

Alma Woodsey Thomas

She had her first one-woman show at the age of 68 and developed her signature style seven years later. Despite her belated start, Alma Woodsey Thomas went on to have retrospectives at the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the National Museum of American Art, both in Washington, D.C.; she was the first African American woman to have a solo show at the Whitney Museum of American Art; and she exhibited her paintings at the White House on three occasions.

Thomas was born and raised in Columbus, Georgia. In 1907 she moved with her family to Washington, D.C., into the house where she spent the remaining seven decades of her life. After graduating from high school, where she excelled at art, Thomas earned a teaching certificate and, later, a master's degree in art education. Throughout her life, Thomas concentrated on her career; she painted part time while supporting herself by teaching art, notably at Shaw Junior High School, where she worked from 1924 until her retirement in 1960.

Thomas's early art was realistic. However, at Howard University, where she was the Art Department's first graduate in 1924, she became fascinated by abstraction, based on the influence of her professors Lois Mailou Jones and James V. Herring. When she was invited to exhibit her art at Howard in 1966, Thomas decided to experiment with a new approach, the type of painting for which she is best known today: large canvases filled with dense, irregular patterns made by brushes heavily laden with bright colors. Thomas's mature work has been compared with Byzantine mosaics, the pointillist technique of Georges Seurat, and the paintings of the Washington Color School, yet her work is quite distinctive.

A lifelong political activist, Thomas offered weekly art classes to children from Washington's poorest neighborhoods even when she was suffering from severe arthritis. In her 80s, neither a broken hip nor a heart ailment prevented her from continuing to paint.

Copyright Notice: This document was generated on ArtRev.com on 10/22/2019 10:56:03 PM (U.S. Eastern Time Zone) - Copyright 2019 ArtRev.com, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The entire contents of this brochure is the property of ArtRev.com and/or its content suppliers. You may not modify, copy, reproduce, republish, or distribute any portion of this brochure without the prior express written consent of ArtRev.com, Inc.

Authenticity & Price Match Guarantee: Shop with confidence. ArtRev.com is proud to be the first online art retailer to offer a "[lifetime authenticity guarantee](#)" with every limited edition or original work of art. Most limited edition and original artworks ship with a Certificate of Authenticity free of charge. This certificate is an official and valuable document that most insurance companies require in order to insure artworks against damage or theft. ArtRev.com will make every possible attempt to match or beat the advertised price of any major Internet competitor, art gallery, or frame shop; given that they are authorized to sell the item from the publisher or artist, and have the exact item in stock available for immediate sale.

Disclaimer: The biography shown in this brochure is not meant to be a complete and comprehensive exploration of the life of the featured artist and is not guaranteed to be up-to-date. While information provided about each artist is carefully studied and reviewed prior to publishing; ArtRev.com assumes no liability for the content provided on this page. Biography Last Updated on 5/22/2009 5:09:30 PM. Please [let us know](#) if any information is out-of-date or inaccurate.