

Investigation of Features Influencing on the Artworks of African American Female Artists Between 1960s and 2000s

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Abstract

The rich tapestry of cultural diversity is intricately woven by artists who have traversed various cultural landscapes, often producing distinctive artistic expressions. Among these artists, African American female painters stand out with their unmistakable styles and themes, a testament to their unique narrative. To explore the elements that shape the work of these artists in the United States, an extensive review of literature was conducted, distilling the essence of their creative output. The analysis encompasses personal and societal dimensions, unveiling a tapestry of influences including personal experiences, societal encounters, artistic styles, environmental nuances, technological advancements, sources of inspiration, and collaborative relationships. Through meticulous research and surveying, this investigation identified the paramount features that resonate most profoundly with the artistic vision of eight eminent painters. This study highlights the top three as being most influential in their creative journey. Future research endeavors should focus on conducting a more systematic case study of African American artists in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of their features. This will involve finding primary information and reference materials to make a deeper investigation into the influencing features on Africa American female artists between the 1960s and 2000s.

Keywords: late 20th century, case analysis, personal experience, historical background, artistic value

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 The Historical Background

This essay is going to introduce the historical background of Africa from the 1960s to 2000s which exhibits several distinct characteristics as follows.

Firstly, it was a period marked by the African independence movement, with a great deal of African countries achieving autonomy and liberation from colonial rule (Sullivan, 2005). Beyond that, the South African government took a variety of means to suppress and persecute the opposition groups of the African Revolutionary War (Paul, 2013). In a manner of speaking, despite gaining independence, African countries still faced formidable political and economic challenges, leading to instability and social issues post-independence (Talton, 2012).

Although the situation wasn't promising at that time, the African liberation movement still had a vital impact on African Americans inevitably because the success of these movements also demonstrated that racial equality was achievable (Talton, 2012).

Most notably, the UN played a crucial role in addressing the issue of African independence and self-determination (Sullivan, 2005). Besides, in the first development decade of Africa from 1960 to 1970, the UN provided various forms of assistance to African countries, which had a huge influence on Africa (Ajaegbo,

1986). Therefore, the international status and reputation of African countries attracted the attention and wider support of African Americans. Moreover, the connections between Africa and African Americans became stronger and stronger, which led to increased interest in African culture, history, and politics among African Americans and facilitated the exchange and development of African culture within the African American community and facilitated the spread and acceptance of African culture within the African American community (Talton, 2012).

Ultimately, African and African American artists and cultural workers delved into traditional African culture and identity and integrated them into various forms of artistic expression, presenting a flourishing of African culture and art. For instance, the inaugural African Writers' Conference held at Makerere University in Uganda in 1962, which brought together writers from across Africa as well as African Americans. This conference served as a platform for African writers to advocate for political autonomy in Africa and to demonstrate their potential in shaping the continent's future (Talton, 2012).

Furthermore, the performing arts in Africa have also undergone significant transformation. During the 1950s and 1960s, Africa's performing arts played a crucial role in shaping national identities and loyalties with activities. For example, Senegalese President Leopold Senghor supported numerous institutions and projects to cultivate a strong sense of Senegalese national identity (Talton, 2012). Those cultural and artistic endeavors played a significant role in the process of nation-building and shaping national identity across African countries.

1.1.2 The Background of Artistic Style





The movement that emerged in the late 20th century was called Postmodernism as a reaction to the intellectual and philosophical ideas of modernity containing philosophical, cultural, and artistic fields, Segundo (2024) has said. Diverse people had their ideas about postmodernism, like Joyce & Kelly (1991) who discussed postmodernism in their work to show their certain perspectives that past events, structures, and processes are inseparable from the historical texts, concepts, and political applications that shape them (Joyce & Kelly, 1991). Besides, the view has achieved the resonance of Giddens (1981).

Specific to the artistic development in Africa, Africa is renowned for its diverse styles which encompass sculpture, masks, textiles, pottery, and body decoration (Peffer, 2005).

When it comes to African American art, Smalls (1994) is one of the most significant people who delve into the complex and diverse nature of African American art. He noted that the birth of African American art history can be traced back to Alan Locke in the early 20th century and the New Black Movement in the 1920s. However, after his research, Smalls (1994) didn't effectively improve methods for researching or scholarship on practicing art history. And then, in his current viewpoint, he firmly acknowledged that African American art and artists had entered the post-modern era, while research methods in art history have not kept pace with this development, which has had a negative influence on the perception, teaching, learning, and research of African American art. Besides, Smalls also emphasized the richness in subject matter, style, and meaning of African American art and highlighted how African American artists try their best to portray their struggle and identity as Americans through their artwork. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, several other works on African American art history mentioned by him none processed completely positive reviews (Smalls, 1994).

2. Research Objectives

The research is going to study eight African American female artists with representative significance who have made significant contributions in the fields of painting, sculpture, and installation art from 1960s to 2000s.

Artists	Basic Information	Representative Work	Brief Introduction
Faith Ringgold	Faith Ringgold was an influential American artist, author, and educator known for her vibrant narrative quilts that depict the experiences of Black Americans. Born in Harlem, New York City, Ringgold's work spans various media, including painting, sculpture, and children's literature, often focusing on themes of race, gender, class, and family .		Ringgold's American People Series #20: Die series faced the racial relationship in the United States in the 1960s. On the canvas, blood splashes evenly on men, women and children of different races, indicating that no one can get out of this struggle. Their clothes imply that a wealthy professional class is held accountable in this violent and chaotic scene.
Emma Amos	Emma Amos was a multifaceted artist known for her work in painting, printmaking, and weaving, which often addressed issues of race, gender, and identity. Born in 1937 in Atlanta, she came from an upper-class, college-educated Black family and was encouraged to pursue her passion for art from a young age .		In Tightrope, Amos shows the difficult balance she must maintain as a black woman, artist, wife and mother. The T-shirt shows Gauguin's Tahiti painting of the nude 13-year-old bride. She also wears a costume from an American hero movie because what she's doing requires superpowers. However, a black cloak, meaning that others cannot see her using these powers.
Dindga McCannon	McCannon's work spans various media, including paintings, textiles, and mixed-media pieces, characterized by vibrant colors and a focus on the African diaspora, particularly the stories of African American women. She has been recognized for her miniature mural-scaled painting "125th Street Revisited" (2020), which reflects her connection to Harlem and the Black community.		Her miniature mural-scaled painting "125th Street Revisited" (2020) felt like the thematic centerpiece of the show. With a satisfying smattering of oranges and purples, the five-foot-wide piece, named for Harlem's main street, seems to fondly recall the colorful cast of Black women in the place she called home for many years.
Elizabeth Catlett	Elizabeth Catlett was an influential American-born Mexican sculptor and printmaker celebrated for her powerful and politically charged artwork. Born on April 15, 1915, in Washington, D.C., Catlett was a granddaughter of enslaved people and grew up in a middle-class family. Her artistic journey began at Howard University, where she studied design, printmaking, and drawing, and was influenced by the art theories of Alain Locke and James A. Porter.		Her miniature mural-scaled painting "125th Street Revisited" (2021) felt like the thematic centerpiece of the show. With a satisfying smattering of oranges and purples, the five-foot-wide piece, named for Harlem's main street, seems to fondly recall the colorful cast of Black women in the place she called home for many years.





