



**NYC DOC**

***For the Women's House***  
**by Faith Ringgold**  
Proposed Relocation via  
Long-Term Loan  
Brooklyn Museum

# Site Location

- The painting is located inside the Rose M. Singer Center (RMSC), a jail facility for women located on Rikers Island, in a main corridor.
- This corridor can only be accessed by staff and people in custody escorted through the corridor.
- Rikers Island is not accessible to the public.



View of front entrance of RMSC



Aerial view of Rikers Island with RMSC highlighted

# Existing Site Views



- Because the painting is located inside of a secure facility, site view photos cannot contain views of the facility, people in custody, or any locking mechanisms, for security purposes.
- The painting is located in a corridor adjacent to the facility intake area and the main clinic. These areas are frequented by people in custody; however, they can only see the painting on passing. They cannot stand in the corridor and observe the painting.
- All staff must pass through this corridor to get to their post in the facility and can view the painting in passing.



# Existing Site Views





# Existing Site Views



- The painting is displayed with a silver metal frame.
- It is covered by two Plexiglass panels that overlap in the middle.
- Both the frame and the Plexiglass have white paint in some areas.



# Artist Biography

- Faith Ringgold is an internationally renowned artist, educator, author, and social activist whose work has taken many forms including painting, printmaking, soft sculpture, performance art, writing and quilt making. She is renowned for her large painted story quilts and is inspired by art forms from other cultures as well as by her own African American heritage and life in Harlem, New York City.
- Ringgold has exhibited in major museums in the USA, Europe, South America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Her work is in the permanent collection of many museums including the Brooklyn Museum, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and The Museum of Modern Art.
- Ringgold has received more than 75 awards, fellowships, citations and honors, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Fellowship for painting, two National Endowment for the Arts Awards and 18 honorary doctorates, one of which is from her alma mater The City College of New York. She is professor Emerita at the University of California, San Diego, where she taught art from 1984 until 2002.

# History of *For the Women's House*

- The idea for the mural *For the Women's House* originated with the artist. In March 1971 Ringgold won a grant from the Creative Artists Public Service Program (CAPS) and chose to use the funds awarded to her to produce a mural for the Women's House of Detention. She was motivated by the desire to use her artistic practice to contribute to meaningful social change.
- The imagery in the painting came from direct conversations with incarcerated women. Ringgold asked the women she interviewed what they dreamed their lives might be upon their release. The first female president and professional women basketball players are among other positive female role models included. The play on words in the imaginary route and destination of the bus in the upper quadrant—"2A Sojourner Truth Square"—speaks to the "long road leading out of here" that the women had asked to see depicted.
- In January 1972, *For the Women's House* was dedicated to the women incarcerated in the Correctional Institution for Women on Rikers Island, New York City.
- The mural remained on view until the facility housed men in 1988. Deemed inappropriate for the incoming men in custody, the painting was whitewashed, but it was later saved by an officer, restored in 1999, and reinstalled in the new women's facility, the Rose M. Singer Center, where it remains on view.

# Proposed Relocation via Long-Term Loan

- The Department of Correction is seeking a long-term loan of the piece to the Brooklyn Museum.
- In the spring of 2017, the City committed to closing the jails on Rikers Island and creating a network of four modern, more humane jail facilities in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx.
- With RMSC's impending closure pursuant to the borough-based jail plan, we believe Ms. Ringgold's painting would be an important addition to the Ringgold holdings in the Brooklyn Museum's collection.
- This arrangement would provide for the long-term preservation of the artwork, allow opportunities to contextualize the artwork within a larger historical context, and increase public access to the artwork.



# Proposed Relocation via Long-Term Loan

- In order to ensure that women in custody are not deprived of the opportunity for artistic expression and enrichment, and that places of beauty and healing remain within the jails, the *Art for Justice Fund* has kindly offered to fund the creation of a new community mural in RMSC in the space vacated by Ms. Ringgold's work.
- The new work could perhaps be a co-creation by a formerly incarcerated artist and women incarcerated at RMSC.
- Upon approval of the transfer, the Brooklyn Museum proposes *For the Women's House* be loaned to the New Museum, New York for inclusion in the exhibition *Faith Ringgold: American People*, where it would be on view to the public from February 17-June 5, 2022 before being transferred and installed at the Brooklyn Museum. Including the mural in this major career survey of Ringgold's entire career is vitally important to the artist.

# Handling and Transportation

- The Brooklyn Museum will secure the services of the same fine arts shipper who successfully transported the piece when it was loaned to the museum in 2017.
- A Brooklyn Museum Conservator and/or Registrar will be present during the packing.
- When the painting arrives at the Museum, it will be unpacked by its full-time art handling team, supervised by a Conservator and/or Registrar.
- Upon approval of a loan to the New Museum, the Brooklyn Museum and New Museum will work closely to plan for the safe and timely transfer of the painting to the New Museum and then to the Brooklyn Museum.

# Display at the Brooklyn Museum

- The Museum is actively discussing both short and long-term ideas for the painting's display. Their goal is for the painting be on display as consistently as is possible, taking into account exhibition rotations and conservation needs.
- If the painting cannot immediately go on view, the painting would be kept in the Museum's onsite secure and climate-controlled storage until plans are finalized and a location is identified.
- Conservators are assessing whether the piece will be displayed with the Plexiglas.



# Public Access

- The Brooklyn Museum is accessible to the public via general admission tickets. General admission ticket pricing is suggested, visitors pay what they wish with 50% of visitors not paying the suggested or any admission.
- The Brooklyn Museum hosts First Saturdays – monthly evenings of free programming welcoming visitors from central Brooklyn and beyond.
- The Museum also welcomes public school groups on a regular basis, averaging 27,000 people served and 975 groups per year.