

# art on Alberta Community Canvas

Art on Alberta, 1614 NE Alberta Street, Portland OR 97211

Winter 2009  
Volume 1 Issue 2

To find out more about Art on Alberta be sure to visit: [www.artonalberta.org](http://www.artonalberta.org)

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Annual Meeting
- 1 Our Latest Additions
- 2 Thelma Johnson Street at Art Hop 2009
- 3 Julie Bernard and Sally Lawrence
- 4 Art Hop 2009

### AoA Annual Meeting

Art on Alberta held its annual meeting at Zaytoon ([www.zaytoonbar.com](http://www.zaytoonbar.com)) on Wednesday, February 18, 2009 from 6:30 to 8:30 P.M. This lively, well-attended event honored Julie Bernard, 25-year host of KBOO Radio's *Art Focus* with a Community Service Award. Keynote speaker and former PNCA President Sally Lawrence offered an insider's view to the art treasures in Portland, as well as keen commentary about the history and future of PNCA, complete with slide show.

More than 45 people attended the no-host event, and many became members after listening to AoA President Hilary Pfeifer's impassioned talk about our favorite nonprofit organization, including its history, mission, goals, and her and other board members' personal connection to the organization and the Alberta neighborhood. Pfeifer noted to the group, "Art on Alberta has been part of the positive change on Alberta Street in the past decade of our existence."

Board member Kathe Swaback presented information about AoA's major project *Art Hop 2009* (see page 4 for more information) and this year's featured artist, Thelma Johnson Street (see page 2 for more information on Street). At least 14 people signed up to be volunteers for *Art Hop 2009* (and there's plenty of room for more!)

The evening was full of positive people, energy, and information - a success all the way around!

### Our Latest Additions

#### Meet Two New Board Members

**Shir Ly Grisanti**, AoA's Volunteer Coordinator, is an independent arts professional who resides in the Portsmouth Neighborhood of North Portland. Her name, pronounced Sheer Lee, rhymes with "clearly", and means "my song" in Hebrew. An east coast transplant, she earned an M.A. in Museum Studies, and has worked with various arts organizations in New York, Boston, Portland and places in between. She has also started working with independent artists to help secure exhibition opportunities and develop community-focused projects.

Art on Alberta's new Grants Manager is **Mazarine Treyz**, Senior Development and Communications Officer at The Urban League of Portland. She is grateful for this opportunity to connect with artists in the community, and to help more artists succeed. She hopes to help people of color have more of a voice on Alberta Street. Mazarine creates encaustic and watercolor paintings, which can be seen at the Talisman Gallery on Alberta Street.

## Thelma Johnson Streat: Featured Artist at *Art Hop 2009*

Thelma Johnson Streat (1912-1959) was an internationally acclaimed artist and dancer from Portland, Oregon and the first African American woman to have work exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art. The Art on Alberta nonprofit organization will honor Streat's innovative art pieces, dances, and her deep commitment to intercultural understanding, in community celebration at the 10th annual *Art Hop* on May 16, 2009.

Ms. Streat was also respected for her work to promote intercultural understanding and for her work with youth. She was fascinated with the power of indigenous cultures to teach compassion, tolerance, and appreciation of diversity.

With humble beginnings in Yakima, Washington she moved to Portland, Oregon and studied art from 1934-35 at the Museum Art School (now known as the Pacific Northwest College of Art). She attended University of Oregon, and went on to San Francisco, Mexico, Paris, New York, and Hawaii. As she traveled around the world, her work rose to international success. Her realist paintings also evolved into more abstract pieces as she widely embraced music, dance, and symbols of the cultures she lived with and studied.

Thelma Johnson Streat's artwork was also exhibited and collected by a number of well-known institutions and celebrities including Eleanor Roosevelt, Frank Lloyd

Wright, Vincent Price, and Roland Hayes. When she began her professional career as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) artist at San Francisco's Pickle Factory, she collaborated with muralist Diego Rivera who became one of her most ardent supporters. In his words, "The work of Thelma Johnson Streat is in my opinion one of the most interesting manifestations in this country at the present. It is extremely evolved and sophisticated enough to reconquer the grace and purity of African and American art."

Please join us Saturday May 16<sup>th</sup> as we celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> annual *Art Hop* and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thelma Johnson Streat's death, with approximately 50 of Streat's paintings in venues throughout 15 blocks of NE Alberta Street, Portland, Oregon.

