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MUSEUM

**New Museum Announces the First Full Retrospective in
New York of Faith Ringgold, Opening in February 2022**



New York, NY...From February 17 to June 5, 2022, the New Museum will present the first full retrospective in New York of the art of Faith Ringgold (b. 1930, New York, NY). Bringing together over sixty years of work, **“Faith Ringgold: American People”** provides the most comprehensive assessment to date of Ringgold’s impactful vision. Her role as an artist, author, educator, and organizer has made her a key figure whose work links the multi-disciplinary achievements of the Harlem Renaissance to the political art of young Black artists working

today. During the 1960s, Ringgold created some of the most indelible art of the Civil Rights era by melding her own unique style of figurative painting with a bold, transformative approach to the language of protest. In subsequent decades, she challenged accepted hierarchies of art and craft through her experimental quilt paintings and undertook a deeply studied reimagining of art history to produce narratives that bear witness to the historical sacrifices and achievements of Black Americans.

This exhibition will feature works from across Ringgold's best-known series, tracking the development of her figurative style and thematic vision as they evolved and expanded to meet the urgency of the political and social changes taking place in America during her lifetime. The first section of the exhibition will provide an extensive look at Ringgold's early paintings, including the *American People* and *Black Light* series. Using what the artist described as a "super-realist" visual language, Ringgold captured the racial and gender divisions in 1960s American society with searing insight. Her large-scale "murals"—including the celebrated *American People Series #20: Die* (1967), recently juxtaposed with Pablo Picasso's "Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)" at The Museum of Modern Art—will be shown alongside her iconic political posters, which advocated for collective causes like support for the Black Panther Party and freeing activist Angela Davis.

The exhibition will also examine Ringgold's embrace of non-Western and craft traditions, including her performance objects and "soft sculptures." A large selection of her early unstretched canvases adorned with sewn fabric borders, inspired by Tibetan *thangkas*, will also be displayed. These works demonstrate Ringgold's attempts to transcend the predominately white art historical tradition to find forms more suitable for the radical exploration of gender and racial identity that her work would go on to enact. Although lesser known within Ringgold's oeuvre, these canvases led directly to the creation of her best-known, story quilt paintings of the 1980s and 1990s.

Ringgold's story quilts are some of the most influential artworks of the past fifty years. Drawing on both personal autobiography and collective histories, the story quilts point to larger social conditions and cultural transformations—from the Harlem Renaissance to the realities of Ringgold's life as a working mother, artist, and activist. This retrospective includes a wide range of Ringgold's quilts, including formative pieces created with her mother, important early series like *The Bitter Nest* and *Change*, and the largest selection to date of her historic series, *The French Collection* and *The American Collection*. Together, these story quilts position the artist's own personal and professional biography in dialogue with key moments in art history and the larger narrative of the African-American experience across the twentieth century, reimagining both the birth of America and the myths of modernity as polyphonic narratives of emancipation and resistance.

This exhibition continues Ringgold's long history with the New Museum. She has participated in the notable exhibitions "[The Decade Show](#)" (1990) and "[A Labor of Love](#)" (1996); and in 1998 was the subject of the celebrated solo exhibition titled "[Dancing at the Louvre: Faith Ringgold's French Collection and Other Story Quilts](#)." Her upcoming retrospective at the New Museum will prominently feature the largest presentation of *The French Collection* since 1998.

The exhibition catalogue, co-published with Phaidon, will be the most significant collection of scholarship on Ringgold's work to date, with new contributions by curators, writers, and artists across generations, including Diedrick Brackens, LeRonn Brooks, Julia Bryan-Wilson, Jordan Casteel, Bridget Cooks, Mark Godfrey, Lucy Lippard, Tschabalala Self, Michele Wallace, and Zoé Whitley, among others. This fully illustrated publication will focus on all aspects of

Ringgold's career—the range of contributors speaks to the wide variety of audiences her work has reached over the past fifty years. Long overdue, this retrospective will provide a timely opportunity to appreciate a critical voice in the history of American art.

“Faith Ringgold: American People” is curated by Massimiliano Gioni, *Edlis Neeson Artistic Director*, and Gary Carrion-Murayari, Kraus Family Curator.

ABOUT NEW MUSEUM

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

SUPPORT

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Image: Faith Ringgold, *American People Series #18: The Flag Is Bleeding*, 1967. Oil on canvas, 72 x 96 in (182.9 x 243.8 cm). Courtesy the artist and ACA Galleries, New York. © Faith Ringgold / ARS, NY and DACS, London, courtesy ACA Galleries, New York 2021