



Faith Ringgold: American People

July 16 – November 27, 2022

Unprecedented “Faith Ringgold: American People” to Make West Coast Debut at de Young Museum

“You can't sit around and wait for somebody to say who you are. You need to write it and paint it and do it.”
—Faith Ringgold

SAN FRANCISCO — The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco are proud to present the first retrospective of American artist Faith Ringgold (b. 1930, New York) on the West Coast. *Faith Ringgold: American People* brings together more than 50 years of work that bears witness to the complexity of the American experience. Featuring a variety of objects—such as her experimental story quilts, renowned painting series *American People* and *Black Light*, soft sculptures, performance objects, and ephemera—the exhibition traces the development of Ringgold's figurative style and thematic vision as she expanded

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and adapted her practice to meet the urgency of the political and social changes taking place in America throughout her life. *American People* provides the most comprehensive assessment to date of Ringgold's impactful vision, from her paintings made during the civil rights movement, which are some of the most indelible artworks of the civil rights era to her experimental story quilts that challenge accepted hierarchies of art and craft. Long overdue, this retrospective provides a timely opportunity to engage with the art of an American icon.

"As an artist, author, educator and organizer, Faith Ringgold is one of the most influential cultural figures of her generation, inspiring young artists working today through her decades of activism and action," stated Thomas P. Campbell, Director and CEO of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. "We are thrilled to present *Faith Ringgold: American People* at the de Young museum this summer. On view at the same time as *The Obama Portraits Tour*, the legacy of groundbreaking Black artists will resound throughout our galleries."

The exhibition will feature works across Ringgold's best-known series, including the *American People* and *Black Light* series, which captured the tumultuous events of the 1960s. Ringgold's support of the Black Power movement and her valiant calls to action are crystallized in her political posters, such as *Free Angela* (1971), a reference to Communist Party leader and Black Panther Party member (and current Oakland resident) Angela Yvonne Davis, whose image became a symbol of the struggle for Black liberation, anti-capitalism and feminism.

"From her contributions to the creation of a visual vocabulary of the African Diaspora in the United States to enshrining women's work and craft as fine arts, Faith Ringgold has profoundly influenced the art-historical canon of the 20th century and beyond," states Janna Keegan, Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art and Programming at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. "Through activism she has ensured wider representation of Black and female artists in major arts institutions, while her children's stories have helped instill a sense of social justice, agency, and empathy in a generation of readers—we are really just beginning to understand the true scope and scale of her influence."

Other important works on view include Ringgold's *Feminism Series*, consisting of evocative landscapes painted with the words of important Black women from history, as well as her soft sculptures and performance objects, as well as a large selection of her early unstretched canvases adorned with sewn fabric inspired by thangkas (a classical form of Tibetan painting consisting of a painted picture panel surrounded by a textile mantle). Ringgold's renowned story quilts, among her most well-known artworks and some of the most influential art objects of the past forty years, will also be on view. Drawing on

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both personal and collective histories, these 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, positioning the artist's personal biography in dialogue with key moments in art history and the American experience across the twentieth century.

Faith Ringgold: American People will be on view from July 16 through November 27, 2022, at the de Young museum in San Francisco. The exhibition is curated by Massimiliano Gioni, Edlis Neeson Artistic Director, and Gary Carrion-Murayari, Kraus Family Curator, with Madeline Weisburg, Curatorial Assistant, at the New Museum. The de Young's presentation is coordinated by Janna Keegan, Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art and Programming at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.



About Faith Ringgold

Faith Ringgold was born on October 30, 1930, in Harlem, New York. Ringgold received a BS and an MA from City College of New York. Ringgold worked as an arts educator in the New York City Public School system for nearly twenty years before joining the faculty alongside Alan Kaprow and Moira Roth at the University of California, San Diego. Ringgold became a professor emerita of art at UCSD in 2002.

Ringgold is the recipient of more than eighty awards and honors, including twenty-three honorary doctorates, two National Endowment for the Arts awards, and the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. Her work is in the permanent collections of numerous museums in the United States and abroad, including the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the High

Museum, Atlanta; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Brooklyn Museum; the Studio Museum in Harlem; and the National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC.



Media Image gallery

deyoungmuseum.org \ [@deyoungmuseum](https://twitter.com/deyoungmuseum)

Exhibition Organization

Faith Ringgold: American People has been organized by the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.

Major Support: Ford Foundation.

Visiting \ de Young

Faith Ringgold: American People will be included in general admission to the de Young museum, with free admission for San Francisco Bay Area residents every Saturday. For more information, please visit deyoungmuseum.org.

About the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco oversee the de Young museum, located in Golden Gate Park, and the Legion of Honor, in Lincoln Park. It is the largest public arts institution in San Francisco, and one of the most visited arts institutions in the United States.

The de Young originated from the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition in Golden Gate Park and was established as the Memorial Museum in 1895. It was later renamed in honor of Michael H. de Young, who spearheaded its creation. The present copper-clad landmark building, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, opened in October 2005. Reflecting an active conversation among cultures, perspectives, and time periods, the collections on view include American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts from the 17th to the 21st centuries; arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas; costume and textile arts; and international modern and contemporary art.

Image credits: Faith Ringgold (born 1930) "American People Series #18, The Flag Is Bleeding", 1967, Oil on canvas. 72 x 96 in. (182.9 x 243.8 cm). From the artist's collection. © 2022 Faith Ringgold / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, Courtesy ACA Galleries, New York; Faith Ringgold, "All Power to the People", 1970. Cut-and-pasted colored paper, pencil, and press type on paper, 30 x 20 in. (76.2 x 50.8 cm). Private collection. © Faith Ringgold / ARS, NY and DACS, London, courtesy ACA Galleries, New York 2022 © Faith Ringgold / ARS, NY and DACS, London, courtesy ACA Galleries, New York 2022; Faith Ringgold, "Early Works #25: Self-Portrait", 1965. Oil on canvas, 50 x 40 in. (127 x 101.6 cm). Brooklyn Museum; Gift of Elizabeth A. Sackler, 2013.96. © Faith Ringgold / ARS, NY and DACS, London, courtesy ACA Galleries, New York 2022 © Faith Ringgold / ARS, NY and DACS, London, courtesy ACA Galleries, New York 2022.

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