### For more information please see:

Thelma Johnson Streat website  
<http://www.thelmajohnsonstreat.net/>

And on Wikipedia  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thelma\\_Johnson\\_Streat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thelma_Johnson_Streat)



*Red Dots*  
by Thelma Johnson Streat

## Art on Alberta Annual Meeting Honors Julie Bernard; Sally Lawrence Keynote Speaker

Art on Alberta Community Service Award Recipient  
Julie Bernard, host of KBOO Radio's *Art Focus* for 25 years

Julie Bernard has a long history in the early days of the Portland art community. In addition to her own artwork, Julie gave to the community. She worked as a docent at the Portland Art Museum, was a supporter of other art venues such as Portland Center for the Visual Arts (PCVA) and Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA). She served the greater public as host of *Art Focus*, a weekly interview show on KBOO Community Radio for 25 years. *Art Focus* not only featured artists who were currently showing work, but frequently served as a historical reminder of the people who were the building blocks of the art community we see today. Julie allowed us to hear voices from a broad perspective of the community, from curators at the Portland Art Museum, the Oregon Potters Association, to independent curators like Gavin Shettler at the Portland Art Center and now Milepost 5, to the women of Gee's Bend whose quilts traveled to Portland several times. It is truly a labor of love to produce a weekly half-hour radio show, and Art on Alberta recognizes Julie Bernard for her countless hours of volunteerism to make the Portland art community a better place.

### Keynote Speaker

Sally Lawrence, former Director and President of Pacific Northwest College of Art (1981 to 2003)

Sally Lawrence facilitated the Pacific Northwest College of Art's move from the Portland Art Museum to its current Pearl District location and served as the College's Director from 1981 to 1994, and then as President when the College separated from the Museum from 1994 until she retired in 2003. Besides her 22 years of commitment as the President, Sally has also been a fine arts consultant, appraiser, and curator. She arrived in Portland from California in 1956 and eagerly embraced the art scene by taking classes at night at the Art School, serving as a museum guide for ten years, and opening a successful gallery. As a longtime art supporter in Portland, Oregon, Lawrence has keen insights to share about Portland's developing art scene, with a particular look at the history and future of the Pacific Northwest College of Art.

## Get Involved.

Become a member. Volunteer. Participate.

Art on Alberta is always accepting new members and loves volunteers!  
Your generous donation of money and time helps not only this  
all-volunteer organization but our amazing neighborhood in countless ways.

A membership form is available to download and print from our website at:  
[www.artonalberta.org](http://www.artonalberta.org). For more information email us at: [membership@artonalberta.org](mailto:membership@artonalberta.org).

We also have many volunteer opportunities for short-term projects.  
Please contact us at [volunteer@artonalberta.org](mailto:volunteer@artonalberta.org) if you are interested in  
being part of our fantastic team.

## Art Hop 2009

This year's *Art Hop* is already well on its way to being the best event yet! In its tenth year, *Art Hop* offers our neighborhood and the city of Portland art exhibits, youth events, a community parade, craft marketplace, and entertainment stages. All of which have been important elements bringing people together and attracting visitors from both inside and outside the community with many coming back year after year.

Art on Alberta has been working and collaborating with partners on this major project since summer 2007, and many businesses and community members are excited to be involved. Exhibition space for Thelma Johnson Streat's work has already been secured at five established venues: Guardino Gallery, Grow Gallery, Talisman, Ampersand, and the Black United Fund. Most have offered to showcase Streat's work not only for the day of the event, but for the entire month of May.

Without the help of our events planner, Combustible Media, we would get nowhere fast. Combustible Media planned and executed a fantastic Art Hop 2008, and has no plan to change the outcome for this year's event.

Aside from showcasing Streat's original work and other visual art throughout the neighborhood venues, vendor booths, children's areas, music, dance and other performance art, and the beloved parade will be happening throughout the day.

Hosting a major art event such as *Art Hop* challenges our members, animates and inspires artists, unifies the business community, and builds Alberta Street's reputation as an exciting place for art in the Portland metropolitan area. Be sure to join in the fun on **Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>!**

## Heartfelt Thanks to Our Grantors

Art on Alberta is thrilled to be the recipient of grants that will significantly help in creating and executing a successful *Art Hop 2009*. Both Oregon Arts Commission and the Regional Arts and Culture Council organizations awarded AoA grants specifically for our major project and focus of the year.

There have also been a number of smaller awards and anonymous gifts graciously given to AoA at the end of 2008. We are grateful for all the support.

*How You Can Help:* Art on Alberta has applied for a few additional grants to help make *Art Hop 2009* possible. But more is needed. More money. More time. More hands.

Donate your time, energy, and creativity to help us present a fabulous *Art Hop* event to the neighborhood and our fine city. Contact us today to see how you can get involved. We need you! For more information on how you can help, contact us at: [volunteer@artonalberta.org](mailto:volunteer@artonalberta.org).

## Welcome and Thanks to Our Most Recent Business Members

- Studio 1627: a collective of nine art galleries at 1627 NE Alberta Street
- Ampersand: gallery, bookshop, retail archive committed to cultural preservation at 2916 NE Alberta Street, Suite B



Art on Alberta  
1614 NE Alberta Street  
Portland OR 97211

Art on Alberta is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the Alberta Art District's distinct cultural identity through art and educational activities.

**Art on Alberta was mentioned in the New York Times Travel Section on February 1, 2009.**

**You can find this article on our website.**