

THE BLACK REVOLUTION: A TURNING POINT
IN AMERICAN NEGRO ART?

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	v
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE IMAGE OF THE NEGRO	7
Introduction	
The Negro in Africa	
West Africa	
Interior Africa	
African Philosophy	
Negro Image in America Under Slavery	
Phantom of Slavery	
Negro Image After Emancipation Until 1960	
Negroes in the North and in the South	
Barriers of Race	
III. THE IMAGE OF THE NEGRO IN ART	38
Introduction	
Transition	
History	
IV. THE IMAGE OF THE NEGRO IN THE BLACK REVOLUTION	72
The Events Leading to Black Revolution	
Civil Rights Movement	
Black Power and the Black Revolution	
V. CONCLUSIONS	96
APPENDICES	101
BIBLIOGRAPHY	120

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Classification of Artists Exhibiting in <u>Afro-American Artists: New York and Boston</u> by Hilton Kramer	88
II. Artists Associated Directly with the Black Revolution	92

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. <u>Benjamin Franklin Yoe and Son</u> Joshua Johnston Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, N. C.	46
2. <u>Romantic Landscape</u> Robert Duncanson Henry M. Fuller Collection, New York	48
3. <u>Approaching Storm</u> Edward M. Bannister Frederick Douglass Institute	49
4. <u>Hagar</u> Edmonia Lewis Frederick Douglass Institute	51
5. <u>Moses in the Bulrushes</u> Henry O. Tanner Frederick Douglass Institute	53
6. <u>Alta Douglas</u> Aaron Douglas Barnett Aden Gallery, Washington, D.C. . . .	58
7. <u>Parisian Scene</u> Archibald Motley Schomburg Collection, New York Public Library	59
8. <u>Praying Ministers</u> Jacob Lawrence Adolph Berle Collection, New York	61
9. <u>Boy on Roof</u> Hughie Lee-Smith David Randolph Collection, Philadelphia . .	62

LIST OF FIGURES -- Continued

Figure		Page
10.	<u>Rites of Spring</u> Romare Bearden Cordier and Ekstrom Gallery, New York . . .	62
11.	<u>Young Boy</u> Ernest Crichlow Collection the artist, New York	64
12.	<u>Black Man and Woman--U.S.A.</u> Charles H. Alston N.A.A.C.P. Collection, New York	64
13.	<u>John Brown Going to His Hanging</u> Horace Pippin Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts . . .	65
14.	<u>The Market Women</u> John Biggers Collection the artist, Houston	66
15.	<u>Gorge</u> Richard Mayhew Courtesy Art Gallery Magazine	68
16.	<u>Crisis of the '60s</u> Carroll Sockwell Eleanor Ulman Collection, Washington, D.C. .	68
17.	<u>But Through</u> Sam Gilliam Jefferson Place Gallery, Washington, D.C. .	69
18.	<u>You Can Win the Game if It's Your Turn</u> Bernie Casey Ankrum Gallery, Los Angeles	69
19.	<u>Fred Hampton's Door</u> Dana Chandler Collection the artist, Boston	89

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The Black Revolution, an American social upheaval of this century, poses numerous questions and challenges to all segments of our culture. For the artists, black and white, there is a dilemma of commitment as regards the acceptance of Black art for its merit without approval of the white artist. The term "Black Revolution" as used describes a movement which began approximately in 1960 and continues today.

The purpose of this investigation was to determine if the Black Revolution would be a turning point in American Negro art. Critical studies have been made from the limited literary sources of information concerning black imagery. This study includes Chapter I, the problem and its purpose, objectives, procedure, and definitions; Chapter II, image of the Negro in his African home until emancipation, liberation and the beginning of the Black Revolution; Chapter III, image of the Negro in art, from its earliest inception to the Black Revolution; Chapter IV, the Black Revolution, its image and its art; and Chapter V, an evaluation and conclusion. A

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Black Artist's role in America is to aid in the destruction of America as he knows it (1).

LeRoi Jones' statement, and others like it, have served to clarify the role of the black artist in the present day United States. No longer content to serve as a reflector of white cultural values, the black artist may be a useful force within the Black Revolution. One of the central problems of this study is to estimate to what degree the Black Revolution may serve as a favorable movement for both the black artist and his image.

Few Americans, either white or black, know a great deal about Negro history and Negro contributions to our national and world culture. With the advent of the Black Revolution Movement, much attention had been focused on all aspects of the Negro experience in the United States. Although the Negro-American is one of the oldest of the hyphenated American groups, he is still among the least known of the

American constituents, as he has been systematically excluded from participation in certain aspects of the mainstream of American life. Racial segregation was a mere acting out of a segregation of the mind resulting in the white view of Negroes as either 'a case or a controversy' (2). All sectors of American life have been affected, particularly generations of scholars and writers of textbooks which nurture the mind of teacher and student.

The Black Revolution, an American social upheaval of this century, poses numerous questions and indeed challenges to all segments of our culture. For the artists, black and white, there is a dilemma of commitment as regards the acceptance of Black art for its' merit without approval of the white artist. The term "Black Revolution" as used describes a movement begun approximately in 1960 and which continues today. It is a coalition of Black forces and organizations which have brought to the attention of the American public that as a minority race they have been repressed socially and politically and that such repression will no longer be tolerated. How to harmonize the exercise of individual creativity with the urgency of the militant

stand is yet to be solved. For the educators, there is perhaps the realization of long-time neglect, of misplaced emphasis, and empty chants of monumental tasks, and, of course, limited resources (2).

This study is concerned with imagery: the image of the African heritage of the Negro; of his days in slavery; of his struggle as a second-class citizen; and finally, his efforts for self-identification through the Black Revolution. An integral part of the Black Revolution will be the ability of the Negro to create an art to which his own people can respond.

If, as it appears, the production of art by the Negro may not be equal to that of other races, there must be some explanation. Instead of being a characteristic of the race, it may be a characteristic resulting from the time spent in dormancy and other conditions not conducive to the creative existence of the individual. If this fact is true, is it not possible that the Black Revolution may offer a brighter promise for the development and broad enrichment of all art? Will Black art fit directly into American society? If the Negro can develop music and dance, as has been very well

exhibited and annotated, does he not also have promise to develop the other fields of art? While many of these questions can not be answered at this time, a reflection on the historical background of Negro American art can be useful as a basis for interpretation.

Today the Negro is asking himself the question: Who am I? His answer has to be defined in his own terms and in his own time. This search is causing the Negro to look backward as he moves forward. Negro-Americans are becoming aware that they have made important contributions to American life and culture, but have received little recognition.

One very significant change wrought by the Black Revolution has been the self image of the black man. While he asks, "Who am I?," his question is not completely unanswered. "Black Art," "Black is Beautiful," "Black Studies," "Black Power"--all these phrases are contributing factors in the black American's new self image. It is an image which draws heavily on African roots and the present social predicament, and which attempts to negate the Negro-American past.

The new Negro self image is radically different from the traditional white image of the black man. In fact,

until the Black Revolution, the white image was the only image; American Negroes shared or accepted it. Those individual black men who rejected the image were powerless.

The new and the old self concepts are reflected in contemporary Negro art. In order to understand the current state of this art, it is necessary to trace the cultural development, particularly the artistic development, of the American Negro.

While it is perhaps presumptuous to attempt to evaluate the effects of a racial revolution on art, it is the purpose of this paper to make such observations as regards the American Negro and certain disciplines in the visual arts.

This study includes Chapter II, The Image of the Negro in his African home until emancipation, liberation, and the beginning of the Black Revolution; Chapter III, Image of the Negro in Art, from its earliest inception to the Black Revolution; Chapter IV, The Black Revolution, its image and its art; and Chapter V, an evaluation and conclusion. The image of the Negro as an individual and as a collective group is highly important to an understanding of the developments in the visual arts that are most important to America at the present time.

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CHAPTER II

THE IMAGE OF THE NEGRO

Introduction

The state of the culture of a civilization or a race determines the artistic productivity accomplished during any era considered. In an attempt to establish the image of the Negro, it is necessary to consider the culture of that race as it existed in Africa, observe its cultural attainments, and establish development of its civilization. The next consideration should be the degradation of the image of the Negro in America under slavery, the cultural changes that occurred, and the differences between the situation in the South American countries and that in North America. After the Negro was emancipated, his image changed, but still was not equivalent to that of the white man. His social position should be considered in regard to his cultural development from 1866 until 1960, and finally, in the image of the Negro in the Black Revolution.

There are many literary sources that relate the conditions of the Negroes in various parts of Africa up to

the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and even later, into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Some of these show the cultural development of the race at that time. The Negro under slavery in North America became a different type of individual, owing to his treatment, living conditions, status in life, and general image. The life of the Negro in America was surely different from that in Africa.

The Negro in Africa

Before the Africans' appearance on the American scene, they were a proud people with a sophisticated cultural heritage. Africa was a land of many languages, religions, colors, and stages of development. It could no more be spoken of as one unified continent than Europe could be so described at that time.

The development of African civilizations can be roughly divided into three stages: Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and modern time. During the period of antiquity the Nubians established the Egyptian culture. Other forces which invaded Africa were assimilated until the time of the Roman conquest, which ended the period. During the African Middle Ages "the drying up of the Sahara cut Africa off from foreign influences" (4, p. 192).

Nevertheless, African culture managed to attain a level which was "materially only a little inferior to Europe, and ethically probably superior, for African standards of law and faith were not only striven for, as in Europe, but actually lived by every individual" (4, p. 192).

The African modern period begins with Europe's discovery of Africa as a source of slaves. Not only were Africans enslaved by European slave traders, but the cooperation of some of the coastal tribes with the Europeans led to tribal civil war and a general state of chaos. From the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries, Richard Wright asserts, "100,000,000 of us were torn from our African homes" (10, p. 14).

West Africa

The dichotomy between the coastal and interior tribes was not merely a matter of cooperation with the slave traders. The coastal tribes were those most influenced by the outside world. Their state of cultural development was equal to, or in many instances superior to, that found in Europe. During the African metal age that began 500 years before the birth of Christ, the Africans began to cultivate the soil, build great cities, develop their arts, smelt and work iron ore, and produce complex social systems. African craftsmen were

highly skilled artisans working with wood, leather, glass, gold, ivory, copper, tin, silver, and bronze. In the kingdom of the Congo, every clan had its special crafts such as weaving, wine-making, and pottery (5). Each craft was represented at the established national council that advised the monarch. For centuries, African kings combined religion and business by making pilgrimages to Mecca in huge caravans in order to trade.

Two centuries before the first Christmas, Nok artists of the Niger-Benue country crafted quartz jewelry, iron axes, tin beads, and finely molded terra-cotta heads (9). These crafts, West Africa's oldest, inspired the magnificent brass heads cast at Ife around 1000 B.C. Artistic tradition and skill in all the major crafts date back for generations, or even centuries, among the principal African tribes of the West Coast and Equatorial Africa, from which the majority of the Afro-Americans descended. Arts of wood and metal sculpture, metal-forging, wood-carving, ivory- and bone-carving, weaving, pottery-making, and skillful surface decoration in line and color are included: in fact, everything in the category of the European fine arts except easel

painting and marble sculpture was known to Africans (1). Even the techniques of engraving and etching were represented in the surface carving of much African art.

The kingdom of Songhay in West Africa had developed a banking system, a school system, and a complete code of laws by 1400 A.D., and had instituted economic policies that made it prosperous. Songhay traded with the Europeans and other African nations, and its University of Sankoré at Timbuktu even offered courses in surgery, law, and literature to African and European scholars. Leo Africanus, a highly educated Spanish Moor who visited Timbuktu, noted a "great store of doctors, judges, priests, and other learned men" who had produced very interesting manuscripts or had written books which were sold for "more money than any other merchandise" (5, p. 6). It is interesting to note that in the year Columbus discovered the New World, Songhay ruled an empire that was larger than all of Europe. The slave trades of Portugal, Spain, Holland, Denmark, France, and England wrecked much of this civilization as they plundered Africa for slaves and battled each other for the control of all of the slave trade.

Interior Africa

The interior tribes, though lacking banking systems and universities, were nevertheless cultural sophisticates. The traditional African culture, as described in Muntu (4), was one in which all disciplines were completely interdependent with one another. "Philosophy, theology, politics, social theory, land law, medicine, psychology, birth and burial, all find themselves logically concentrated in a system so tight that to subtract one item from the whole is to paralyze the structure of the whole" (4, p. 97). Because the African viewed himself and everything around him as a part of a total unity, his concept of artistic creation was radically different from the standard European concept.

African Philosophy

Not only was the artist a living creator, but his work had a life force of its own as long as it fulfilled its function. In a strict sense, it was a creature informed with life by his act of designation, that is, by his decision that this piece of wood was to be no longer merely a piece of wood, but, for example, a statue of his king. He had altered its order of existence--in his mind--it was now a living creation, an extension not merely of himself, but of the life force.

This change is evident when one considers that an accompanying change in nomenclature occurs. The undesignated wood was a "kintu", a 'thing', and nothing more. But with the help of 'Nommo', the word, the thing is transformed into an image. Nommo therefore can be taken to mean that life force which informs the object. In other words, in art, Nommo is the creative act.

"Muntu" is the human being and in the case of art, the artisan, who, faced with the "Kintu", the thing, through Nommo, the word or creative force, transforms kintu into a particular expression of the life force which partakes of "kuntu" or a particular modality. Further, this creation was made at a specific point in time and space, "Hantu". Through this specific act of artistic creation we gain an insight into the basic elements of African philosophy.

Philosophic unity of the African system had four major categories: "Muntu", human being; "Kintu", thing; "Hantu", place and time; and "Kuntu", modality. All being, all essence, in whatever form it is conceived, can be under one of these categories. Nothing can be conceived outside them. These four categories are the manifestations of NTU, the universal force, "Being" itself.

It should be noted that it is impossible to separate the universal force, NTU, from its specific manifestations. According to Paul Klee, the Swiss artist, "It is that point from which all creation flows" (4, p. 101).

Perhaps because the interior tribes had no system of writing, the Europeans believed them to be primitive, yet the highly complex philosophy outlined above discredits any such theory. Moreover, their sophisticated system of communication through drums was unequalled until the invention of the teletype.