<p>Betye Saar</p>	<p>Betye Saar is a distinguished assemblage artist known for her profound reflections on African American identity, spirituality, and the interconnectedness of cultures. Her art, characterized by its rich symbolism, has evolved to represent a variety of contexts including environmental, cultural, political, racial, technological, economic, and historical aspects .</p>		<p>Her miniature mural-scaled painting “125th Street Revisited” (2022) felt like the thematic centerpiece of the show. With a satisfying smattering of oranges and purples, the five-foot-wide piece, named for Harlem’s main street, seems to fondly recall the colorful cast of Black women in the place she called home for many years.</p>
<p>Senga Nengudi</p>	<p>Senga Nengudi, born in 1943 in Chicago, is a multidisciplinary artist whose work has been pivotal in the realms of sculpture, installation, and performance art. Her artistic journey began in Los Angeles during the vibrant years of the Black Arts Movement, where she was part of a collective of avant-garde Black artists in the 1970s and 1980s . Nengudi’s practice expanded the boundaries between sculpture and performance, using non-traditional materials to create a unique artistic language.</p>		<p>Her miniature mural-scaled painting “125th Street Revisited” (2023) felt like the thematic centerpiece of the show. With a satisfying smattering of oranges and purples, the five-foot-wide piece, named for Harlem’s main street, seems to fondly recall the colorful cast of Black women in the place she called home for many years.</p>
<p>Carrie Mae Weems</p>	<p>Carrie Mae Weems is a highly influential American artist whose work delves into the exploration of history, identity, and power, giving voice to narratives that have often been marginalized or overlooked. Born on April 20 in Portland, Oregon, Weems has spent over four decades using various mediums including photographs, text, fabric, audio, digital images, installation, and video to tell stories that connect personal experiences with broader societal structures .</p>		<p>Her miniature mural-scaled painting “125th Street Revisited” (2024) felt like the thematic centerpiece of the show. With a satisfying smattering of oranges and purples, the five-foot-wide piece, named for Harlem’s main street, seems to fondly recall the colorful cast of Black women in the place she called home for many years.</p>
<p>Lorna Simpson</p>	<p>Lorna Simpson is a pioneering multimedia artist celebrated for her conceptual photography and innovative approach to narrative art. Born in 1960, Simpson has been a significant figure in the art world, focusing on themes of identity, memory, and history, particularly concerning the African American experience. Simpson's work often features fragmented images and texts that challenge traditional visual habits and engage with issues of sexuality, identity, culture, and politics.</p>		<p>Her miniature mural-scaled painting “125th Street Revisited” (2025) felt like the thematic centerpiece of the show. With a satisfying smattering of oranges and purples, the five-foot-wide piece, named for Harlem’s main street, seems to fondly recall the colorful cast of Black women in the place she called home for many years.</p>

Figure 1. The summary of the basic information of the eight artists and their popular artwork

3. Literature Review

Several studies have examined the work of eight prominent African American female artists, offering insights for

this research. Notably, Li (2022) analyzed Faith Ringgold's early paintings and fabric works, focusing on identity, feminism, and gender narratives within a multicultural context. Li's work highlights the challenges faced by African-American female artists in the 1960s and 70s but lacks a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing Ringgold's style, indicating a need for further exploration.

Hanson (2018) detailed Ringgold's artistic achievements and her influence, recognized in the US and increasingly in Europe. Hanson noted Ringgold's exploration of new themes, media, and cubist techniques, influenced by Picasso, and her ongoing fight against racism and sexism in the art world. This study acknowledges the factors impacting Ringgold's work, providing valuable context for this research.

Wolfskill (2016) examined Emma Amos' interaction with Western art norms, viewing her appropriation as both imitation and challenge. Amos' dress performances, informed by her African American identity, critiqued the mainstream art culture of her era. This study offers valuable insights for this research but is limited in perspective and requires further development (Wolfskill, 2016).

Elizabeth Catlett's work addresses social change, spanning various artistic and political movements, from social realism to the Black art movement, advocating for marginalized groups through her printmaking and sculpture. Bateman (2016) identified visual and textual repetition in Catlett's work as a storytelling device. Her art highlights systemic racism and violence against African Americans while celebrating the beauty and hope of black and indigenous communities. This analysis contributes a fresh viewpoint to the study of Catlett's artistic influences (Anita Bateman, 2016).

Tani (2016) recognized Saar as a pioneering black female sculptor who significantly contributed to the West Coast Assembly in the 1960s. Saar's Depression-era upbringing as a collector and creator of makeshift items influenced her art, which began formally in the mid-1960s with printmaking and collage. Her innovative techniques, such as integrating found objects into three-dimensional structures, are well-documented, providing a rich reference for this study (Tani, 2016).

Bradley (2015) highlighted Senga Nengudi's R.S.V.P. Performance as a radical exploration of sculptural form and the representation of the black body in contemporary art. However, the article only briefly introduced Nengudi's work, leaving the influences on her creation to be further explored.

Fakunle (2022) discussed Carrie Mae Weems' COVID-19 | TAKE 6! campaign, which raises awareness of societal issues through her art. Weems has consistently examined themes of family, identity, discrimination, and power through various media. Her 2020 collaboration with other artists to reflect on historical and systemic injustices underscores her artistic themes, yet a deeper analysis of the factors affecting her work is needed (David Fakunle, 2022).

Armand (2014) analyzed Lorna Simpson's use of visual and linguistic theories in her multimedia art, particularly the interaction between text and images in her installations. He detailed how these elements challenge and complement each other, emphasizing the fragmented and elliptical nature of Simpson's work. This study offers valuable insights into Simpson's theoretical and technical approaches, aiding the exploration of the influences on her artistic creation (Claudine Armand, 2014).

In summary, while foreign research on these eight African American female artists is ongoing, it has its limitations. To address this, the paper will conduct a literature review for a systematic understanding and use case studies for in-depth analysis of specific works or events. The analysis will examine the multifaceted influences on these artists' creations, including the era's atmosphere, social movements, and personal experiences, aiming to provide clear conclusions on the various factors affecting African female artists' work.

4. Research Significance

Studying the factors influencing African American female artists' works from 1960s to 2000s in a global context is important due to the political, social, and cultural changes in African countries during this period.

4.1 The Research Significance of African American Female Artists

African American female artists often address gender and racial issues in their art, advocating for women's rights, racial equality, and social justice. Their work sparks public discussion and research on these topics while also preserving the historical and cultural experiences of African American women. Studying their art provides insight into women's contributions to the arts and promotes cross-cultural understanding. Additionally, these artists challenge traditional ideas and prejudices while expressing the identity and role of African American women through their work.

