



UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND

DAVID C. DRISKELL CENTER

FOR THE STUDY OF THE VISUAL ARTS AND CULTURE OF
AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NEWS RELEASE**

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**DAVID C. DRISKELL CENTER ANNOUNCES THE OPENING OF THE
FAITH RINGGOLD STUDY ROOM**

COLLEGE PARK, MD. —The David C. Driskell Center for the Study of Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora, the leading research center for the study of African American art and the art of the Diaspora, is proud to announce the opening of the Faith Ringgold Study Room, a new resource for the study of African American art. The study room is a space dedicated to honoring the work and life of the artist Faith Ringgold and provides an opportunity for students, scholars, and the community at large to research and engage with her artwork and books while also deepening their understanding of African American artists' contributions to the American art canon.

The Faith Ringgold Study Room is now open to the public. The room can be accessed by appointment, Monday-Friday from 10AM-4PM. Appointments to use the Faith Ringgold Study Room can be made by emailing driskellcenter@umd.edu or calling 301-314-2615.

Over six decades, Faith Ringgold has organized and maintained records documenting her life and career; this collection was donated to the Driskell Center and is the heart of the Faith Ringgold Study Room. The Faith Ringgold Collection includes documentation of her artwork organized into binders by Ringgold; letters; exhibition catalogues; writings, including drafts of her children's books, lecture notes, and notes about the creation of her art; books by and about Ringgold; and ephemera that document the artist's life and work. Some highlights of the collection include copies of each of the children's books written by Faith Ringgold, copies of her memoirs and other writings; primary source material documenting Ringgold's activism, most notably as part of the "Judson 3" and her involvement with *The Flag Show*; and early drafts of notable artworks such as *Tar Beach* and *Who's Afraid of Aunt Jemima?*.

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With financial support from the artist, the Driskell Center hired a graduate student to assist the Driskell Center's Archivist to document, inventory, and catalog the collection in the Center's PastPerfect database, making Ringgold's collection available to the public. The database can be searched here: <http://driskellcenter.umd.edu/RinggoldStudyRoom.php>.

ABOUT FAITH RINGGOLD

Faith Ringgold is an African American artist and author who was born in 1930 in Harlem, New York City. Ringgold is best known for her large painted story quilts. As a child she was taught to sew fabrics creatively by her mother, a professional fashion designer, and to make quilts by her great-great-grandmother. In 1950, she began studying art at City College of New York, concentrating on painting; she received her Master's degree in Fine Art from City College in 1959. Ringgold is a Professor Emeritus at the University of California, San Diego where she taught art from 1987 until 2002. Her art frequently comments on themes of race and gender and their particular relation to the art world, including art history. Ringgold was one of the first female artists to begin making art objects in a medium formerly referred to as "woman's work" (textiles, sewn fabric, weaving, quilting, embroidery, etc.) in the 1970's, offering her work as 'serious' art, rather than accepting the label of 'craft.' To date, she has illustrated 16 children's books and received more than 75 awards, including 22 Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degrees. Her works are included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the High Museum of Fine Art, among others.

ABOUT THE DAVID C. DRISKELL CENTER

The David C. Driskell Center honors the legacy of David C. Driskell—Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of Art, Artist, Art Historian, Collector, Curator, and Philanthropist—by preserving the rich heritage of African American visual art and culture. The Driskell Center is committed to preserving, documenting, and presenting African American art, as well as replenishing and expanding the field of African American art. All programs at the David C. Driskell Center are free and open to the public. The facility is wheelchair accessible. For further information regarding exhibitions and activities at the Driskell Center, please call 301.314.2615 or visit www.driskellcenter.umd.edu. The Driskell Center's programming is supported by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council.