

Merleau-Ponty's central thesis is what he later called the "**primacy of perception.**"

Humans are first perceiving the world, then we do philosophy.

This critique of the Cartesian notion "I think, therefore I am", together with Descartes dualism of mind and body calls into question our primary way of existing in the world.

The Cartesian concept of consciousness is rejected in favor of an intersubjective conception or dialectical concept of consciousness.

What is characteristic of his account of perception is the centrality that the body plays.

**We perceive the world through our bodies; we are embodied subjects, involved in existence.**



TONY SMITH, Die, 1962. Steel, 6' x 6' x 6'. Museum of Modern Art, New York (gift of Jane Smith in honor of Agnes Gund).



Artists like Richard Serra began creating large scale sculptures from industrial materials, using industrial processes.

These pieces were designed to be experienced. The viewer walked through them. Feeling the space, the materials, the form in Real Time & Real Space.

<http://www.gagosian.com/exhibitions/richard-serra--october-26-2013>







*Splashing—1968*—originated with a list of verbs associated with sculpture leading to this performance where he threw molten lead against the wall in Leo Castelli Warehouse.

It could not be moved without destroying it. Takes their form from the space that exists and discourages any kind of metaphorical reading.

Metal is: Physical, active, liquid, solid, fluid, hot, malleable,





Objects in real space, on the floor, to be walked on or around.

Pre made, standard units, prefabricated elements (sheets of metal, bricks) arranged in numerically determined structures.

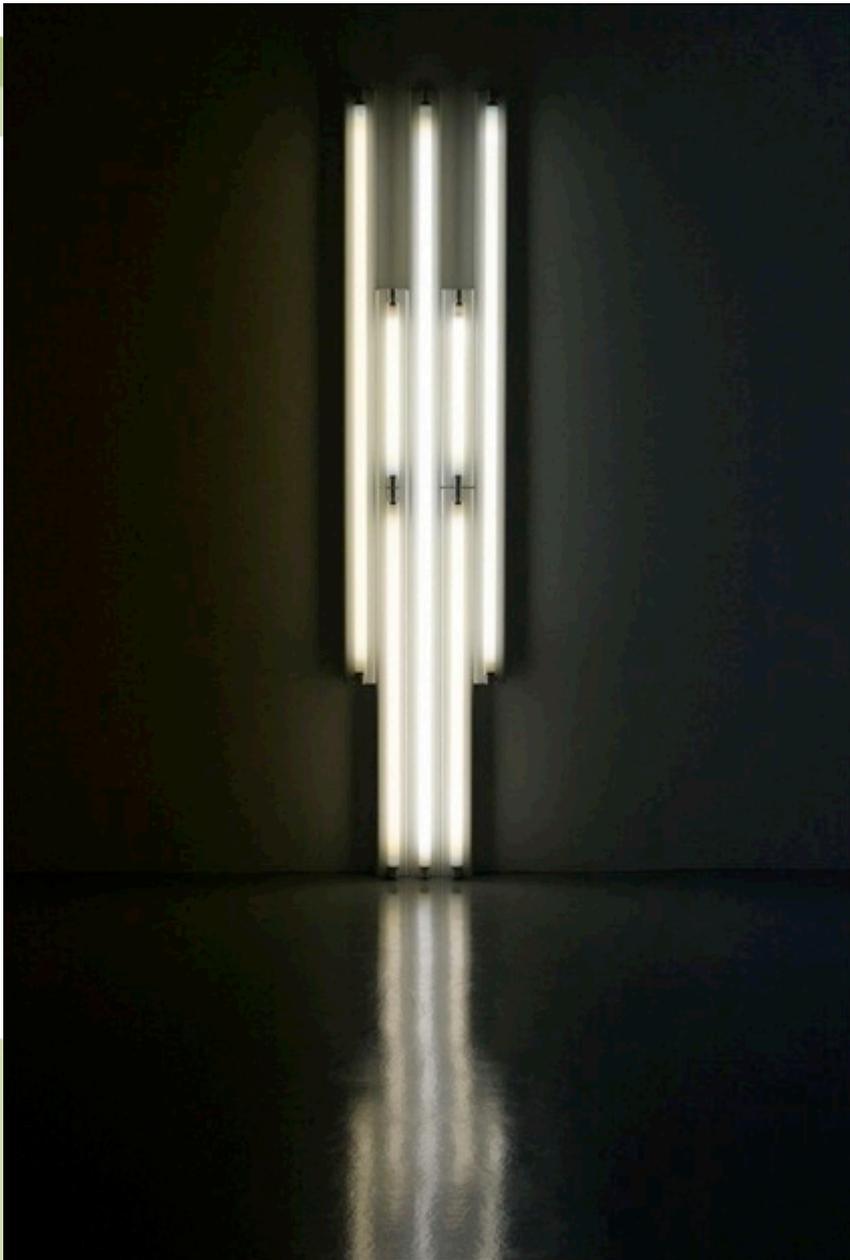
**Andre said his intention was to sensitize his spectators to gravity.**

