

Press Release

TOWER<sup>MMK</sup>, 18 November – 16 June 2024

Opening: Friday, 17 November 2023, 7 pm–midnight

## ELIZABETH CATLETT



Elizabeth Catlett, *Two Generations*, 1979, courtesy of Dr. & Mrs. Walter O. Evans, © Elizabeth Catlett Family Trust / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2023

If images don't exist, one must create them. At the start of the twentieth century, there were certain absences in the way that African American history was represented in the canon of art history. Some collective experiences lacked images with which people could identify, which were necessary for the idea of community and a shared iconography to emerge.

The portraits created by Elizabeth Catlett (1915–2012) are clear, precise, and invariably personal. While some of her works show events from African American history, others depict the people she saw all around her. Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, and Phillis Wheatley are heroines who gave people courage and guidance. But the artist also portrayed women at work in the fields or at the side of the road—when they are displaying vulnerability or resistance; when they are troubled or relaxed. Catlett's lithographs, woodcuts, linocuts, and even her small sculptures were relatively easy to exhibit in many different locations and could be purchased at a reasonable price. Making art accessible to everyone remained a fundamentally important principle for Elizabeth Catlett throughout her life.

The exhibition *Elizabeth Catlett* is the first comprehensive survey of the American Mexican artist, presenting works from all phases of her oeuvre.

Press photos can be downloaded here: <http://www.mmk.art/en/about/press>

Press contact

Samet Belhoche / Ai Vi Bui

Phone +49 69 212 35844 / +49 69 212 46722

presse.mmk@stadt-frankfurt.de