Mildred Thompson was a Black artist whose art combined art and science. In “String Theory,” swirling lines and bright colors mix to create a feeling of energy. Thompson often painted quick, repeating shapes in vivid, colorful layers to make pulsing visual effects that lead your eyes across the work. She was inspired by outer space, sounds and the movement of energy, like light. She used art to show scientific phenomena that we can’t always see but that exist all around us. What does “String Theory” remind you of? Does this painting seem busy or calm? How would you describe this painting using a dance move?

For this activity you will need:

- bubble wrap
- paint
- paper
- yarn
- paper plate

To make your painting:

1. Pour paint onto plates. Try a different color in each plate.
2. Dip bubble wrap into the paint, bubble-side down. Make sure to press down evenly so paint gets on all the bubbles.
3. Peel up the bubble wrap. Press the paint-covered side onto your paper. What design is revealed when you lift up the bubble wrap?
4. Let the first layer of paint dry.
5. Repeat these steps with different colors. Try printing with different colors on separate parts of the paper or rotating the paper before adding new colors. What texture do the layers of color create?
6. When you are done with your background, dip a piece of yarn in another color of paint. Drag the yarn around your paper to make different designs. Repeat until you feel like your painting is finished!