Carl Andre, Firebricks 120 units, 1966-69



The properties of materials--lead, copper, aluminum--could be transmitted through the audience's feet. At the same time, the individual industrially made parts could be reconfigured to fit any space.

Aluminium- Copper Alloy Square, 1969, Carl Andre



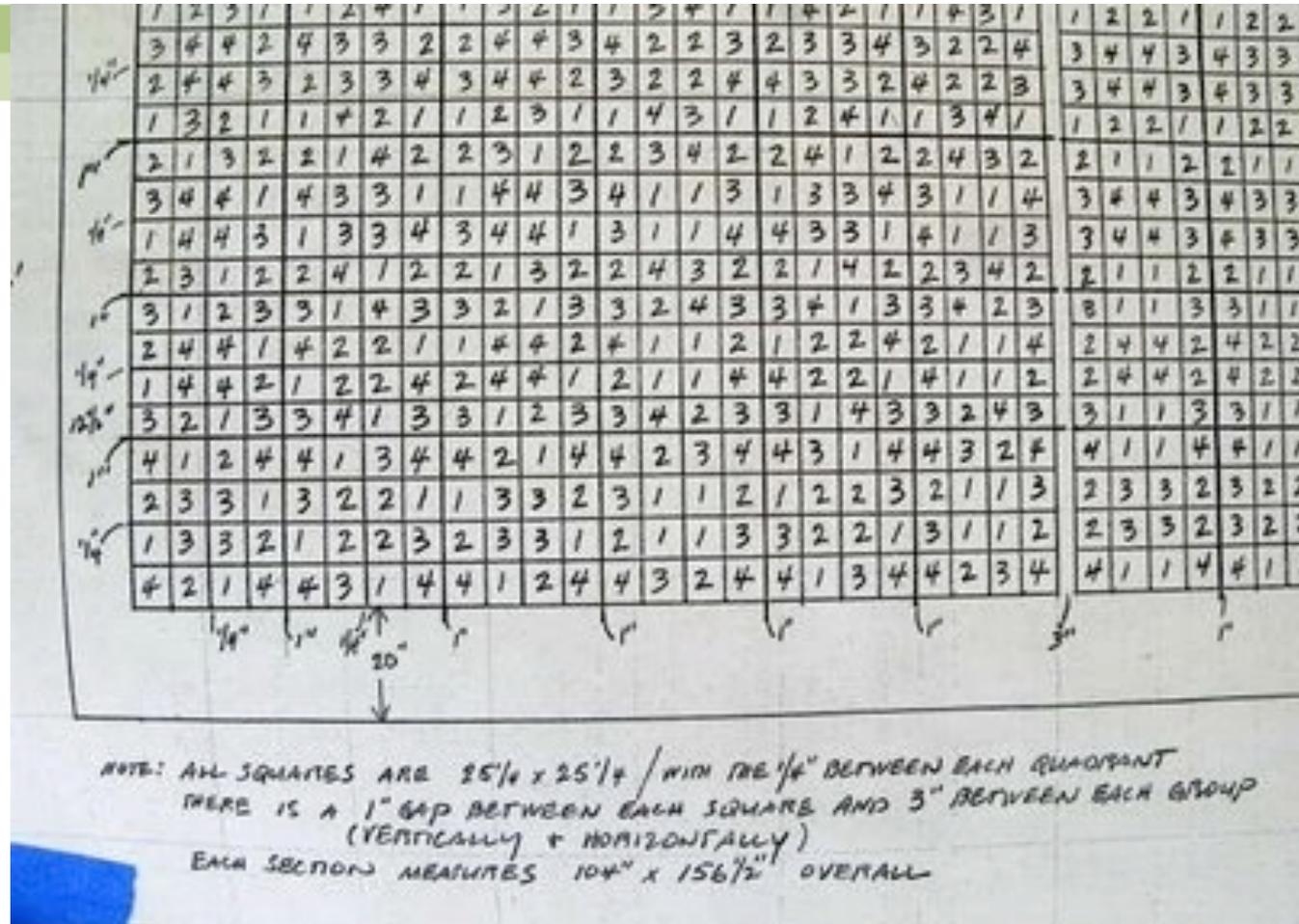
Dan Flavin—worked almost exclusively with new, industrially produced fluorescent tubes and fixtures.