4.2 The Research Significance of the Influencing Factors

Analyzing the impact of globalization on the African art industry and female creators involves considering political events, social changes related to women's rights, and cultural exchange. Understanding these factors is

crucial for gaining a deeper understanding of the interplay between art and society, as well as the impact of history and cultural diversity. Researching the factors influencing the presentation of African female artists' works from 1960s to 2000s has several significant advantages for professional development in art, history, gender studies, sociology, and curation. It can enhance skills such as art criticism, research, and working in the field of art while fostering innovation by inspiring new creativity.

5. Empirical Analysis

5.1 Case Study of Faith Ringgold

Faith Ringgold, an African American artist, author, and activist born in 1930, made notable contributions to the art world through her diverse works, including paintings, story quilts, and children's books (Yirong, 2022).

Raised in Harlem during the Great Depression, Ringgold's early life was shaped by family support that significantly influenced her artistic growth (Seiferle, 2017). Her *Family of Woman* series, for instance, draws on her childhood experiences and focuses on character essence, with costumes made by her mother.

Ringgold's work was deeply influenced by the Harlem Renaissance, which celebrated African American culture and instilled in her a strong sense of racial pride and identity (Li, 2022). She aimed to depict the black experience in American history, skillfully blending interests in black history, African culture, and women's history, as seen in her *American People* series, which was also inspired by James Baldwin's writings on race relations (Ringgold, 1987; Ringgold & Withers, 1980).

The 1960s civil rights movement profoundly affected Ringgold, prompting her to create art that addressed racial tensions and social injustices, reflecting the political climate of the time (Yirong, 2022). Her *American People* series is a testament to this period (Seiferle, 2017). And then, in 1967, she created three large-scale paintings — *The Flag Is Bleeding*, *U.S. Postage Stamp Commemorating the Advent of Black Power*, and *Die* — inspired by social changes in America at that time. These works mirror the climate of the black rights movement and highlight the power dynamics within the black community then. Through her art, she aims to draw attention to racial inequality and societal issues while calling for social change and recognition of black rights (Ringgold, 1987).



Figure 2. The image of one of the artworks in *Family of Woman Mask Series* originally used in <https://www.faithringgold.com/portfolio/mrs-jones-and-family-1973/>

The Harlem Renaissance significantly shaped Ringgold's art, instilling a strong sense of racial pride and cultural identity that infused her work (Li, 2022). Her art, like the American People series, visually portrays the black experience in American history and skillfully combines interests in black, African, and women's history (Ringgold, 1987; Ringgold & Withers, 1980). Additionally, Ringgold's inspiration was partly drawn from James Baldwin's writings on racial dynamics (Ringgold, 1987).

The 1960s civil rights movement profoundly influenced Ringgold, inspiring politically charged works that tackled racial tensions and injustices (Yirong, 2022). Notably, her 1967 paintings — *The Flag Is Bleeding*, *U.S. Postage Stamp Commemorating the Advent of Black Power*, and *Die* — reflect the era's social changes and the black rights movement, emphasizing racial inequality and the need for societal change and recognition of black rights (Ringgold, 1987; Seiferle, 2017).



Figure 3. The image of *The Flag Is Bleeding*, *U.S. Postage Stamp Commemorating the Advent of Black Power*, and *Die* originally used in <https://artreview.com/desecrate-flag-faith-ringgold-american-dream/>

Education played a crucial role in Ringgold's artistic development, giving her a solid grounding in traditional art forms that she merged with her unique cultural perspective (Ringgold & Withers, 1980). Her art, which addresses physical issues, is widely accessible, especially among college audiences, allowing her to integrate her diverse interests into her work.

Throughout her career, Ringgold encountered challenges as a woman and a person of color in the art world. She aimed to depict pivotal historical moments through her art, referring to her works as surrealism to convey authenticity in her subjects' portrayals (Ringgold, 1987). These experiences spurred her activism, leading her to establish organizations that support African American women artists, such as Where We At and the Anyone Can Fly Foundation.

In essence, Faith Ringgold's life was a rich blend of personal experiences, cultural heritage, and social activism, all intricately woven into her art. Her work powerfully narrates the African American experience and stands as a testament to human resilience and creativity.

5.2 Case study of Emma Amos

Emma Amos, a renowned painter, printmaker, and weaver from Atlanta, is celebrated for her vibrant mixed-media paintings that delve into the intricate dynamics of race, class, gender, and privilege. Her narrative style challenges Western art norms through expressive color use and the inclusion of African fabrics, enhancing the depth of her visual narratives (National Gallery of Art, 2023).

Amos's early life in Atlanta was pivotal to her artistic journey; she was self-taught, learning to paint by

replicating images from books and magazines. Her passion for painting was evident from a young age, leading to her taking an oil painting course at the age of 11 with special permission (Hotton, 1985).

Her family's rich background — her grandfather being Georgia's first black pharmacist and her father a member of the Atlanta Municipal Committee — along with a heritage that includes Native American and white lineage, has deeply influenced Amos's exploration of race, family, and culture in her works such as *Odyssey* and *The Gift* (Figure 4) (Farrington, 2007).



Figure 4. The image of *The Gift*, 48 Watercolor Portraits, watercolor, 19.75" × 26" each, 9' × 21' total, 1990–1994, from <https://emmaamos.com/wordpress/1994/01/01/the-gift/>

Emma Amos advanced her art education at Antioch College and the Central School of Art in London, where she cultivated a passion for printmaking and weaving (Hotton, 1985). Relocating to New York in 1960, she immersed herself in the city's dynamic art scene and collaborated with artists like Robert Blackburn, a pivotal moment in her career (National Gallery of Art, 2023).

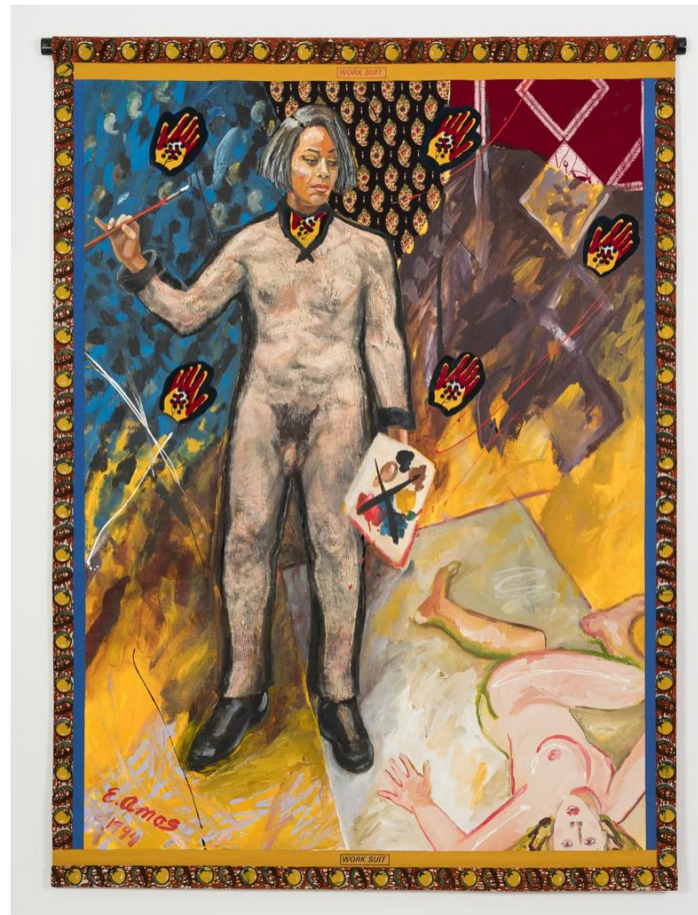
At New York University, Amos earned a master's in art education, aligning with her dedication to teaching and activism (National Gallery of Art, 2023). She also joined a printmaking studio under Blackburn's mentorship (Hotton, 1985) and was active in the feminist art journal *Heresies* and activist groups like the Guerrilla Girls, advocating for equity in the art world (Georgia Museum of Art at the University of Georgia, 2021).

