

Fall 2024

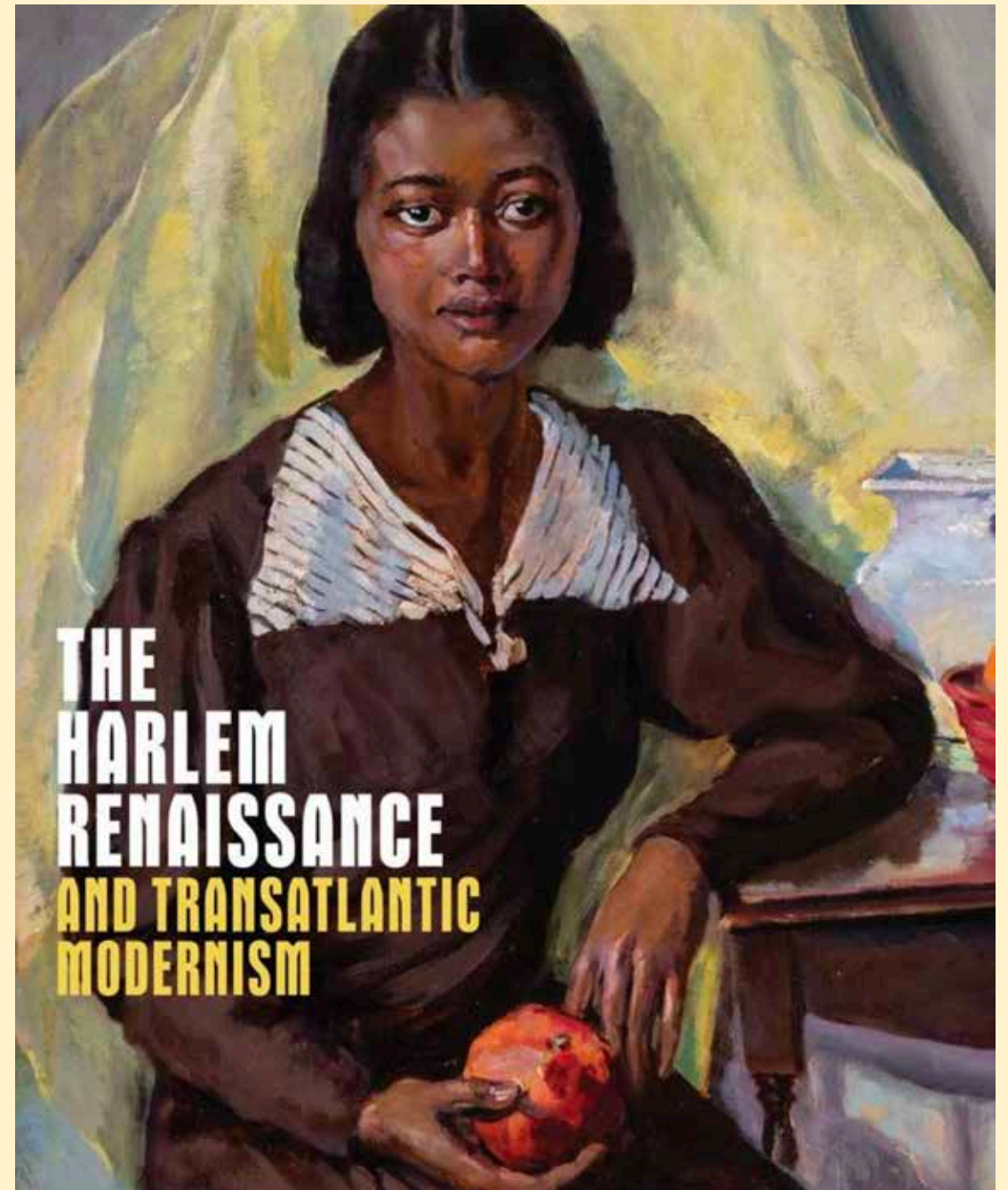
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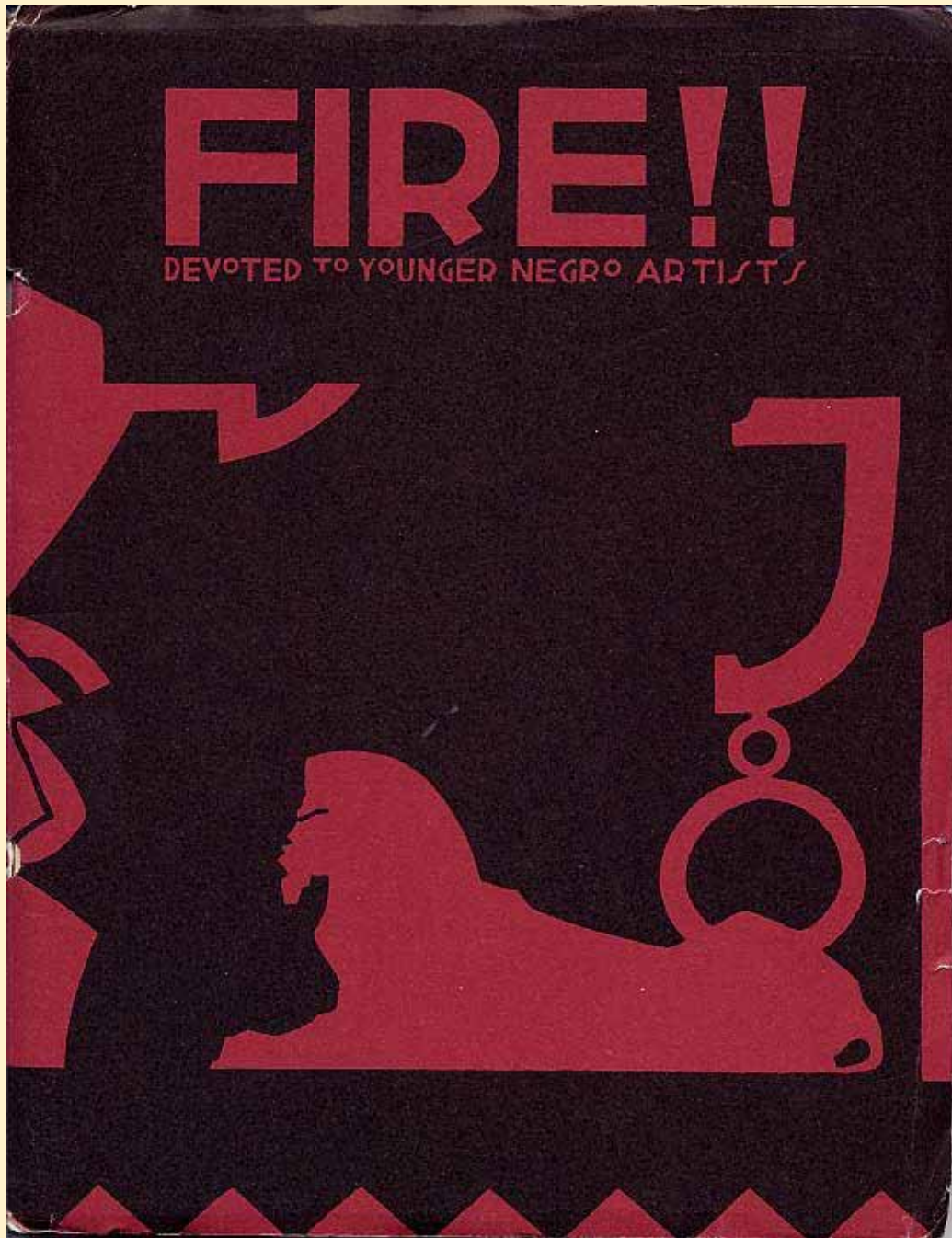
Harlem Renaissance

Professor Richard J. Powell

Wednesdays, 6:15pm – 8:45pm

Right: Cover of Denise Murrell, ed., *The Harlem Renaissance and Transatlantic Modernism* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2024).





ETHIOPIA: REBORN & RE- PRESENTED

Left: Aaron Douglas, Cover illustration for *Fire!! Devoted to Younger Negro Artists* (1926).

Right: Meta Warrick Fuller, *Ethiopia Awakening*, 1921. Plaster.





Arthur G. Dove, *Swinging in the Park (there were Colored people there)*, 1930. Oil on canvas.

Song of the Son

Jean Toomer

*Pour O pour that parting soul in song,
Pour it in the sawdust glow of night,
Into the velvet pine-smoke air to-night,
And let the valley carry it along.
And let the valley carry it along.*

*Land and soil, red soil and sweet-gum tree,
So scant of grass, so profligate of pines,
Now just before an epoch's sun declines
Thy son, in time, I have returned to thee,
Thy son, I have in time returned to thee.*

*In time, for though the sun is setting on
A song-lit race of slaves, it has not set;*

*Though late, O soil, it is not too late yet
To catch thy plaintive soul, leaving, soon gone,
Leaving, to catch thy plaintive soul soon gone.*

*Negro slaves, dark purple ripened plums,
Squeezed, and bursting in the pine-wood air,
Passing, before they stripped the old tree bare
One plum was saved for me, one seed becomes*

*An everlasting song, a singing tree,
Caroling softly souls of slavery,
What they were, and what they are to me,
Caroling softly souls of slavery.*

Aaron Douglas, *Crucifixion*, 1927. Oil on hardboard.



What's in a name?

New Negro Arts Movement

Negro Renaissance

Harlem Renaissance



Upper left: Winold Reiss, Pictorial header for Alain Locke's essay "The New Negro," in Locke's *The New Negro* (1925).

Left: Carl Van Vechten, Writer, philosopher & educator Alain Locke (1885-1954), 1941. Color photograph.

Right: Winold Reiss, Sociologist & college administrator Charles S. Johnson (1893-1956), 1925. Pastel on paperboard.





Left: Arthur Kaufmann, Composer & pianist George Gershwin (1898-1937), 1936. Oil on canvas.

Above center: Music publisher & jazz promoter Irving Mills (between Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway), circa 1930s. Photograph.

Above right: Alexander Calder, Journalist & art & theater critic Frank Crowninshield (1872-1947), 1928. Wire sculpture.

Right: Gangster, nightclub owner, & boxing promoter Owney Madden (1891-1965).





Left: Pianist, composer, & band leader Duke Ellington (1899-1974).

Right: Doris Ullman, Author, lyricist, & civil rights activist James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938), 1925.





Photograph of a family of southern U.S. migrants, after arriving in Chicago, Illinois, circa 1918.



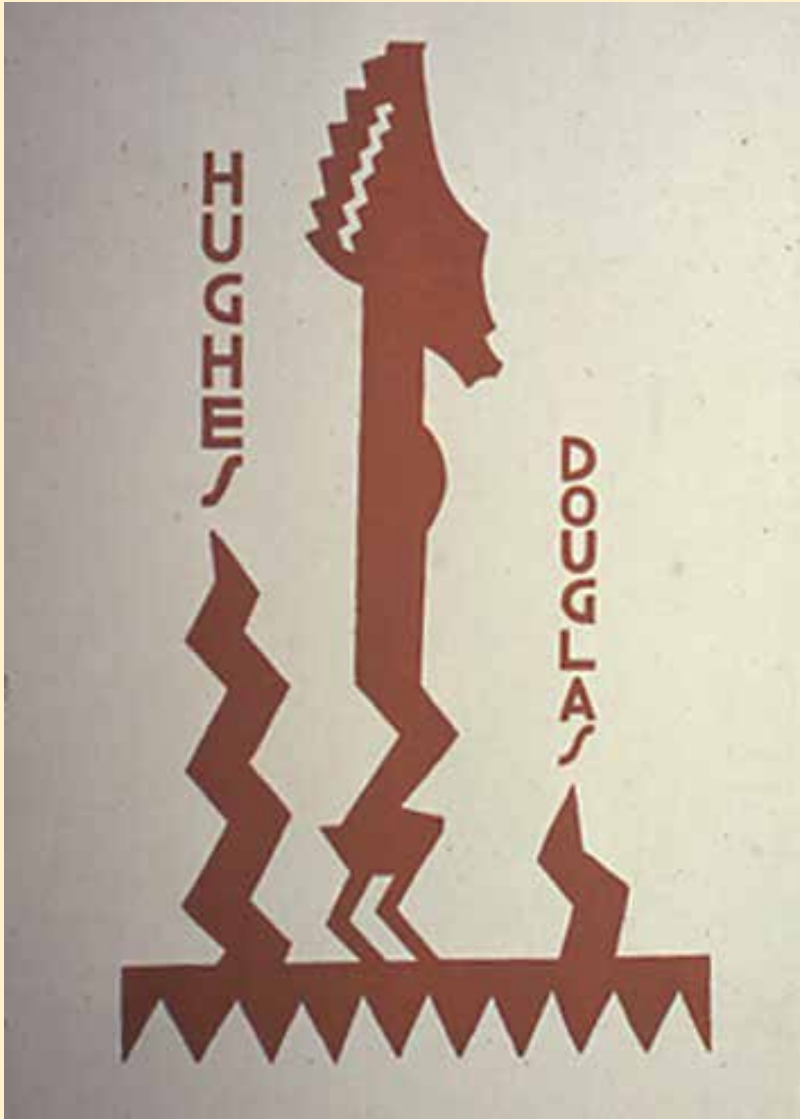
Left: Winold Reiss, African American poet & playwright *Langston Hughes*, 1925. Pastel on illustration board, 30 1/16 x 21 5/8 inches.



