



FOR RELEASE: August 16, 2022

Sacred Spaces: Art and Spirituality at the Fourth Universalist Society in the City of New York.

On Sunday September 11th at 11:00 a.m, The Fourth Universalist Society in the City of New York will celebrate its second art installation with works by world renowned artists; Faith Ringgold and Kiki Smith. Installed above the altar and in the chapel, the artworks seek to align the values of the congregation with the sacred space.

Both artists are social activists at their core. They also inspire us with compelling expressions of the human spirit. The art on view invites us to explore questions of hope and regeneration. Through the use of magical and uplifting imagery, spirituality is reimagined in the hands of these artists. The aspirations of these women, both feminists, are in keeping with Unitarian Universalist principles and our belief in social action. In his sermon, Senior Minister Schuyler Vogel will explore our deep desire to make a home in a world that struggles with marginality, prejudice, and environmental collapse.



Faith Ringgold in front of Tar Beach, photo Kathy Willens, courtesy the artist and ACA Galleries. Artwork copyright ARS.

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Rev. Schuyler Vogel, Senior Minister
Spencer Salzberg, Board President

160 Central Park West
New York, NY 10023

(212) 595.1658
www.4thu.org

Faith Ringgold, born 1930 in Harlem, is known for her narrative painted story quilts. She creates works that reflect her political activism and personal story within the context of the women's movement. Ringgold is one of a very small group of Black women who helped galvanize the Black and Feminist Art Movements in New York in the 1970s and today.

The image on view above the altar is a study for *Tar Beach*, featuring an eight-year-old girl whose urban dreams encapsulate the essence of emancipation. *Tar Beach* was later turned into an award winning children's book. The original quilt is in the permanent collection of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City.



Kiki Smith in her studio, photo Nina Subin, courtesy the artist.

Kiki Smith, born in 1954, is known for figurative works which confront subjects such as AIDS and gender. More recent works depict the human condition in relationship to nature and the cosmos.

Her large scale tapestry, *Sky*, shown in the chapel, is inspired by medieval tapestries. In *Sky* we see the amalgamation of the underworld, earth, and heaven. Her iconic female floating body suggests an absence of boundaries between human and the realm of myth and animistic spiritual traditions.

For further information, images and to view the installations, please contact Loretta Howard (curator) at loretta@4thU.org or the office office@4thU.org. The art is on view to the public every Sunday morning before, during and after the 11:00 a.m. service and by appointment, commencing September 11th and running through June of 2023.

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