Their art, too, was an intricate part of their culture and completely in accordance with their philosophy. Their creative process (Appendix I) distinguished Muntu (man) from Kintu (thing) and life from lifeless, resulting in a meaningful African art.

Such a system of aesthetic creation would not be possible in an underdeveloped or unsophisticated culture. It was from this system that the African was uprooted and dragged to America. Not merely was he cut off from his traditional art but from his total world view--of which art was only one facet.

Negro Image in America Under Slavery

According to Lincoln (6), the Europeans who came to America were in search of a new and more complete freedom, while the Africans came because the last vestige of their freedom had been taken away. The Europeans came in search of new ways to exploit the full potential of their humanity, but the Africans came under conditions which denied even their basic humanity. The children of West Africa and the sons and daughters of Europe were destined to have separate roles in the making of America. For the white Europeans, America was to be a land of the free. For the black African, America was to mean two hundred and fifty years of slavery. After that would come the belated discovery that even with freedom there were social and moral factors which would nullify that freedom for yet another hundred years, and more.

The slave period in America was a period of racial and cultural provincialism oblivious to any values not consistent with or conforming to those prevailing in Western Europe. It was of no significance to colonial Americans that many of the Africans they held as slaves came directly from, or were descendants of cultures which were highly developed.

The African political, artistic, economic, religious, and linguistic experience was not European, and was thus

judged to be of no consequence for the New World, which was organized in terms of the European experience. Africans were prohibited from practicing and developing their art, their language, their religion, their family life. For want of appreciation and practice, whatever was distinctively African soon died out in America.

As explained by Silberman (8), it is noteworthy that the mere fact that Negroes were slaves is important in itself, for it meant that few Negroes ever came to the United States voluntarily, that every Negro bears in his color the stigma of slavery. Tocqueville (8, p. 78) appreciated the significance of this fact a hundred and twenty-five years ago:

There is a natural prejudice that prompts men to despise whoever had been their inferior long after he has become their equal In the ancient world, men could move from slavery to freedom without great difficulty because former slaves could not be distinguished from those who had always been free. The Negro, by contrast, transmits the eternal mark of his ignominy to all his descendants; and although the law may abolish slavery, God alone can obliterate the traces of its existence.

By itself, however, the fact of slavery does not begin to explain "the crushing sense of nobodiness" with which Negroes are afflicted. People of Slavic descent have no trouble holding their heads aloft, although "Slav" originally meant "slave." And the Jews, far from trying to erase the

memory of slavery, have made it central to their religion: every Jew is enjoined to recall the fact that "we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt." The pronoun "we" is used because each individual is to imagine that he himself, not just his ancestors, had been enslaved.

Understandably enough, Negroes have been unable to recall their experience of slavery in the same light. After all, the Jews, under Moses' leadership, freed themselves, and they went from Egypt to Mount Sinai; slavery was followed almost immediately by a moment of spiritual glory. The Negroes, on the other hand, did not free themselves; they were freed by others, as a by-product of a political dispute between two groups of whites. Negroes were not even permitted to fight on the Union side until fairly late in the Civil War. Emancipation was not followed by Exodus.

The fact is that Negro slavery in the United States and in the other British colonies was completely unlike slavery in any other part of the globe or any other period of history. Tocqueville (8, pp. 78-79) saw this clearly in 1837:

The only means by which the ancients maintained slavery were fetters and death; the Americans of the South of the Union have discovered more intellectual securities for the duration of their power. They have employed their despotism and their violence against the human.

The ancients, Tocqueville pointed out, took care to prevent the slave from breaking his chains. The Southerners, by contrast, have adapted "measures to deprive him even of his desire for freedom" (8 , p. 79).

Some historians have gone to great lengths to discover examples of Negro courage, Negro rebelliousness, Negro hatred for slavery--that is to say, all the attributes one would expect to find in those who are "merely white men wearing black skins." But the ghost of "Sambo" cannot be exorcised that easily. Professor Stamp, for example, who has written a major critique of the Southern view of slavery, concedes: "To be sure, there were plenty of opportunists among the Negroes who played the role assigned to them, acted the clown, and curried the favor of their masters in order to win the maximum rewards within the system" (8, p. 79). And when the much-heralded slave revolts are examined closely, they turn out to be rather insignificant. Of the two hundred fifty "revolts" which the historian Herbert Aptheker (2) has uncovered, for example, only three are really worthy of the term "revolt." The two best organized--those led by Vesey and Gabriel (2)--were suppressed quite easily, and the most dramatic, the Nat Turner rebellion, was little more than aimless butchery. The remaining "revolts", even under

Aptheker's sympathetic description, are clearly insignificant-- little more than outbreaks of local vandalism. More to the point, the rebellions were suppressed easily, in part because they involved only a handful of slaves, and in good measure because fellow-slaves almost invariably informed on the rebels. In any case, the rebellions in no way ameliorated the slaves' condition; on the contrary, the revolts were generally followed by harsh repression. The only way a slave could change his situation was by escape--a form of withdrawal--or by cajolery and flattery of his master.

The submissiveness of the slaves is all the more striking in terms of the cultures from which most of them came. Modern historical and anthropological scholars have made it clear that the traditional view of Africa as a place of savagery and barbarism is almost pure myth (8, p. 80). Professor Elkins wrote: -

Fifty years ago, if the American Negro was congratulated for anything, it was for his remarkable advancement from a state of primitive ignorance. Now, however, looking back upon the energy, vitality, and complex organization of West African tribal life, we are tempted to reverse the question altogether and to wonder how it was ever possible that all this native resourcefulness and vitality could have been brought to such a point of utter stultification in America.

Some of the slaves were Moslems from the highly cultivated Negro Moslem empires of the western Sudan. Accounts of a number of these Moslem slaves were collected and preserved by three amateur ethnologists of the nineteenth century, Theodore Dwight, William Brown Hodgson, and James Hamilton Cooper.

In the Methodist Quarterly Review of January, 1864, Dwight attacked the notion of Negro inferiority (8, p. 81), insisting upon the high level of both Moslem and pagan Negro civilization in Africa, and telling the stories of a number of Moslem slaves he had met. "Among the victims of the slave trade among us," he wrote, "have been men of learning and pure and exalted characters, who have been treated like beasts of the field by those who claimed a purer religion." Perhaps the most interesting story that has survived concerns one Job, of Futa near the Gambia River. Around 1730, Job was sent to the coast to trade with the English but was captured by other Africans and sold into slavery. Ending up on a Maryland tobacco plantation, he escaped and was jailed. When his story became known, abolitionists arranged for his freedom and passage to England; en route, he wrote out, from memory, three copies of the Koran. In England, he met members of the royal family and became friendly with Sir Hans Sloane,

president of the Royal Society, for whom he translated a number of Arabic inscriptions. After he returned to Futa around 1735, he corresponded with his English friends, telling them of his problems of adjustment after five or six years in England and America.

Traumatic as all these experiences were, however, they go only part of the way toward explaining the impact of slavery on the American Negro. The Africans who were transported to South America went through the same experiences as those who landed in the United States, yet slavery had totally different effects in the two continents, as Elkins has shown (2). Very much more of African culture survived in South America; the survivals are so distinct that they can be identified by tribe, whereas American anthropologists are still arguing over whether any African survivals can be identified among the Negroes of the United States. More importantly, slavery carried little taint of inferiority in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies; it was regarded, rather, as a misfortune that could have happened to anyone (8). As a result, the South American system of slavery contained a fluidity that made it relatively easy for a slave to move to freedom; color did not represent a disability that would block the slave's incorporation into the larger society, as

it did in the United States. Thus, an English visitor to Brazil in the mid-nineteenth century reported that he had:

. . . passed black ladies in silks and jewelry, with male slaves in livery behind them. Today one rode past in her carriage, accompanied by a liveried footman and coachman. Several have white husbands. The first doctor of the city is a colored man; so is the President of the Province (8, p. 85).

As early as the eighteenth century, in fact, there were Negro priests and even Negro bishops in Brazil; in the seventeenth century, the Negroes had established a reputation for courage and military ability.

It may seem paradoxical that slavery was so much more tolerable in the colonies of the feudal and despotic Spanish and Portuguese empires than in the democratic United States. Yet it was precisely the persistence of feudalism in Spain and Portugal and its absence in the United States (and in the other British colonies) that explains the difference. Although slavery had long since died out everywhere else in western Europe, the institution had survived in the Iberian peninsula down to the fifteenth century, in part because of the continuing wars with the Moors. There was, indeed, a tradition of slavery and of slave law going back to the Justinian Code and to earlier time. The Romans (as did most other ancients) saw slavery as a normal condition of man--the result of accident

and misfortune, rather than of human nature. In this view, slavery affected only the body of the slave--that is, only his labor; his mind and soul remained free. As the Roman author Seneca wrote, "A slave can be just, brave, magnanimous" (8, p. 86). Spiritually, the slave was his master's equal; intellectually, he could be his superior.

Because Spanish and Portuguese law saw slavery as a misfortune that could happen to anyone, and because it insisted that the slave had a soul and mind and personality of his own, the opprobrium Americans attached to color never developed. It would be wrong to suggest that South American slavery was benign; it was frequently quite brutal. But the cruelties and brutalities were against the law and were punishable if discovered. More importantly, South American whites never seriously maintained that a Negro slave was incapable of being free. On the contrary, freed slaves enjoyed the same legal rights as the white man and on the whole the same social status. And in fact freed slaves did participate actively and fully in the life of their new countries. The literature of South American slavery therefore shows no trace of the "Sambo" of United States tradition. "Sambo" never took root in South American soil.

Phantom of Slavery

"Sambo" flourished in the United States, however, for on this continent slavery developed in such a way as to convince the whites that Negroes were inherently inferior and incapable of freedom. Equally important, the system of slavery was administered so as to make the Negroes behave as if they were inferiors--to distort their personalities and suppress their mentalities in such a way as to make them in fact incapable of utilizing the "freedom" that finally became theirs after two and a half centuries of enslavement.

It would be hard to conceive a system better designed to create the submissive, infantile, incontinent, undisciplined, dull, dependent "Sambo" of Southern legend. Silberman suggests, "The results seem to justify the system: no one looking at the slaves could doubt their inferiority; to argue otherwise was to deny the evidence of one's senses" (8, p. 91).

Having erected the system of slavery on the assumption of Negro inferiority, and then having produced the behavior that seemed to justify the assumption, it was inevitable that America would refuse to admit free Negroes to full membership in their society. Slavery became associated with the race, and race with inferiority; the two concepts merged. And so black meant inferior, inferior meant black. Thus, even when

a black man became free, white America offered him neither equality nor citizenship in any meaningful sense of the word. Free Negroes lived in a limbo somewhere between slavery and freedom. In 1857, Chief Justice Taney declared the belief of the Supreme Court that "a Negro has no rights which a white man need respect" (8, p. 92). In the Court's interpretation of the Constitution, the words "people of the United States" did not include Negroes.

Understandably enough in the light of this view, free Negroes were denied the vote in most Northern states as well as in the South; New Jersey and Ohio rejected equal suffrage in 1867, and New York rejected it as late as 1869. In many states, free Negroes were denied trial by jury. Upon arrival in the nation's capital, every Negro over the age of twelve had to post bond, as if he were out on bail, and had to report within five days of his arrival. Negroes could not appear on the streets after 10 p.m. without special permit; a permit was also required for any public gathering, while private meetings were expressly forbidden. The burden of proof was on free Negroes to prove their freedom; in the absence of proof, they could be jailed, and even if they subsequently demonstrated their free status, they could be sold into slavery if they were unable to pay for their keep

while in jail. Four states in the West literally barred Negroes from physical entry; in Oregon, free Negroes could enter, but they could not own real property, could not sign contracts or engage in law suits. Even the Great Emancipator himself, before he became president, expressed his unalterable opposition to political or social equality between the races.

Negro Image After Emancipation Until 1960

As Rose explained (7), after the war and Emancipation, the race dogma was retained in the South as necessary to justify the caste system that succeeded slavery as the social organization of Negro-white relations. The North had never cleansed its own record in its dealing with the Negro even if it freed him and gave him permanent civil rights and the vote. In the North, however, race prejudice was never so deep and so widespread as in the South. A brief Reconstruction period was followed by the national compromise of the 1870's when the North allowed the South to have its own way with the Negroes in obvious contradiction to what a decade earlier had been declared to be the ideals of the victorious North and the policy of the nation. The North now also needed the race dogma to justify its course.

The fact that the same rationalizations are used to defend slavery and caste is one of the connecting links between

the two social institutions. In the South the connection is direct. Even today some white Southerners may use the race dogma to defend, not only the present caste situation, but also slavery and, consequently, the righteousness of the Southern cause in the Civil War.

The partial exclusion of the Negro from American democracy has, however, in no way dethroned the American Creed. But the influences from the American Creed have a double direction. On the one hand, the Creed operates directly to suppress the dogma of the Negro's racial inferiority and to make people's thoughts more and more "independent of race, creed or color," as the American slogan runs. On the other hand, it indirectly calls forth the same dogma of inferiority to justify the exception of the Negro to the Creed. The need for race prejudice is, from this point of view, a need for defence on the part of the Americans against their own national Creed.

The Emancipation Proclamation, to repeat Wendell Phillips' epigram, freed the slave but ignored the Negro. It was almost inevitable that this be so. Lincoln apparently reached the decision to free the slaves with some reluctance, and rather hoped that once freed, they would solve the problem by returning to Africa (2). In any case, the exigencies of war

left little time to prepare any program to help the newly-freed slaves move into the main stream of American life. The abolitionists, moreover, were no help at all, for they failed to understand the dimensions of the problem. The Southerners had justified slavery in terms of Negro inferiority. The abolitionists accepted the Southerners' terms and simply reversed the argument, drawing upon the then-current notions of human perfectibility. According to William Jay, for example, emancipation would immediately "stimulate [the Negroes'] morals, quicken their intelligence, and convert a dangerous, idle and vicious population into wholesome citizens" (8, p. 93). The transformation from slavery to freedom, in his view, could be made "instantaneously, and with scarcely any perceptible interruption of the ordinary pursuits of life." With such a view there clearly was no need to develop any program to assist the slaves in making the difficult transition from total dependence to freedom and independence.