Center: Czech author *Franz Kafka*, *Prague, Czech Republic*, circa 1896-1906. Photograph.



Right: Camille Ruf, Irish novelist *James Joyce*, 1918. Photograph.



Aaron Douglas, Cover for *Opportunity Art Folio*, 1926.
Relief print, letterpress.

“I clearly recall [Winold Reiss’s] impatience as he sought to urge me beyond my doubts and fears that seemed to loom so large in the presence of the terrifying specters moving beneath the surface of every African masque and fetish . . . ”

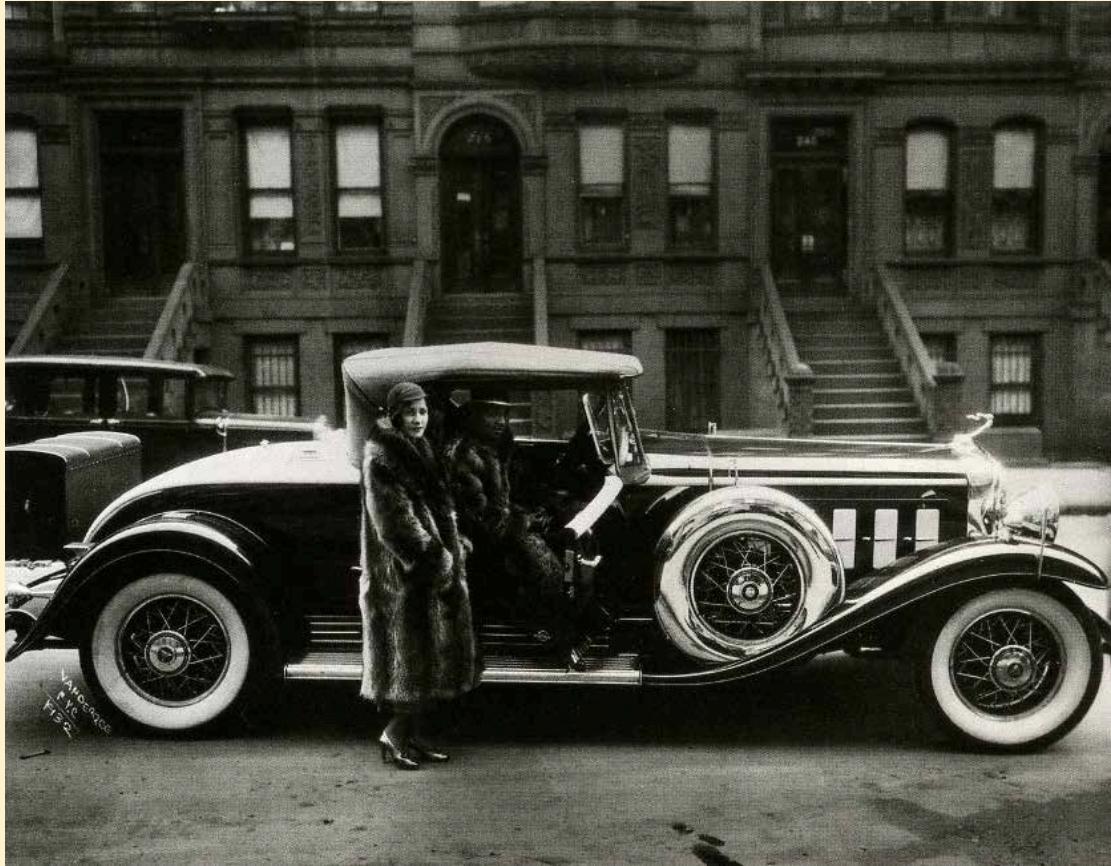
"... I shall not attempt to describe my feelings as I first tried to objectify with paint and brush what I thought to be the visual emanations or expressions that came into view with the sounds produced by the old black song makers of the antebellum days when they first began to put together snatches and bits from Protestant hymns, along with half remembered tribal chants, lullabies, and work songs . . . "

Aaron Douglas, n.d.



Aaron Douglas, *Harriet Tubman*, 1931. Oil on canvas.

NEW NEGROES = OLD NEGROES



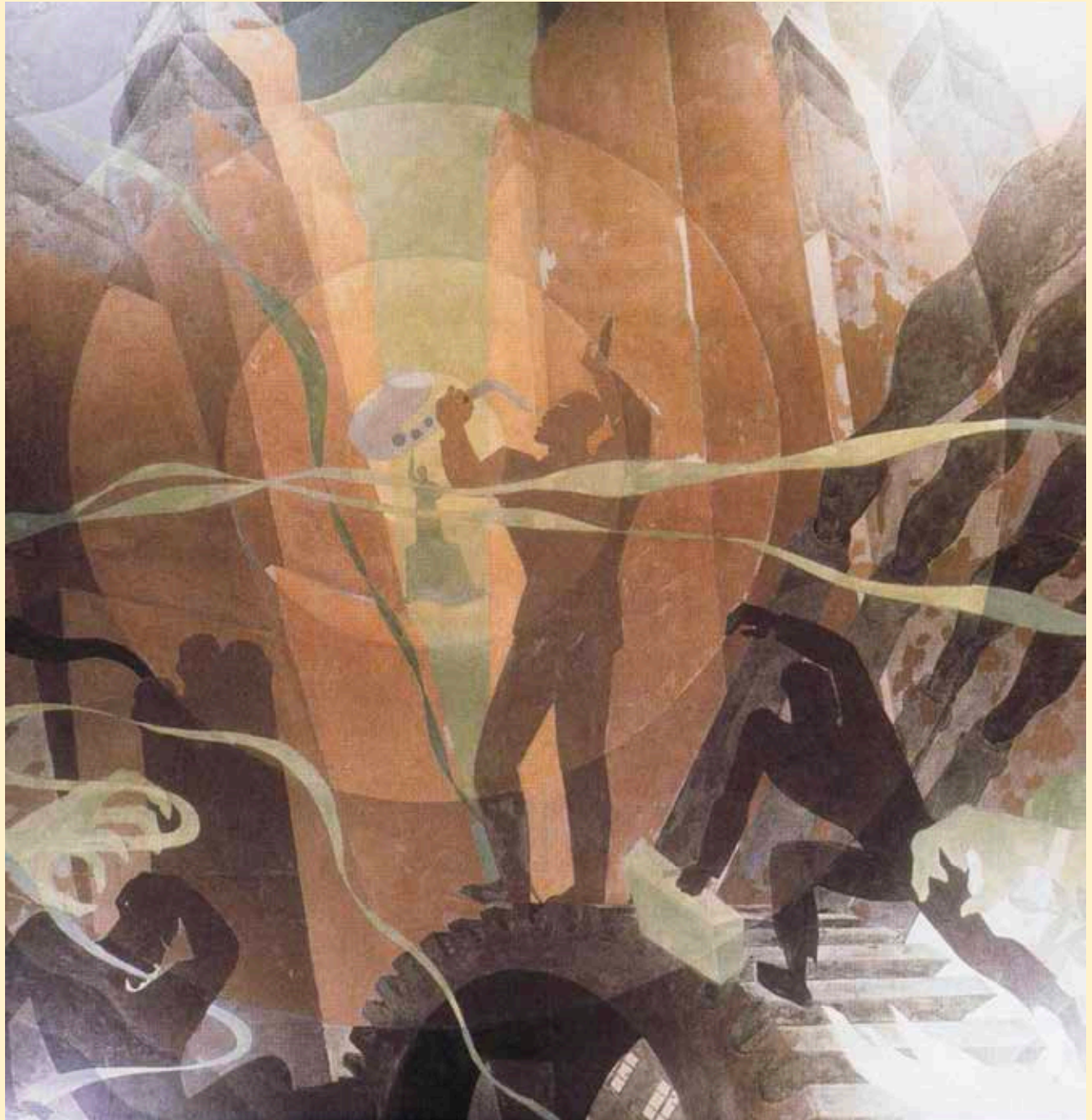
Above James Van Der Zee, *Couple wearing raccoon coats with a Cadillac*, taken on West 127th Street, Harlem, New York, 1932. Photograph.

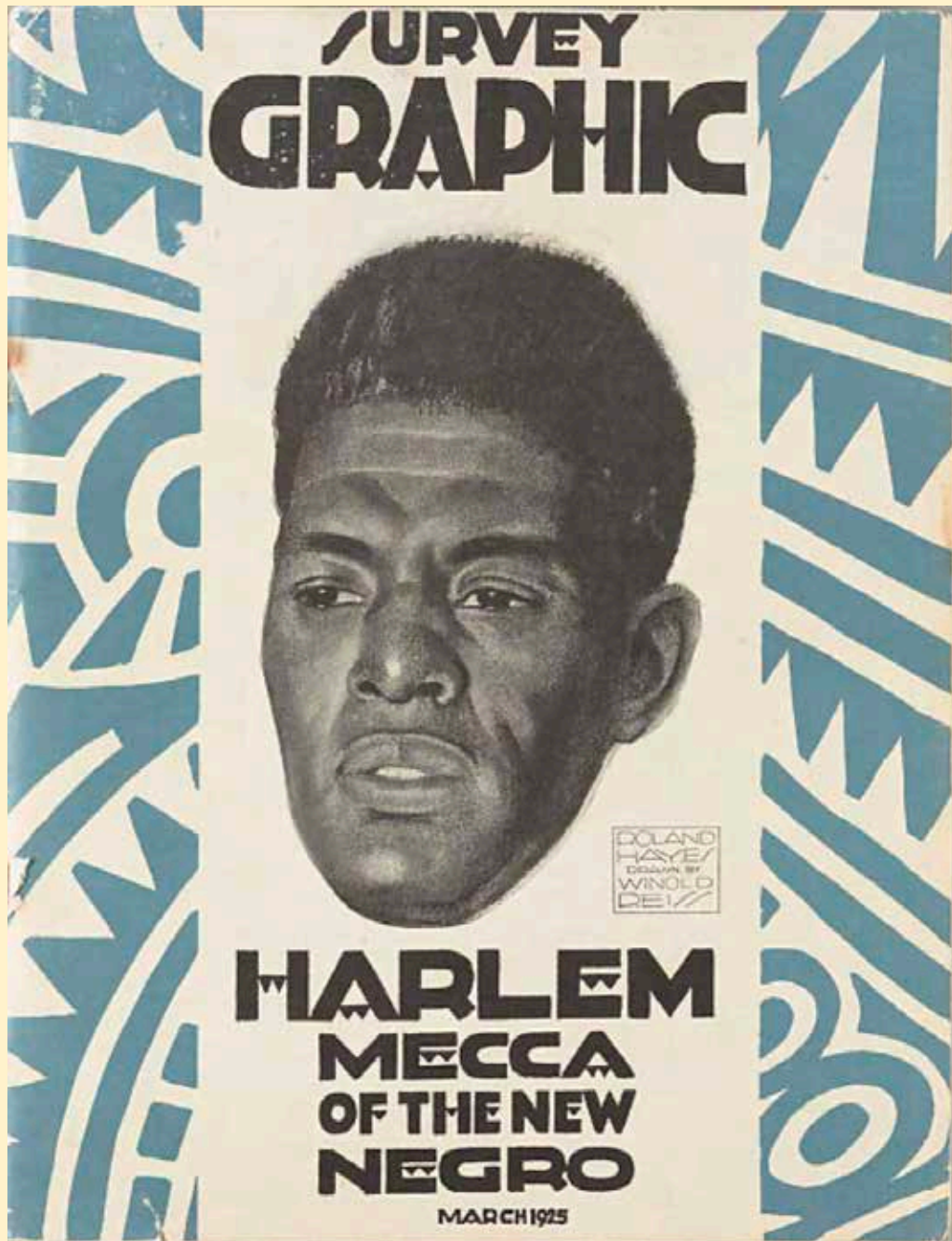
Right: Doris Ullman, *Baptism in River*, South Carolina, 1929.



