Historical sights along the route of the
Black Arts Movement Cultural and Economic District
14th Street corridor

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The Black Arts Movement District begins at the African American Museum/Library, Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and 14th Street.

14th and Clay, The Elihu Harris state building in honor of Oakland's mayor and state official.

14th and Clay, the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building, in honor of Congressman Ronald V. Dellums, an icon of Oakland's Black radical tradition, along with his uncle, C.L. Dellums.
14th and Broadway, Frank Ogawa Plaza, in honor of City Councilman Frank Ogawa, Asian American we fondly remember was sensitive to the needs of ethnic minorities. The plaza is also called Oscar Grant Plaza in honor of the young man slain by BART police.
14th and Broadway, Black Arts Movement co-founder Marvin X's Academy of da Corner, the most dangerous classroom in the world. Oakland rebellions happen in his classroom, i.e., Oscar Grant, Occupy Oakland, General Strike, Ferguson, Black Lives Matter. Ishmael Reed says, "Marvin X is Plato teaching on the streets of Oakland." photo Adam Turner

14th and Broadway, City Center BART station, Bust of John B. Williams. Williams was the first Black Redevelopment Director of Oakland. Williams is celebrated for revitalizing West Oakland, Old Oakland and portions of Chinatown along with the George Scotland Convention Center housed inside the Marriott Hotel, which is diagonal to the Key System Building where Josephine Baker led a protest for workers.
Legendary dancer, singer Josephine Baker performed at Slim Jenkins in West Oakland. "My dream is to see a resurrection of West Oakland's 7th Street, Harlem of the West, where I grew up. I'm saddened Oakland youth have no knowledge of West Oakland as the cultural and economic district of North American Africans," says BAM organizer, planner Marvin X.
14th and Franklin, BAM artists/activists gather at Joyce Gordon's Gallery in honor of slain journalist Chauncey Bailey. Joye Gordon standing far right. photo Gene Hazzard/Adam Turner

14th and Franklin, Geoffrey's Inner Circle, building owned by Geoffrey Pete, a North American African.
The building at Franklin and 14th Street, 405 14th, Suite 1215, is office of the Post News Group, Published by Paul Cobb. We demand the owners not evict the Post News Group from their BAM District location. Power to the People! We want to buy the building housing the Post. Let's make a deal!

14th and Alice, The Malonga Arts Center near the end of the Black Arts Movement District along the 14th Street Corridor.
14th and Alice is also where journalist Chauncey Bailey was slain. We demand a statue in his memory. Chauncey was a journalist in the BAM radical tradition. Alice Street should be renamed in honor of Black Arts Movement worker Michael Lange.

Mural of ancestor Michael Lange at 14th and Alice. Michael directed and performed at the Malonga Arts Center. Alice Street should be renamed in honor of Black Arts Movement worker Michael Lange.
From the archives of the Oakland Post Newspaper

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BAM Artists seek "Black Arts Movement District" in Oakland

Caption: Left to right, Amiri Baraka, chief visionary of the Black Arts Movement; Bobby Seale, co-founder of the Black Panther Party; theatre director Dr. Ayodele Nzinga; Ahi Baraka; and Marvin X at his Academy of da Corner at 14th and Broadway in downtown Oakland. Man in background is NOI fan of Marvin X. Photo by Gene Hazzard.
By Ashley Chambers, Associate Editor, Post News Group

With plans underway for BAM’s (Bay Area Black Arts Movement) 50th anniversary celebration, BAM producer Marvin X. Jackmon and Post Publisher Paul Cobb are proposing that the City Council and Mayor-elect Libby Schaaf declare 14th Street, between Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and Alice Street in downtown Oakland, as “Black Arts Movement District.”

The movement revolutionized the arts, literature and ethnic studies in America. Leading artists include Ed Bullins, Nikki Giovanni, Woodie King, Haki Madhubuti, Sonia Sanchez, Askia Touré, Marvin X, Val Gray Ward, and others.

“I think what Black Arts did was inspire a whole lot of Black people to write,” said author Ishmael Reed. “Moreover, there would be no multiculturalism movement without Black Arts. Latinos, Asian Americans, and others all say they began writing as a result of the example of the 1960s,” said Marvin.

“When the Post Newspapers were founded 50 years ago, we also founded El Mundo, a Spanish language paper as well. Many artists, writers and musicians have been covered and promoted by our publications,” said Cobb.