The abolitionists saw slavery as a moral abstraction, not as a social problem, and were, therefore, incapable of proposing any program. Thus, they quickly lost interest. The Negroes themselves were totally unprepared; never was a people less prepared for freedom. Slavery had emasculated the Negro males, had made them shiftless and irresponsible

and promiscuous by preventing them from ever assuming responsibility, negating their role as husband and father, and making them totally dependent on the will of another. There was no stable family structure to offer support to men or women or children in this strange new world. With no history of stable family ties, no knowledge even of what stability might mean, huge numbers of Negro men took to the roads as soon as freedom was proclaimed; the right to move about was seen as the crucial test of freedom. Thus there developed a pattern of drifting from place to place and job to job and woman to woman that has persisted (in lesser degree, of course) to the present day.

Negroes in the North and in the South

The Negroes of the North were better off, of course-- but not enough better off to enable them to shuck off the heritage of slavery. Before Emancipation, as we have seen, the free Negroes lived in a kind of limbo somewhere between the slaves and the whites.

Yet before the Civil War there was hope, there was aspiration, based on the dream that some day slavery would end and all black men would be admitted to full membership in American Society. Partly as a result of his hope, the Negro

showed a remarkable zeal for self-improvement. In Washington, D.C., for example, of the fifty-two schools established for Negro children between 1807 and 1861, forty were founded and run by Negroes themselves. As the historian Constance McLaughlin Green has written, "hard-working Negro families who observed the law meticulously made astonishing material progress and won new respect from upper-class whites." The New York City and County Suffrage Committee of Colored Citizens had twenty branches within the city itself, and more throughout the state. Almost every city and a good many villages had literary societies, dedicated to "the stimulation of reading and the spreading of useful knowledge by providing libraries and reading rooms." The historian Benjamin Quarles reports the existence of at least forty-five such societies in the North. In Baltimore, for example, there was the Young Men's Mental Improvement Society for the Discussion of Moral and Philosophical Questions of All Kinds; Pittsburgh Negroes had their Young Men's Literary and Moral Reform Society; and the hundred and twenty Negro families in Greenville, Indiana, boasted of having "a very good Literary Debating Society" (8, p. 103).

To the free Negroes of the North, moreover, the Civil War seemed like the dawn of a new day. For example, George T.

Downing, a prosperous caterer, compared the Negro's lot in 1861 with that of a quarter-century before. Then, he observed,

. . . a colored man had to take the gutter side of the pave, and dared not show his face in a concert, lecture, or library-room; schools, colleges and literary associations closed their doors against him . . . (8, p. 103)

But now, Downing reported,

Colleges and lectures are alike open to all on equal terms, as are also the lecture, the concert and the library-room; . . . see him participating at the bar, in the workshop, in the studio, occupying professorships, and then say, if you can, there is not hope for the future (8, p. 103).

It has been noted by Elkins (2) that in rediscovering their African origins Negroes are not regaining their identity as long-lost Africans but are reshaping their identity as Americans. This is a complicated and difficult matter, for the reasons identified above, which lie embedded in the Negro-American experience. It is also complicated and difficult because being 'American' is itself not so much a condition as a process whose nature is still imprecisely defined and whose ultimate shape no one clearly sees. Nevertheless, like so many other people who have become members of the American society, Negroes have to blend their unique character as a group with the common character they share as Americans. Between these two identifications there has been up to now

a deep and mutually deforming split. Negroes have had to fight fiercely for the most elementary part of their share of the common American holding--their equality of rights as citizens. The exclusions and denials that were their lot for so long dominated the shaping of their unique character while laming--as with a shriveled limb--the common American identity itself. Now this system of exclusion is coming to an end, or is at least being sweepingly revised. The Negro group identity based upon it is becoming obsolete, and some new kind of group identity must somehow take shape out of the old elements and the new circumstances. Like the restoration of sight or the use of a paralyzed limb, this change in Negroes must at the same time profoundly alter the American organism of which they will now become a more normally functioning part.

To try to see Negroes going through this great transition is to see a confused melee of people at many different points: in motion physically and psychologically; pushing in and out of ghettos, in and out of blind alleys; trying to cope with old foes and old problems while facing new pressures and new demands and new circumstances. There is no way of simplifying these complexities or of catching them whole. Still, as Ralph Ellison said, the struggle for first-class citizenship for

Negroes is but the first paragraph of the first chapter of a long story that has yet to unfold (3).

Barriers of Race

Negroes bring to each experience their own distinctive character, their peculiar history, and the drives and conditions of their present circumstances. But for all their uniqueness, the matter is hardly unique to them. The same or similar questions have come up out of many of the same patterns of separateness, alienation, assimilation, and integration of other groups that have gone through--or are still going through-- the business of trying to fit themselves into an American whole. With all the many differences in kind, time, place, and process, and with all the varieties of intensity, irony, and agony, the questions posed for Negroes have in one form or another faced Irishmen, Jews, Italians, Poles and Ukrainians, Chinese, Japanese, and Mexicans. They have long been present for American Indians and have much more recently come into the lives of other groups, such as: Puerto Ricans, Hawaiians in all their shades and mixes, and even Alaskan Eskimos (3). For what we are dealing with here is the problem of American pluralism, within which each group must maintain its own identity in the American effort to create an open society.

The barriers of race have prevented the entry of Negroes into the great common world of American life until recently. A few smaller groups seen as racially distinct, the Chinese, Japanese, Mexicans, and the Jews--with their peculiarly equivocal mix of ethnic and religious separateness--have shared the kind of exclusion and rejection which was the central burden of the Negro-American experience. Members of all these groups are still the objects of more or less virulent prejudice and discrimination. All of them have only recently achieved a partial and still-fragile measure of inclusion. But for Negroes the breakthroughs into the open spaces of the nation's life are just beginning. Negroes have remained submerged, staying at the bottom, as James Baldwin has wryly observed, "because it's the only way everyone in America will know where the bottom is" (3, p. 328). The openings in the American society which were available for every successive immigrant group for more than a century were never there for Negroes.

For other groups, the new urban politics, largely created by the great immigrant masses, occasionally gave some voters the chance to vote more than once but never systematically prevented any body of citizens from voting at all. Although Yankees despised Irishmen, Irishmen despised Italians and

Poles, and they all despised Jews; great whole subworlds with their own tribal systems, dialects, and codes of relationship were built up around these assorted mutual antipathies and prejudices. Members of these groups, however, were neither denied access to all the public rights and places open to citizens, nor to the eventual freedom to live tolerably and to work to improve their estate. Most of these groups came into American life during the time of the sweatshops in the cities and varieties of labor peonage in the mills and mines. When these workers organized themselves into trade unions to fight for better conditions of life, however, they rigidly excluded Negroes from their trades and from their unions. It was all but impossible for Negroes to acquire the skills, and therefore the jobs, necessary to help them rise. Negroes were left to live as they could at the bottom, at the lowest levels of unskilled toil, or by whatever ways they could devise. Often this resulted in their living better by living off each other inside their ghettos.

Having briefly traced the changes that occurred in the image of the Negro, it is proper to give consideration to the visual arts produced by a race that originally lost its identity but struggled to regain it in order to produce an

image which would reflect the true Negro. Since the image is described in Chapter II, Chapter III will be concerned with the artistic accomplishments of the Negro.

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CHAPTER III

THE IMAGE OF THE NEGRO IN ART

Introduction

In considering the art of the Black Revolution it is necessary to review the image of the Negro in art from his African home to modern America.

Transition

In being transplanted from Africa to America, Negro art and Negro artists were separated, and it was several generations before they had an opportunity to come together. In the interval, African visual arts were forgotten, so that Negro themes and subject matter were neglected by most artists and many Negro artists regarded "Negro Art" as restricted to the ghetto, and therefore ignored it completely. If historical facts were lost, it might be possible to rewrite much of the history from the art of the times. A perceptive eye could discern what the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries thought of the Negro, from the way in which he was artistically depicted. A change or special attitude has always been reflected in the art of the period; in fact, art has often

registered the change before it was generally apparent in the conventional attitudes of society (2). For example, during the seventeenth century the Negro was an unfamiliar figure who frequently excited curiosity and romantic interest. This was revealed first in the blackamoor figures of a Negro king among the three magi who went to Bethlehem with gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The romantic concept of the Negro continued into the eighteenth century, since most Negroes were elaborately depicted, symbolic of their position as prized possessions of the noblemen they attended. Few portraits of the Empire and Pompadour periods were complete without the traditional figure of the black attendant elegantly dressed and obviously displayed as a pet. The occasional black notable or scholar whose idealized portrait reflected the admiration and sentimental interest of the Negro in the eighteenth century is unforgettable. Men like Juan Latino, the Spanish Negro scholar; Capitein, the Dutch Negro theologian; and others, including Samuel Brown, the learned servant of Samuel Johnson, sat for the most popular painters and engravers of their day. From this tradition came the occasional, but significant, Negro portraits by Valazquez, Rembrandt, Rubens, Goya, Reynolds, and Hogarth (2).

A similar tendency carried over into early colonial America, where the aristocratic tradition was strong. An example is the portrait of George Washington's family, where the dark-brown, elegantly groomed family "retainer," Lee, is a prominent figure in the group. Few grotesque or carelessly rendered Negro figures existed before the beginning of the nineteenth century, the moment of the Negro's lapse into chattel slavery and plantation bondage.

For a period of time the Negro disappeared from paintings. When he made a reappearance, it was in the background as a clownish, grotesque object setting off the glory of his master or portraying the comic subject for the master's amusement. The "old faithful uncle"--later literature's "Uncle Tom"--was an initial stereotype. No less conventional were the jiggling plantation hands in tattered jeans or the grinning pickaninnies. Few nineteenth-century art shows were without their genre portrait studies of one or more of these types, or their realistically painted portrayal of "The Plantation Quarters," "Ole Virginia Life," or some equally glorified version of the slave system (2).

The "Uncle Tom" tradition was so strong that it lasted at least forty years after the nominal fall of slavery and has served as one of the mainstays of the literary and

artistic defenses of the "lost cause" of the Confederacy. One of the obvious arguments for the lost cause was this representation of the supposed patriarchal regime of the southern plantation. It was against this falsification that American art reacted in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, and it was this misrepresentation that made the Negro artist, during that period, avoid Negro subjects.

As described by Butcher (2, p. 213):

Few were able to remember that Negro subjects had been treated with dignity and even with a romantic touch in the previous century; no one dared to resume the dignified or romantic interpretation in opposition to such strong Nordic pride or prejudice. A Negro figure, decently dressed, not obviously a peasant or servant, and without reflection of inferior status, was a rarity; a book, rather than a tray, in a Negro hand would have been an intolerable heresy.

Negro painters and sculptors did not take the opportunity to challenge this hardening tradition and stereotype. For the most part they ignored Negro subjects entirely. Yet, in spite of the Negro artist's failure to attack the stereotype, it was undermined by white artists who, for artistic rather than social reasons, were pioneers in the cause of realism. So-called "Americanists" were developing a realistic art of native types, including a new portrayal of the Negro subject. Winslow Homer sketched exotic Negroes in the West Indies.

Others started with some bias toward the plantation, but tempered by the new concept of realism which demanded true type portraiture. Wayman Adams can be identified with this trend. Finally, with the great realists of early-twentieth-century fame, Robert Henri and George Luks, Negro types commanded the technical thoroughness of a major artistic problem. Eventually, portrayal of Negroes reflected the dignity and honesty of a changed artistic approach and social attitude. George Bellows, John Curry, Julius Block, Thomas Benton, and other artists of the twentieth century made the Negro a subject of interest and interpreted him in dignified, sympathetic and spiritual terms (2). Thus, white artists in the United States have accurately reflected the changing positions of the Negro in our society. Historically, the black artist has not been quite so successful.

The task of the early Negro artist was to prove to a skeptical world that the Negro could be an artist. It was not generally known that the African had been a capable artist in his native culture and that, independent of European culture, he had built up his own techniques and traditions. The notion that a Negro might aspire to the fine arts was considered ridiculous. Before 1885, any Negro man or woman with artistic talent and ambition confronted an

almost impassable barrier. Yet, after many years of trying apprenticeship, several Negro artists surmounted both the natural and the artificial obstacles with sufficient success to disprove, but not dispel, the prevailing prejudice. It is evident that the American Negro found his artistic identity in the white man's concept. The history of American Negro art will support such a contention.

History

Despite the earnest efforts by certain researchers to discover Negro painters in Colonial America, the quest has not been unusually rewarding. It is well known that Colonial America was not a particularly hospitable climate for painters, regardless of race. One can quickly name the painters of some merit and even those names pale for the most part when they are compared to the contemporary Europeans.

In the colonial period and up until the invention of photography, the bread and butter of American art was portraiture. Because it was the only means of recording family likeness, the market was constant and not too discriminating. Our first major period of truly American art includes the itinerant painters and the local portraitists. Little or nothing is known about many of these individuals,

but there are indications that Negroes were involved in this trade.

Since most Negroes were still in bondage and the few free ones were involved in more elemental pursuits than applying paint to board or canvas, it would have been particularly amazing if any great Negro artists had emerged. Nevertheless, a small start was made in the areas where some dilution of Negroid characteristics had occurred (5). For example, there is enough evidence to support the contention that there were several mulattoes painting portraits in early New Orleans. One of them, Jusiea Judson, painted a fascinating self-portrait.

History offers no date for the beginnings of art by American Negroes; it never does for any art. Noted historians assume that chosen Negroes were craftsmen during the early days of colonial America. They must have made many of the things needed in the home; but the things needed, like the homes themselves (which they helped to build), were rough and too uncherished to survive (1, 8).

The situation was different after the mid-eighteenth century. Increasing prosperity, education, comfort and good taste promoted a greater variety of needs; and favored slaves were trained to meet them. The larger plantations

often had their own smithies, workshops, and tanneries; the smaller establishments found it expedient on occasions to rent talented slaves to local craftsmen; and quite a few owners took creative pleasure in securing the addition of aesthetic appeal to utility (8).