Amos continually challenges the art historical narrative dominated by white perspectives. Her work, referencing ancient Greek sculpture, African photography, and modern sculpture, seeks to transcend traditional boundaries and confront the status quo. She explores identity through the juxtaposition of diverse cultural and historical symbols. Additionally, by representing figures with missing parts, Amos highlights the complexities and uncertainties of identity (Wolfskill, 2016).

Amos's career was centered on feminist and racial issues, power dynamics, and representation in art, often drawing from her personal experiences and interests in art and world history. She created the TV show *A Show of Hands* to celebrate American arts and crafts (Hotton, 1985).

Amos was adept in various media, using distinctive line and color in her paintings, skillful texture and material use in her fabric work, and demonstrating mastery of printing techniques in her printmaking (Hotton, 1985).

The renewed interest in the Black Arts movement has highlighted Amos's work, with her paintings featured in major exhibitions like *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*. Despite facing racial and gender biases, her art continues to address race and gender dynamics, including interactions among individuals of different ages, genders, and between black and white people. For instance, her piece *Let Me Off Uptown* embodies jazz music, dance, and cultural carnival (Farrington, 2007).



Emma Amos, *Work Suit*, 1994.
©EMMA AMOS/COURTESY RYAN LEE GALLERY, NEW YORK

Figure 5. The image of *Work Suit* from
<https://www.artnews.com/feature/emma-amos-who-is-she-why-is-she-important-1234591424/>

In addition, Amos's two works *Work Suit* (Figure 5) and *Tightrope* created in 1994 still showcase her identity as an African-American female artist and address issues related to gender and race politics, also explore the complex relationship between traditional art and artists in several ways. This approach provides deeper insights into the pluralistic nature of Western art encompassing various bodies, cultures, and subjectivities (Wolfskill, 2016).

Spiral's experience has had a significant impact on Amos's artistic work. Involvement with Spiral has deepened Amos's exploration, while also increasing her sensitivity to the complex relationships of the intersection between race, gender, age, and artistic legitimacy. These themes are thoroughly examined and conveyed in her body of work (Wolfskill, 2016).

Ultimately, Amos's art continues to inspire and challenge audiences, promoting a deeper understanding of the complexities of identity and representation.

5.3 Case Study of Elizabeth Catlett

Elizabeth Cartwright, a prominent Mexican sculptor and printmaker, is renowned for her politically charged art that champions the experiences and strength of black women. Her iconic sculptures, including *Homage to My Young Black Sisters* and mother-child depictions, celebrate Black women's power. Cartwright's accessible and affordable printmaking features subjects from notable figures like Harriet Tubman to everyday workers, all portrayed with dignity and strength (Britannica, 2024).



Figure 6. The image of *Homage to My Young Black Sisters*, 68 × 12 × 12 in | 172.7 × 30.5 × 30.5 cm, 1968, Originally used in <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/elizabeth-catlett-homage-to-my-young-black-sisters>

Catlett, from an academic background with a math professor father, was influenced by her family's narratives of slavery and urban poverty, which informed her empathy for black Americans' struggles and fueled her artistic vision. At Howard University, she overcame racial discrimination and absorbed art theories and discipline from mentors. Her exchanges with fellow artists enriched her style and subject matter, emphasizing social justice in her work (Herzog, 2012; Britannica, 2024).

In 1940, Catlett made history as the first to earn a Master of Fine Arts in sculpture at the University of Iowa, inspired by professor Grant Wood to depict Black culture (Britannica, 2024). She relocated to Mexico City in 1946 to join the Taller de Gráfica Popular, an artists' collective, and married artist Francisco Mora, drawn by the artistic opportunities and freedom in Mexico. Catlett integrated Mexican art elements into her work, influenced by the country's cultural and social context (Berlind & Catlett, 1994). Mexico provided a supportive environment for her political beliefs and artistic growth, with her work reflecting themes from both Mexican and African American experiences. Her husband's research also made Mexico an ideal base for her artistic pursuits (Dufrene, 1994).

Catlett's work was deeply influenced by Mexico's social and political climate, addressing themes of racial inequality, civil rights, and African American life (Berlind & Catlett, 1994). She actively engaged in civil rights and feminist movements, using her art to advocate for change (Dufrene, 1994). Her art gained recognition in Mexico, bolstering her career. Despite facing U.S. House Un-American Activities Committee scrutiny in the 1950s, Catlett became a Mexican citizen in 1962. Her art often celebrated strong Black women and motherhood, with facial images symbolizing racial identity and human experience, expressing pride, dignity, and resilience in the face of societal challenges (Gouma-Peterson, 1983).

In her work, Catlett employed symbols to convey social protest and political action. For instance, *Black Unity* and *Homage to My Young Black Sisters* feature clenched and raised fists to symbolize unity and strength, blending African and black activism, reflecting her belief that art complemented survival in the late 1960s. In works like *Target Practice* and *The Torture of Mothers*, she used fragmented figures to evoke themes of death and dismemberment, communicating tragedy and irony, and highlighting her focus on social injustice and political action (Gouma-Peterson, 1983).

In summary, Catlett's life and work illustrate art's capacity to cross borders and unite diverse cultures, embodying solidarity with the oppressed. Her art stands as a strong advocate for cultural identity and activism, continuing to spark vital discussions on identity, representation, and social justice (Ramos, 2022).

5.4 Case Study of Betye Saar

Betye Saar, an African-American artist born in 1926 in Los Angeles, has a six-decade career marked by collages, assemblages, altars, and installations crafted from found materials to delve into themes of race, identity, and spirituality. Her creativity was nurtured during the Great Depression, leading her to transform discarded items into art, and her mixed-race heritage fuels her examination of racial and ethnic identities in a non-prescriptive aesthetic. Saar's work confronts racial stereotypes and weaves personal and ancestral memories into broader historical contexts (Studio Museum in Harlem, 2024; Meyer, 2024; Adler, 2019; Dallow, 2004).

