



Elizabeth Catlett

The Negro Woman

series of fifteen linoleum cuts, 1946-1947

Catlett's series presents a narrative, each image representing one phrase of the narrative. Cuts 1 and 15 are color; cuts 2-14 are black and white. The full narrative and cuts 11-14 are presented here.



Caption of linoleum cut	Content
1. I am the Negro Woman.	Face of a young woman, looking to her right. [color cut]
2. I have always worked hard in America.	Three women doing housecleaning chores.
3. In the fields.	Woman hoeing (background: shack).
4. In other folks' homes.	Woman domestic standing with broom.
5. I have given the world my songs.	Woman playing guitar (background: burning cross; a white man assaulting a black man).
6. In Sojourner Truth I fought for the rights of women as well as Negroes.	Sojourner Truth preaching, holding up right arm and pointing index finger upward (Bible on stand).
7. In Harriet Tubman I helped hundreds to freedom.	Harriet Tubman pointing way along Underground Railroad to group of fugitive slaves.
8. In Phillis Wheatley I proved intellectual equality in the midst of slavery.	Phillis Wheatley with quill pen, in pose of the well-known portrait of Wheatley (background: three women slaves chained together).
9. My role has been important in the struggle to organize the unorganized.	Woman, centered, speaking to four workers who surround her, two black and two white (background: factory).
10. I have studied in ever increasing numbers.	Classroom of African American adult women, one teacher and four seated students.
11. My reward has been bars between me and the rest of the land. [Image below]	Woman behind barbed wire fence.
12. I have special reservations. [Image below]	Woman seated on bus behind "Colored Only sign; three women seated behind her.
13. Special houses. [Image below]	Faces of two women looking past each other (background: northern urban apartment houses).
14. And a special fear for my loved ones. [Image below]	Body of a lynched African American man, noose around his neck; above him the dangling feet of three hanged men.
15. My right is a future of equality with other Americans. [Image below]	Face of a young woman (same woman as in #1), looking up and to her left. [color cut]

#11

"My reward has
been bars
between me
and the rest
of the land"

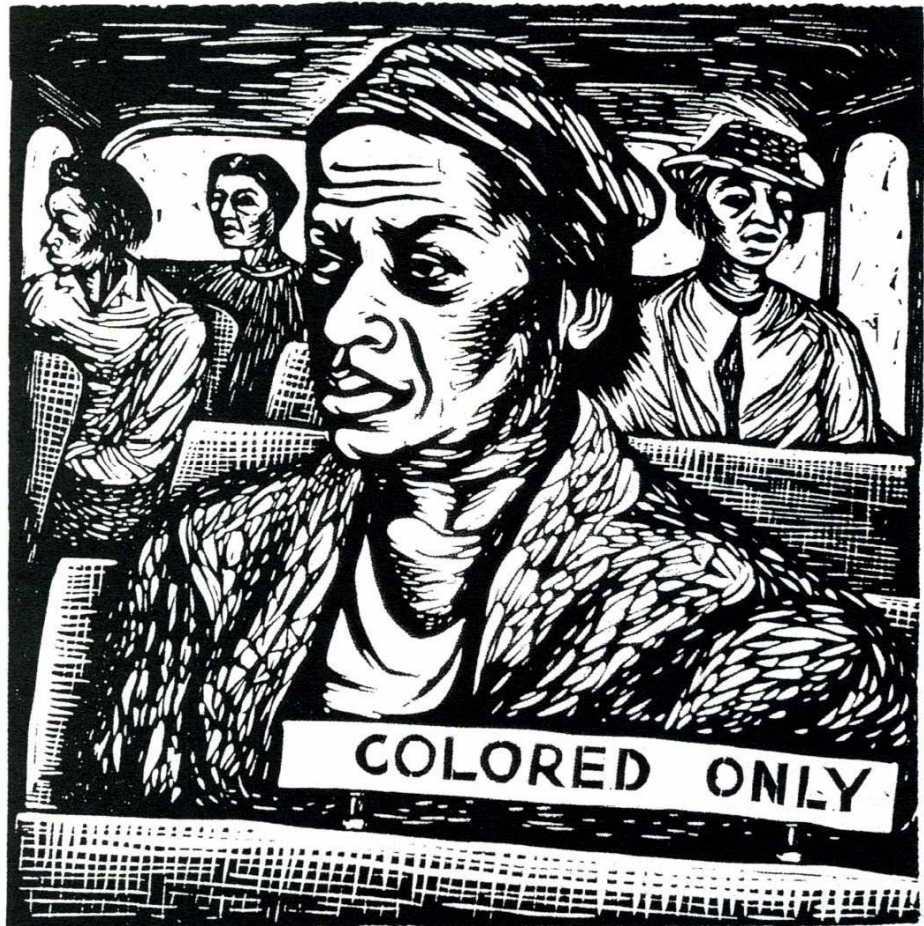
15 x 11.5 cm.



#12

"I have
special
reservations"

15.5 x 15.5 cm.

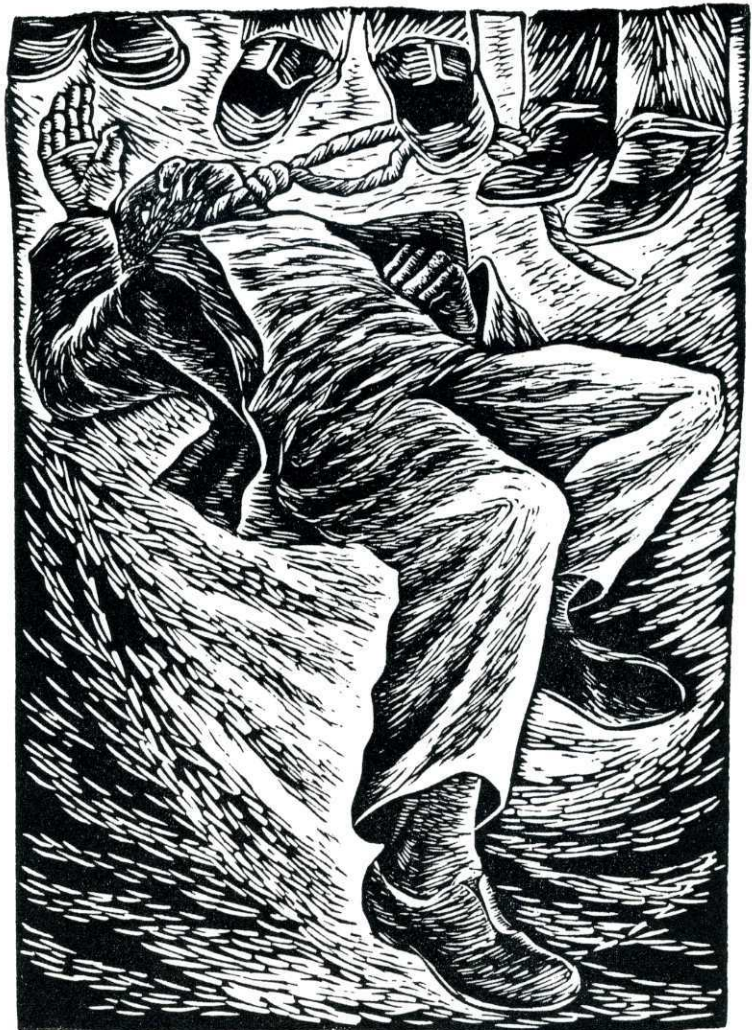




#13

“Special
houses”

10.8 x 15 cm.



#14

“And a
special fear
for my loved
ones”

21.3 x 15.3 cm.