Arranged from hardware store parts, anyone could reproduce them...asserting the continuity with everyday things. Investigated the idea of sculpture as space rather than form.

**Conceptual Art**—The idea is the important thing. Artist doesn't have to make it.

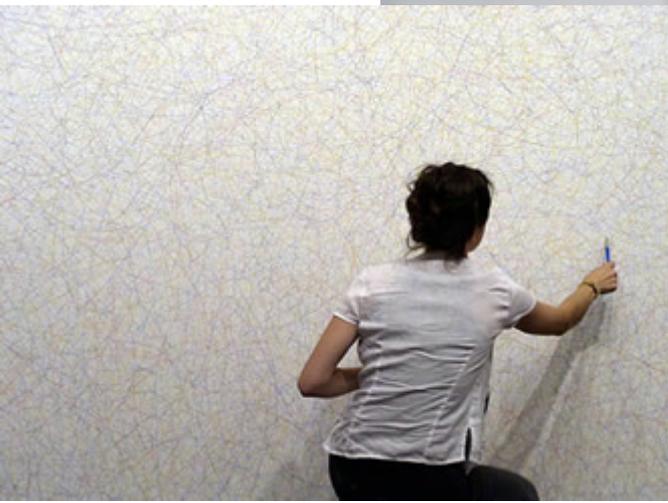
*WORK FROM INSTRUCTIONS*  
(1971):

USING A BLACK, HARD  
CRAYON DRAW A TWENTY  
INCH SQUARE.  
DIVIDE THIS SQUARE INTO  
ONE INCH SQUARES. WITHIN  
EACH  
ONE INCH SQUARE, DRAW  
NOTHING, OR DRAW A  
DIAGONAL  
STRAIGHT LINE FROM  
CORNER TO CORNER OR TWO  
CROSSING  
STRAIGHT LINES  
DIAGONALLY FROM CORNER  
TO CORNER.



**Sol LeWitt**--one of the first practitioners of Conceptual art with articles written in 67 and 69 with statements such as..."The idea becomes a machine that makes the art".

*Wall Drawings*”  
--abandonment  
of control  
--use of  
pragmatic  
systems to  
undermine  
rationality  
-- shift in power



*Wall drawing #1*---instructions for how to reproduce it...anyone could do it.



MAYA YING LIN, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, D.C., 1981–1983. Black granite, each wing 246' long.

# The Memorial was designed as a place to grieve.

The memorial is made of highly reflective black granite.

The thin slabs are sunken into the earth and inscribed with more than 58 thousand names of men and women who died or were lost in action in the course of the Vietnam War.

Lin envisioned the construction of the monument quite literally as a cut into the earth, a metaphorical wound in the nation's landscape, with the potentiality to heal through the monument's resurrection.



