decides what you listen to? What have you heard from this sharing that has caught your attention and why?
- Create a class playlist/mix tape of your tracks. What do you notice about the collective tracks? What does this say about you as individuals and as a collective?
- If you were to write an album note about this collection of works - what would it say and what would you call it?


Shirley Collins

Object: *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians, Volume 1*

Shirley Collins MBE is an English folk singer and song collector. During the 1960s, she recorded *Anthems In Eden* and *Love, Death & The Lady*. Shortly after this, having developed dysphonia, Shirley turned to writing books, including 'America Over the Water.

In 2016, she released *Lodestar* - a collection of English, American and Cajun songs dated back to the 16th Century up to the 1950s. Now in her 80's, she is more active than ever.



If struggling to access song via
QR Code please visit:
 Shirley Collins – Pretty Polly

'I talk about these books often and early in my career they made a big difference to me. They show the story of migration over around 400 years. These songs were taken by ordinary people through all the various ways and means they came to arrive in America. Penal transportation, economic migrants, indentured labour and even those fleeing religious intolerance. Today populists tell us to assume that immigration is one way, when in fact, poverty and intolerance often drove migrations from England over 100s of years.'

Shirley Cornish

Themes of Empowerment

- Stories, journeys, personal experience
- Overcoming adversity
- Creative freedom

Creative Music Making Task: Your History

- Look through the stories and songs in the book. Ask someone to sift through and find something they feel curious about - perhaps because of the title, the lyrics or the look of the melody. Try singing or playing the song.
- What do they notice about the melody? What kind of shape or feel does it have? How does it feel to play or sing?
- Ask the group to consider the story or journey depicted here. How connected do they feel to it? What resonance or dissonance do they and you notice with your own story or journey?

- Take the book and play with it using a cut-up technique. Choose some pages of the book and cut it up into pieces with a few or single words on each piece. Rearrange these into a new text. Do the same with the musical notation. Try speaking, singing or playing these new pieces of text and melody. What kinds of material emerge?
- Consider how you could draw on your own life experiences to create music. One way of doing this is to explore your own story, journey and personal history. Alternatively, you could think about a time or experience when you (or someone from your family) have had to overcome adversity.
- To explore these topics facilitate a short freewriting session. Ask the group to write freely and without stopping for 5-10 minutes. Use the following question prompts as needed:
 - Where do you come from? What is your family history? Who are the important people in your life? What makes them important to you?
 - If you are thinking about an event, where were you? What happened? Who else was involved? What impact has this had?
 - How does this (event/story) inform how you feel about yourself, the world and your future?
- Encourage the group to be open and not to worry about being right or wrong - just write what comes to mind.
- Ask students to read back what they have written and with a pen, circle or underline the words, phrases or sentences that stand out to them most.
- Try creating a story piece or folk song from these words. Use the words to create lyrics, or to create a vocal or instrumental melody.

Ruby Turner


Object: *Strange Fruit* performed by Billie Holiday

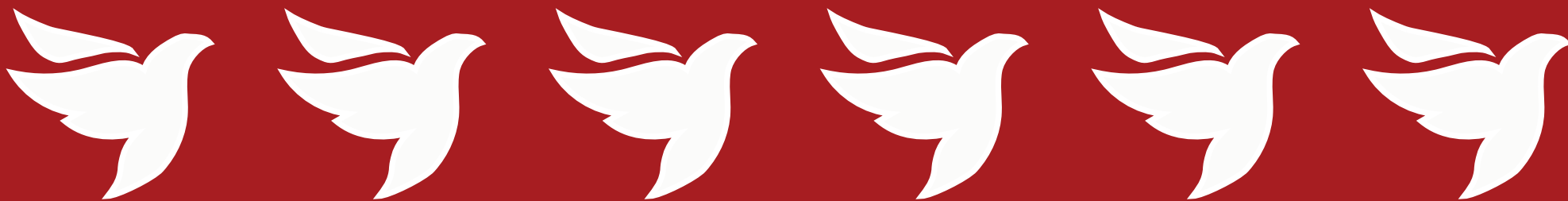
Ruby Turner was born in Jamaica and moved to England when she was nine years old. Her major break came in the 1980's, when she joined Culture Club. Since then, she has sung around the world, including performing 'You Are So Beautiful' with Jools Holland at the Queens Diamond Jubilee Concert outside Buckingham Palace.

In recent years, Ruby has been awarded an MBE, and has written hit songs such as 'Rather Go Blind' and 'It's Gonna Be Alright'



If struggling to access song via QR Code please visit:

 Ruby Turner – Love Was Here



'The lyrics in this song left me spellbound, heartbroken. They took me through an emotional cycle beyond my years! In my early teens, I experienced what it was, how it was, to feel... rejection... loneliness... unrequited love... inequality... racism... So much hurt people are capable of. I find solace in the words, answers, even if they weren't what I wanted to hear. I was learning something.