The Negro in this period was better known as a craftsman than as an artist. It is believed that many of the skills he exhibited had been learned in Africa. For example, in the city of New Orleans, the wrought iron balconies in Le Vieux Carre originated in foundries completely manned by Negro slaves. There is also a type of 'plantation pottery' produced by slave craftsmen showing an African influence.

There are records of some Negro artists in the eighteenth century in America. A certain Scipio Moorhead was painting in Boston in 1773, as we know from a poem written by Phillis Wheatly, usually considered the first Negro poet in America. In her poem, she refers to Moorhead as an African artist.

Richard Allen, the first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, was done in pastel in 1785 by G. W. Hobbs, a Negro minister in Baltimore--probably the first portrait of an American Negro by an American Negro. It is believed that Hobbs did many portraits, but they have not yet been discovered.

Joshua Johnston (ca. 1765-1830), of Baltimore, is perhaps the best documented early Afro-American painter of this period and is counted in the "American Primitives" group. He is noted for his portraits of well-to-do Maryland families. His work is indistinguishable from that of his white contemporaries, as is illustrated in Figure 1. Indeed, it was only recently discovered that he was a "free householder of colour" (5, p. 23).



Fig. 1--Benjamin Franklin Yoe and Son by Joshua Johnston

There is no trace of racial awareness in his work, but this is not unusual. Such a preoccupation would have been economic suicide, because no one would have bought such pictures.

Johnson, in turning to the portraiture of white people, became one of the many semi-skilled artisans whose productions had a quaint appeal.

Early American art of the nineteenth century was bound to Europe. Indeed an artist was acceptable to society only if he had studied in Europe. Many of the American artists of this period worked as expatriates in Paris or Rome. Several outstanding Negro artists received recognition in Europe, but their works were never really given full attention in this country. Again, it was not an ethnic contribution which distinguished them but rather their skill and proficiency within the rigid academic tradition. Among them, the most worthy of comment are Robert Duncanson (1817-72), Edward Mitchell Bannister (1828-1901), and Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859-1937).

Robert Duncanson, a romantic-realist landscape and portrait painter, was a Scotch Canadian mulatto born in New York state and educated in Canada. He lived in Cincinnati and Detroit from 1842 to 1859, and spent the latter part of his life in Italy and Scotland, returning to Detroit to die. He was more inclined to claim his Scottish than his African heritage and declared at one time that his only interest in color was in paint (see Figure 2).



Fig. 2--Romantic Landscape by Robert Duncanson

Duncanson was commissioned by the Longworths and other prominent families of Cincinnati to paint portraits and landscapes. His murals still adorn the stately Longworth mansion (now known as the Taft Museum).

An award by the Anti-Slavery League allowed Duncanson to travel in Europe. While in England he received the patronage of the Duchess of Sutherland and the Duchess of Essex. He enjoyed the hospitality of Alfred Lord Tennyson, who is reported to have remarked that Duncanson had truly captured the spirit of his poem, "The Lotus Eaters," in his painting of that subject (10, 17).

A prominent artist who did not travel abroad was Edward Mitchell Bannister of Providence, Rhode Island. His father was a Negro from Barbadoes who drifted to Canada and married a white woman from New Brunswick. As a young man Bannister worked on coastwise vessels, probably as a cook.

About 1850 Bannister settled in Boston, possibly because it was the hub of the anti-slavery movement. He became a photographer and began taking classes in painting at Lowell Institute. Bannister won considerable recognition as an American regional painter, reflecting the style of his white contemporaries (see Figure 3). One of his landscapes



Fig. 3--Approaching Storm by Edward Mitchell Bannister

took a first prize at the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876 and was purchased by a New York collector for \$1,500---a considerable sum for an American painting in that day. As stated in The Afro-American Artist (8, p. 14):

Prejudice on the part of the judges nearly prevented Bannister's receiving his prize when they discovered that the winner was a Negro. Only because of the strong insistence by competing artists that race should not be a factor in art was the prize awarded to him.

He thus became the first Negro-American artist to win recognition in a national exhibition. He was mostly influenced by the Barbizon group then current in French painting.

The nineteenth century produced a well-known sculptor, Edmonia Lewis (1843-ca. 1900), daughter of a Chippewa Indian mother and an Afro-American father. She became the first woman of African descent to win distinction. Following private study in this country, she traveled to Rome and became a favorite of the expatriate art community. She created neo-classical portraits and figures relating to her dual racial heritage. A good example of this dual expression is shown in Figure 4, Hagar. At twenty-four, she completed Forever Free, in celebration of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which forever forbade slavery. Described by Henry Tuckerman, a leading American



Fig. 4--Hagar by
Edmonia Lewis

art historian of the nineteenth century, as "unquestionable the most interesting representative of our country in Europe . . ." (8, 10), she enjoyed a brief vogue as the neo-classical revival was fading.

The first Negro member of the National Academy of Design and the first Negro-American painter to gain an international reputation was Henry Ossawa Tanner. He achieved substantial success during his lifetime, and in very recent years his

work has begun to enjoy renewed interest. He was born in Pittsburgh, the son of a bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (14).

Tanner enrolled at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1880, the second Negro student to have attended the institution, and studied under the noted Thomas Eakins. Tanner's earlier works show the influence of Eakins, who urged him to remain in America. Tanner went south to North Carolina and later to Atlanta, Georgia. His celebrated Banjo Lesson grew out of his experiences in western North Carolina. For a while it appeared that Tanner might become the first major Negro genre painter, but he followed the route of the leading artists of his day and journeyed to Paris to continue his studies. Even in Paris, however, the American colony maintained their racial prejudice. An American artist who was a fellow member with Tanner of a club called the American Art Association recounts the following bitter incident (6, p. 110).

. . . Tanner, who had a touch of Negro blood, once had the innocence or the folly to permit his name to be put up for election to the house committee. He failed to get even the vote of his sponsor. This little corner of Paris, like its spittoons, was definitely American.

Tanner developed a distinctive style--restrained, mystical, and scientific in its attention to detail. Remaining aloof from the revolution in art wrought by the fertile influence of abstract African sculpture on such artists as Picasso, Leger, Modigliani, and many other modern masters, he finally found his ideal subject matter when he journeyed to Palestine and was profoundly impressed. He began painting biblical subjects, a favored idiom for a small group of white painters in his day, in the prevailing academic manner (see Figure 5). Tanner made several trips to the Holy Land under



Fig. 5--Moses in the Bulrushes by Henry O. Tanner

the sponsorship of the American collector and department store heir, Rodman Wanamaker. His reputation sky-rocketed and soon he was being compared to Rembrandt. After he was awarded the Legion of Honor by the French government, American museums began buying his work. In his later years, after the First World War, his reputation diminished, until it reached the point where he is now scarcely mentioned at all in standard works on American artists. This may in some part be due to the fact that he was Negro. There are other considerations, however. His romantically religious paintings were easily eclipsed by the rise of modernism. Nevertheless, although he considered Post-Impressionism to be sheer anarchy, he appreciated Impressionism enough to allow himself to be influenced in the direction of a brighter blue-green palette. Beginning in 1907, he employed a painstaking glazing technique that produced works which were his most effective and most Romantic efforts, recalling the visions of Ryder (11).

Recently, seventy paintings were rediscovered by Tanner's son in a dusty studio outside of Paris (11, 12). Although sold almost immediately to the many Negro colleges and universities anxious to obtain examples of works by America's first internationally recognized and now perhaps unjustly neglected

Negro painter, the paintings have been on view recently at the Grand Central Galleries.

Significant changes occurred in the history of art at approximately the same time as the Civil War, with the academic tradition of painting being challenged by new movements amongst the European artists. Americans were not involved in this rebellion and in 1913 were hit full-faced by the second wave of the revolt which followed the post-impressionists through the Armory Show in New York, which became one of the greatest single events in American art history. With this exhibition came new surges of energy which are still motivating the main body of American painters. White Americans became deeply involved in cubism, expressionism, and fauvism, but according to Porter (16), Negro artists failed to accept the fresh currents, and it was fifteen years before Negro art began to utilize these concepts. This is unfortunate, since it had been the African influence which was most important in the birth of modern art. Black artists favored the academic realism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was not until much later that Negroes began to accept the new African influences. The arts associated with the back-to-Africa movements floundered in the nineteenth century romanticism instead of leading the way. This most regrettable

decision by Negro artists reflects the artistic conservatism in the Negro community, and the fact that Negro artists who depended on the white market were not likely to take aggressive new directions which might jeopardize their acceptability.

The New Negro Movement of the 1920's sometimes referred to as the Negro Renaissance, was mainly a literary and musical flowering of poets, novelists, composers, singers, and musicians. It was a period of great social and intellectual ferment. In the black community dozens of literary-art publications appeared, and for the first time in American history, a cultural racialism developed among Negroes. Harlem became their Mecca, and they flourished there amidst the intellectual forums of the Schomburg Collection of Negro History and Harlem's cabarets. No Negro painters were precisely affiliated with the Harlem Renaissance, and, in general, the visual arts were neglected in the upsurge (8); but it must be said that the spark of the Harlem Renaissance traveled across the country and ignited many fires.

It is a fair assumption that as a direct reaction, the Harmon Foundation gave five exhibitions between 1928 and 1933 of the work of Negro artists. Among the painters in those exhibitions were

Aaron Douglas, Richmond Barthé, Palmer C. Hayden, Hale Woodruff, Archibald Motley,

August Savage, William Edouard Scott,
Albert A. Smith, James A. Porter, Allan
Rohan Crite, Malvin Gray Johnson, William H.
Johnson, O. Richard Reid, Laura W. Waring,
William E. Braxton, James L. Wells, Edwin A.
Harleston and Lois Mailou Jones (Pierre-Noel).

Aaron Douglas gives an amused remembrance of the desperate search for Negro artists caused by the Harmon Foundation's exhibitions (5, p. 31):

Harlem was sifted. Neither streets, homes nor public institutions escaped. When unsuspecting Negroes were found with a brush in their hands they were immediately hauled away and held for interpretation. They were given places of honor and bowed to with much ceremony. Every effort to protest their innocence was drowned out with big-mouthed praise. A number escaped and returned to a more reasonable existence. Many fell in with the game and went along making hollow and meaningless gestures with brush and palette . . . But . . . the Negro artists have emerged.

Douglas, the first Negro artist of importance to be turned up in this sifting, was a fine portrait painter, as his studies of Alexandre Dumas and Marian Anderson witness. His paintings such as these and Figure 6 helped raise the level of Negro portraiture to a respectable standard.



Fig. 6--Alta Douglas
by Aaron Douglas

Archibald Motley is another artist who came to the fore with Aaron Douglas. His paintings deal with the night life of the city, as shown in Figure 7. There is more social comment than satire in his rhythmic caricatures, and it is interesting to observe that there are no Negroes depicted in this painting.

In spite of the interest generated by Dr. Alain L. Locke and other Negro intellectuals in the ancestral heritage of the Negro-American during this period, few--if any--of these artists travelled to black Africa. However, many Negro artists and writers began to appreciate their link with the cultural heritage of Africa in this period (9).



Fig. 7--Parisian Scene by Archibald Motley

Among the painters who exhibited in the Harmon Exhibitions was James A. Porter, who was barely past the student stage. He was a superb draughtsman and was able to transfer to oil the same discipline he showed in his drawings. He went on to become Chairman of the Art Department at Howard University, a position he occupied until his death in February, 1970. He wrote the first comprehensive study of modern Negro art; it is frequently cited in this writing (16).

The Renaissance and its aftermath was ended by the economic Depression. The Negro artist along with his white counterpart felt the effect of the closing of galleries and

the curtailment of exhibitions. The Federal Arts Projects rescued many of them and made available better opportunities than would otherwise have existed. Some of the best known Negro-American artists of today emerged during the 1930's and 40's. The following Negro artists are associated with this period:

Jacob Lawrence, Hughie Lee-Smith,
Romare Bearden, Ernest Crichlow,
Charles H. Alston, Horace Pippin,
John Biggers, Fred Flemlister, Charles
White, John Wilson, Elizabeth Catlett,
William Artis, William Edmonson, Earl
Richardson, Claude Clark, Ellis Wilson,
Charles Sebree, Robert Blackburn,
Robert S. Pious, Norman Lewis, Beauford
DeLaney, Joseph Delaney, Selma Burke,
Eldzier Cortor and Ronald Joseph.

Jacob Lawrence's colorful, stark designs of Afro-American life (Figure 8) catapulted him to public attention in the early '40's. Now regarded by both militants and by those who have entered the mainstream as an elder statesman of black art, Lawrence, 52, was earning the recognition of a few white collectors and critics before many of today's young artists were born. "Race was the main motivating factor for me in the beginning," he tells students at the University of Washington in Seattle where he is artist-in-residence. "But I think the question of a black esthetic is an individual one. If you find it, it can motivate you" (13).



Fig. 8--Praying Ministers by Jacob Lawrence

A near contemporary of Jacob Lawrence, Hughie Lee-Smith's dignified, isolated men and women have a surrealistic touch expressing man's lonely and confused condition in a complex technological age (Figure 9). Romare Bearden has raised collage to the level of the best modern painting and his skillful use of the collage penetrates the Afro-American psyche and conveys the universality of oppressed man's condition (Figure 10). His favorite theme lately is the life of the Southern rural Negro. Though he was born in Charlotte, N.C., and grew up in Pittsburgh and Harlem, he



Fig. 9--Boy on Roof by Hughie Lee-Smith



Fig. 10--Rites of Spring
by Romare Bearden

strongly identifies with rural life. Cabins, mules, trains, and guitars are recurrent motifs in his works. Many of Bearden's views on race date from the early 1950's, when he was a philosophy student at the Sorbonne, in Paris, and hung around with poet Leopold Senghor, now president of Senegal, and a group of black African intellectuals concerned with the concept of Negritude. Wide enough to embrace blacks in Africa, the West Indies, Brazil, or Harlem, Negritude describes a common racial consciousness that is little understood by most whites. During many prolific years, Bearden has moved from social realism to serene water colors to his present fragmented collages (4).