MAYA YING LIN, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, D.C., 1981–1983. Black granite, each wing 246' long.

Marked with the years 1959 and 1973 at its farthest points left and right respectively, the monument escalates to the center, with the walls reaching over ten feet at the apex.

Lin imagined the names themselves would be the only concrete reality. The reflective surface opens a world the living can never enter but could conceptually experience.



MAYA YING LIN, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, D.C., 1981–1983. Black granite, each wing 246' long.

# The Memorial was designed as a place to grieve.

Negative reactions to the Lin's design created controversy in two areas.

1. Was a reaction to the memorial itself. Many felt it was not heroic enough. It was so different than previous memorials that present figurative sculptures inspiring pride and heroism. **These people felt the selected design was too unconventional, its black color and its lack of ornamentation led some public officials to voice their displeasure, calling the wall "a black gash of shame."** To deal with this controversy, an additional sculpture was added to the site. Entitled, *The Three Soldiers*, by Frederick Hart, the piece is more traditionally inspired.

2. Many reacted negatively to Lin's ethnicity, Asian.

**The Vietnam War was one of the longest and most controversial wars in United States history. A stated goal of the memorial fund was to avoid commentary on the war itself, serving solely as a memorial to those who served. Lin focused her design to that end.**



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# Postmodern Art as Political Weapon

The Feminist Art Movement began with the idea that women's experiences must be expressed through art, where they had previously been ignored or trivialized.

Early proponents of Feminist Art in the United States envisioned a revolution. They called for a new framework in which the universal would include women's experiences, in addition to men's.



Female artists, like Mary Beth Eddelson, challenged the male dominated art world with controversial pieces like this; *Some Living American Women Artists/Last Supper*, 1972

# THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING A WOMAN ARTIST:

- Working without the pressure of success.
- Not having to be in shows with men.
- Having an escape from the art world in your 4 free-lance jobs.
- Knowing your career might pick up after you're eighty.
- Being reassured that whatever kind of art you make it will be labeled feminine.
- Not being stuck in a tenured teaching position.
- Seeing your ideas live on in the work of others.
- Having the opportunity to choose between career and motherhood.
- Not having to choke on those big cigars or paint in Italian suits.
- Having more time to work when your mate dumps you for someone younger.
- Being included in revised versions of art history.
- Not having to undergo the embarrassment of being called a genius.
- Getting your picture in the art magazines wearing a gorilla suit.

A PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGE FROM **GUERRILLA GIRLS** CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD  
532 LAGUARDIA PLACE, #237, NY, NY 10012  
www.guerrillagirls.com



GUERRILLA GIRLS, The Advantages of Being A Woman Artist, 1988. Poster.

**Guerrilla Girls** are an anonymous group of feminist, female artists devoted to fighting sexism and racism within the art world.

The group formed in New York City in 1985 with the mission of bringing gender and racial inequality within the fine arts to light. Members are known for the gorilla masks they wear to remain anonymous.



## Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?

Less than **5%** of the **artists** in the Modern Art sections are women, but **85%** of the **nudes** are female.

**GUERRILLA GIRLS** CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD  
www.guerrillagirls.com



JUDY CHICAGO, *The Dinner Party*, 1979. Multimedia, including ceramics and stitchery, 48' x 48' x 48' installed.



**Nude woman (Venus of Willendorf), from Willendorf, Austria, ca. 28,000–25,000 BCE. Limestone, approx. 4 1/4" high. Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna.**