Lyrics are at the top of my list. I need to be captivated, educated... And great lyrics can do that.'



Themes of Empowerment

- Performance and physicality
- Voice and testimony
- Protest

Creative Music Making Task: Performance

- Watch the film of Billie Holiday singing 'Strange Fruit'.
- Now watch the film again and this time, allow yourself to notice anything that strikes you about the performance - her physicality, her voice, the words, the image.
- Write a list of words or phrases that summarise your observations.
- Now watch the film one more time. This time try to become more aware of your own experience of the song - your responses, thoughts, physicality, emotions.
- Without thinking too much, again write a list of words, phrases, questions, which summarise what you notice.
- Working in small groups, use these observations as a starting point for a conversation. What common threads or differences do you notice?
- Choose 2 or 3 words or phrases to explore further. These could be used as inspiration for a new piece of music or could be used directly as sung or spoken lyrics.
- Explore how you could create music from emotions. Ruby talks about 'rejection, loneliness, unrequited love, inequality, racism'. Choose an emotion or topic that you feel strongly about. How many different ways can you find to express the feeling you have in mind? Explore voice, rhythm, body percussion, instrumental sounds. Experiment with dynamics and feel: Does the feeling need loud or quiet sounds? Should it be gentle and soothing or powerful and provoking? Test out a few different sounds to see what works. Once you have something you like, try experimenting with this physically. Should this music be performed sitting or standing, in a circle or in a line? How does how we stand, our posture and our performance support the emotion we are expressing?

Matt Deighton

Object: Pilot Fineliner and Notepad



For some time, Matt Deighton was best known as the frontman and singer/guitarist in Mother Earth, as Paul Weller's guitarist and as Noel Gallagher's stand-in in Oasis. Following the release of Kevin Lee Brown's documentary *Overshadowed*, Matt is finally enjoying the recognition he so richly deserves for his incomparable and recently rediscovered solo back catalogue. The documentary received Critic's choice in the Sunday Times, and each solo album Matt has released has received critical acclaim.



If struggling to access song via
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 Matt Deighton –
Overshadowed



'I chose a Pilot Fineliner ink pen and notepad. Putting actual pen to paper for me has always been part of my creative process, more so than via the laptop. Even my setlists are handwritten as it goes into my memory firmer than printing a set of lyrics or a setlist out... A pen and paper draws me into the creative world more than digitally.'

Matt

Themes of Empowerment

- Creative freedom
- Space and time
- Inquiry, exploration

Creative Music Making Task: Doodle

- Use this pen and paper to create a space for yourself to write, draw, doodle, sketch at any time and anywhere. See this as an empowering space. It could be a space to think, a space to express yourself, to get your thoughts and feelings down. You can use it to journal or to write down ideas, lyrics, poems or any other creative thoughts.
- How does it feel to use a pen and paper? What does this form of documenting allow you to do or to feel? When and where do you feel it is most useful to you?
- Try using it to document the creation of your song for the Barbican Box performance. What processes have you used? What's worked or hasn't worked? What does the song sound and feel like? What have you enjoyed most about this work? What challenges have you faced and how have you overcome these?

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Barbican Creative Learning

Barbican Creative Learning pioneers new models for creative and cultural learning across the art forms. Our mission, Creative Skills for Life, underpins all aspects of our work and approach in the design and delivery of meaningful and impactful learning experiences across three strategic pillars: Education, Employability and Enrichment.

In 2020/21, we delivered 20 digital and physical programmes with over 200 partners, engaging 2,400 participants and reaching an audience of more than 50,000. In order to achieve this, we build partnerships with teachers, artists, young people, schools and community organisations locally, nationally and internationally.



The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre



barbican box



Matt Deighton

Zara McFarlane



Hannah Peel



SHIRLEY COLLINS



Matt Deighton



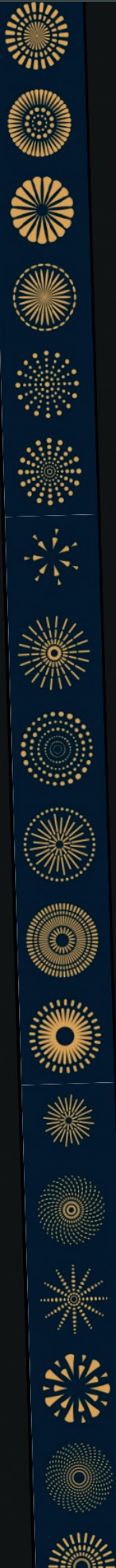
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