Born the same year as Bearden, 1914, Ernest Crichlow has also been consistent in his social commentary on Afro-American life (Figure 11). Both he and Charles Alston have maintained a vital interest and proficiency in figural works and abstract painting (Figure 12). Elizabeth Catlett, presently living and teaching in Mexico, is a sculptor of considerable power (8).

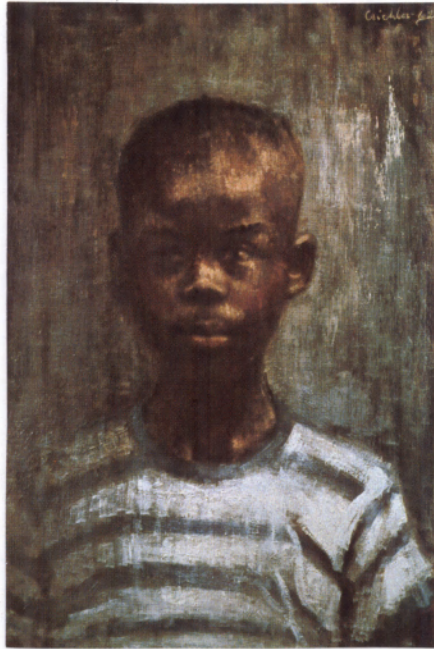


Fig. 11--Young Boy
by Ernest Crichlow



Fig. 12--Black Man
and Woman-U.S.A. by
Charles H. Alston

Mention of this period would not be complete without recalling the extraordinary work of the late Horace Pippin, of Pennsylvania, one of the finest of twentieth century self-taught American artists (Figure 13) (15, 18).



Fig. 13--John Brown Going to His Hanging by Horace Pippin

Since the end of World War II the number of Afro-American artists has greatly increased and a considerable number have earned international reputations. They are to be found in large cities, farm areas, and universities across the land. The work of Prof. John Biggers, of Texas Southern University, in Houston, reflects a growing interest in Africa.

Since 1950, increasing numbers of black artists travel to Africa each year. In 1957, through a UNESCO fellowship,



Fig. 14--The Market Women by John Biggers

Biggers traveled to West Africa hoping to experience the rhythmic and graceful life-styles of the people and to gain an understanding of the African esthetic. In Figure 14 he shows the tribal spirit and the dignity of his race.

By 1956 the changes which had occurred in Africa's newly liberated nations began to be felt in America and the Black Revolution became almost inevitable. Social and economic commentary, which had been suppressed by the Negro, became more prevalent.

Today, the majority of Negro painters continue to follow the cultural trends of the Western world, the mainstream. Figures 15, 16, 17 and 18 show four significant contributions to nonrepresentational art. Richard Mayhew (Figure 15), superb colorist and landscapist, must be mentioned for his distinctive use of restrained color, which he employs to transmit feeling and mood. It is sometimes difficult, if not impossible, to discern nationality or ethnic group in most of these works. Carroll Sockwell (Figure 16) and Sam Gilliam (Figure 17) reveal the wide range of styles and techniques of these younger painters (10).

In a recent interview, Dorothy Gilliam gave an insight into her husband's views (7, p. 140):

. . . he feels that to be effective as a major artist and as a Black man, he must make it in the whole spectrum of painting and art. Sam says that painting is more than the image on the canvas; the sense of abstraction does not suggest non-involvement. 'To paint without images doesn't make me less Black,' he feels.

Bernie Casey (Figure 18), actor, poet, and former star flankerback for the Los Angeles Rams, paints lyrical abstract paintings "because it is necessary for my very existence". He believes he has an obligation to himself, not as a black man, but as a human being, communicating with other human beings (3).

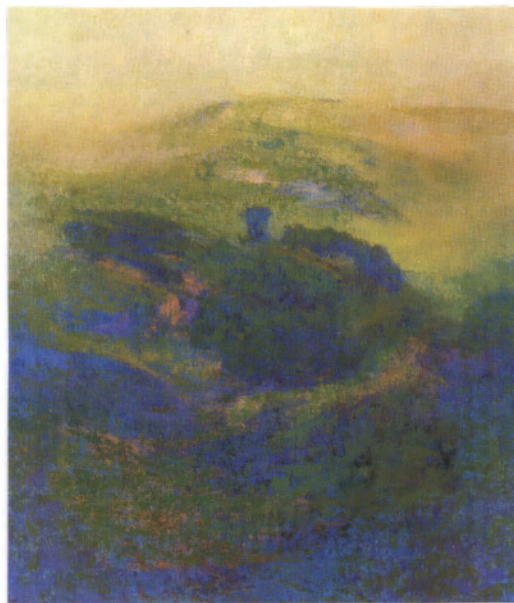


Fig. 15--Gorge by
Richard Mayhew



Fig. 16--Crisis of the '60s by
Carroll Sockwell



Fig. 17--But Through by
Sam Gilliam

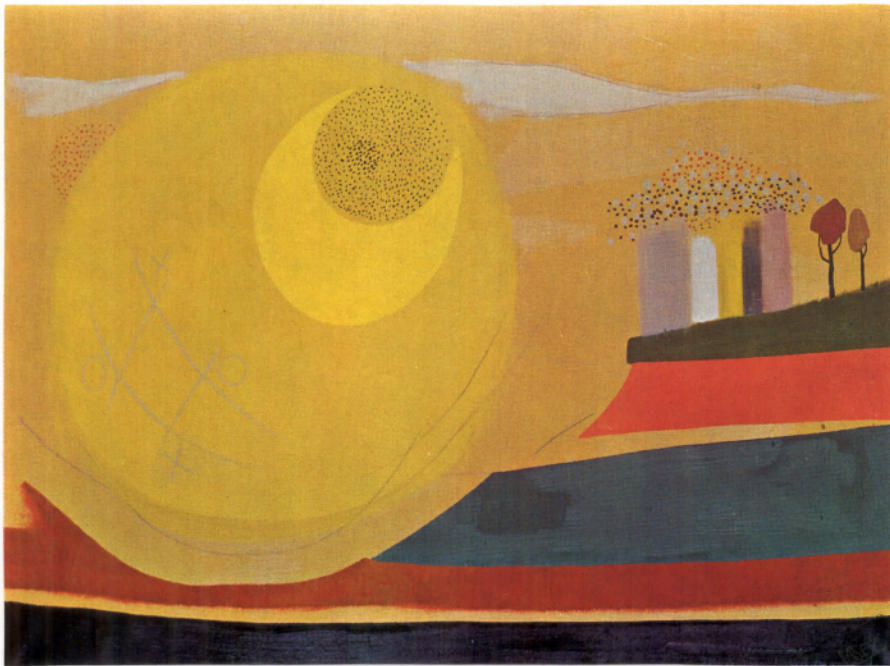


Fig. 18--You Can Win the Game if It's Your
Turn by Bernie Casey

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CHAPTER IV

THE IMAGE OF THE NEGRO IN THE BLACK REVOLUTION

The Events Leading to Black Revolution

Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement, which began in earnest in 1960, marked the beginning of an attempt on the part of the Negro to obtain equal social, economic, and cultural rights in America. Few nations in history have experienced a situation such as that found in America, where one group of one color and in their own minds 'superior' have attempted to subdue, berate, and retain a race at an inferior position (10). Such situations obviously effect the culture of a people. If a race is not accepted on an equal basis in all aspects, it is hardly possible that their products from an artistic standpoint will be sufficiently numerous to depict their true situation. It is important to consider the steps in the civil rights movement that lead to Black Power and the Black Revolution.

Black college students organized the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in order to activate desegregation of public accommodations in the South. The activities of SNCC were not totally Black as far as participants were concerned, since many white students and adults joined in protest marches. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) also joined in civil rights movements including cities in the south, east, north, and west. These were the 'freedom riders' which also included members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Demonstrations by the above named organizations began in Birmingham, Alabama, extended to Danville, Virginia, to Cambridge, Maryland, and on to many other cities where the Negro felt the civil rights movement should be expanded in hopes that the white population would join in their active program for true civil rights (18).

The civil rights movement initiated a migration of millions of Negroes from the south into the large metropolitan areas such as New York City, Chicago, Detroit, and Los Angeles. It apparently was the thought of these Negroes that by moving from the hostile South they would enter a territory that would be more patient with their civil rights movement and perhaps more receptive. However, upon their arrival they were

forced into slums in the centers of many of the cities. They arrived poorly educated and in many instances lacking in skills. As a matter of fact, they were in many ways similar to the great waves of European immigrants who entered the United States during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Interestingly enough, no provisions were made to ease the transition of the Negro migrants, as had been done for the white European refugees. Unfortunately, the Federal measures that were aimed at improving the standard of living of the urban Negroes have been inadequate or have not been enacted by Congress. Many of the appropriations under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 never reached the persons they were designated to assist. Thus a situation existed in which the dark Americans were powerless, with no control over the institutions in their communities which were responsible for them; and virtually all of the ghetto areas were white-owned but occupied by the Negro. These dark ghettos are obviously social, political, and above all, economic colonies. Thus the development of a pure culture was greatly inhibited, and the Negro in the north, east, and, perhaps, west, was in a situation, in many instances, less desirable than that of the Negro in the deep South (9, 13).

Black Power and the Black Revolution

According to Dr. Martin Luther King (19, p. 197), the concept of Black Power was first proclaimed at the time the marchers of various civil rights organizations reached Greenwood, Mississippi. The introduction of the concept of Black Power, as related by Pinkney (19), was debated by the leaders of CORE, SCLC, SNCC, and NAACP. It appeared that the combination of the words "Black" and "Power" offended certain of the white Americans, since it indicated "liberal", thus causing the white Americans who had contributed time and money to civil rights movements to withdraw their support. They understood that the concept implied Black supremacy and Black violence. Their resignation from membership withheld considerable financial support from the more militant organizations and the Black Power Movement for a period of time.

The various leaders of Black Power have attempted from time to time to define the true concept of this movement, but the attempts have been lost in the growing debate in the mass media of communication. However, Stokely Carmichael, who speaks for SNCC, states that Black Power refers to the needs of the Black people at the present time. It is a call to the Black people, as he indicated, to liberate themselves from oppression by assuming control over their lives

economically, politically, and socially. His statement is as follows (19, p. 197):

Black Power means black people coming together to form a political force and either electing representatives or forcing their representative to speak to their needs. It's an economic and physical bloc that can exercise its strength in the black community instead of letting the job go to the Democratic or Republican parties or a white-controlled black man set up as a puppet to represent black people. We pick the brother and make sure he fulfills our needs. Black Power doesn't mean antiwhite, violence, separatism, or any other racist things the press says it means. It's saying, "Look, buddy, we're not laying a vote on you unless you lay so many schools, hospitals, playgrounds, and jobs on us."

A more elaborate concept of Black Power was elucidated by Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton (19, p. 198).

It is as follows:

It is a call for black people in this country to unite, to recognize their heritage, to build a sense of community. It is a call for black people to begin to define their own goals, to lead their own organizations, and to support those organizations. It is a call to reject the racist institutions and values of this society. . . . The concept of Black Power rests on a fundamental premise: Before a group can enter the open society, it must first close ranks. By this we mean that group solidarity is necessary before a group can operate effectively from a bargaining position of strength in a pluralistic society.

By 1967 the Black Power organization began to communicate more favorably with the civil rights leaders and as a consequence more realistic concepts were involved. While

it must be recognized that there are Black militants called "racists" by the moderates who still follow the concept of Black Power, it is understood that there are inexperienced, self-seeking individuals who lack a concrete program for obtaining such a social position. In due time the image of the Negro will be changed by a more moderate Black Revolution, which had its inception by the latter part of 1967 and early 1968. It is understandable that America is a reformist society and that social change comes slowly, especially when it involves changes in black and white relationships. It is, however, essential that the Negro change his image in order to conform to the ideology that 'Black is Beautiful', that he has a place in America, that he decides where and how to go. It is appropriate to quote an editorial from Ebony, August, 1969, written by Lerone Bennett (3, p. 42):

In a way, it could be considered incongruous for a black publication to do a special issue on "The Black Revolution." The day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month coverage of black life in America today cannot help but treat of the Revolution-- for there is a revolution going on, a revolution which must be successful for black folk if white and black folk are ever to live in this nation as equals.

The "revolution" of which we speak is not a violent political revolution aimed at overthrowing the established government and substituting another in the chairs of command. Only the most fanatic of black revolutionaries today actually believe that black could, through the use of force, depose

the government of these United States and put the man of their choice in the White House. The poorest 11 per cent of a population of more than 200 million people, even if operating in complete accord, would have difficulty just denting the power structure by force.

The Black Revolution which is going on fits more the definition of revolution as a "sudden, radical or complete change"--a revolution more like the Industrial Revolution of late 18th century which, in time, completely changed the life style of entire populations of Western nations.

Another editorial by the same author, entitled, But A Word of Caution (3, p. 42):

But a word of caution--don't let blackness become a sanctuary or the revolution will be lost. The clothes, the songs, the black studies, the music, the poems, the rapping black--these are the symbols. The substance is the proud and free moving forward in the 20th century. It's black engineers as well as black poets. It's black lawyers as well as black artists. It's black inventors, and farmers, and builders, and nurses, and philosophers, and space travelers and senators and secretaries and vice presidents and presidents. The revolution is black men finally free to pursue their personal goals secure in the dignity of their manhood.

It is apparent that the Black Americans have never actually been an integral part of our society. Their status is such that they have been excluded from most of the major institutions of society and as a result their view and vantage point is different from that of the white American. It is therefore necessary that their image be built in such a manner that they can have both pride in their cultural back-

ground and opportunities afforded them for complete development. This of course depends upon the willingness of the white American to actually recognize the Negro status and the requirements for improving his image.