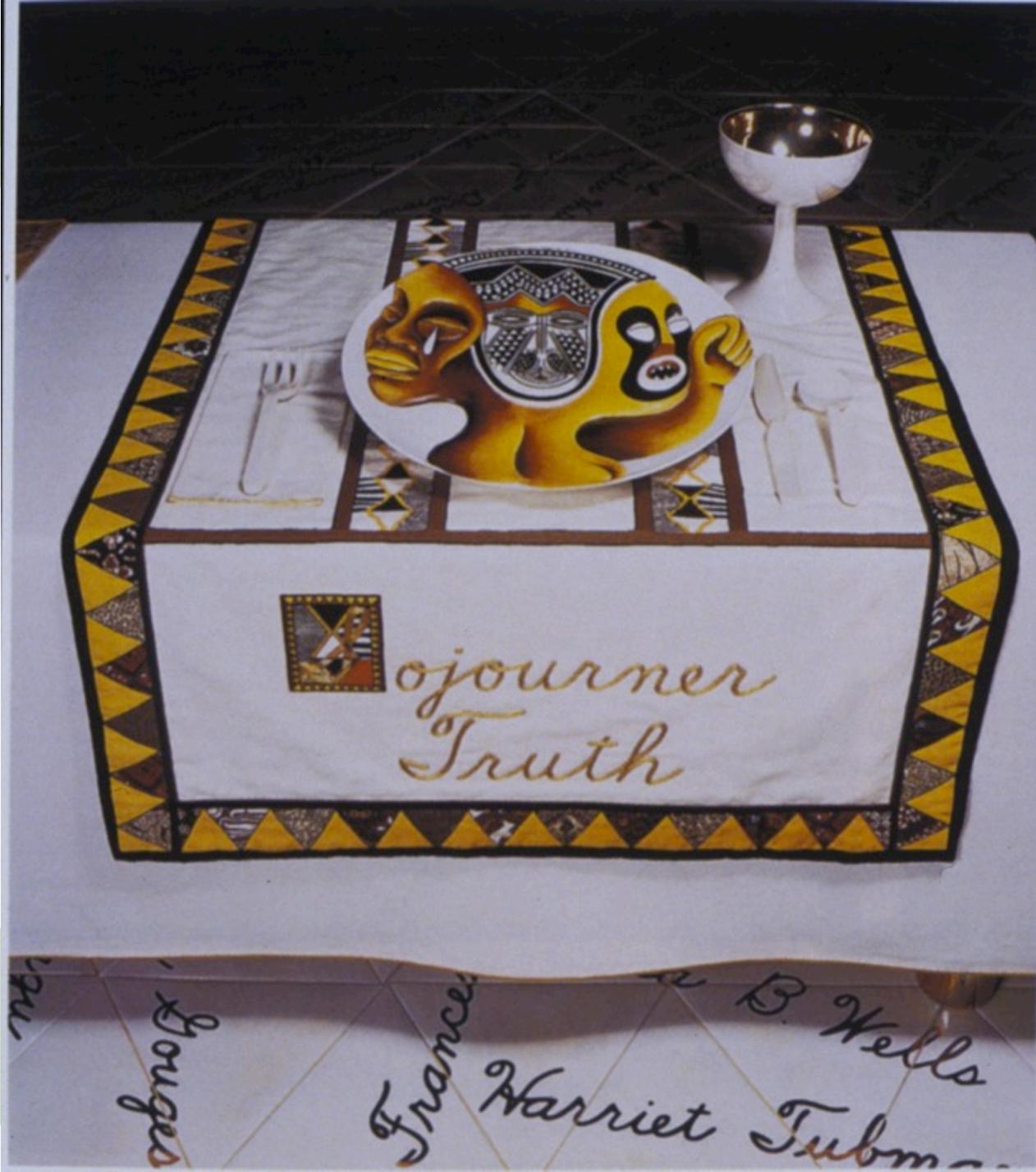


Woman holding a bison horn, from Laussel, Dordogne, France, ca. 25,000–20,000 BCE. Painted limestone, approx. 1' 6" high. Musée d' Aquitaine, Bordeaux.

**Judy Chicago-**  
**the Dinner Party, 1979--**  
designed to commemorate  
the achievements of women  
in history such as O'Keefe,  
Virginia Wolfe and Queen  
Hatshepsut.

Plates are decorated with  
vaginal references because  
it is common to all women.

39 women place settings  
and on the floor 999 more  
names. Traditional female  
crafts such as china painting  
embroidery, needle point,  
etc.