HARLEM: MECCA & METAPHOR

Aaron Douglas, *Aspects of Negro Life, Panel 4: Song of the Towers*, 1934. Oil on canvas,



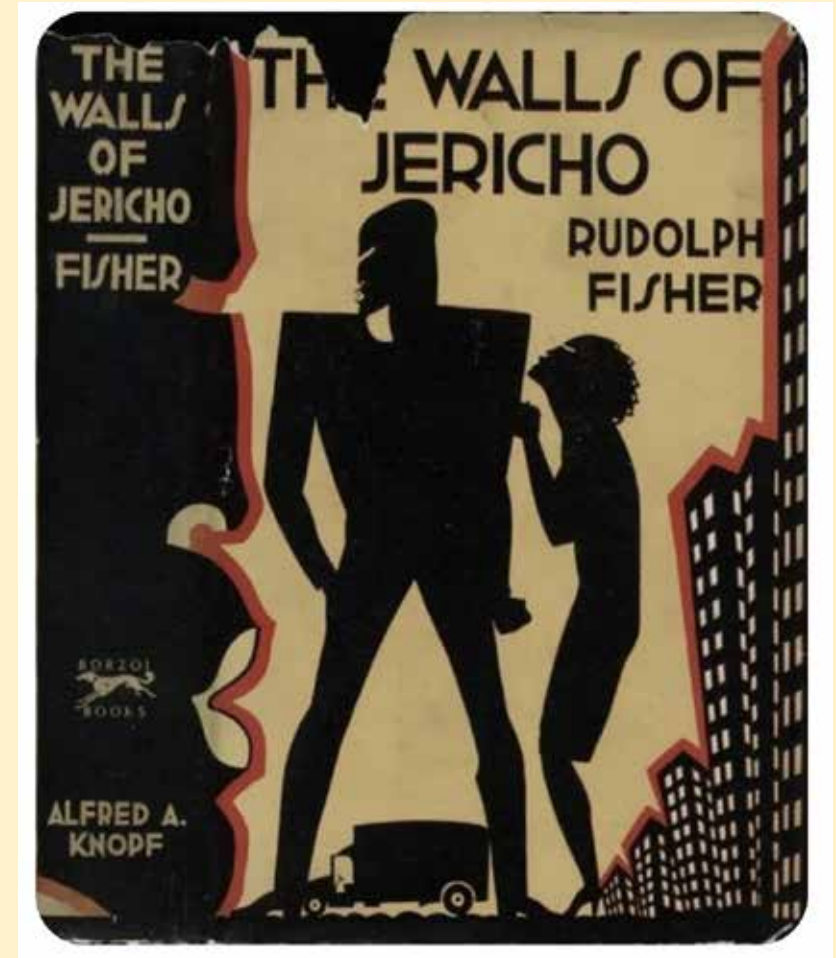


"The truth about 5th Avenue has only half been told, that it harbors an aristocracy of residence already yielding to an aristocracy of commerce. Has any New Yorker confessed to the rest – that when aristocratic 5th Avenue crosses 110th Street, leaving Central Park behind, it leaves its aristocracy behind as well? Here are bargain-stores, babble, and kids, dinginess, odors, thick speech. Fallen from splendor and doubtless ashamed, the Avenue burrows into the ground – plunges beneath a park which hides it from 116th to 125th Street. Here it emerges moving uncertainly northward a few more blocks; irony of ironies – finds itself in Negro Harlem."

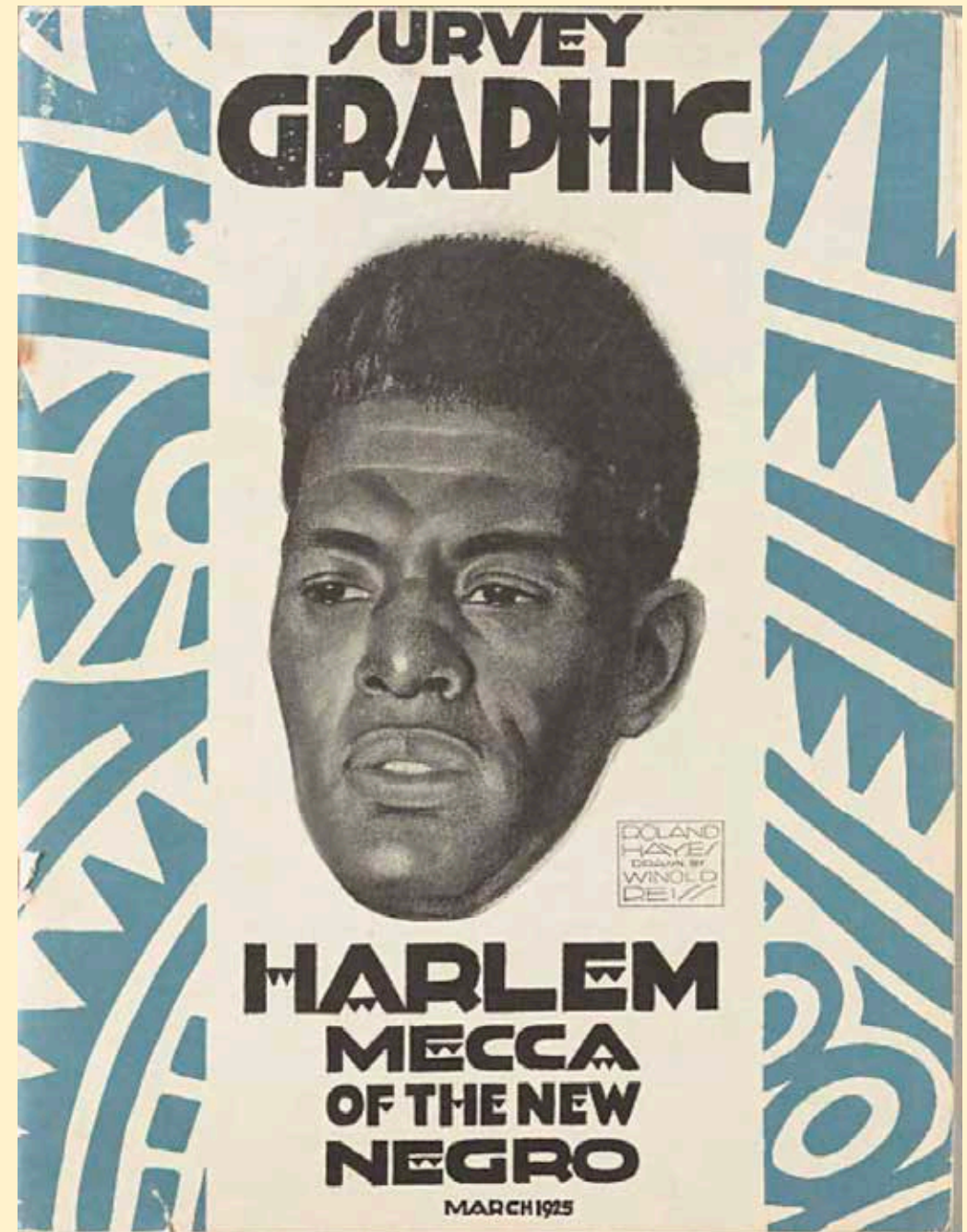
Winold Reiss, Portrait of classical singer Roland Hayes, on the cover of *Survey Graphic*'s special issue "Harlem, Mecca of the New Negro," which Reiss also designed, March 1925.

"You can see the Avenue change expression –blankness, horror, conviction. You can almost see it wag its head in self-commiseration. Not just because this is Harlem – there are proud streets in Harlem: Seventh Avenue of a Sunday afternoon, Strivers' Row, and The Hill. Fifth Avenue's shame lies in having missed the so-called dicky sections, in having poked its head out into the dark kingdom's backwoods. A city jungle this, if ever there was one, peopled largely by untamed creatures that live and die for the moment only. Accordingly, here strides melodrama, naked and unashamed."

Rudolph Fisher, from *The Walls of Jericho* (1928)



Winold Reiss, Portrait of classical singer Roland Hayes, on the cover of *Survey Graphic*'s special issue "Harlem, Mecca of the New Negro," which Reiss also designed, March 1925.





James Van Der Zee, *James Van Der Zee*, 1931. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.



James Van Der Zee, *Interior*, *GGG Photo Studio*, 1930. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.



Clockwise (from upper left):

James Van Der Zee, *Marcus Garvey in Regalia*, 1924. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

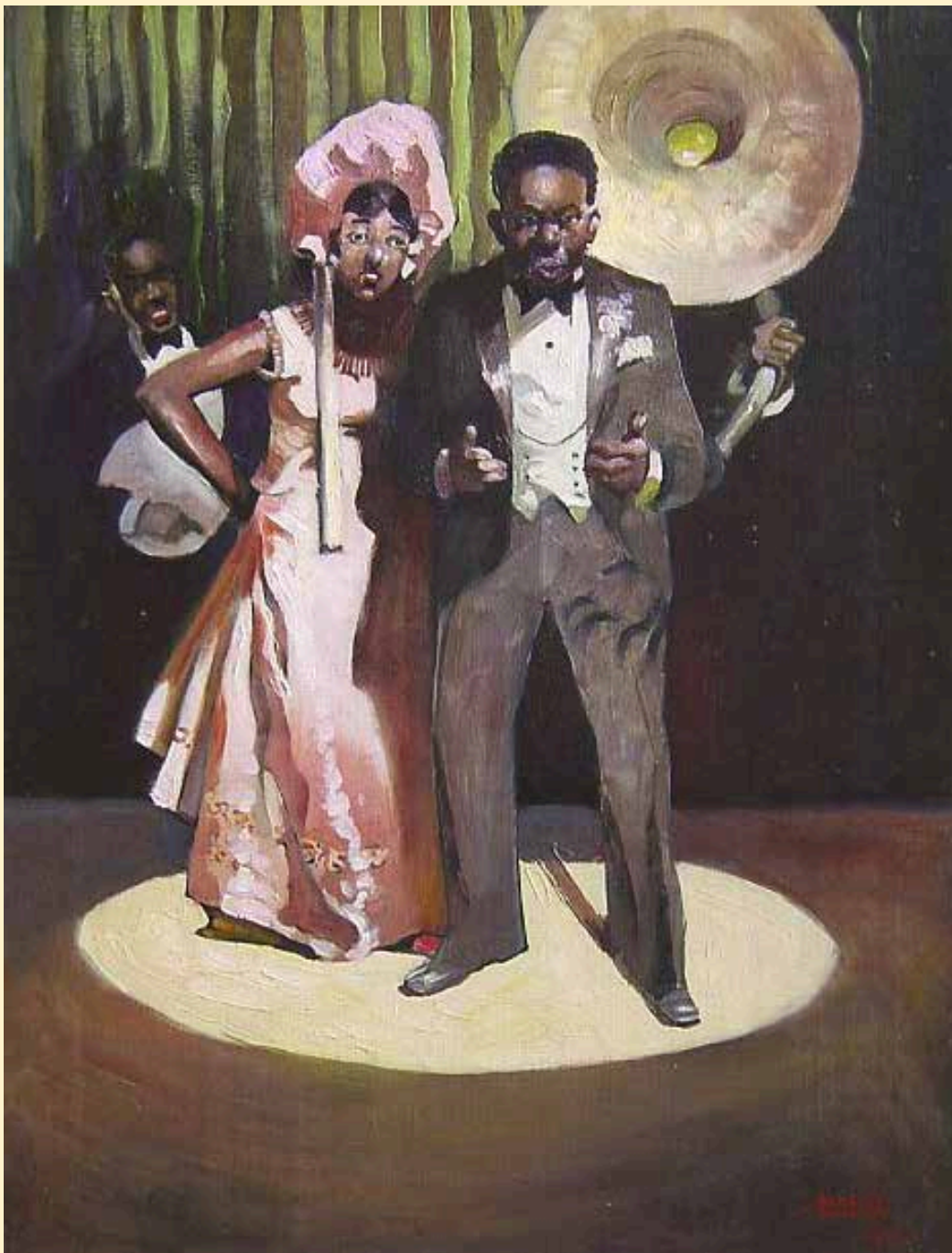
James Van Der Zee, *Black Cross Nurses*, 1924. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.



