

The President, Professors and Trustees of

The Corcoran School of Art

*To all persons to whom this writing may come, Greeting:
Be it known that by virtue of the authority granted us by
charter of the Congress of the United States of America
we do confer upon*

Lois Mailou Jones

the degree of

Doctor of Fine Arts

Honoris Causa

*for outstanding achievement in art and declare her
entitled to all the rights, privileges and immunities
thereunto appertaining.*

*In witness whereof we have caused this Diploma to be
signed by the duly authorized officers of the college and
sealed with our corporate seal in the City of Washington,
District of Columbia*

May 11, 1996



[Signature]
President

[Signature]
Chairman

Lois Mailou Jones world renowned artist, designer, esteemed art educator and ninety years young.

You are one of Washington's best known and most admired artists. Your work, which has been exhibited on five continents and in the most prestigious museums and galleries in the world, has brought you international acclaim.

Encouraged by loving parents, your artistic talents were recognized in early childhood and nurtured throughout your youth. Winning a scholarship to the Boston Museum School of the Fine Arts, where you excelled both as an artist and a scholar, you continued your formal education at such prestigious schools as Harvard University, Columbia University and the Academie Julien in Paris.

In the 30's and 40's, the social climate was not kind to a black woman artist. It was race, not a lack of talent, that kept your work out of many exhibitions. Undaunted, you cleverly submitted your work incognito, often having your friends make deliveries to and from the galleries in your place. Your first award, presented to you by the Corcoran in 1941, was not picked up in person. It was sent to you in the mail.

In 1950, you were invited to join the faculty of Howard University, thus launching your illustrious forty-seven year career as an art educator and head of the Howard University Art Department. It is here that your paintings evolve. Greatly influenced by your travels to Haiti and Africa, your culture becomes something to embrace, to celebrate, to record... rather than to conceal. Important paintings such as *Les Fetiches*, *Mob Victim* and *The Ascent of Ethiopia*, reflect your emerging interest in international pan-Africanism. Your efforts are, at long last, rewarded. You become the first black member of the Washington Society of Arts and the Washington Watercolor Association. In 1980, then president Jimmy Carter honors you for Outstanding Achievement as an African American Artist.

With awards and citations too numerous to mention and sixty solo shows to your credit, you continue to amaze and inspire us. As the creator of the movie poster for "Cry, the Beloved Country", the subject of a beautifully illustrated book, *The Art and life of Lois Mailou Jones* and the inspirational force behind a career retrospective, *The World of Lois Mailou Jones*, life has never been richer or fuller. You have followed your own teachings, "Be happy in the direction that you take and know that it's not going to be easy."

In grateful recognition of your talent, your lifetime contribution to the arts, and your perseverance in breaking down that separate us, one from the other, the Corcoran School of Art confers upon you its highest academic honor, the Doctor of Fine Arts, honoris causa.