

## FOCUS

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## B<sup>l</sup>ack H<sup>l</sup>istory M<sup>l</sup>onth

### A<sup>l</sup> for Affirmative Action

By JANUS ADAMS

The term, "affirmative action" was first used by John F. Kennedy in his Executive Order No. 10925 of March 6, 1961, which established the President's Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity: "The contractor will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and employees are treated fairly during their employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin..." But, said President Lyndon Johnson, "Freedom is not enough. You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him to the starting line of a race and then say, 'You are free to compete with all others,' and still justly believe you have been completely fair." And what did he propose? "We seek not just freedom but opportunity," said Johnson. "We seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result." That summer Johnson's Executive Order No. 11246 would spell out the terms of affirmative action.

### B<sup>l</sup> for Black Arts Movement

By THE SCHOMBURG CENTER

The Civil Rights Movement had a powerful impact on African American visual artists, inspiring countless works that pointedly

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explored political and cultural issues. Later in the 1960s, the Black Arts Movement intensified this new spirit, which emphasized self-determination and brought art home to the African American community. In a number of eastern and midwestern cities, black artists painted huge outdoor murals celebrating Civil Rights leaders and black nationalists. By the 1980s, the intensely political focus of the Black Arts Movement had subsided. Since that time, African American artists have maintained a keen social consciousness, drawing on the insights of previous generations, but they have also explored the full range of styles and techniques available to contemporary artists.



The Black Arts Movement was described by African American writer, Larry Neal in 1968 as "the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept."

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