James Van Der Zee, *Parade Along Seventh Avenue*, circa 1924. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

James Van Der Zee, *The Dark Tower*, 1929. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

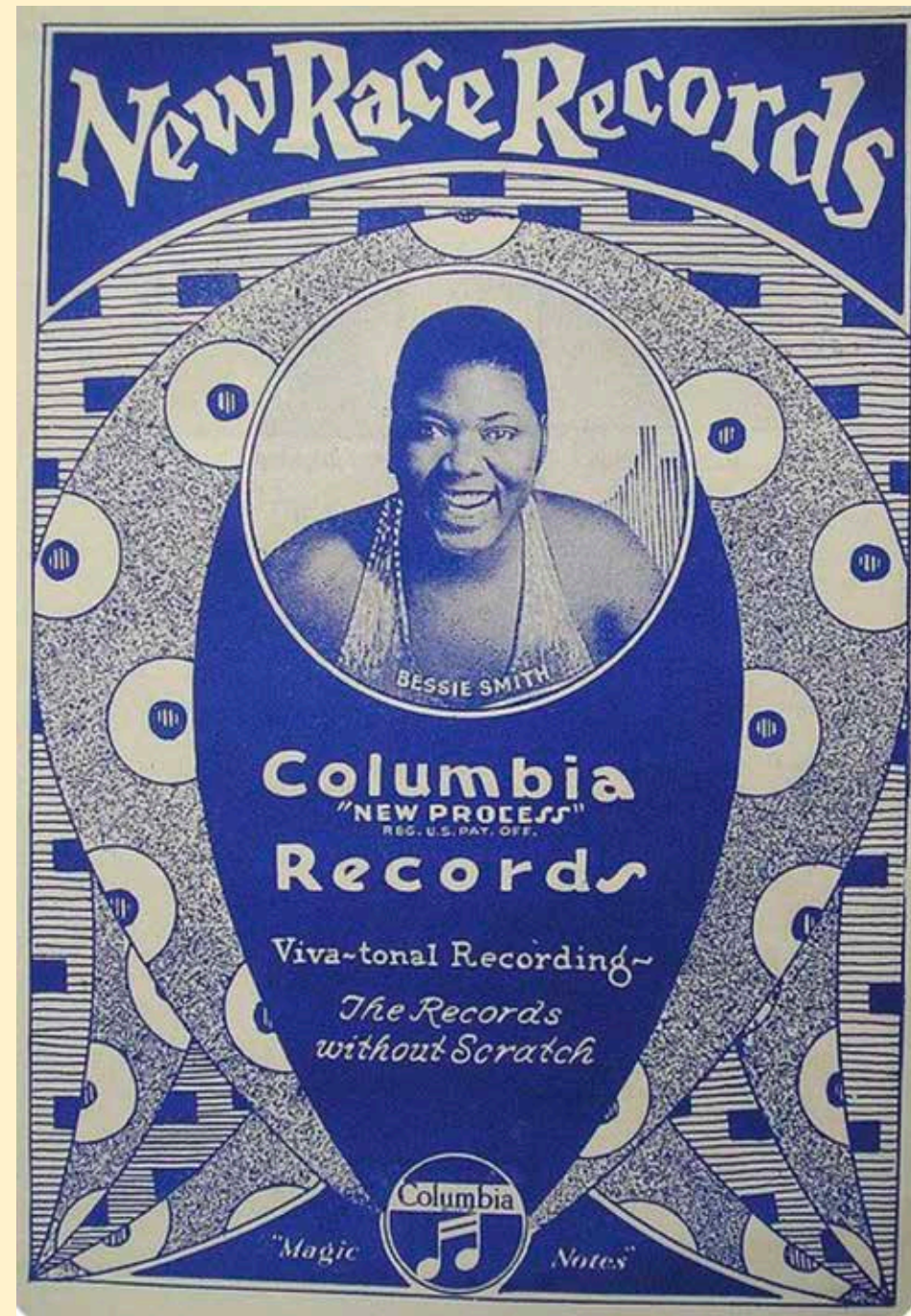




REVUE NEGRE

Left: Albert Alexander Smith, *Cabaret*, 1932. Oil on canvas.

Right: Advertisement for Columbia Records "New Race Records," c. 1929.





“Her face was beautiful with the rich ripe beauty of southern darkness, a deep bronze, matching the bronze of her bare arms. Walking slowly to the footlights, to the accompaniment of the wailing, muted brasses, the monotonous African pounding of the drums, the dromedary glide of the pianist’s fingers over the responsive keys, she began her strange, rhythmic rites in a voice full of shouting and moaning and praying and suffering, a wild, rough Ethiopian voice, harsh and volcanic, but seductive and sensuous too, released between rouged lips and the whitest of teeth. . . .”

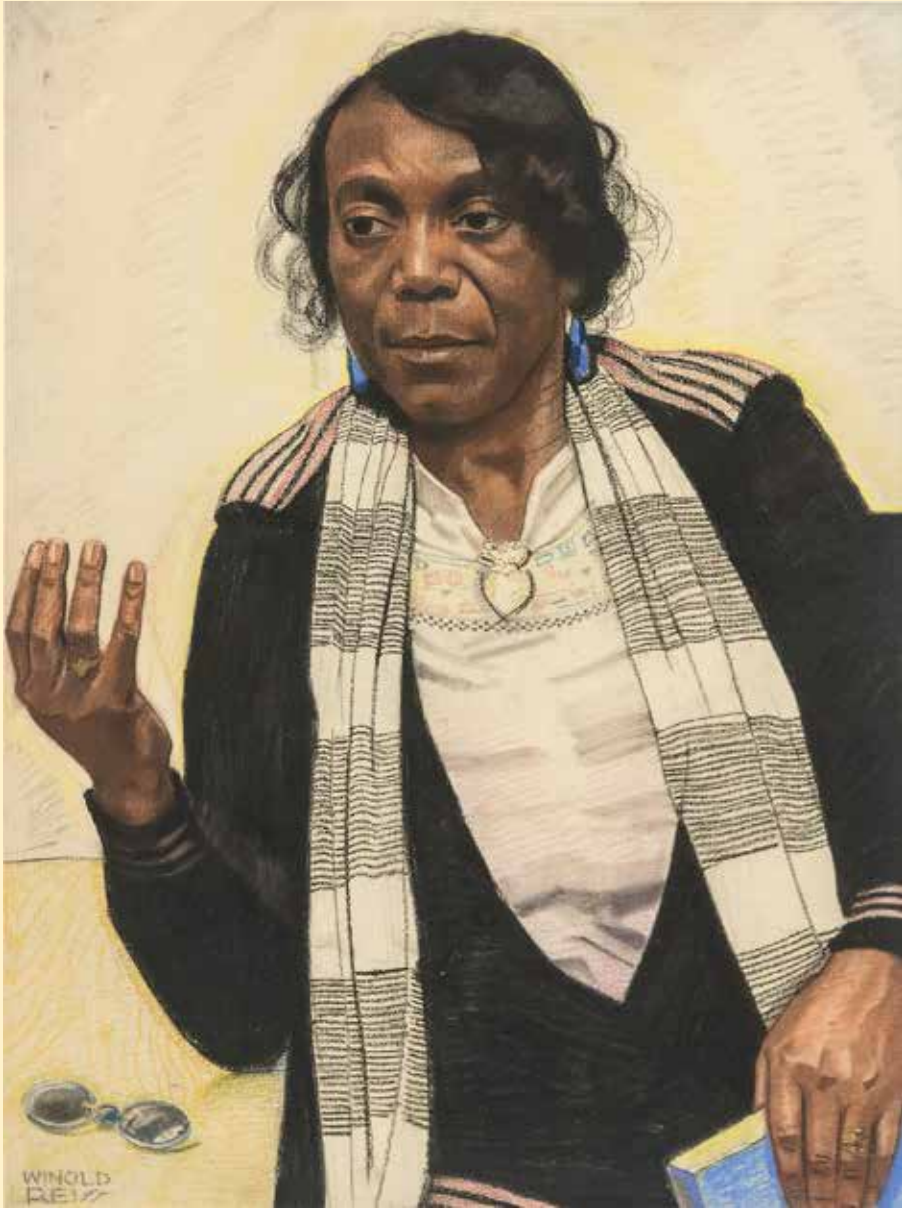
Carl Van Vechten, From “Negro Blues Singers,” *Vanity Fair*, March 1926



Left: Miguel Covarrubias, *Rhapsody in Blue*, 1927. Oil on canvas.



Right: Archibald J. Motley, Jr., *Blues*, 1929. Oil on canvas.



Left: Winold Reiss, *The Actress (Fanny Belle DeKnight)*, c. 1927. Pastel on Whatman board.

Above: Winold Reiss, *Hot Chocolates*, 1929. Crayon and pastel on paper.



Clockwise from upper left: Photo of filmmaker Oscar Micheaux (1884-1951); Film still from *Black and Tan* (USA, 1929, directed by Dudley Murphy); Film still from *The Melancholy Dame* (USA, 1929, dir. Arvid Gillstrom); Film still from *The Emperor Jones* (USA, 1934, dir. Dudley Murphy); 2 film stills from *Hallelujah* (USA, 1929, dir. King Vidor).





1920. ----- *I returned to France. In the post-War bars. So sublime, so heartrending, are the accents of jazz, that we all realize that a new form is needed for our mode of feeling. But the basis of it all? Sooner or later, I tell myself, we shall have to respond to this summons from the darkness and go out to see what lies behind this overweening melancholy that calls from the saxophones. How can we stand still while the ice of time is melting between our warm hands?*
En route!

1925. ----- *Jibuti.*

1927. ----- *Havana, New Orleans, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Virginia, the Carolinas, Charleston, Harlem.-----Guadeloupe, Martinique, Trinidad, Curacao, Haiti, Jamaica, Cuba, Alabama, Mississippi.*

1928. ----- *Dakar, Guinea, Senegambia, the Sudan, the Southern Sahara, the Niger, Timbuktu, the Mossi country, the Ivory Coast.*

30,000 miles. 28 Negro countries.

Paul Morand, From the Introduction, *Black Magic (Magie Noire)*, 1928.

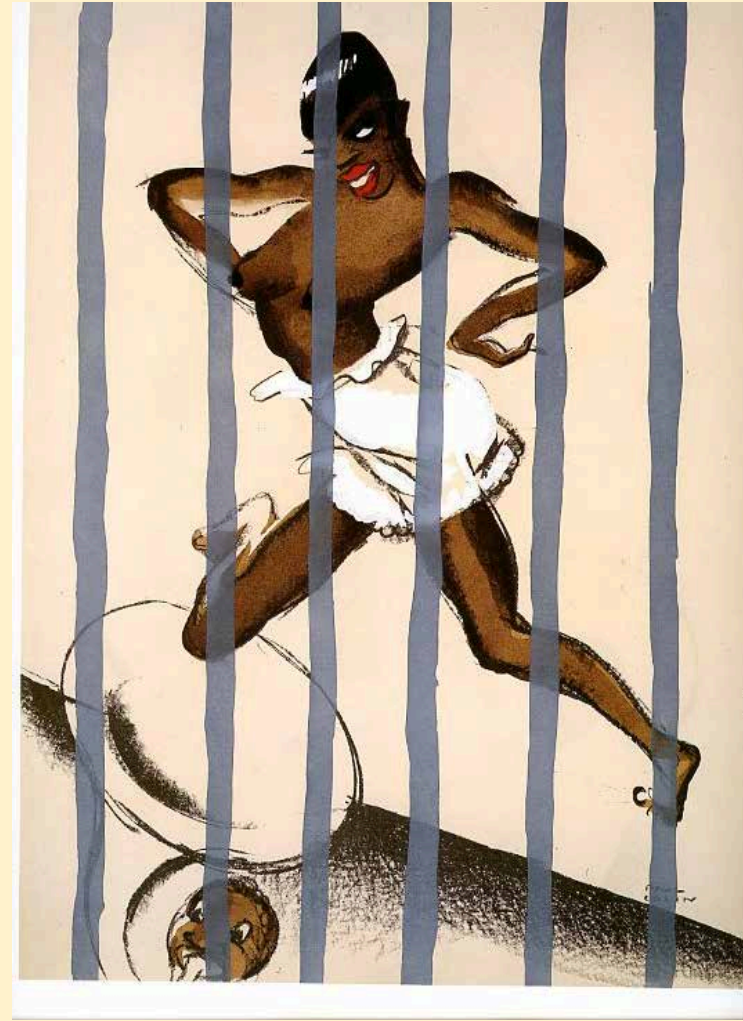
Left: Richmond Barthé, *Feral Benga*, 1935. Bronze.