Saar's life experiences heavily influence her art, with personal and family memories often at the forefront. She assembles pieces from family items like letters, photographs, and jewelry, symbolizing both individual and collective racial histories. Her art frequently highlights memories of her family, especially her grandmother, underscoring the value she assigns to familial connections (Dallow, 2004).

In essence, Saar infuses her art with personal narratives and emotions by incorporating family photos, letters, and memorabilia into her collages, reflecting her personal and family history (Dallow, 2004). Her upbringing fostered an eye for the potential in overlooked objects, a skill clearly manifested in her artwork. Saar was profoundly inspired by the works of Simon Rodia and Joseph Cornell, which sparked her passion for transforming the ordinary into meaningful art pieces (Adler, 2019).



Betye Saar, *Liberation of Aunt Jemima*, 1972, assemblage, 11-3/4 x 8 x 2-3/4 inches (Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive)

Figure 7. The image of *The Liberation of Aunt Jemima* originally used in <https://smarthistory.org/betye-saar-liberation-aunt-jemima/>

A significant turning point for Saar was the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., prompting her to employ art as a protest medium. Her 1972 work, *The Liberation of Aunt Jemima*, redefined a derogatory stereotype into one of empowerment and resistance (Adler, 2019; Studio Museum in Harlem, 2024). Post-1975, Saar's art evolved to be less overtly political and more introspective, influenced by her personal growth, including her divorce. Her work began to deeply explore themes of transition, nostalgia, and women's traditional rituals on a personal level (Saar & Withers, 1980). Saar emphasizes the fusion of memories with technology to connect past and future, using her art to bridge cultural diversities and address political, racial, religious, and gender issues (Studio Museum in Harlem, 2024).

In her *Train to Paris* hankie collage, Saar uses the train as a symbol of travel and transition, while the chiffon hankie represents traditional women's rituals, evoking nostalgia and contemplating women's roles and experiences (Saar & Withers, 1980). Throughout her career, Saar has earned recognition, including two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships and a J. Paul Getty Fund for the Visual Arts Fellowship (Studio Museum in Harlem, 2024). Saar's influence transcends her generation, inspiring a new wave of Black women artists and serving as a role model (Dalbow, 2024). Saar views her work as timeless, highlighting the recurring patterns in history and the ongoing struggle with race and inequality, which remain pertinent (Adler, 2019; Dalbow, 2024). Her art stands as a symbol of her enduring spirit and her dedication to challenging and inspiring through her artistic voice.

5.5 Case Study of Senga Nengudi

Senga Nengudi, born in 1943 in Chicago, is a pioneering multidisciplinary artist who has significantly influenced sculpture, installation, and performance art. Her creative odyssey commenced in Los Angeles during the dynamic era of the Black Arts Movement, where she was integral to a collective of progressive Black artists in the 1970s and 1980s (Lowry, 2019). Nengudi's innovative work transcended the conventional confines of sculpture, infusing it with performance through the use of unconventional materials, thus forging a distinctive artistic lexicon (Hopkins, 2023).

Her initial forays into art involved the use of materials reminiscent of skin, which she masterfully manipulated through stretching, pulling, tying, knotting, and twisting, transforming them into installations that hung on walls and ceilings. These tactile explorations paved the way for collaborations with artists like David Hammons and Maren Hassinger, converting sculpture materials and found objects into immersive, ritualistic spaces for political and civic discourse (Hopkins, 2023).

The friendship between Senga Nengudi and Hassinger was instrumental to their performance art, fostering a nurturing community where they engaged in and critiqued each other's performances. This bond offered emotional support, inspiration, and a united front against the marginalization they faced in mainstream institutions that often overlooked their contributions. The Watts Riots of 1965 profoundly influenced artists like Nengudi, prompting a focus on African American culture and the exploration of innovative materials and creative methods. This departure from traditional art forms towards more intimate and experimental expressions marked a paradigm shift in the artistic perspectives of African American artists post-riots (Bowles, 2016; Auther, 2013).

Nengudi's creative vision is a tapestry woven from myriad influences. Predominantly, her art was sculpted by the intricate dynamics between men and women within the black community in the 1970s, as she sought to foster *healing* through communal gatherings like the Ceremony for Freeway Fets. Her oeuvre was also deeply affected by the collaborative ethos of both the feminist and Black Art movements, which were committed to projects that heightened societal awareness (Bowles, 2016).

Nengudi's work is further enriched by the cultural heritage of Africa and Japan, which she skillfully melds to imbue her art with a rich tapestry of complexity and diversity. Feeling a sense of disconnect with how African and African-American culture was portrayed in Los Angeles Museums, she turned to her own experiences to delve into African culture, crafting rituals that pay homage to the multifaceted traditions within African American culture (Bowles, 2016).

One of her most celebrated series, *R.S.V.P.*, first unveiled in 1977 at Just Above Midtown, a gallery championing artists of color, is a testament to Nengudi's innovative fusion of black performing arts with sculptural forms (Lowry, 2019). This series, resonating with the black aesthetic tradition that has flourished across literature, visual arts, and performing arts, has sparked academic and artistic discourse on the interplay of race, conceptualism, politics, and form (Bradley, 2015).

The *R.S.V.P.* series, crafted from used, dark pantyhose knotted around sand-filled sacks and taut against walls, functions as both standalone sculptures and performative elements. Through its evocative examination of the flesh, Nengudi's work beckons an appreciation for the performative essence of the human form, inviting audiences to partake in a transformative process that transcends the physical realm (Bradley, 2015; Lowry, 2019).

Nengudi's work, through the subtle evolution of the body, poetically embodies a narrative of transformation that speaks to an exchange of states rather than mere loss. It is a rediscovery and a reclamation of value and dignity that have been overlooked. This article delves into how the *R.S.V.P.* series illuminates the symbolic role of the black body in contemporary performance, reflecting on its profound historical and cultural resonance (Bradley, 2015). Inspired by Nengudi's own experiences of her body's metamorphosis during pregnancy, the series serves as a powerful metaphor for the human body's and psyche's remarkable adaptability and strength (Lowry, 2019).



Senga Nengudi, *Performance Piece*, 1977, activated by Maren Hassinger.
Photo Harmon Outlaw/@Senga Nengudi/Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus Und Kunstbau München, Sammlung KiCo

Figure 8. The image of *R.S.V.P.* series originally used in
<https://www.artnews.com/feature/senga-nengudi-who-is-she-why-is-she-important-1234591161/>

Nengudi's artistic palette is richly hued by her studies in modern dance and her reverence for trailblazing dancers like Isadora Duncan and Ted Shawn. Her appreciation extends to the cinematic artistry of modern dance, with Pina Bausch among her inspirations. Nengudi's fascination with African dance traditions, social dance, jazz, and Motown music further enrich her creative tapestry. Her aesthetic is also informed by Dadaism, Salvador Dali, and African American artists, crafting a vision that is a vibrant mosaic of dance, music, culture, and avant-garde influences (Auther, 2013).

