

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **“Hartford Renaissance” Event Celebrates Artist Romare Bearden’s City Ties**



*Bearden’s mural “Untitled” hangs in Hartford Public Library’s Downtown atrium.*

Hartford, Connecticut (February 17, 2015) - On Saturday, February 28, in celebration of Black History Month, the Hartford Commission on Cultural Affairs, in collaboration with the Hartford Public Library, will host “Hartford Renaissance - Celebrating the Art of Romare Bearden,” the first in a series of community conversations on art and culture. This free event is designed to honor the artist Romare Bearden and to provide a forum for public dialogue about his importance as an influential fine artist and his relationship to Hartford. The program will be held from 9:00 AM – 12:00 noon at Hartford Public Library’s Downtown location, 500 Main Street, Hartford.

“The recent installation of two murals by the renowned artist Romare Bearden at Hartford Public Library acknowledges and reaffirms the 35-year-old public-minded vision of a few,” said Carlos

Hernández Chávez, Chair of the Hartford Commission on Cultural Affairs. “Having these magnificent works of art available for free public viewing is evidence that when citizens and government work together in earnest for the common good, the quality of life is greatly enriched for all.”

“Hartford Renaissance” will feature a performance by The Iron Poets, as well as a panel discussion with the following guests:

- Michael Borders, Fine Artist
- Kathrine Kane, Executive Director of the Harriet Beecher Stowe House
- Joe Sam, Fine Artist
- Matt Poland, CEO of Hartford Public Library
- Diedra Harris Kelley, Co-Director of the Romare Bearden Foundation

Guests will break into small group discussions following the panel. A continental breakfast and full lunch will also be served.

The event is part of the Library’s ongoing Black History Month programming. Romare Bearden, whose richly textured paintings and murals are now held in the most important museums in the United States, was commissioned to create two large murals for the Hartford Civic Center in the early 1980’s. They have lived there ever since, until the Civic Center (now the XL Center) was scheduled for major renovation in 2014. Hartford Public Library has the extraordinary honor of housing and displaying these Bearden works for all to enjoy; a public setting and safe home that will be accessible to Hartford residents in perpetuity.

To register for “Hartford Renaissance: Celebrating the Art of Romare Bearden,” visit [RomareHPL.eventbrite.com](http://RomareHPL.eventbrite.com). In the event of inclement weather, the snow date for “Hartford Renaissance” will be Saturday, March 7. For more information, call 860-695-6319 or email [hartfordlistens@hplct.org](mailto:hartfordlistens@hplct.org).

#### **ABOUT THE CITY OF HARTFORD COMMISSION ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

The City of Hartford’s Commission on Cultural Affairs advises city government on policies and initiatives that will help create an environment that fosters the improvement of the quality of life, both culturally and economically, for the residents of the City of Hartford and the surrounding region. The Commission also holds community conversations to give a voice to residents in how to create positive change in the city and its surroundings. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, contact MECA, the Office of Marketing, Events & Cultural Affairs at [860.757.9016](tel:860.757.9016).

## **ABOUT [HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY](#)**

As a finalist for the 2014 National Medal from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, Hartford Public Library has been recognized as national leader in redefining the urban public library in the 21st century as an innovative and stimulating place where people can learn and discover, explore their passions, and find a rich array of resources that contribute to a full life. Hartford Public Library provides free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and encourage individual exploration. Serving the residents of Hartford and beyond at its nine branches and Downtown location, Hartford Public Library receives more than 860,000 visits per year from adults, children and families seeking early literacy opportunities, work skills training, civic engagement, arts enrichment, and so much more. Visit [hplct.org](http://hplct.org).

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