Right: Malvina Hoffman, *Mangbetu Woman*, 1929. Bronze.





Left: Madame, d'Ora, *Josephine Baker*, circa 1925. Photograph.



Right: Paul Colin, From *Le Tumulte Noir*, circa 1927. Lithograph.

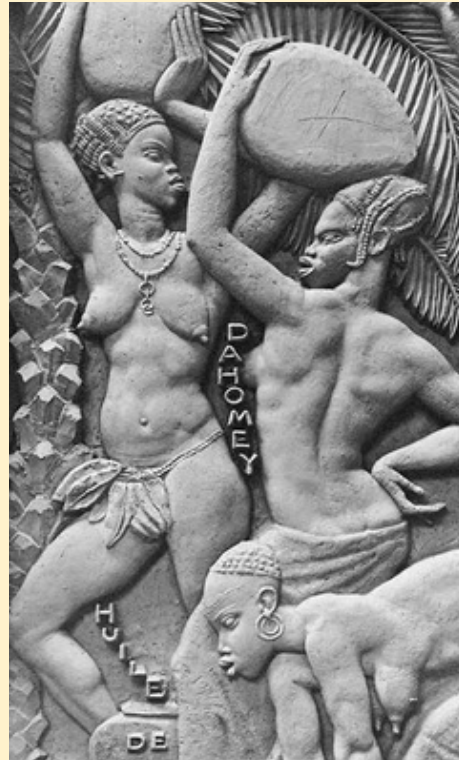


Counterclockwise, from top: Charles C. Dawson, Advertisement for Madagasco Hair Straightener, from the *Chicago Defender* 1925.

George Platt-Lynes' portrait of Jimmie Daniels (1908-1984), Cabaret singer/socialite, c. 1940s.

Film still from *Einbrecher* (Germany, 1930, Hanns Schwarz, dir.).

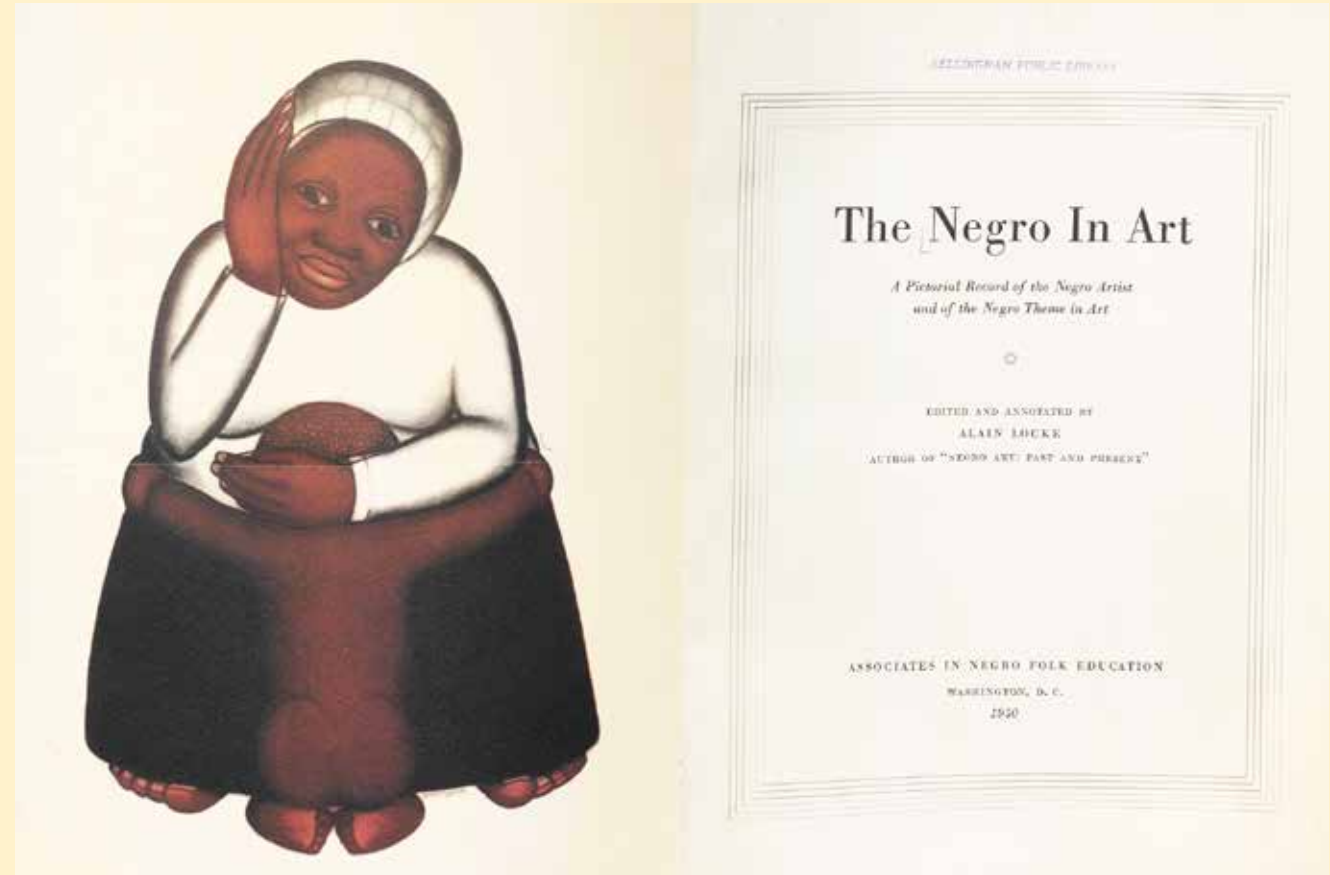
Alfred Janniot, Sculptural reliefs (details lower left and lower center left), 1931, for the façade of the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris (formerly the Palais de la Porte Dorée, for the Paris Colonial Exposition).



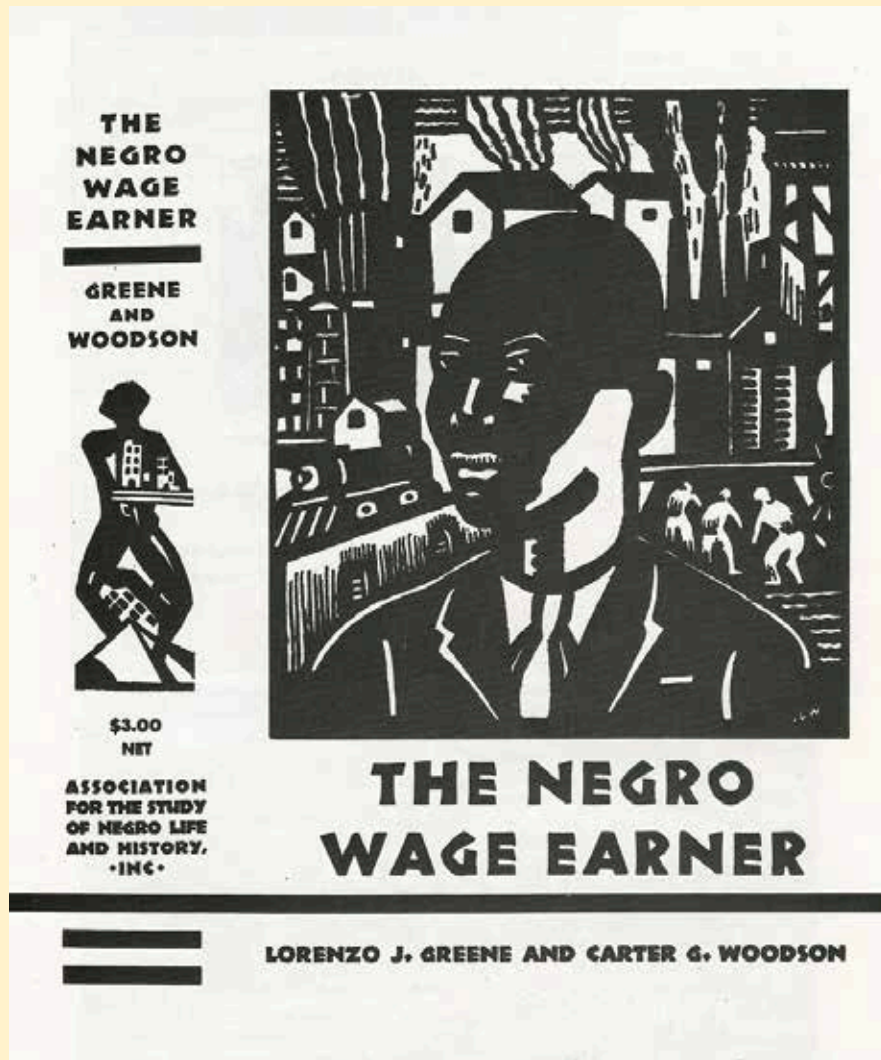
FROM NEW NEGRO TO NEW DEAL



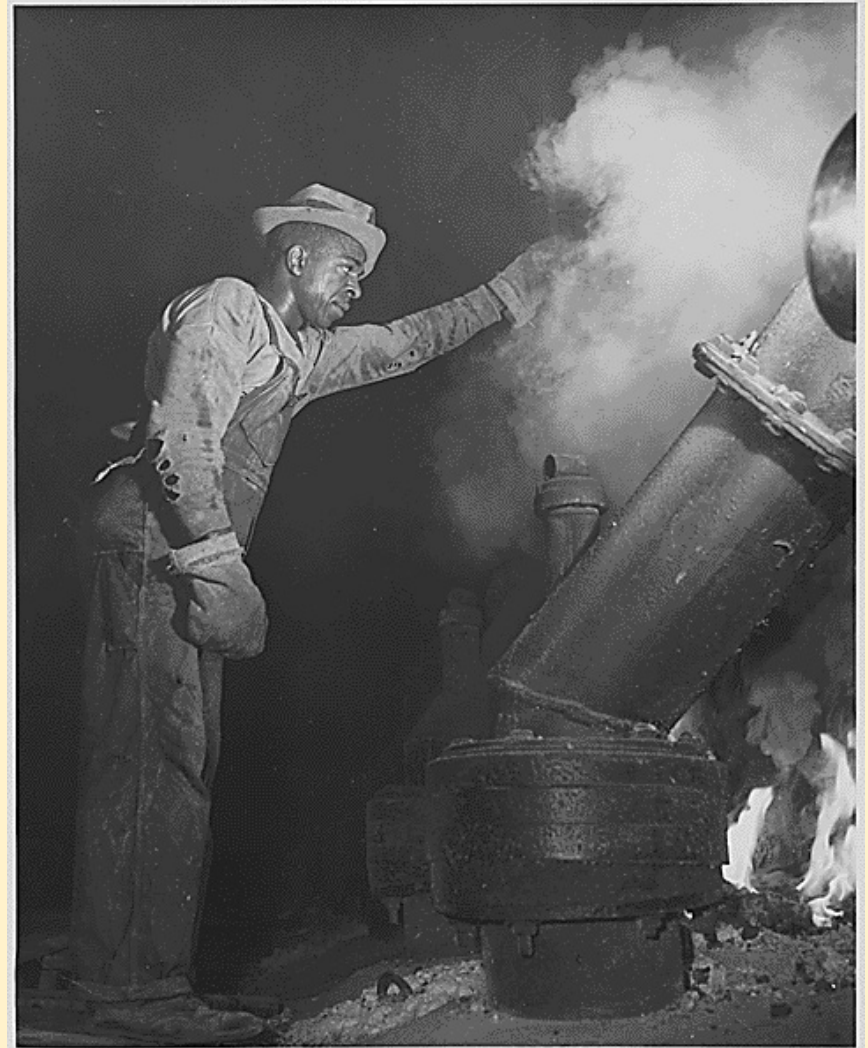
Left: Frontispiece by Winold Reiss & title page of Alain Locke, ed., *The New Negro* (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1925).



Right: Frontispiece by Sargent Johnson & title page of Alain Locke, ed., *The Negro In Art* (Washington, DC: Associates in Negro Folk Education, 1942).