Nengudi's art is an intimate reflection of her identity and experiences, highlighting her multifaceted roles as a black woman, American, mother, daughter, and wife. Her work transcends a mere political discourse on race and gender, delving into the universal human experience that resonates across boundaries. Her global consciousness is echoed in her chosen pseudonym, rooted in Duala terms for *to listen* or *to hear* and a woman who gains power as a traditional healer, underscoring her commitment to intercultural dialogue (Hopkins, 2023).

Nengudi's artistic ethos champions the notion that *the best kind of art is public*, advocating for art that is accessible and interactive. Her installations, exemplified by *Wet Night — Early Dawn — Scat Chant — Pilgrim's Song*, are crafted from everyday materials, transforming them into spaces of spiritual and conceptual reflection, embodying her belief in the democratization of art (Hopkins, 2023).

Throughout her illustrious career, Nengudi has garnered accolades for her profound contributions to the arts, with her work featured in esteemed venues such as the Museum of Modern Art and the Dia Beacon, and honored with prestigious awards including the Nasher Sculpture Center's annual laureate prize (Hopkins, 2023). Her oeuvre persistently defies conventions, delving into the realms of identity, spirituality, and the body's capacity for expression.

5.6 Case Study of Carrie Mae Weems

Carrie Mae Weems, an artist born on April 20, 1953, masterfully explores narratives through the lens of a black woman, engaging with the intricate themes of race, class, gender, and identity. Her work skillfully merges personal life experiences with broader socio-political frameworks, utilizing photography and film to convey her message (Weaver, 2009).

Weems has dedicated her art to bearing witness to history and challenging prevailing norms, with a particular focus on the African American experience. She tackles racism, sexism, politics, and personal identity, using her own life and body as a canvas to represent the spectrum of human reality in her art (Ryan, 2021).

Her work fluidly transitions between intimate and global perspectives, moving from personal narratives to wider socio-political discourses, and highlighting the multifaceted nature of power. The bodies of black women in her art serve as an entry point for deeper explorations. Weems crafts a compelling interplay of images and words, prompting her audience to reflect on the dynamics of power (Weaver, 2009).

Weems' art is an evocative tapestry that weaves together personal narratives and socio-political paradigms, conjuring the essence of history, the immediacy of the present, and the promise of the future through a poignant synthesis of words and images. Her oeuvre often features a solitary female figure, guiding us through the complex corridors of historical consciousness (Weaver, 2009).

Weems' work is a critical examination of a spectrum of ideologies, including feminism, sexism, anarchism, and various philosophical stances, from optimism to postmodernism. She crafts non-traditional photographic surfaces from materials like fabric, glass, ceramics, and wallpaper to assert the presence and narrative of black women in history. Weems frequently uses her own body as a medium, positioning herself within the historical narrative and performing for the camera. Her art probes into themes of desire, tragedy, and historical events, offering a provocative dialogue with these ideologies (Willis, 2012).

The impetus behind Weems' creations is a profound desire to challenge and expand the confines of traditional narratives. She has expressed her commitment to *endlessly explode the limits of tradition*, seeking to offer new models for understanding and living. This pursuit is a persistent thread in her work, as she endeavors to offer fresh perspectives on history and to envision alternative futures (Ryan, 2021).



Carrie Mae Weems

Untitled, from The Kitchen Table Series, 1990

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA)

Figure 9. The image of one of the artworks from *The Kitchen Table Series* originally used in <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-revisiting-carrie-mae-weemss-landmark-kitchen-table-series>

Weems' acclaimed *The Kitchen Table Series* from the early 1990s is a poignant exploration of womanhood, subjectivity, and self-image, using her own persona to delve into these themes. Comprising 20 gelatin silver prints and 14 silkscreen panels with text, the series captures intimate moments around a wooden table featuring Weems and various characters, illustrating gender as a learned performance and honoring its black female subjects (Ryan, 2021).

The Studio Museum has been instrumental in Weems' artistic journey, serving as a nurturing home where she has forged significant relationships. She appreciates the museum as a sanctuary for photography and a broader art space, and values the lectures and debates that draw a diverse crowd, including black intellectuals and artists. Despite her experiences with other institutions, the Studio Museum stands out as her primary platform for recognition (Bey & Weems, 2009).

Weems also recognizes the influence of directors Federico Fellini and Lars von Trier on her cinematic work. Her films achieve a nuanced equilibrium between minimalist settings and densely symbolic scenes. *Italian Dreams*, for instance, reflects Fellini's surrealist and fragmented storytelling. Weems' filmmaking approach resonates with that of Isaac Julien, especially in works like *The Attendant*, which guides viewers through dreamlike narratives devoid of dialogue (Weaver, 2009).

At seventeen, Weems embarked on her artistic odyssey through Anna Halprin's San Francisco Dancers' Workshop, where she encountered the experimental dance realm and its intersection with minimalist choreography, epitomized by Halprin's kinship with Yvonne Rainer and Trisha Brown (Edwards, 2015). Weems' performance art inclination is mirrored in her vivid use of color and the visual pauses in her pieces. She employs color strategically, sometimes saturating images or using it to obscure parts of the scene, thereby creating moments of interpretive ambiguity that prompt a reevaluation of societal norms and racial framing (Edwards, 2015).

Weems' artistic palette is also colored by the influence of Mark Rothko and Ellsworth Kelly, whose geometric abstraction and color theory provide a structured yet nuanced backdrop for her contemplation of race and its existential implications. Her work, decorative in nature, uses ornamentation to deconstruct the concept of skin color, highlighting the significance of color in racial discourse (Edwards, 2015). Weems' self-reflective method echoes Rothko and Kelly's employment of color, yet her goal is distinct — she aims to dismantle the skin color construct while acknowledging its racial relevance. Thus, her art finds common ground with theirs in chromatic exploration but diverges in its mission and message (Edwards, 2015).

Weems deftly challenges her audience's preconceptions and values with a potent mix of imagery and text. She uses aesthetic allure to engage and simultaneously disorient the viewer, embedding her message within this enigmatic beauty. These messages, though rational, are often designed to provoke and stir controversy. By harmoniously merging these elements, Weems crafts works that are both intellectually stimulating and alluring, serving as catalysts for contemplation and debate (Patterson, 2001).

Weems also strategically uses social metrics and methods that are conventionally deemed acceptable, such as humor, riddles, and nursery rhymes, to broach subjects typically shrouded in taboo. By juxtaposing portraits of African Americans with jokes and slogans, her work induces a sense of incongruity, aiming to awaken the viewer's subconscious biases and evoke a spectrum of emotions from shock to shame. Her art is imbued with a profound psychological depth, intended to startle and resonate with the viewer unexpectedly (Patterson, 2001).

In essence, Weems' life and artistic trajectory are characterized by an unwavering commitment to defying societal norms and amplifying the voices of the marginalized. Her body of work is a powerful testament to art's capacity to incite reflection, catalyze change, and stand as a historical witness.