Along with the Black Revolution, there has been developing a movement among Black Artists to create a 'Black Art'. This movement, in many ways, is older than the current revolution. It is primarily concerned with the cultural and spiritual liberation of Black America. It takes upon itself the task of expressing, through various art forms, the soul of the Black Nation. And like the Black Revolution, it seeks to define the world of art and culture in its own terms. The Black Art movement, therefore, reasons that this linking must take place along lines that are rooted in an Afro-American and Third World historical and cultural sensibility. "Third World" means the Black artists see their struggle in the context of the global confrontation occurring in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (1, 2, 9, 19).

Lately, Black artists have been concerned with the development, for lack of a better term they explain, of a "Black Esthetic." While the Standard College Dictionary definition is "Esthetic; 1) A branch of philosophy relating to the nature of forms of beauty, especially found in the

fine arts. 2) Study of the mental and emotional responses to the beauty in art, nature, etc.", the movement considers this definition worthless. They believe that what the Western white man calls an "esthetic" is, "Fundamentally a dry assembly of dead ideas based on a dead people; a people whose ideas have been found meaningless in light of contemporary history. We need new values, new ways of living. We need a new system of moral and philosophical thought" (14, p. 54).

Larry Neal explains that today we are bearing witness to the moral and philosophical decay of a corrupt civilization. Europe and America are the new Babylons, he says, and 'sex-ploitation' of the Andy Warhol madness he cites as an example. He believes that Western art has reached an impasse where it is unable, within the confines of even their ideas of art, to deal with the real issues confronting Man today." . . . so they steal and suck Black energy, an energy which in the slop jars of their minds they distort and corrupt in their own sick images" (14, p. 54).

Neal believes that the white man, backed up by a powerful and oppressive political system, tries to force Black people to measure up to his standards. Thus, the Black man is forced to see himself through white eyes. He is made to evaluate

his innermost impulses against the white man's. And in the process, the Black man does himself great spiritual and psychological harm, says Neal. The Black Art movement seeks to give the Black Americans a total vision of themselves. Not the split vision that DuBois (14) called the "Double Consciousness":

. . . this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness--an American, a Negro--two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder . . .

The words above are from The Souls of Black Folk, published in 1903. Now, in 1970, DuBois' sons and daughters in the Black Art movement go forth to destroy the Double Consciousness, and to merge these 'warring ideals' into 'One Committed Soul' integrated with itself and taking its own place in the world (14).

As already stated, the Negro Renaissance was a key period in the rising historical and cultural consciousness of Black people. There was a flowering of black poets, writers, and, to some degree, artists. And there was the ascendancy of hip, blues-talking Langston Hughes, who best personified the Black writer, clearly intent upon developing a style of poetry.

which springs forcefully and recognizably from a Black life style, a poetry whose very tone and concerte points of reference are informed by the feelings of the people as expressed in the gospel and blues songs (11).

It is here that any discussion of a Black esthetic must begin. Black music, in all of its forms, represents the highest artistic achievement of the race--an epic cycle of awesome propositions--one song (poem) after the other expressing the daily confrontation of Black people with themselves and the world. They are not merely entertainment. They act to clarify and make more bearable the human experience. As poetry, the blues act to link Man to a past informed by the Spirit--a past in which art served as a means of connecting his ancestors with the unknown psychic forces which he knew existed in the universe (shades of Muntu?). The blues are a deep-down thing, always trying to get to the nitty-gritty of human experience.

It is then apparent that the blues and the people who create them are seen as the soul force of the race, the emotional current of the nation. That is why Langston Hughes and Ralph Ellison based their esthetic on the blues (14). The Black Art movement strives for the same kind of intimacy with the people. It strives to be a movement that is rooted in the fundamental experiences of the nation.

The 'soul' singer is the voice of the community, its historian, and one of the shapers of its morality. He expresses the general psychology of his people. He is the bearer of the group's working myths, aspirations, and values. He had been called on by the spirit to tell about life in the sharpest and harshest terms possible (6, 9).

Contemporary Black music and the living folklore of the people are, therefore, the most obvious examples of the Black esthetic. These forms are the truest expressions of their pain, aspirations, and group wisdom. These elements constitute their culture; and a culture expresses a definite telling about the world. Black entertainers today are the poets and philosophers of Black America. In them, more so than in literature and certainly more than in the visual arts, is found the purest and most powerful expression of the Black experience in America. These 'soul' artists have set the standards, and the current movement attempts to meet them and, where possible, to create new and more demanding ones.

In order to understand the Black man's concept of Black art, a number of descriptions and/or definitions are presented from Art Gallery (4, pp. 32-34).

BLACK ART:

What Is It?

Lois Mailou Jones:

. . . On each appearance I have been confronted with the questions--"What is black art?" "Does black art exist?" In response I have explained that I consider "black art" a name or a title given to works done by black artists in an effort to bring about an awareness that black artists exist. It establishes for them "black identity."

Malcolm Bailey:

In my opinion there is no definition of black Art. It is absurd to take a group of painters, whose various works and concepts differ, and categorize this group as exponents of black art just because of their skin color. There is however a definite black political experience in America. I feel that too many black artists believe that by depicting an African design motif or painting an enraged black man with a raised clenched fist they are really saying something...It is a much more dynamic experience to see a live black cat raising his fist than it is to see a painting of one. Therefore an artist's job should be more than one of just mirroring life; he must instead interpret life in a very subjective abstract way.

Paul Keene:

Black art is a visual attempt to find a viable form which relates directly to the black experience. We are understanding in a very precise way that we are a people of a unique and tragic experience--people of a particular race and culture. It is the graphic language

of the self-assertion and imminent maturation of black people living in a degrading and oppressive society that offers little liberation of the black potential. It is an attempt to impress in black terms the sense of who and what we were, what we are now, and what we can be.

Jacob Lawrence

Black art is that art which has a particular form that is recognized as "BLACK"--regardless of content.

Tom Lloyd

To the question What is black art? I usually reply with a question: What is white art? My question always stuns my adversary, who, while regaining his composure, thinks, "Oh hell, what is he asking? Doesn't he know what white culture is? Doesn't he know how long it's been around? Can't he see the relevancy of Noland's strips? Or the beauty of Warhol's Brillo boxes? Certainly, he must know the validity of Oppenheim's earthworks. Damned black militant extremists! Black aesthetic--bah!"

Hughie Lee-Smith

My observations have led me to conclude that a growing number of today's young black artists are showing signs of increasing disaffection for what has been for them a frustrating, unproductive courtship with the art Establishment, and Establishment art . . . In this view the mainstream art scene, replete with a diversity of aesthetic alternatives, most of which are concerned with gross trivialities, is entirely irrelevant to the cultural needs of black people who have been denied the "pseudosophistication" required to "appreciate" most current art and its anti-humanist philosophy. . .

The new work of black artists who have returned to the frass roots is often rough-hewn and vigorous, but most importantly it is affirmative of life. This robust "unsophistication" seems to be an essential characteristic of black art at this early stage of its development.

. . . I would venture to define it tentatively as that art which derives its inspiration and sustenance from the struggle of black people for economic, social, and cultural power; an art which reflects, celebrates, and interprets that struggle in a stylistic manner which is meaningful to the Afro-American community and members of other oppressed minorities. . . given the current social/political climate, it is hoped that they will develop a new intellectual posture which will lead to a re-examination of favored assumptions, and inspire a search for new values; new art forms that can be appropriated to the cultural needs of the black community and the black human rights struggle.

Jan van der Marck
Director
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
(white)

. . . Ignoring rather than flouting international tradition, young black artists develop their own style from scratch. Their art serves the black liberation, it denotes black pride, its is a weapon of propaganda and it is an art of the streets, not of museums. . . it is an important means for young and militant talents to link heritage and background with the furthering of the black cause and the destiny of the black race. For whites to demand that black art comply with current international esthetics is unreasonable and shortsighted. The revolution will have to be fought before art by black people becomes another strand in the fabric of international art and the term "black art" is recognized as a misnomer.

Until then, the art world has to accept black art on its own terms--or turn away from it, at a loss!

Edmund Gaither
 Curator
 Museum of the National Center of
 Afro-American Artists
 Staff Member
 Museum of Fine Arts
 (black)

Black art is a didactic art form arising from a strong nationalistic base and characterized by its commitment to: a) use the past and its heroes to inspire heroic and revolutionary ideals; b) use recent political and social events to teach recognition, control and extermination of the 'enemy' and c) to project the future which the nation can anticipate after the struggle is won.

It may be observed that there is as yet no definition of Black art that is universally accepted. This is reflected in the current show in Boston at the Fine Arts Museum titled: Afro-American Artists: New York and Boston. This is, incidentally, the largest collection by black artists ever shown in America. Hilton Kramer, critic for the New York Times, in reviewing the show (15), grouped the artists in three categories as shown in Table I: mainstream artists, Black artists, and those with a 'double commitment'.

TABLE I
 CLASSIFICATION OF ARTISTS EXHIBITING IN
AFRO-AMERICAN ARTISTS: NEW YORK
AND BOSTON BY HILTON KRAMER

Mainstream	Black	Double Commitment
Ellen Banks Ronald Doutte Frank Bowling Marvin Brown Felrath Hines Norman Lewis Alvin D. Loving, Jr. Alma Thomas Bob Thompson (Deceased) Rill Rivers Thomas Sills Jack White	Dana Chandler Edward Clark Reginald Gammon Barbara Chase Riboud Russ Thompson Gary Rickson	Benny Andrews Romare Bearden Mahler B. Ryder

As examples of black art, some paintings depict black faces that peer from between the bars of red, white, and blue jail cells. In others, muscular black arms pitch Molotov cocktails with American flag wicks. Their creator, Dana C. Chandler, Jr., is an artist and a militant black man. He and his violent canvases are a long way from the

gentle Negro genre scenes and portraits painted around the turn of the century (Figure 19 shows Chandler standing beside his painting memorializing the shooting of Black Panther Leader Fred Hampton by Chicago police. The bullet holes are real holes, the U.S. stamp of approval invented, and the name misspelled) (8).



Fig. 19--Fred Hampton's Door
by Dana Chandler

Chandler's model of the relevant black artist is the African artist-craftsman who makes masks and figures for his tribe's ritual needs. Such an artist "is a repository of medical and spiritual information for the whole tribe," he points out (16). "He is just as concerned with the esthetics of an object as any Western artist, but his concern goes deeper. How do I make this functional? How do I show reverence for the gods? Where in the household does it fit in? Who will wear it? Who will it conjure up?" (16).

Western art has not been this functional since the flowering of religious art during the Middle Ages, Chandler says. "In Western society, the artist is suspect. He paints from the outside" (16).

As Chandler sees it, his art's function is to educate blacks "and those whites that are flexible enough" to realize the job they have "as to the true direction of this country" (16). He sees himself as a reporter in paint, and he paints guns, fire bombs, and hand grenades because, in his view, "that is what everyone has in his home" (16).

Chandler has also painted several murals on buildings near his studio and he hopes to paint more because he believes art belongs in the streets, where it is closer to the lives of the people, a study in functional education (17).

Another major development in black art is the "Wall of Respect," a large outdoor mural depicting such black heroes as the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Muhammad Ali, and Stokely Carmichael. The first of the type was painted by a group of young Chicago artists (5, 7, 12); other Walls of Respect have sprung up in Washington, Detroit, Birmingham, St. Louis, and Kansas City, among many cities.

Other young black artists are looking to their own ghetto communities for an audience. To these artists the need is not only for white acceptance but for a black esthetic, a style or group of styles that fits their experience and enables them to reach their own people with their own messages.

As late as April, 1970, Time magazine (8) listed the artists the editors associate directly with the Black Revolution. The major artists and their contributions are cited in Table II.

A careful analysis of the progress made in Black art which is directly representative of the image of the black man in America is very difficult to judge at this time. However, Appendix B is a chronicle of the year 1968 which shows the relationship between the Black Revolution and the productivity in Black art. The annotations are made on a

TABLE II
 ARTISTS ASSOCIATED DIRECTLY WITH
 THE BLACK REVOLUTION*

Major Artists	Location	Contributions
Dana Chandler, Jr.	Boston	"Fred Hampton's Door" Black Power Murals
Charles Milles	Boston	Mural on Handball Wall in Orchard Park
Don McIlvaine	Chicago	"Into the Mainstream" Mural - Rear Wall of Store in Chicago
Bill Walker	Chicago	"Wall of Dignity" (Detroit)
Richard Hunt	Chicago	Metal Sculpture
David Hammons	Los Angeles	"Pray for America"
Daniel Larue Johnson	Los Angeles	Slab-sided Totems
Malcolm-Bailey	New York	"Hold (Separate but Equal)"
Joe Overstreet		(Uses African & Indian Colors on Guy-wired Canvases)
Sam Gilliam (Born in Miss.)	Washington, D. C.	Abstract Impressionism (Teaching at Maryland Inst. Art)
Melvin Edwards (Born in Texas)	Conn.	Chains & Barb-wires (Teaching at U. of Conn. at Storrs)

monthly basis and show the changes that occurred that year which may reveal the true alterations in image.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this investigation was to determine if the Black Revolution would be a turning point in American Negro art. Critical studies have been made from the limited literary sources of information concerning black imagery, with particular reference to the African heritage of the Negro, his days in slavery, his struggle as a second-class citizen, and finally, his efforts at self-identification through the Black Revolution. Consideration has also been given to the ability of the Negro to create a 'Black esthetic', an art to which his own people can respond (1).

Unlike music and literature, Black art as a school of art has not been previously recognized in American art history. The Negro Renaissance of the 1920's appealed to only a select group of established Negro intellectuals in a small area of the nation, Harlem, and did not succeed in establishing a recognized style or tradition.

Many reasons have been offered for the failure of an establishment of a true black artistic tradition. One of the important causes could have been the abrupt and near total

severance of the Negro from his original African heritage. Even those who sought a black past found little in the African tradition to paint on canvas, possibly because they failed to delve into the philosophy of Africa itself. Unfortunately, until the advent of the Black Revolution, the influence of African esthetics has come to the Negro artists more by way of Picasso, Klee, and other white artists than by direct influences.