Left: James Lesesne Wells, Book jacket for *The Negro Wage Earner*, 1930. Offset lithograph.



Right: Photograph of steel mill worker, Pittsburgh, PA, circa 1930s.



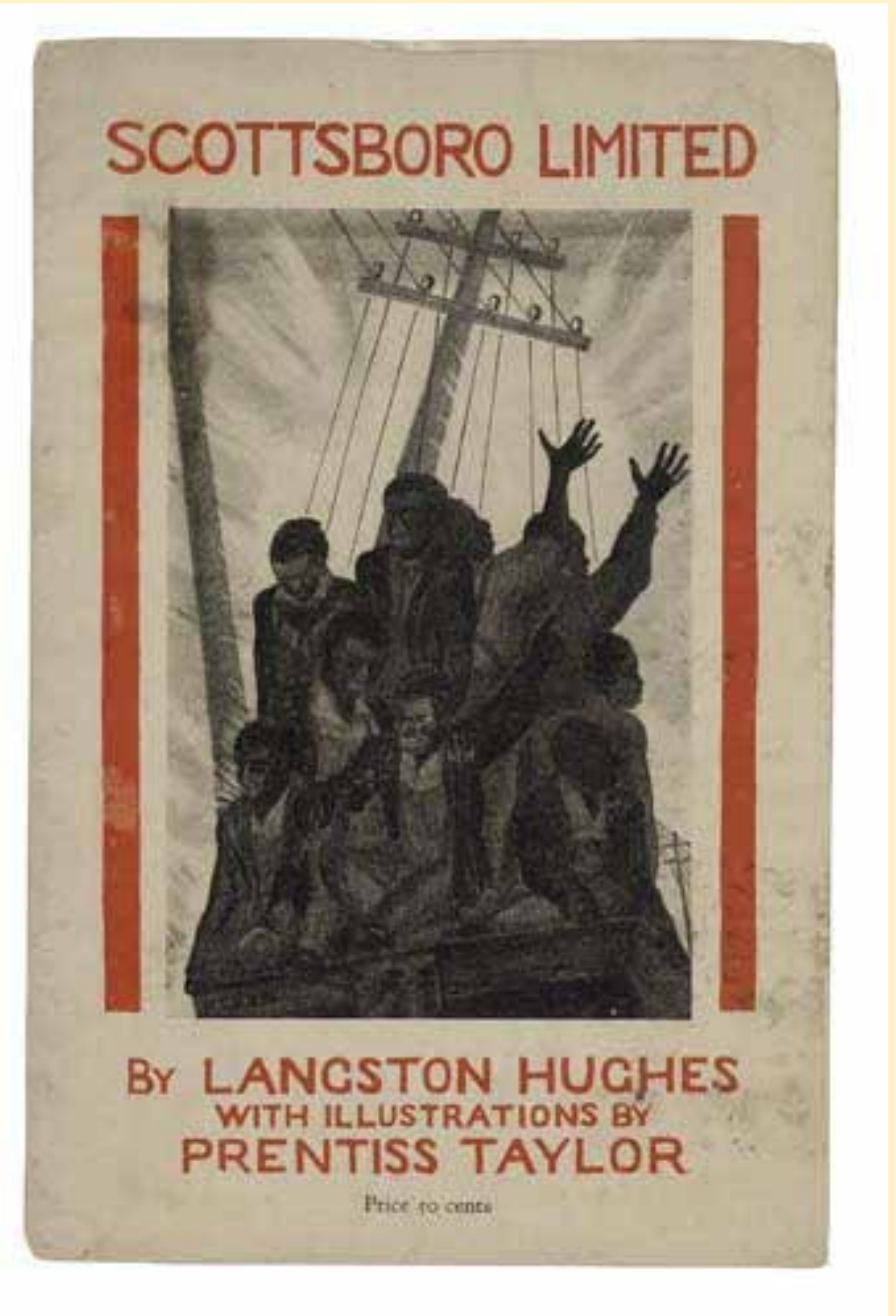
Left: Palmer C. Hayden, *Midsummer Night in Harlem*, 1936. Oil on canvas.



Right: Archibald J. Motley, Jr., *The Picnic*, 1936. Oil on canvas.



Left: Ernest Crichlow, *Lovers*, 1938. Lithograph.

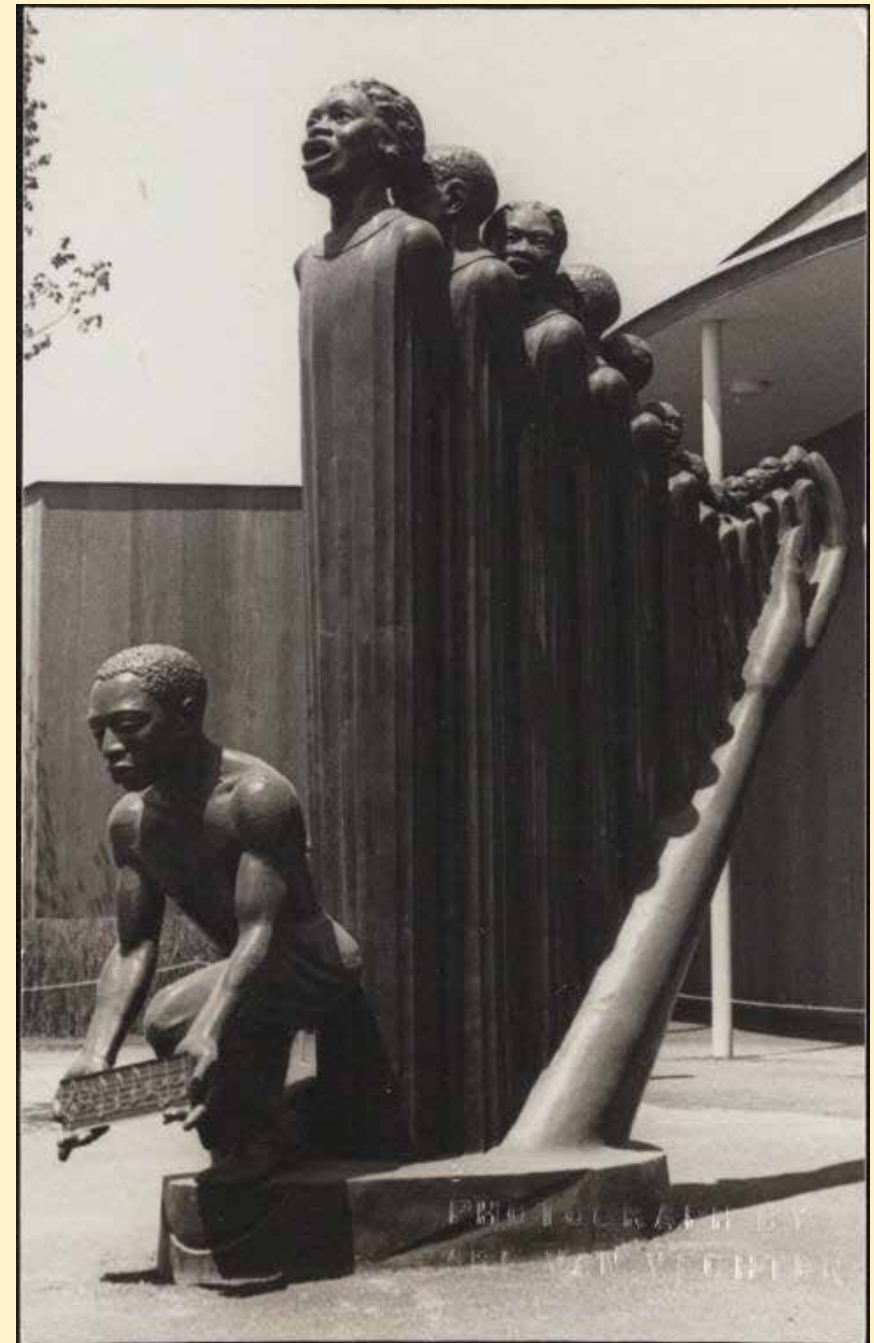


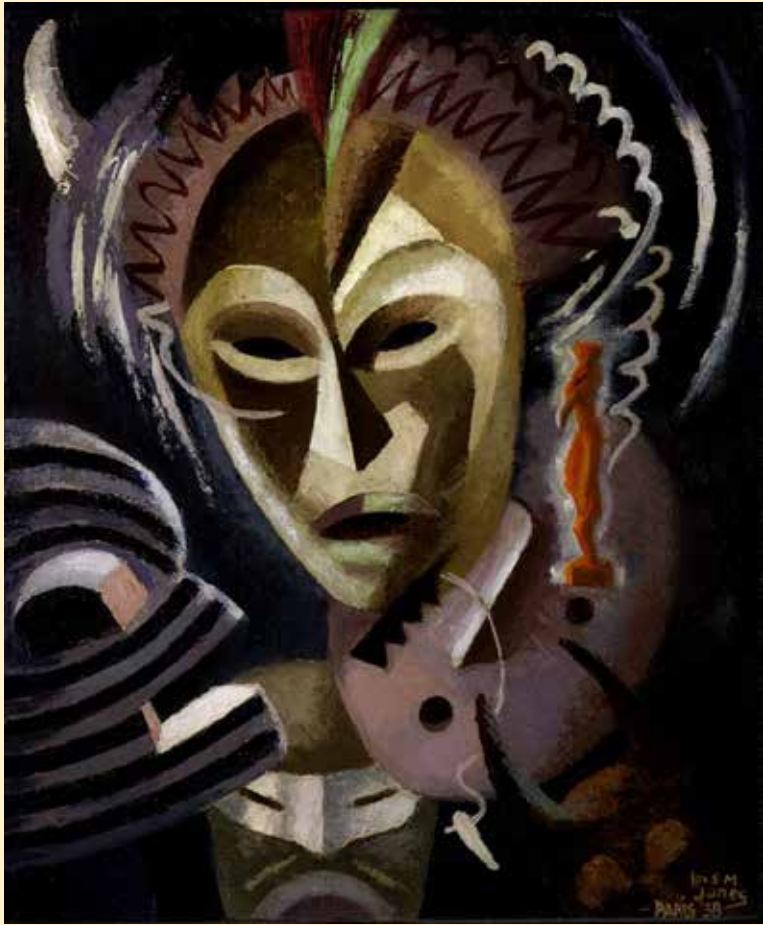
Right: Langston Hughes (text) and Prentiss Taylor (illustrations), *Scottsboro Limited*, 1932.



Above: Augusta Savage in front of her studio, Harlem, NY, circa 1940.

Right: Augusta Savage, *Lift Every Voice and Sing (The Harp)*, 1939. Plaster (Destroyed).

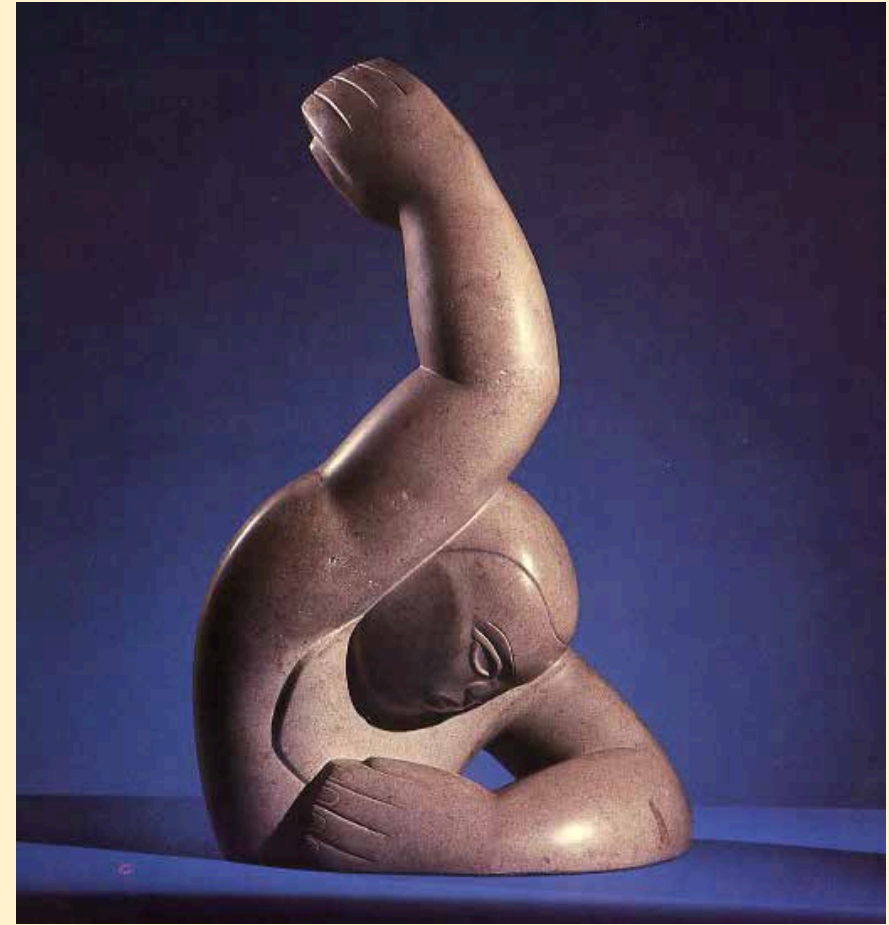




Left: Lois Mailou Jones, *Les Fétiches*, 1938. Oil on canvas.



