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Brief Bio on Thelma Johnson Streat and Art Hop 2009

Thelma Johnson Streat (1911-1959) 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*, May 16, 2009.

Extended Bio on Thelma Johnson Streat and Art Hop 2009

Ms. Thelma Johnson Streat (1911-1959) was a painter, dancer, designer, and educator internationally known in the mid-twentieth century for her visual and performance art. She also pioneered work to promote intercultural understanding with a focus towards youth. She was fascinated with the power of indigenous cultures to teach understanding, tolerance, and appreciation of diversity.

With humble beginnings in Yakima, Washington and Pendleton, Oregon, 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 took classes at the 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 the music, dance, and symbols of the cultures she lived with and studied.

Thelma Johnson Streat was the first African American woman to have her work ("Rabbit Man") collected by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Her 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 worked 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 16th as we celebrate the 10th annual Art Hop and the 50th 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 go to:

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

Wikipedia site:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thelma_Johnson_Streat

To see what Eleanor Roosevelt said about Ms. Streat go to:
http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/displaydoc.cfm?_y=1951&_f=md001950



Artist, Thelma Johnson Streat
"Red Dots, Black Angel" 11.75"x15"

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