To add to their dilemma, there has never been a demand for black genre painting; thus the Negroes have, for the most part, avoided such themes and reflected the current schools of their white contemporaries. Another factor in their slow development as artists has been the lack of encouragement given the Negro artist within his home and community. Art to a community already beset with male identity problems has not been viewed as a masculine occupation. There was also the lack of a Negro market or Negro patronage. As Hughie Lee-Smith commented, "The Negro can afford art. He's buying Cadillac cars and mink coats, but he's just not at the point where he considers art important . . ." (2, p. 31). Negro artists have not had an identity or tradition. They have not had a Negro market or social backing. How can they hope to contribute a powerful new art form through the Black Revolution?

The Negro responds to 'soul' music, 'soul' dance, 'soul' poetry, even 'soul' food; will he find 'soul' art? And, after all, how different is 'soul' from the African philosophy described in Muntu (3)? Does not the phrase, "not art for art's sake but art for life's sake" from Muntu (3, p. 175) also describe what the black artist of today is trying to say with his black esthetic, his sense of black identity?

In considering the present situation it is apparent that the limitations of black art mirror the limitations black artists have placed upon themselves. Because of their image, they feel compelled to limit their works to show only the racial situation. On one hand, this compulsion--and the intensity of black anger--gives their works a special appeal. On the other hand, it is a restriction on content as artists. It may even encourage propaganda, and the black public is then lured to this art as a sophisticated art experience when it may actually be only black mass-appeal, reinforcing ghetto values. Also, no matter how angry a black painting may be, the white environment of the museum turns it sour--makes it a display of black wares in the white marketplace and invites a kind of visiting benevolence.

These complex relationships--the racial gap--prevent whites from being natural toward Black art. The fear of

misunderstanding makes misunderstanding only more likely. Over-praise, however well meant, is unintentionally bigoted, the result of white overcompensation and guilt.

This writer feels that in creating an environment in which the black man can seek identity and in which his art can flourish, it is necessary for the white man to also find a new self, one that can accept a 'new' esthetic, different from his own, but one equally as appealing to the hearts of all men. Essentially, the Black artist must separate in order to assimilate into the white mainstream. This separation, now in full cycle, allows the Black man enough freedom and movement to equally offer meaningful contributions to the universal esthetic concept.

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APPENDIX A
CREATIVE PROCESS*

Kintu

Wood -- Image

KUNTU

Modality -- Quality of Being -- Mode of Existence

Designation	Determination	Rhythm
<p>Gives Meaning to Image through Nommo</p> <p>Independent of Shape or Form of Image</p> <p>Ex. Named Such and Such a King</p> <p>Individualized the <u>Particular</u></p>	<p>Meaning Given Form</p> <p>Way to Make Carving Recognizable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distinguishes a Muntu from a Kintu (Man from Animal) 2. Distinguishes Living Man from Human Being Without Life <p>Determines Place in Ontological System</p>	<p>Arrangement of Forms--Source of Expressive Power</p> <p>Pure Expression of Force Through Lines, Surfaces, Textures, Colors, Volumes</p> <p>Grouping of Parts, and Their Relationship to the Whole</p>

* Muntu

CREATIVE PROCESS --Continued

Designation is the individualization of the sculpture. This is independent of the looks of the figure. The giving of meaning to the image through the Nommo (naming the chief or king). The individualization can be done only through designation; otherwise the image would become reality and would fail in its purpose, namely to 'reveal' behind the visible world a 'universe of hierarchically ordered life forces'. Of course, designation would not preempt the determination of men from animals, general types, etc., but would be the final individualization.

Determination is the general. The meaning given form-determination of the place of the figure in the ontological system, in the world of the living and the dead. Starts with the most general--a way of determining men from animals; living from departed; the Muntu face of one tribe from another--the most general types.

Rhythm according to Senghor is the pure expression of the life force. It is expressed through corporeal and sensual means; through lines, surfaces, colours, and volumes in architecture, sculpture, or painting. Rhythm is the modality of the Nommo (word in action). Rhythm gives the form its effective fullness.

"Whether painting or carving, the African work of art receives its meaning during its designation. This meaning is expressed through signs, determinants which are rhythmically arranged and the expressive power of which is intensified by rhythm."

When the above components are present the creative process is KUNTU--a force--power--mode of existence.

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGY

In an effort to show the relationship between "Black Art" and the "Black Revolution" this appendix chronicles the happenings that occurred in 1968 to give one an idea of the progress that had been made "in image" since the late 1950's. In 1958, Elton C. Fax, a New York Black artist, attempted to recruit members from among the Black painters for the American Society of African Culture. One of the well-known Afro-American artists was very swift to reply that he would not join. He felt that it was high time that the Black artists forgot about Africa, stopped thinking about their Blackness, and got down to the serious job of being good American artists. By 1968 the Black American artist who apparently had not wanted any part of the "Black Label" decided that in order for the Black Community and the "Black Culture" to obtain the image for which they are destined, they must operate openly and claim their Blackness.

There are many references regarding Black art of 1968. There is, however, no manner in which one can cite every happening of that year which favored Black artists or, for

that matter, the Black Community. In current literature, many viewpoints are expressed by the various authors of magazines, journals and textbooks. The writer has attempted, therefore, to annotate the happenings on a monthly basis for the year 1968 and to present them in such a manner as to show the historical changes that occurred in this year. No specific references are made to the sources of information since they are numerous and at the same time, frequently repetitious.

1968
JANUARY

A show of paintings by Jacob Lawrence opened at Terry Dintenfass' East 67th Street Gallery in New York City. The twenty gouache paintings on view were illustrations for Mr. Lawrence's book Harriet Tubman and the Promised Land, published by Windmill Books, Inc. Critical reviews of the Lawrence paintings included this comment from Arts magazine (February, 1968):

Lawrence undeniably understands how illustrations should work--not as a repetition of text but as its natural complement to accelerate the action.

Mr. Lawrence, speaking to a reporter for the New York Amsterdam News (January 20, 1968), had this to say about his show:

I feel very good about it and a challenge to try to portray the character of man and his quest for freedom and man who seeks to better himself . . . not just the Negro thing, but a symbol of man's constant struggle for freedom.

When asked how the Tubman saga relates to the present Civil Rights Movement, he replied:

It is a continuous struggle. I don't see any separation between then and now--even the mistakes. The civil rights movement today is a very good thing if you look at it as a whole and don't fragment it.

In South Africa, twenty-four-year-old Clive Haupt, of mixed blood, donated his heart to fifty-eight-year-old Dr. Philip Blaiberg, a white dentist. Each lived in different sections of racially segregated Cape Town. Haupt's body was buried safely away from those of white South Africans.

In a New York revival of Bernard Shaw's Saint Joan, Black actress Diana Sands was winning critical praise as Joan of Arc. Across the Hudson River in New Jersey playwright LeRoi Jones drew a two-and-a-half to three-year jail sentence

and incurred a fine of \$1,000 after his conviction on charges of having possessed firearms during riots in Newark the previous summer.

Charles White was at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, along with thirty-one original drawings from his book Images of Dignity.

Chicago was host to Jeff Donaldson's one-man show at the Lakeside Gallery, while in Washington, at a White House luncheon, Eartha Kitt told the First Lady and her guests exactly what, in her opinion, was wrong with America.

In New York, Faith Ringgold displayed a group of her canvases titled American People at the midtown Spectrum Gallery, while the Adams School presented drawings and paintings by Frederick R. Noel.

Judge Waties Waring, a white South Carolina jurist who startled this nation with his 1951 ruling, "Segregation is per se inequality," died in a New York hospital January 18.

FEBRUARY

The Countee Cullen Branch of the New York Public Library opened a memorial showing of the paintings of Samuel Countee. Romare Bearden and Bruce Nugent selected the works to be exhibited. Most of the artist's figure studies in this show reflected his awareness of Black America's social problems, while his Atomic Aftermath sounded a grim warning against the use of the awesome weapon.

President Lyndon Johnson issued an indirect plea to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil rights activists to reconsider their plans for a mass demonstration in Washington slated for April.

Also in the nation's capital, artist-teacher Leo A. Robinson, a native son, opened an exhibition of his paintings at the Howard University Art Gallery February 17.

On the same day, Father James E. Groppi, fiery Roman Catholic priest of Milwaukee, likened a jury of that city to "a Mississippi jury." He called its lone Black member "a 'Yes, sir,' Black man." The deliberating body had convicted Father Groppi of resisting arrest during an open housing demonstration the previous summer.

MARCH

A large collection of the works of Wayne Thiebaud opened on the West Coast at the Pasadena Art Museum. The exhibition ran through March 17 and was organized by John Coplans, the museum's art curator.

In Los Angeles Roderick Sykes displayed his works at Sunset Boulevard's Art Mark on February 25 and 26.

Much of white America was angrily trying to regain its composure after having read what President Johnson's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders had reported. It had no idea, it seemed, that "white racism" was of any consequence in America--much less that white racism was the cause of urban violence in 1967.

A show called New Voices: 15 New York City Artists exhibited the works of Benny Andrews, Betty Blayton, Emilio Cruz, Mel Edwards, Reginald Gammon, Al Hollingsworth, Avel DeKnight, Emma Amos Levine, Tom Lloyd, William Majors, Earl Miller, Mahler Ryder, Ray Saunders, Jack White and Jacky Whitten. Their show hung in the main concourse of New York's Pan Am Building before leaving for a tour of several American cities.

Meanwhile, Atlanta University's Trevor Arnette Library housed a group of Herman Bailey's drawings and paintings, featuring portraits of W. E. B. DuBois, Denmark Vesey, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass and General Benjamin O. Davis.

In Chicago, David Bradford's work was shown March 30 and 31 at the Lakeside Gallery.

MARCH --Continued

From March 5 to March 28, a small retrospective was on view at the Martha Jackson Gallery in New York. It included landscapes with nude figures, a homage to the American Indian and a portrait of LeRoi Jones. These were the paintings of Bob Thompson, who had died less than two years earlier in Rome. In 1959 while in New York, he had formed a close friendship with LeRoi Jones, but Europe magnetized young Thompson and he made several trips there during his short and somewhat stormy life. In one of the pastoral landscapes shown, Thompson had painted a group of Black male nudes playing saxophones-- obviously an effort to state strong emotions with social and personal implications.

Atlanta University presented its twenty-seventh Annual Exhibition of Paintings, Sculpture and Prints by Negro Artists March 31. At the same time the all-Black Local 1733 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees was striking in Memphis. Local 1733 represented that city's garbage collectors. Their strike for what they considered fairer working conditions met with hostile resistance from official Memphis and from the city's white population in general. A strong link existed between those two seemingly unrelated events taking place in Atlanta and Memphis.

Atlanta University was justly proud of its twenty-seventh successful effort to show the best art of Afro-Americans from all areas of the country. Freddie W. Styles, an Atlantan, had designed the posters for the exhibition, and received an honorable mention for an oil painting in the show. Awards and honorable mentions went to more than twenty exhibitors from fifteen states. Purchase prizes were won by Jewel Simon, Lilli K. Walker, Henry Linton, Arthur L. Britt, Vivian Williams, Jack Jordan, Gregory Ridley, Jr., Calvin Burnett and William C. Henderson. Honorable mention winners were James W. Bridges, Leonard Fields, Raymond L. Floyd, Charles E. Hayes, Noel Jemison, Howard Mason, Alex McMath, Kermit Oliver, Nazie Lee Strain, Freddie W. Styles, Gerald F. Hooper, Emanuel R. Savage, Calvin Burnett, Robert Glover, Leon M. Hicks, Arthur Parks, Jr., and Haywood L. Oubre.

APRIL

The Atlanta show remained on view for a month. Within a week of its opening, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., an alumnus of Morehouse College, left his home in Atlanta to lend support to the striking garbage collectors in Memphis. There, on April 4, he was fatally shot. And the civilized world mourned.

From April 16 to April 27, Lois Mailou Jones, painter and teacher, exhibited fourteen oils and thirteen watercolors (depicting aspects of life in Haiti and in Paris) at the Galerie Internationale on New York's Madison Avenue.

At the same time, Black artists were liberally publicized by the magazine, Art Gallery. A monthly publication by the Hollycroft Press in Connecticut, the Art Gallery, with a cover design by Samuel Gilliam of Washington, D. C., devoted most of its April issue to Negro artists.

An introductory summary by Carroll Greene, Jr., art historian and curator, was followed by several striking color plates by paintings by David Driskell, Al Hollingsworth, Jacob Lawrence, Richard Mayhew, Raymond Saunders and Hartwell Yeargans. Jay Jacobs, writing of a revealing interview with Romare Bearden and Hughie Lee-Smith, began:

Although Romare Bearden and Hughie Lee-Smith are both respected artists of the same generation (they are both in their 50's) they have little else but an ethnic heritage in common.

Mr. Jacobs then proceeded to elaborate upon the dissimilarities of the two men, citing surface and visual differences of build, skin tone, mode of dress, speech pattern and degree of public acclaim and "success." But a close study of the interview revealed that, in spite of his opening statement, Mr. Jacobs established three fundamental areas of agreement between these two Black men who are artists. The first was that economic pressures within the average Black family (as with whites) engender discouragement to the young member who aspires to be a full-time artist. Second: that while the Black community

APRIL --Continued

enthusiastically lends a superficial moral and social support to its artists, it does not provide enough hard financial support to render them independent of white patronage. Third: that success "downtown" within the white establishment depends upon social contact from which the majority of Black artists are excluded.

In addition to the Jacobs interview, Chicago artist Margaret Burroughs reported on her city's Afro-American artist in an essay titled "To Make a Poet Black." Miss Burroughs wrote of two Chicago exhibition places for Black artists, the Lake Meadows Art Fair and the South Side Community Art Center:

Many of our artists who are prominent today were first seen at street fairs such as these. Some artists--Charles C. Dawson, William Edouard Scott, George E. Neal, and Frank Neal were among them--earned enviable reputations before the advent of the fairs. Marion Perkins and Bernard Goss were among the founders of the Lake Meadows Art Fair and also the South Side Community Art Center, which has been a bulwark of encouragement to black artists.

She concluded with mention of The Wall of Pride, a collectively painted mural in the heart of Black Chicago, rising two stories high on the side of a tenement. The uniqueness of The Wall is that the heroes and heroines it depicts are selections of the Black community and not those of the white establishment.