**Judy Chicago-**  
the Dinner Party, 1979– installed in the Brooklyn Museum.

He said the work was his “response and need to redefine the image of man in the terms of the Negro experience I know best.”



**Romare Bearden**--African-American contemporary of AEs. Began as a Social realist in WPA then turned to Collages of African-American life.

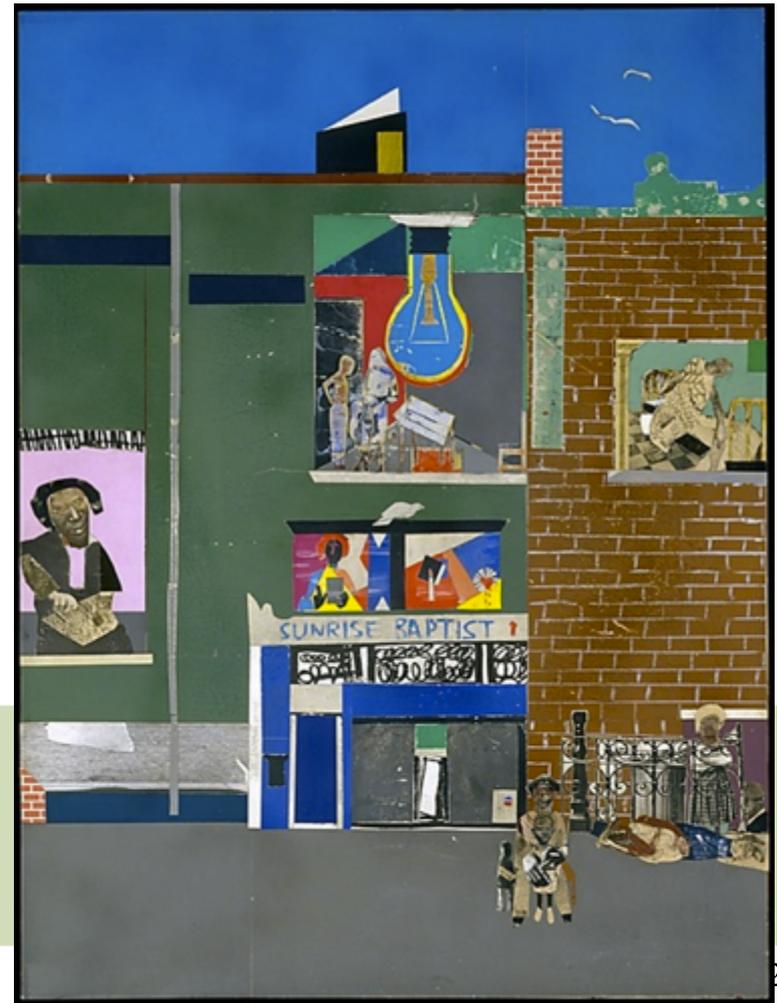
Anticipated collage aesthetic of postmodernism by recontextualizing images into a personal perception of reality. Brought his Afro-Caribbean cultural heritage into a relation with Eurocentric traditions.