Center: Petion Savain, Untitled block print from *La Case de Damballah*, 1939.



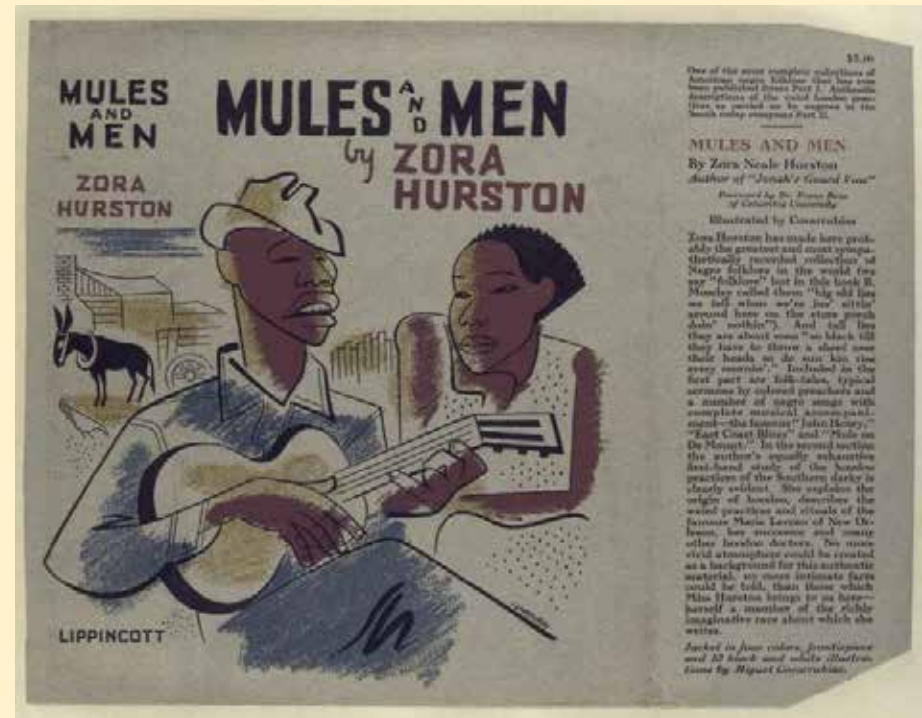
Right: Edna Manley, *Pocomania*, 1936. Hoptonwood stone.



Above: William Edmondson, *Angel*, 1932-37. Limestone.



Upper right: Anonymous photograph of Elijah and Cornelia Pierce, circa 1935



Lower right: Miguel Covarrubias, Book jacket for Zora Neale Hurston's *Mules and Men*, 1935.



“THERE CAN NEVER BE
ENOUGH
BEAUTY, LET ALONE, TOO
MUCH”

Palmer C. Hayden, *Fetich et Fleurs*, 1932. Oil on canvas.

“On the walls of the homes of the average Negro one always finds a glut of gaudy calendars, wall pockets and advertising lithographs. . . I saw in Mobile a room in which there was an over-stuffed mohair living-room suite, an imitation mahogany bed and a chifferobe, a console victrola. The walls were gaily papered with Sunday supplements of the Mobile Register. There were seven calendars and three wall pockets. One of them was decorated with a lace doily. The mantelshelf was covered with a scarf of deep home-made lace, looped up with a huge bow of pink crepe paper. Over the door was a huge lithograph showing the Treaty of Versailles being signed with a Waterman fountain pen.

It was grotesque, yes. But it indicated the desire for beauty. And decorating a decoration, as in the case of the doily on the gaudy wall pocket, did not seem out of place to the hostess. The feeling back of such an act is that there can never be enough of beauty, let alone too much. Perhaps she is right...”

Zora Neale Hurston, From “Characteristics of Negro Expression” (1932).



Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960).



Above: Poro Hair & Beauty Culture Brochure, ca. 1922.



Upper right: Murray's Superior Hair Dressing Pomade Container, ca. 1926.



Lower right: Madame C. J. Walker's Wonderful Hair Grower Advertisement, circa 1926.



Left: Archibald J. Motley, Jr., *The Octoroon Girl*, 1925. Oil on canvas.



Center: Miguel Covarrubias, *Woman in Blue Dress*, 1926. Oil on masonite.



Photographer unknown, Nora Holt (1890-1974), Singer, journalist & socialite.



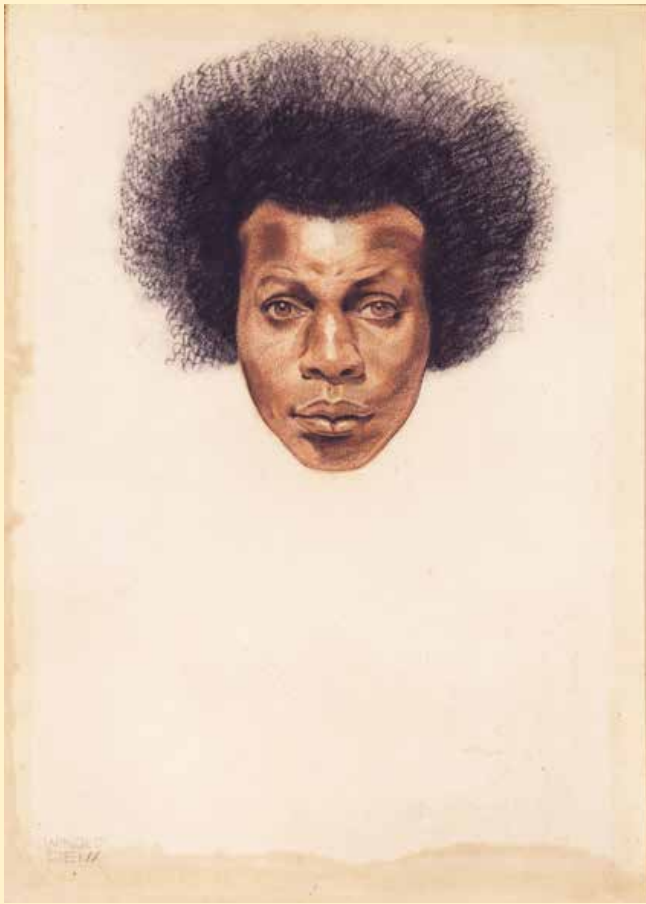
Clockwise from upper left: Laura Wheeler Waring, *Anna Washington Derry*, circa 1927. Oil on canvas.

Photographer unknown, Classical concert singer Marian Anderson.

William H. Johnson, *Portrait Study/No. 16*, 1930. Oil on canvas.

Malvin Gray Johnson, *Meditation*, 1931. Oil on canvas.



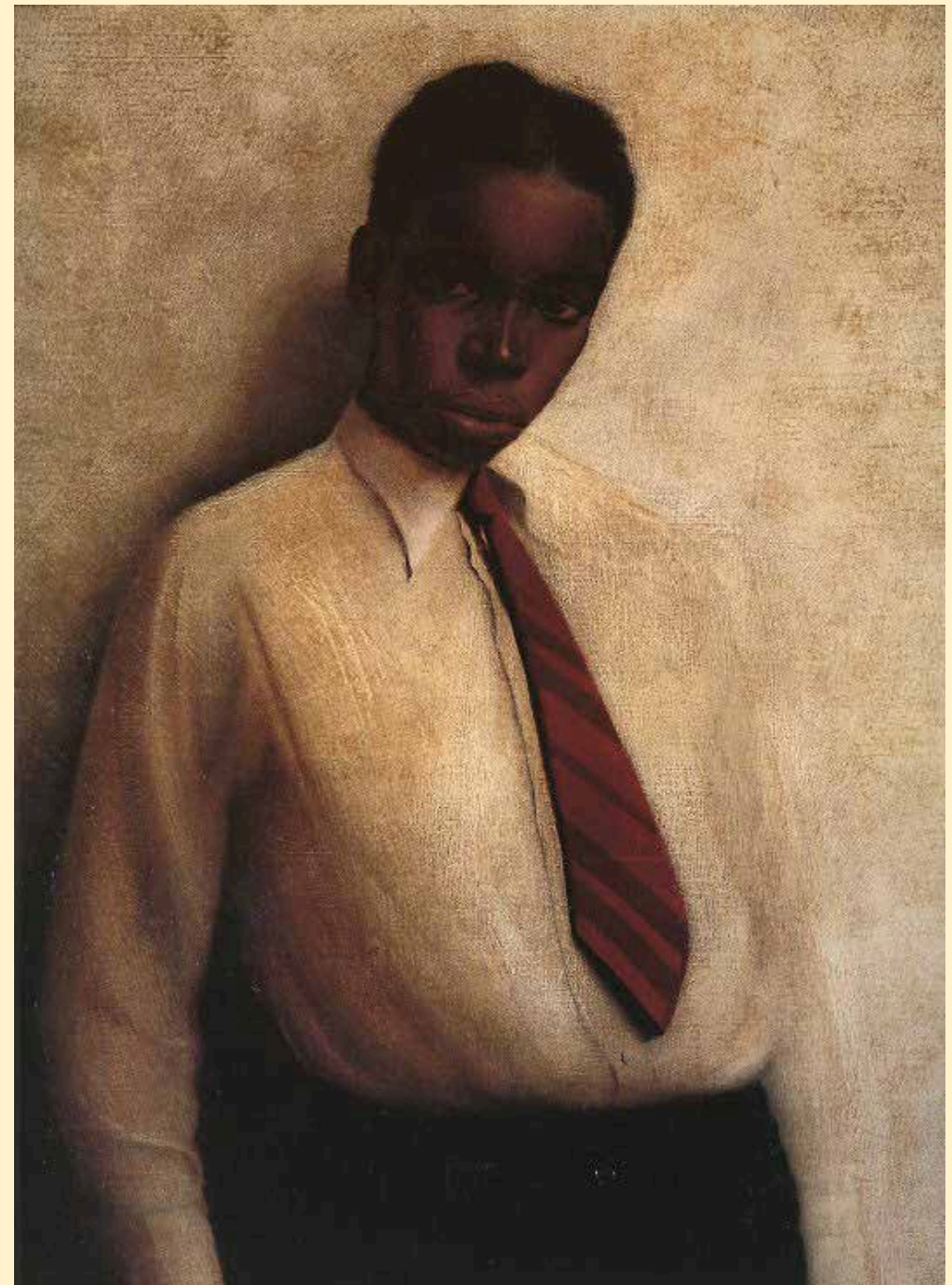


Clockwise from upper left: Winold Reiss, *Congo*, 1925. Pencil, charcoal & pastel on paperboard.

Anonymous, *Roland Hayes*, c. 1925. Platinum print.

Archibald J. Motley, Jr., *Senegalese Boy*, 1929. Oil on canvas.

William H. Johnson, *Jim*, 1930. Oil on canvas.





thé



Left: Richmond Barthé, *Stevedore*, 1937. Bronze.