Cobb is optimistic that the city could designate the district because while he was Religion Editor and a columnist at the Oakland Tribune and at the Post, he proposed the renaming of 20th Street to Thomas L. Berkley Way, to honor the late Post Publisher. And now, ironically, the Oakland Tribune offices are located at Broadway and Thomas L. Berkley Way. Cobb also proposed the renaming of Cypress Street to Mandela Parkway after the freeway collapsed during the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake.

Marvin and Cobb said the BAM district could start at 14th and Brush Street location, at the off ramp of the John Miller Freeway, which also borders the Oak Center District championed by the late Lillian Love. From Castro Street to Martin Luther King, Jr. Way sits the Preservation Park Development which was organized by the late Black Chamber of Commerce leaders Oscar Coffey, Leon Miller and C.J.Patterson along with the OCCUR organization led by Paul Cobb. The home of Ellen G. White, the Black prophetess of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is located inside Preservation Park. Writer Jack London, who was raised and breast-fed by Jennie Prentice, his African American surrogate mother, studied at the Charles Greene Library, now renamed the African American Museum/Library (AAMLO) at 14th and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way.

Walking up 14th are the C. L. Dellums apartments, across the street from AAMLO, in honor of the Pullman Porters Union, the first Black union in America.

At 14th and Brush Streets which is at the edge of the Oak Center District and at the off ramp of the John Miller Freeway stands the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building with a statue of the late NAACP leader and Judge Donald McCallum in the plaza area adjacent to the Post Office named for the late Pharmacist and Senator Byron Rumford. The Elihu Harris State Building is also located on Clay Street.
City Hall Plaza which honors Japanese American vice Mayor Frank Ogawa, is adjacent to the Lionel Wilson office Building named after Oakland's first Black Mayor.

At 14th and Broadway, we enter the outdoor classroom of Marvin X, a literacy center, site of mentoring and grief counseling. Readings and dramatic performances happen there. The Oscar Grant rebellion and Occupy Oakland occurred in his classroom, which is located above the bust of the late John B. Williams, the first Black Redevelopment Director of Oakland. Williams is celebrated for revitalizing West Oakland, Old Oakland and portions of Chinatown along with the George Scotland Convention Center housed inside the Marriott Hotel, which is diagonal to the Key System Building where Josephine Baker led a protest for workers.

Marvin plans to help conduct walking tours similar to those led by the City of Oakland’s Anna Lee Allen. The sites will include Geoffrey’s Inner Circle the premiere Black Entertainment Complex at 14th and Franklin, which faces the offices of the Post Newspaper in the Financial Center Building. Historically Geoffrey Pete’s building, the Niles Club, once denied entrance to Blacks. Other Black venues at Geoffrey’s include: The Joyce Gordon Gallery, Imagine Affairs special events, Exhale Hair Salon, Oakland Tattoos, Central Nails, When Harlem Was In Vogue, Club Vinyl, a nightclub and Halftime Sports Bar.

Walking eastward toward Webster Street is the site of former Black owned Bank of Oakland, now owned by the Greenlining Institute.

The tour moves past the Club Caribee towards the Malonga Arts Center at 14th and Alice Streets, which is across the street from the site of the assassination of Post Editor Chauncey Bailey. At the end of the walking tours Marvin said they would visit the Rene C. Davidson County Courthouse where the trials Bailey’s Murderer and Black Panther co-founder Huey Newton were conducted. Davidson was the first countywide elected Black official.

The tour concludes with visits to the once Black-owned Tribune Building. Robert C. Maynard was the first Black publisher of a major metropolitan daily newspaper. Many Black editors, writers, photographers and columnists worked for the Tribune, including Delilah Beasley, Chauncey Bailey, Martin Reynolds, Pearl Stewart and Paul Cobb. The building now houses offices of the African American Chamber of Commerce and the offices of Congresswoman Barbara Lee.

For information call 510-200-4164 or email: jmarvinx@yahoo.com.
Please sign this petition: Black Arts Movement Cultural District for downtown Oakland

Hotep,

To raise cultural, economic and political consciousness in Oakland CA.

That's why I created a petition to Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf which says:

"We demand the City of Oakland proclaim the Black Arts Movement Cultural and Business District along the 14th Street corridor, from Martin Luther King, Jr. Way to Alice Street and beyond. It will be an Afro-centric sacred space for people of good will and positive consciousness to gather and express themselves freely as divine beings in human form. Gov. Brown recently signed legislation to establish cultural districts throughout California."

Will you sign this petition? Click here:


Thanks!
Marvin X, Black Arts Movement