

THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION WOULD LIKE TO THANK ARTIST JOESAM FOR TAKING PART IN BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT THE STATE CAPITOL.





JoeSam. is a mixed media painter and sculptor. The content of his work is often social and political commentary. His style is characterized by the juxtaposition of diverse, independent, often quite simple elements and his use of bright colors, reflective of his African American heritage.

Joe was born in Harlem during an important time in its history after the Harlem renaissance and before WW II. He holds degrees from Howard, Columbia and UMass Amherst. He went to San Francisco in the late 70's, and began his art career full-time in the early 1980's with the Black Cowboy series and an NEA grant.

Since then, JoeSam. has achieved national and international recognition. Among his accomplishments, he has illustrated several children's books, won awards in the bilingual markets for *The Invisible Hunters* and his public art sculptures have been installed all over the country with many important works located in California. JoeSam.'s limited edition Art-Pins, all replicas of his public sculptures, were issued for each commissioned work and sold in museum stores nationwide. His work is sought by collectors all over the world as African American art is highly valued internationally.

His decision to move to Connecticut comes from having friends and family throughout the Northeast. The Hartford area was central with a nice quality of life, yet it was the deep cultural roots and diversity in an accessible city that ultimately drew him to build a studio here. Most interesting is how well this area suits the internationally recognized African American artist and how embracing the people of Hartford have been. Joe loves the things that Hartford is doing.....revolutionary really welcoming him here, and all he brings with him.

It's so great the vision to host this retrospective of a major artist in a venue here in Hartford where we (those of us who live here) are proud of our diversity and our renaissance.