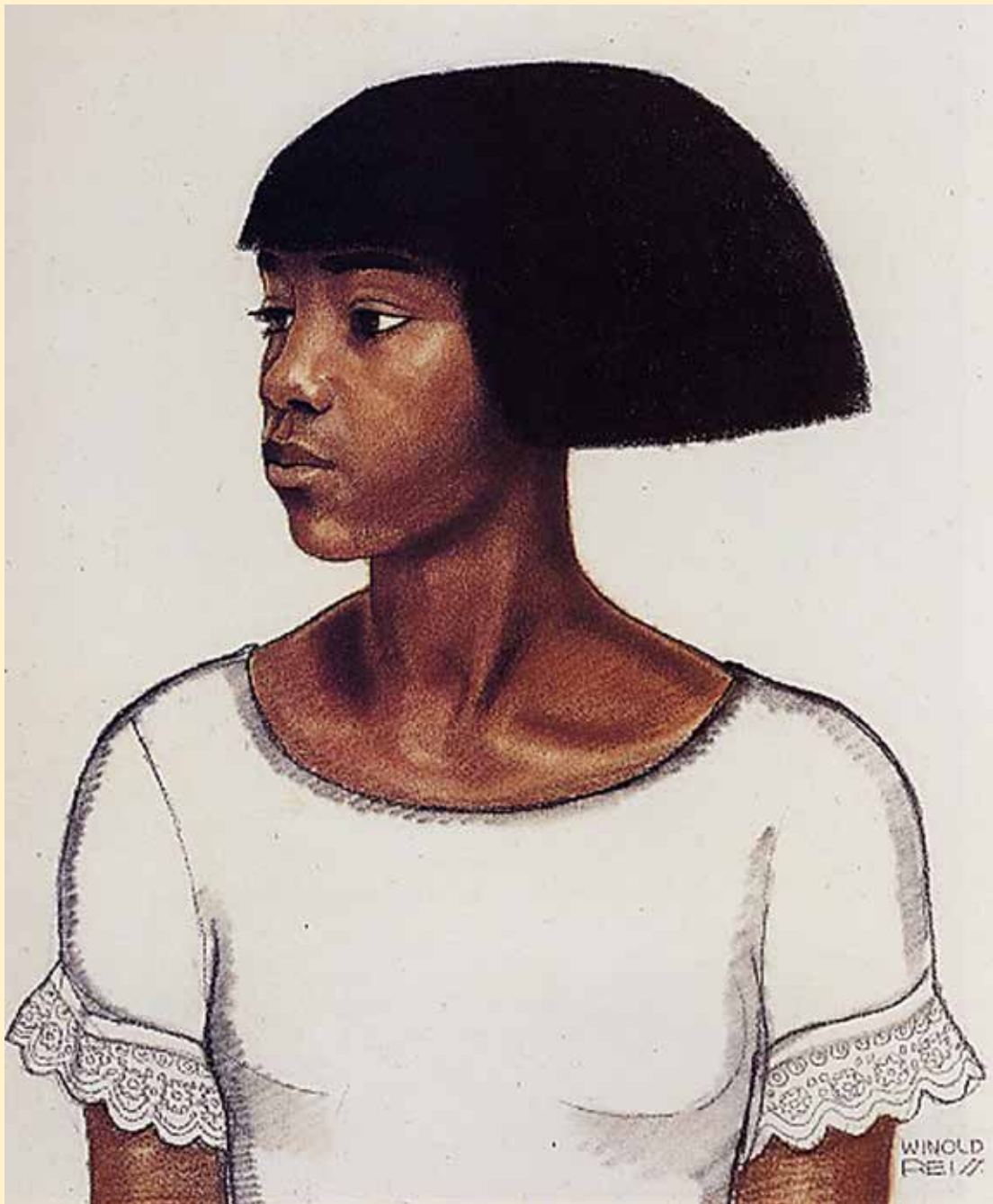
Center left: Carl Van Vechten, *Bill "Bojangles" Robinson*, 1933. Silver gelatin print.



Center right: Carl Van Vechten, *Aaron Douglas*, 1933. Silver gelatin print.



Right: Walker Evans, *Havana Citizen*, 1933. Photograph.



Left: Winold Reiss, *Harlem Girl I*, 1925. Pencil, charcoal & pastel on paperboard.

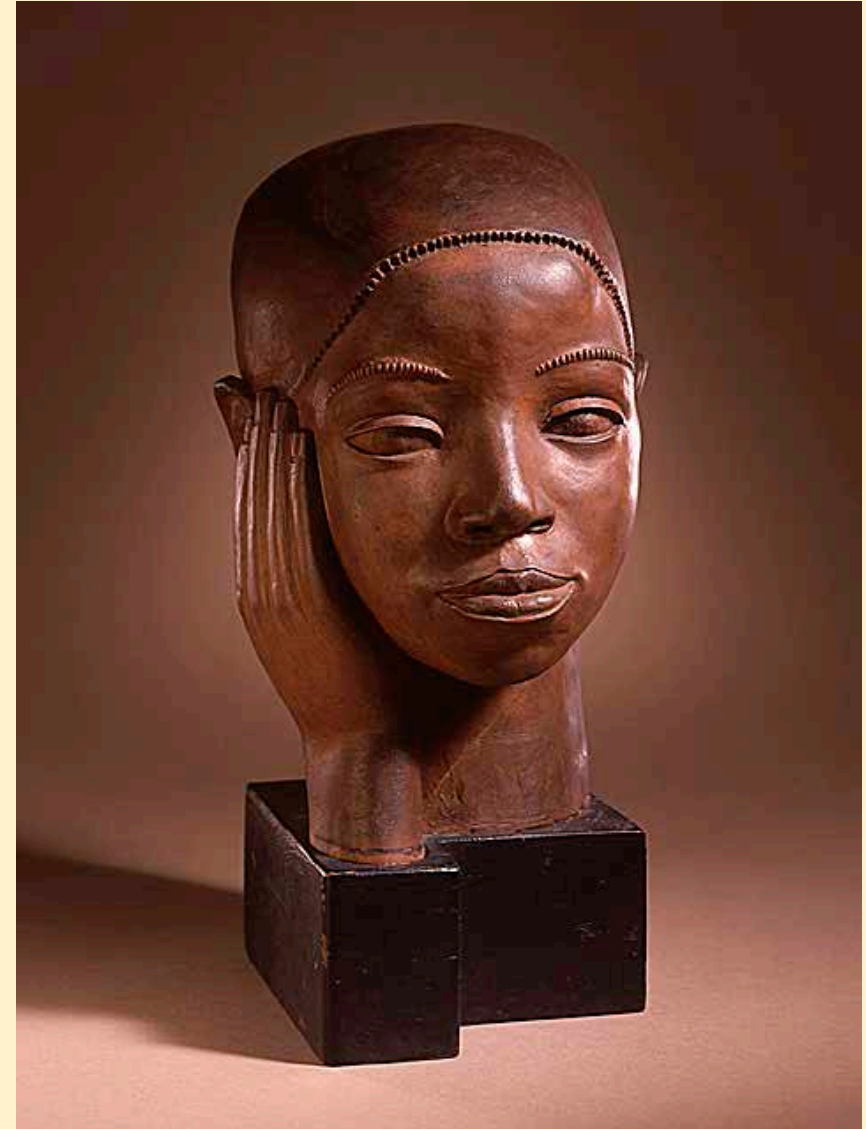
Above: James Van Der Zee, *Girls Dancing*, 1928.



Above: Richard Samuel Roberts, *Cornelius C. Roberts*, circa 1925. Photograph.

Center: Augusta Savage, *Gamin*, ca. 1929. Painted plaster, 9 inches.

Right: Sargent Johnson, *Chester*, 1930. Painted terracotta, 11 ½ inches.





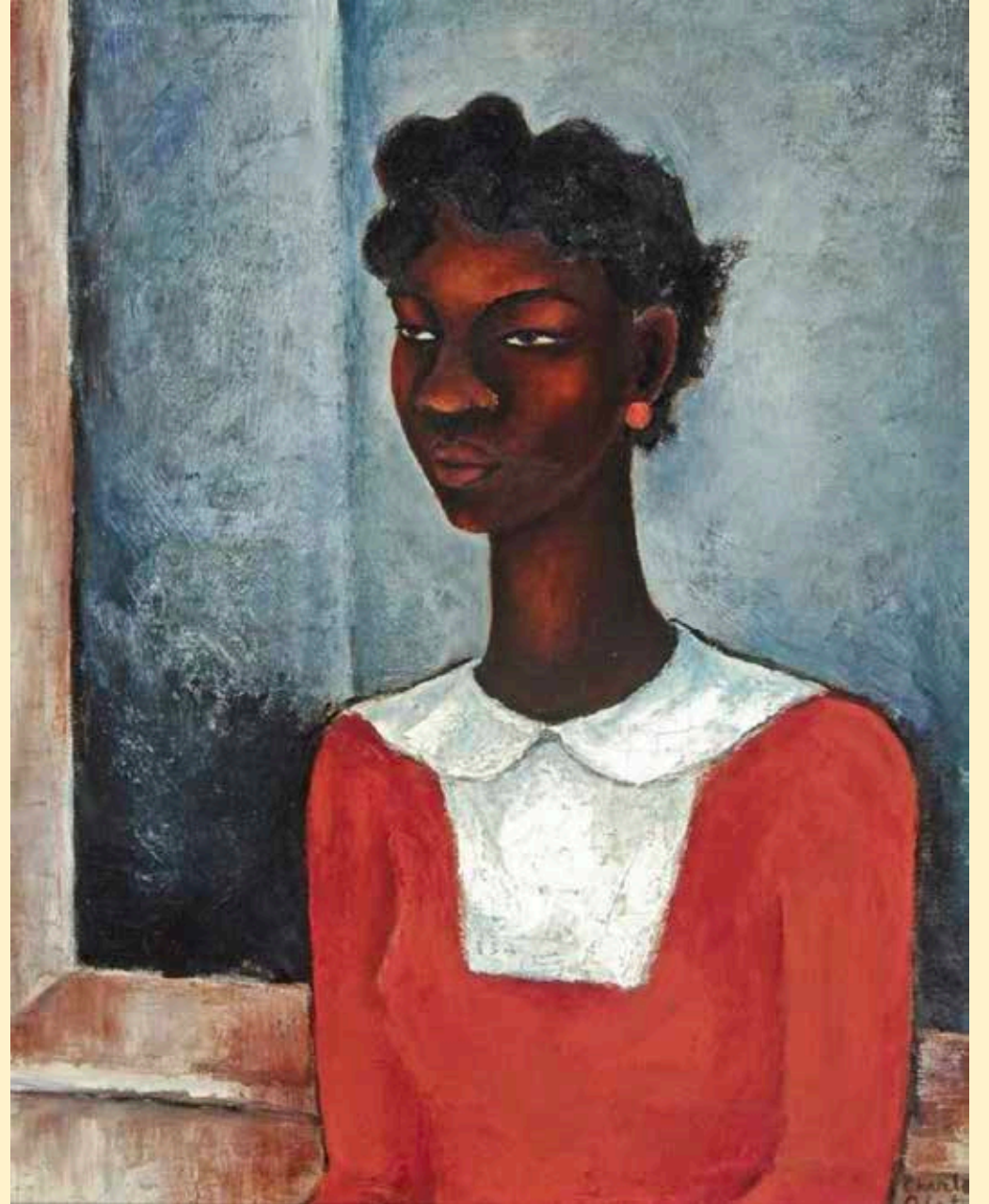
Children looking up at *Midonz* (1937), by the British/Jamaican sculptor Ronald Moody (1900-1984), at the Baltimore Museum of Art, 1939.

“ . . . We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased, we are glad. If they are not, it doesn’t matter. We know we are beautiful. And ugly, too. The tom-tom cries and the tom-tom laughs. If colored people are pleased, we are glad. If they are not, their displeasure doesn’t matter either. We build our temples for tomorrow, strong as we know how, and we stand on top of the mountain, free within ourselves.”

Langston Hughes, From “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” (from *The Nation*, 1926).

*"Your problem Langston, my problem,
no our problem is to conceive, develop,
establish an art era. Not white art
painted black..."*

Charles Alston, *Girl in a Red Dress*, 1934. Oil on canvas.





"No, let's bare our arms and plunge them deep, deep through laughter, through pain, through sorrow, through hope, through disappointment, into the very depths of the souls of our people and drag forth material crude, rough, neglected . . ."

Left: Malvin Gray Johnson, *Self-Portrait*, 1934. Oil on canvas.

*“Then let’s sing it, dance it, write
it, paint it . . . ”*

Carl Van Vechten, *Cab Calloway*, 1932. Silver gelatin print.



*Let's do the impossible.
Let's create something
transcendentally material,
mystically objective.
Earthy. Spiritually earthy.
Dynamic."*

Aaron Douglas to Langston Hughes Papers, c. 1925.



William H. Johnson, *Jacobia Hotel*, 1930. Oil on canvas.



MODERNITY = BLACKNESS

Sargent Johnson, *Negro Woman*, 1933. Terracotta.