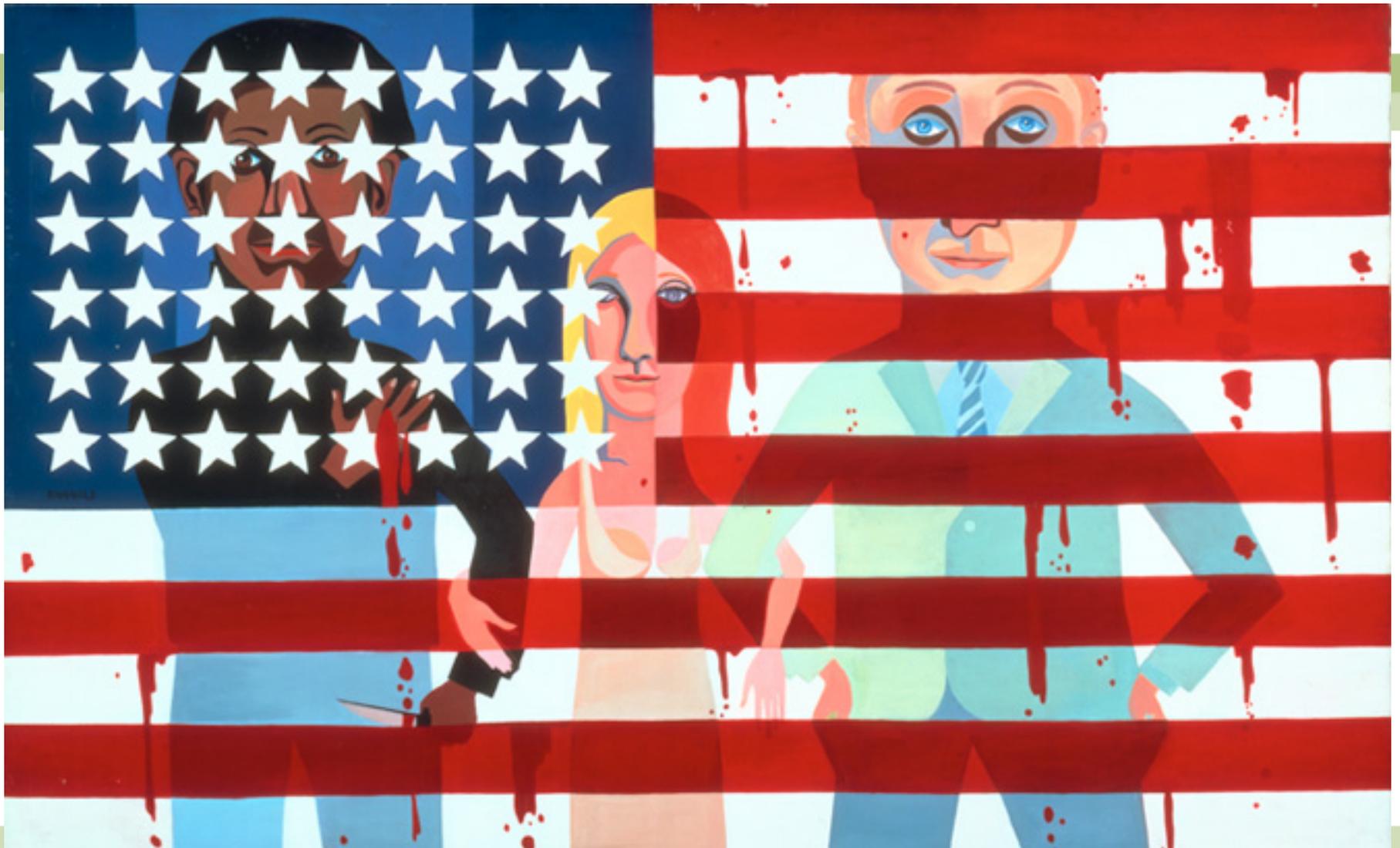
*The Block* as a series of small vignettes (simultaneously public and private, secular and spiritual, real and imagined) that one might encounter while walking the length of its eighteen-foot span.

Outside on the sidewalk, and inside every building (seen through windows and imaginary cutaways in the walls), people of all ages go about their daily routines and rituals.

While the finished collage contains moments of levity, enhanced by its bright colors and unexpected imagery and juxtapositions, it also acknowledges some of the harsher realities of living in an urban setting.



**Romare Bearden**– *The Block*, 1971. detail of 18ft work.



FAITH RINGGOLD, American People Series #18, The Flag is Bleeding, 1967,



These paintings present subjects who are black and white, male and female, and rich and poor.