5.7 Case Study of Lorna Simpson

Lorna Simpson, born in 1960 in Brooklyn, New York, is an artist whose work artfully weaves symbolic imagery and allegory to depict real-life scenarios. Her pieces beckon viewers to actively engage, offering subtle clues to interpretation rather than prescribing a singular perspective. Drawing from her identity as an African American woman, Simpson employs fractured texts with visual elements to tackle the intricate dynamics of gender and race, imprinting a profound impact on viewers (Wilkes, 1993).

Simpson's artistic voyage commenced with her studies at the School of Visual Arts in New York, where she earned a BFA in Photography. Her academic pursuit continued at the University of California, San Diego, culminating in an MFA and solidifying her status as a vanguard in conceptual photography (Lesso, 2020).

In the late 1980s, Simpson made waves with her pioneering approach, presenting photographs of enigmatic Black figures with accompanying text that challenged the stereotypical portrayals of Black women in popular culture and the art sphere. This work served as a potent critique of representation and the commodification of Black bodies, a recurring theme in her oeuvre deeply informed by her personal journey and societal insights (Roberts, 2013).

Her art is profoundly influenced by her dual identity, using disjointed texts with imagery to convey the multifaceted issues of gender and race. Simpson's work ventures beyond mere victim narratives or expressions of empathy, exploring the nuanced interplay of experience and power. The language and structure of her pieces are crafted to disrupt conventional photographic perceptions, inviting viewers to emotionally connect with the

work's composition, even as the full extent of her intentions remains open to interpretation (Wilkes, 1993).

Simpson's artwork is distinguished by her use of collage, tableau, and repetition, techniques that underscore the historical objectification of Black bodies. Simpson crafts a form of *intertextuality* by interlacing language with imagery, prompting viewers to reassess their interpretations of both (Lesso, 2020). She inventively uses props such as hair, African masks, shoes, and shoe boxes, positioning viewers as wearers when presenting African masks, thus challenging entrenched cultural viewpoints (Wilkes, 1993).

The portrayal of Black women's images and hairstyling in Simpson's art is particularly poignant, exploring the convergence of race and gender. By combining elaborate and vibrant hair designs with the visages of Black women, Simpson confronts the historical suppression and discrimination against natural Black hair, which has often pressured Black women to adhere to Eurocentric beauty standards. The diverse and innovative hair designs in Simpson's work defy these norms, celebrating the beauty and identity of Black women (Jefferson, 2016). This serves as a potent examination of Black women's societal status and identity, inextricably linked to racial and gender issues.

Simpson's art, shaped by memories and the legacy of systemic racism in the United States, urges viewers to delve beneath the surface to uncover the emotional, psychological, and sociological layers within her pieces. Linked to the Post-Blackness movement, Simpson presents her work through a personal perspective that moves beyond the constraints of a collective Black narrative (Lesso, 2020). Her exploration of the California region and its Black female narratives aims to showcase the area's diverse populace and their lifestyles, challenging oversimplified notions of identity, such as the Mexican/American divide in San Diego or the Black and Jewish in Brooklyn, which she views as more intricate than commonly portrayed. Simpson's narratives often revolve around black identity, desire, and betrayal, examining how technology can serve both personal desires and privacy invasions (Simpson & Fusco, 1997).

Simpson's artistic innovation spans photography, painting, installation, collage, and video, earning her global acclaim and significantly influencing conversations on race, gender, and representation in contemporary art (Lesso, 2020).

Simpson's artistic evolution has been marked by her transition from still photography to the moving image. In dialogue with her creative process, Simpson has shared her preference for a preparatory approach that involves outlining scenes and character motivations, foregoing traditional rehearsals to foster genuine performances from actors during filming. This method promotes spontaneity and authenticity in character portrayals. She also favors the medium of short films for the creative autonomy it affords her, allowing for an uncompromised vision. For one of her projects, she contemplated the use of color lenses but chose black-and-white for its simplicity and considered enhancing these images with monochrome elements (Simpson & Fusco, 1997).

In essence, Simpson's life and artistic journey reflect a steadfast quest for imagery that defies societal conventions and provides a multifaceted view of the African American narrative. Her oeuvre stands as a powerful testament to the importance of representation and the imperative to delve into the intricate layers that define our identities.

5.8 Case Study of Dindga McCannon

Dindga McCannon, a multifaceted artist, has been deeply shaped by her cultural heritage and the Harlem upbringing that first introduced her to the arts through needlework, sewing, and embroidery, skills imparted by her mother and grandmother (Glasgow, 2021). These early influences became the bedrock of her future work in fiber arts and painting.

McCannon's immersion in the Black Arts Movement significantly impacted her life and art, providing a space to explore Afrocentric themes and aesthetics. Despite encountering racial and gender discrimination in the art world, she drew strength from the resilience of women and remained steadfast in her artistic pursuits (Samudzi, 2022).

Reflecting on her early ambitions, McCannon recalls deciding to become an artist around the age of 10 or 11, a dream kindled in the rich cultural milieu of Harlem and later nurtured in the Bronx. Her determination to follow a creative path was fueled by the joy and fulfillment that art brought to her life, even in the face of limited opportunities for Black women in the arts at the time (Glasgow, 2021).

McCannon's first major solo exhibition, *In Plain Sight*, was a multi-decade retrospective that celebrated her vibrant paintings, textiles, and mixed-media art, showcasing the narrative power of Black feminist stories and the cultural richness of her Harlem community (Samudzi, 2022; Glasgow, 2021).

The 1960s and 1970s Black Arts and Back to Africa movements significantly influenced McCannon, as seen in her adoption of dashikis and her dedication to fiber arts. Her participation in the Weusi Collective and the Where We At collective, which addressed the specific exclusions faced by Black women artists, further defined her

artistic vision and political engagement (Samudzi, 2022).

In the mid-1960s, McCannon became part of the Weusi Collective, which was inspired by the Black Arts Movement to establish a Black-centered aesthetic. The collective established the Weusi Nyumba Ya Sanaa Gallery and the Academy of Fine Arts and Studies, offering arts workshops and education to the Harlem community. Despite facing sexism within the collective and the art world, McCannon's involvement was pivotal in molding her artistic and political perspectives (Glasgow, 2021).

The Where We At collective emerged in 1971 to tackle the challenges specific to Black women artists, with McCannon playing a key role. The collective's inaugural exhibition, *Where We At: Black Women Artists*, featured McCannon's *Revolutionary Sister* — a potent work symbolizing the often-overlooked Black women in revolutionary thought (Glasgow, 2021).



Dindga McCannon (American, born 1947). *Revolutionary Sister*, 1971. Mixed media construction on wood, 62 x 27 in. (157.5 x 68.6 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Gift of R.M. Atwater, Anna Wolfrom Dove, Alice Fiebiger, Joseph Fiebiger, Belle Campbell Harriss, and Emma L. Hyde, by exchange, Designated Purchase Fund, Mary Smith Dorward Fund, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, and Carll H. de Silver Fund, 2012.80.32. © artist or artist's estate (Photo: Brooklyn Museum, 2012.80.32_PS9.jpg)

Figure 10. The image of McCannon's *Revolutionary Sister* originally used in <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/210707>

Throughout her career, McCannon has explored diverse mediums such as fiber arts, painting, printmaking, and murals. Her rekindled focus on fiber arts was driven by the practicality of income generation through dashikis during the Back to Africa movement, a period that also deepened her exploration of Afrocentric themes (Glasgow, 2021). Despite encountering sexism and undervaluation within the art world, McCannon maintains an optimistic outlook, witnessing a rising appreciation for Black art and growing recognition of Black women artists' contributions and stands as a celebration of Black women's resilience and creativity and the significance of their narratives (Samudzi, 2022).

