

***Opportunity: Journal of Negro Life* (1926)**

Starting in 1925, *Opportunity* began to publish short fiction. Writers such as Gwendolyn B. Bennett had regular columns in the journal. In 1926, Bennett became a central figure for the journal, serving as its assistant editor and contributing significantly to its visual and literary identity during the height of the Harlem Renaissance. She created several striking covers for the magazine, most notably the July 1926 issue featuring an elegant Black woman against an Art Deco backdrop, blending modern aesthetics with Africanist motifs—a style sometimes called "Black Deco."

***Lift Every Voice and Sing* (1939)**

The larger than life *Lift Every Voice and Sing* was commissioned by the 1939 New York World's Fair committee in 1937. Her iconic sculpture stood almost 16-foot high, in painted, cast plaster on the grounds of the fair. Savage left the Works Progress Administration to work on this monumental project, inspired by Jacksonville brothers James Weldon and Rosamund Johnson's anthem *Lift Every Voice*. Sadly, the original work was destroyed when the fair was over - it is known today only from photographs and smaller versions which were cast by the artist to be sold as souvenirs.

Harlem Couple (1932) by James Van Der Zee

Van Der Zee's iconic 1932 photograph, *Harlem Couple* (also known as *Couple in Raccoon Coats*), captures a Black couple posing confidently with a Cadillac V-16 in New York City. Posing on a residential street in Harlem, New York, this stylish couple is cocooned in signifiers of success: their luxurious automobile, his-and-hers raccoon coats, and serene expressions together create a powerful aura of contentment. The couple's wealth and security, rarities in the United States during the Great Depression, symbolizes Black luxury, success, and style, challenging contemporary stereotypes.

***Off to War* (1942)**

Created by William H. Johnson in 1942, this artwork depicts a poignant scene featuring a soldier in uniform, likely saying farewell to his family as he embarks on his journey to war. The setting appears to be rural, illustrated through the simple, colorful shapes of a wooden house, utility poles, and abstracted landscape in the background. The figures, rendered in a stylized and rudimentary manner characteristic of Naïve Art, convey a sense of communal support and an emotional goodbye, with family members raising their arms as if in a wave. The use of bold colors and simplified forms captures the raw emotion and historic context of the era, encapsulating the gravity of wartime farewells within a visually accessible and compelling framework.



Opportunity: Journal of Negro Life (1926)
Gwendolyn Bennett (Ink, cover design)



Lift Every Voice and Sing (1939)
Augusta Savage (Cast white metal painted gold)



Harlem Couple (1932)
James Van Der Zee (Gelatin silver print)



Off to War (ca. 1942)
William H. Johnson (Silkscreen, poster/print)