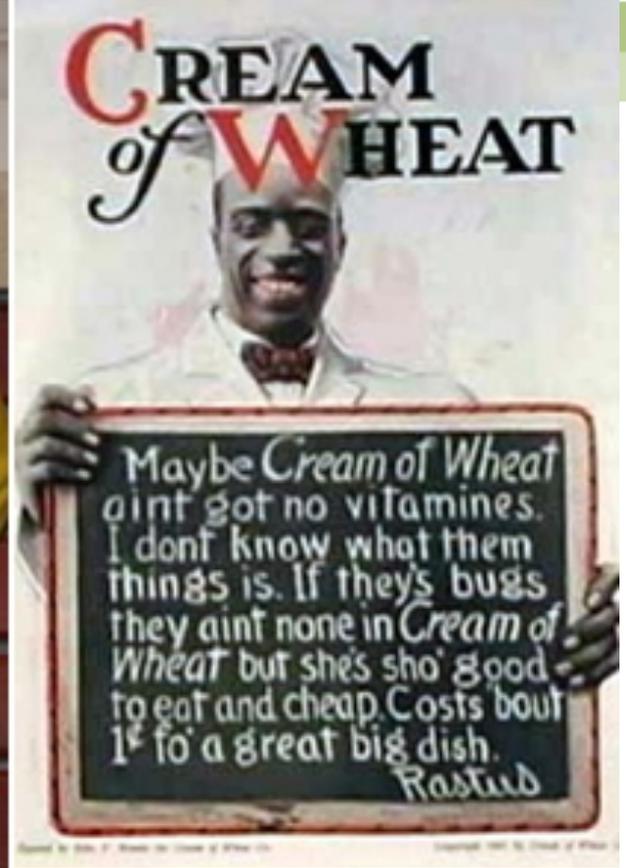
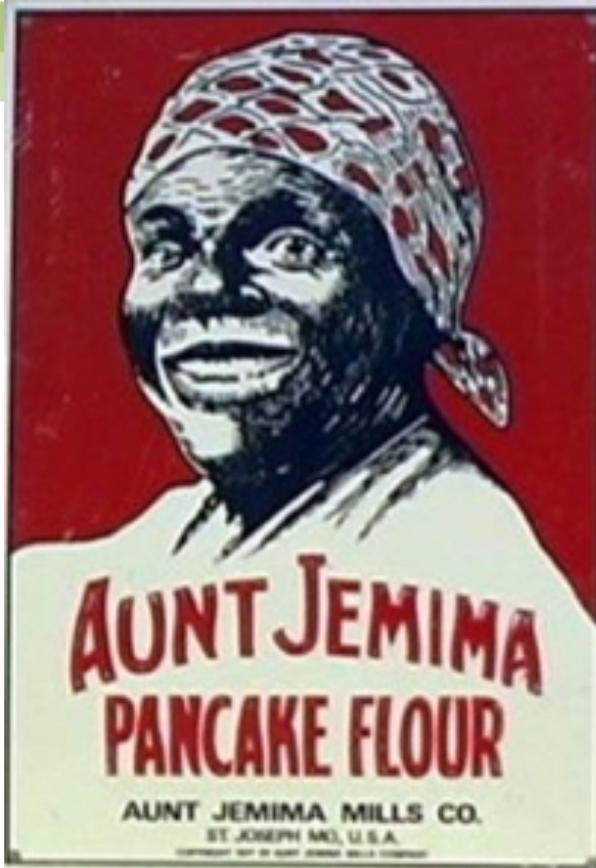
## FAITH RINGGOLD—

African-American artist—  
empower art with a folk  
tradition.

Works about the African-  
American female  
experience.

FAITH RINGGOLD, *Who's  
Afraid of Aunt Jemima?*, 1983.  
Acrylic on canvas with fabric  
borders, quilted, 7' 6" x 6' 8".  
Private collection.





Critique of cultural objects filled with mixed messages.

To take someone who sees the Aunt Jemima label as a nostalgic thing, a picture that reminds them of good times, and introduce that person to someone who sees it as a vestige of slavery or segregation.

Saar was a part of the black arts movement in the 1970s, challenging myths and stereotypes.

In the 1990s, her work was politicized while she continued to challenge the negative ideas of African Americans.

Betye Saar, The Liberation of Aunt Jemima, 1972