In 2021, McCannon's first major solo show, *In Plain Sight*, graced the Fridman Gallery in New York City, presenting a multi-decade retrospective of her vibrant paintings, textiles, and mixed-media pieces. This exhibition was a testament to her dedication to Black feminist storytelling, with works like *125th Street Revisited*

capturing the vibrant essence of Black women in Harlem (Glasgow, 2021).

In essence, McCannon's artistic journey, enriched by her Harlem roots and the Black Arts Movement, is defined by her unwavering commitment to telling the stories of Black women. Her art is a dynamic and potent affirmation of Black feminist narratives, reflecting the cultural wealth of her community, and continues to inspire future generations of artists.

6. Result and Conclusion

This paper organizes influences on an artist's work into personal factors — encompassing life experiences, education, family, artistic motivation, and beliefs — and social and cultural factors, which include historical context, cultural traditions, political and artistic movements, art theories, and forms. Artistic technique refinement is shaped by available materials and technological progress. Environmental factors consist of natural surroundings and the creative workspace. Artistic exchanges and collaborations involve interactions with peers and Cross-industry partnerships. Inspirations stem from life observations and other artistic expressions.

For instance, the Harlem Renaissance was pivotal to Ringgold's art, instilling a strong sense of racial pride and identity that became central to her work. Amos's art education, particularly her time at Antioch College and later at the Central School of Art in London, significantly influenced her, particularly her interest in printmaking and weaving (Li, 2022; Ringgold & Wither, 1980).

Nengudi's interest in intercultural relations is reflected in her pseudonym, inspired by Douala terms for women who listen, hear, and gain strength as traditional healers. Her work is also heavily influenced by dance and music, particularly modern dance, which has significantly shaped her artistic vision (Hopkins, 2023). In summary, an artist's work is a complex interplay of personal history, social and cultural contexts, technical capabilities, environmental influences, collaborative experiences, and diverse sources of inspiration. After sorting out the above content, it is presented as follows.

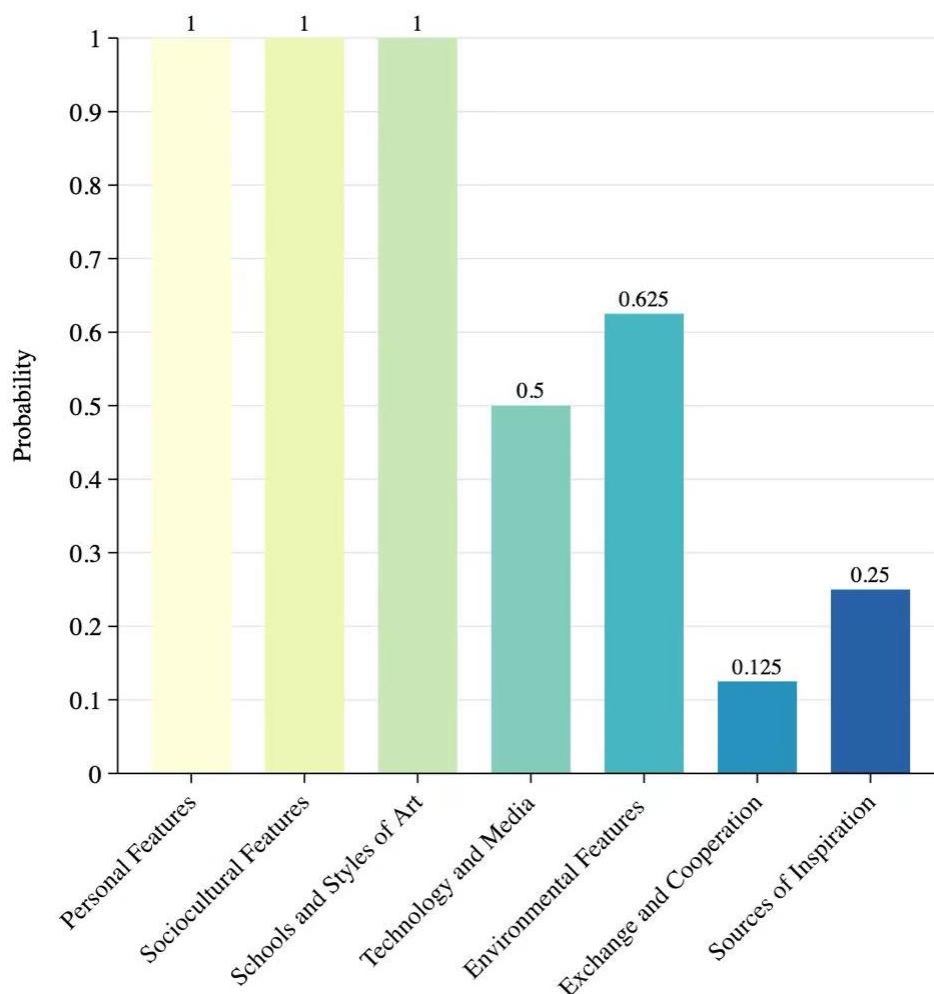


Figure 11. Bar Chart of Features influencing the artistic creation and performance of eight individual artists

According to Figure 11, Personal Features, Sociocultural Features, Schools and Styles of Art are Common Features that influence the artistic creation and presentation of these eight African female artists. Environmental Features are fairly common features that affect the artistic creation and presentation of these eight African female artists.

7. Discussion

The research indicates that the eight African-American artists studied were significantly influenced by a spectrum of factors, including personal experiences, societal contexts, cultural backgrounds, and artistic genres and styles. The profound impact of these styles on the African-American community is notably striking. Technological and media advancements have specifically influenced the work of Ringgold, Amos, Saar, and Simpson. Environmental factors have also significantly shaped the art of Emma Amos, McCannon, Catlett, Weems, and Simpson. Nengudi has been affected by exchanges and collaborations, while Saar and Weems draw inspiration from various sources.

Our systematic analysis of existing literature and statistical review of the characteristics influencing 20th-century African-American female artists has yielded important findings. However, the study has its limitations. Firstly, the research is confined to a systematic case study of only eight artists, limiting the comprehensiveness of the feature analysis. Secondly, despite efforts to gather extensive information, the reliance on secondary sources for some primary data may introduce minor inaccuracies in the analysis of these eight artists.

In conclusion, while this study sheds initial light on the influences on African-American women artists from the 1960s to 2000s, it acknowledges the need for broader and more in-depth research to fully capture the complexity of their experiences and creative processes.

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