This issue of the Art Gallery also included an article by Gordon Hazlitt called "Los Angeles Report," an essay focusing upon the painting of Bernie Casey, a flanker back for the Los Angeles Rams pro football team. Hazlitt borrowed the following quote from Jay Jacobs:

Bernie Casey's paintings are not simple-minded sea-scapes or cowboys or Indians or sunsets over the Grand Canyon. They are violent explosions of color and protest.

APRIL --Continued

The fury and frustration which Bernie Casey puts on canvas were aired in the pages of Sports Illustrated in July, 1968, in an exposé series by Jack Olsen titled "The Black Athlete-- A Shameful Story."

The Hazlitt article was followed by Richard A. Long's short article "The Negro College Museum." Mr. Long cited the excellent African art collection at Hampton Institute, the collections of contemporary art at Howard, Atlanta and Fisk Universities, and those at Tougaloo College and Morgan State College, and he did not overlook the names of James V. Herring, Hale Woodruff, Aaron Douglas, David Driskell, Donald Schnell, and James E. Lewis. Each has had a part in building the collections at the above-mentioned schools.

The Art Gallery concluded this issue with three pages of black-and-white reproductions of paintings titled "Afro-American Artists Across the Land."

On the last three days of April, the New York Times carried a front-page series of three excellent stories on the American Negro in Vietnam. They were done by Thomas C. Johnson, an on-the-spot reporter, who is a Negro.

At this time, too, the Council on Interracial Books for Children (New York City) published a front-page feature (with photographs) in its own quarterly, Interracial Books for Children, announcing the two winners of \$500 cash prizes in a contest for the best juvenile stories by Black writers hitherto unpublished in the children's book field. The recipients were Kristen Hunter and Walter M. Myers who were chosen by a jury of four Black writers. Inside the quarterly was a picture story on nine Negro illustrators of children's books: Tom Feelings, Ernest Crichlow, George Ford, Harold James, Monetta Barnett, Charles White, Alvin Smith, Don Miller and Yvonne Johnson.

MAY

Brooklyn painter Vincent D. Smith won a \$2,500 grant in art at this time from the National Institute of Arts and Letters. From May 19 through June 30 the Lois Mailou Jones exhibition was on view at Washington's Smith-Mason Gallery. The Washington Gallery of Modern Art presented 66 Signs of Neon, a macabre group of sixty-six sculptures adapted from charred and twisted metal gathered from the ruins of the 1965 riot in Watts. Noah Purifoy and Judson Powell, who conceived the idea, had this to say about their unusual show:

The distilled spirit of 66 Signs of Neon tells us that the world is a confused and fearful place, that God is difficult to find, that our philosophic systems are imperfect, that the only hope is in communication between individuals . . . I Don't Have Anybody But You.

JUNE

In Los Angeles, California, June 5, the assassin's bullet found its target again. The nation reeled in horror, and Black America was especially shaken, as Robert Francis Kennedy died in another act of violence.

In Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant ghetto Dolores Carty and Ernest Crichlow delayed the opening of the Fulton Outdoor Art Fair out of respect for the slain senator.

Boys and girls of Harlem's HARYOU Act's After School Study Program showed their paintings in the Countee Cullen Branch of the New York Public Library. This show was dedicated to the memory of fifteen-year-old Emmett Till, murdered in Mississippi, and the four Black Sunday-school girls murdered in the church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama.

JUNE --Continued

In art, this quarter year ended with the exhibition, at the Grand Central Galleries in New York, of the drawings, etchings, lithographs and watercolors of Henry O. Tanner. Carroll Greene included these observations in his introduction to the show:

A drawing is the first revelation of an artist's imagination. Every line is a note of the melody first conceived. The feeling and emotion of the artist are given spontaneous expression in his drawings at the moment of creation . . . Although not a part of the abstract revolution that overtook so many of his colleagues, Henry O. Tanner reaffirmed the values he felt were essential to the human experience. That quiet strength appears through these master drawings.

JULY

The Black community of San Francisco announced early in July that it had received \$45,000 from the San Francisco Foundation for the establishment of ten arts workshops. Randall Horton, a musician and teacher, was appointed coordinator of the project called "The Black Madonna." The site was the San Francisco College for Women, and the grant covered expenses for the first six months. Painting, sculpture, photography and silk-screen classes were planned.

Jordan Davies' paintings were on view in the Chicago State College's temporary office building, and Frieda High had her first one-man show in mid-July at the Chicago South Side Community Art Center.

AUGUST

Black Heritage, an exhibition of African sculpture, opened at the South Side Center August 8 to run through September 15. Lenders to the show included Etta Moten Barnett and the Chicago Art Institute.

The August 23 cover of Time showed the portrait of Biafra's Colonel Ojukwu, painted by Jacob Lawrence.

The New York Times for August 28 ran an article by Donal Henahan entitled, "Negroes Sought for Art Boards." Mr. Henahan said, "around the board tables of the nation's art museums and symphony orchestras, by tradition the impregnable strongholds of white Anglo-Saxon wealth and social position, there are few black faces." He went on to state that in a dozen leading museums surveyed, two Negroes serve on the board of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and one on that of the Detroit Art Institute. The Museum of Modern Art in New York employs Kynaston L. McShine, a Trinidadian educated at Princeton and Yale, as an associate curator; and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts recently named painter John Wilson to be in charge of its Operation Outbreak program in Roxbury. Mr. Henahan concluded by saying that since museum trustees and board members usually come from the ranks of moneyed art collectors, the Negro is virtually eliminated from consideration in this area.

A unique summer art program was held at Vermont Academy, a private school at Saxtons River, Vermont. Initiated by Black sculptor John Torres and aided by the Ford Foundation and Stewart Klonis, director of the Art Students League of New York, the program was designed to help gifted and economically deprived students. Eighty-five students participated. Their five instructors were professional artists, three of them, Joseph Delaney, Earl Miller and Hughie Lee-Smith, have been mentioned. The Humble Way, a quarterly published by the Humble Oil and Refining Company, provided another showcase for Black artists in its 1968 Summer issue. Taking its material from the show The Evolution of Afro-American Artists: 1800-1950, the Humble Way used twenty-five color plates, accompanied by the comments of Carroll Greene. The editor's brief foreword, "Afro-American Artists: Yesterday and Today," seemed particularly appropriate:

The Yellow Hat, on the cover of this issue, was painted by Norman Lewis, a New York artist whose work has been exhibited in many galleries in the U.S. and in Africa, Europe, and South America.

This painting and the examples shown on pages 10 to 15 were done by 25 artists and sculptors whose lives span 200 years--from the 18th Century to the present. Styles range from primitive to sophisticated. There are examples of landscapes and portraiture, academic realism, social commentary, abstract expressionism. In addition to their high level of quality they have only one thing in common. All are the work of American Negroes.

The examples shown here were gathered from many galleries and private collections from New York to Los Angeles. They make it clear that Negro artists have never belonged to one school, but have responded to all the currents moving through American and European art history. Many Negro artists have naturally been concerned with Negro subject matter, but today they are in the international mainstream. Whether they choose to call themselves Negro, black or Afro-American, these talented individuals ask to be judged only on their merits--in other words, as artists.

SEPTEMBER

On September 26, 1969, the Studio Museum in Harlem opened with a one-man show by thirty-nine-year-old Brooklynite Tom Lloyd, presenting Electronic Refractions 2, a series of compositions of blinking colored lights.

The USIA in Washington, D.C. published its thirty-second volume of Topic with a four-page spread on art. Under the heading "African Gallery," the publication showed how "a growing body of work by U.S. artists owes its inspiration to the African scene." Nine artists and their work were presented, and of the nine, seven were Black. These were

SEPTEMBER --Continued

sculptor John Rhoden and painters Jacob Lawrence, Hale Woodruff, William H. Johnson, James A. Porter, John Biggers and Elton C. Fax.

In late September, Henri Ghent and a group of local Black artists confronted the Brooklyn Museum with the charge that color discrimination was keeping the works of Negro artists out of the museum's shows. Mayor John V. Lindsay and Walter Hoving were asked to make a ruling and they decided that the Brooklyn Museum, a tax-supported institution, should have an exhibition of contemporary art by the artists of the Bedford-Stuyvesant community. Thus the Community Gallery of the Brooklyn Museum was formed, and, with Mr. Ghent as its director, presented a show on September 29, 1968, of non-prejudged works by neighborhood Black artists.

Black American sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos defied tradition with a gesture of protest during their victors' ritual from Mexico City's Olympic Stadium. Black heavyweight boxer George Foreman waved an American flag after winning the Olympic championship from his Soviet opponent.

In Chicago thirty-two-year-old sculptor Richard C. Hunt was appointed to a six-year term on the National Council on the Arts by President Johnson.

OCTOBER

On October 4, 1968, Fisk University opened an exhibition of African and Afro-American Art, to commemorate the inauguration of Fisk's eighth president, Dr. James R. Lawson. The twenty-two traditional and contemporary African works of art were assembled by David C. Driskell and Earl J. Hooks of the Fisk Art Department. Exhibiting Afro-Americans, in addition to Driskell and Hooks, were Richmond Barthé, Sargent Johnson, William Artis, William Taylor, Gregory Ridley, Jr., Marion Perkins, William H. Johnson, Malvin Gray Johnson, Claude Clark,

OCTOBER ---Continued

Ellis Wilson, Keith Morrison, Walter Williams, Jacob Lawrence, Stephanie Pogue, Aaron Douglas and Charles White.

Thirty Contemporary Black Artists was seen at the Minneapolis Art Institute.

At Oakland, California, New Perspective in Black Art was shown for three weeks beginning October 5 at the Kaiser Center Gallery. Exhibitors were: Cleveland Bellows, David P. Bradford, Harrison Branch, Arthur Carraway, Frances D. Catlett, Charlotte J. Chambers, Claude Clark, Sr., Irene Clark, Richard L. Collins, Marva Cremer, Urania Cummings, Johnathan Eubanks, Lawrence Fisher, Doyle Foreman, Ibibio Fundi, Kenneth Green, Ben Hazard, Elvoys Hooper, Margo Humphrey, Janice Jefferson, Herbert Johnson, Marie E. Johnson, Lawrence McGaugh, Barrington McLean, William E. Smith, Evangeline J. Montgomery, Robert Newsome, George Smith, Carlton Taylor, Roberta Thompson, Royce Vaughan, Rugh G. Waddy, Mary B. Washington and Laura G. Williams.

A new organization, Black Pride Arts Unlimited, was launched in San Francisco by artist Earl Scarborough.

NOVEMBER

Time magazine's cover for November 1, 1968 (a collage depicting New York Mayor Lindsay as the besieged and harried focal point of a city in turmoil), was the work of Romare Bearden.

The NAACP fired white associate attorney Lewis Steele when his article "Nine Men in Black Who Think White," was published in the New York Times Magazine.

The November issue of Ebony carried a five-page picture story of Lois Mailou Jones Pierre-Noel.

The nation elected Richard M. Nixon to its highest public office in a close popular vote, with minimal support from Black voters.

NOVEMBER --Continued

An exhibition of thirty-three Contemporary Drawings of Africa by Elton C. Fax opened at Fisk University.

In the November 18 issue of the New York Times, Grace Gleck wrote an article describing the picketing of a show that had opened a month earlier at the Whitney Museum. Some thirty Black artists, led by Henri Ghent, carried signs in front of the Whitney protesting the "lily-whiteness" of the show called The 1930's: Painting and Sculpture in America. Mr. Ghent branded the title a misnomer and organized a countershow, Invisible Americans: Black Artists of the '30's, which opened at the New Studio Museum in Harlem. Artists included were those of the same period who had been seen in the show The Evolution of Afro-American Artists: 1800-1950.

Hilton Kramer, writing in the New York Times for Sunday, November 24, in defense of the Whitney, insisted that the Black artists of the 1930's showing at the Harlem Museum (with four possible exceptions) did not measure up to the standards set by the artists in the Whitney show.

The Houston Museum of Fine Arts exhibited the Africa-inspired drawings and paintings of John Biggers paired with a collection of Benin sculptures. Dr. Biggers was later presented the Harbison Award for Distinguished Teaching.

Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina, was host during November to an exhibition celebrating the Charlotte-Mechlenburg Bi-Centennial. Selma Burke, James T. Diggs, Walker Foster, J. Eugene Grigsby, Ethel Guest, Ethel Hill, Harvey Johnson, Paul Keene, Jr., Kermit Oliver, Oliver Parsons, B. D. Roberts, Carroll Sockwell, Alma W. Thomas, Theodore Wells, Otis Williams, Rip Woods and Kenneth V. Young were among the exhibitors.

In a show at the Museum of Modern Art (New York) Norman Lewis, Richard Mayhew and Charles Alston were among those artists participating to honor the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

NOVEMBER --Continued

Paintings by Reginald Gammon were shown at the Greenwich Mews Theatre in New York in conjunction with Vine Burrow's one-woman show Walk Together, Children.

Fisk University held a showing of the thirty-year-old Toussaint L'Ouverture series of tempera paintings by Jacob Lawrence.

DECEMBER

A former dishwasher and presently artist-in-residence at Cleveland's Karamu House, Sterling V. Hykes was cited in the December 4 issue of the Cleveland Plain Dealer for his successful three-dimensional paintings in sand and acrylics.

A small group of artists in New York donated their drawings to Freedomways magazine for use as greeting cards. They were Joan C. Bacchus, John Biggers, Brumsic Brandon, Margaret Burroughs, Leo Carty, Ernest Crichlow, Roy DeCarava, Jack Devine, Elton C. Fax, Tom Feelings, Oliver Harrington, Jacob Lawrence, Jack Lee Morton and Charles White.

Archie Jefferson, a young painter, illustrated a juvenile book, The Frightful Nobody, published by Shelley Graphics, Ltd.

New York's Gallery of Modern Art held a semi-retrospective show of paintings and sculpture by Charles Alston from December 3 through January 19.

The appellate division of the New Jersey Supreme Court reversed the convictions of playwright LeRoi Jones on charges of possessing guns during the Newark riot and of court contempt at his trial.

Apollo 8 mission was completed.

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