



## EXHIBIT OF PHOTOGRAPHY BY INTISAR ABIOTO AT THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE CENTER EXAMINES THE LIVED HISTORY OF BLACK PLACE

The exhibit builds on two decades of work to document and advocate for places important to Portland's Black community

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Black Domain

June 2-September 24, 2022  
Architectural Heritage Center  
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May 27, 2022 (Portland, Oregon) – The Architectural Heritage Center originates the exhibit **Black Domain** featuring photographs by Portland-based artist



Intisar Abioto that examine the lived history of Black place. Through portraits of Black Portlanders in their homes, at work, in creativity, and at worship, the exhibit captures places of architectural, cultural, and historical relevance to the city's Black communities.

This exhibit builds on the Bosco-Milligan Foundation/Architectural Heritage Center's work over two decades to research, document, and advocate for places of Portland's Black history and community. A publication and related programs produced in the late 1990s, [Cornerstones of Community: The Buildings of Portland's African American History](#), broke ground by identifying almost 1,300 everyday buildings important to Black heritage in the city. **Cornerstones** began to fill a gap in the history of the Black built environment. The project also showed that it was the experiences of Black individuals that made everyday places—front porches,

Charlotte Rutherford in front of the Rutherford house, which was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2015.  
© Intisar Abioto, 2022.



shops, music clubs, churches, and more—important cultural landmarks.

In this project, Abioto documents, through her eyes, places and people in the region's Black communities. The homes, small businesses, community centers, and other sites in these photographs have deep cultural meaning that illuminates their architectural significance. As her images show, from these spaces, even the most intimate, emanate experiences of Black life, rest and restoration, authority, education, creativity, comfort, and solace.

Also on view is **Northeast Voices**, a two-part video series with intergenerational members of Portland's black community discussing neighborhood history and change, recorded at Dean's Beauty Salon and Barber Shop earlier this year. [This short video provides](#) a glimpse into these discussions.

**Black Domain** is the largest solo exhibit to date of work by Intisar Abioto (b. Memphis, 1986), a multidisciplinary artist who works across photography, dance, research, and writing. Abioto

has been documenting Black presence in Oregon since 2013, including *The Black Portlanders* photo essay and blog, and *Black Legend, Black, Oregon* exhibit at the Oregon State Capitol in 2019. Her long-form projects encompass the visual, folkloric, documentary, and performing arts, such as *The People Could Fly Project* travel chronicles. Abioto is the guest curator of *Black Artists of Oregon*, a 2023 exhibit at the Portland Art Museum. With the five women artists in her family, she is co-founder of Studio Abioto, a multidisciplinary creative arts practice.

Support for **Black Domain** is provided by the James F. & Marion L. Miller Foundation, the Regional Arts & Culture Council, The Van Evera and Janet M. Bailey Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation, The Kinsman Foundation, Multnomah County Cultural Coalition, the Oregon Arts Commission, and the Cathy Galbraith Educational Endowment. The "Northeast Voices" video dialogues presented in the exhibit are made possible in part by Oregon Humanities.

## ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE CENTER

Owned and operated by the Bosco-Milligan Foundation, the Architectural Heritage Center (AHC) is a resource center for historic preservation located in the rehabilitated 1883 West Block's Building in Portland's East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District. AHC programs explore diverse topics in architecture history and preservation, and include rotating gallery exhibitions, talks, panel discussions, and other special projects and events. The AHC also runs a full program of docent-

led architecture and history walking tours throughout downtown and many Portland neighborhoods.

Images available upon request.

**AHC Gallery Hours and Visitor Information**

The AHC is open to the public Thursday–Saturday, 10am–5pm. Admission is free for AHC members and \$8 for the general public. The AHC is accessible.

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