



Harlem Nocturne: Women Artists and Progressive Politics During World War II

Farah Jasmine Griffin

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Harlem Nocturne: Women Artists and Progressive Politics During World War II Farah Jasmine Griffin As World War II raged overseas, Harlem witnessed a battle of its own. Brimming with creative and political energy, Harlem's diverse array of artists and activists launched a bold cultural offensive aimed at winning democracy for all Americans, regardless of race or gender. In *Harlem Nocturne*, esteemed scholar Farah Jasmine Griffin tells the stories of three black female artists whose creative and political efforts fueled this movement for change: novelist Ann Petry, a major new literary voice; choreographer and dancer Pearl Primus, a pioneer in her field; and composer and pianist Mary Lou Williams, a prominent figure in the emergence of Be-Bop. As Griffin shows, these women made enormous strides for social justice during the war, laying the groundwork for the Civil Rights Movement before the Cold War temporarily froze their democratic dreams.

A rich account of three distinguished artists and the city that inspired them, *Harlem Nocturne* captures a period of unprecedented vitality and progress for African Americans and women in the United States.



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