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## Black History Month: Rae Louise Hayward

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*1950-2008*

### **Artist, community activist**

Earlier this month, the Richmond Art Center opened its annual exhibition "The Art of Living Black" (through March 14), a program that Rae Louise Hayward co-founded with the late Jan Hart-Schuyers.

The show provides a nonjuried forum for new work by Bay Area artists of African ancestry, and it offers a self-guided tour of additional venues, including open studios, where African American artists' work can be seen ( [www.taolb.org](http://www.taolb.org)).

A New Orleans native transplanted to Los Angeles, Hayward received an art degree from California State University Northridge in 1971, having begun her studies at Pepperdine College. She moved to the Bay Area in 1987.

Although she did not resume her art practice for nearly 20 years, she traveled extensively in Africa in the mid-'70s and what she saw there, along with predecessors such as Jacob Lawrence, Faith Ringgold and Symbolist and early modernist painters, influenced her art.

Hayward worked in a variety of media, using high color and vivid patterns that integrate echoes of African craft tradition and Cubism as stylized by artists such as Paul Klee and Robert Delaunay.

If, like me, you never met Hayward, who died at 57 of cancer in January, a brief YouTube video of her speaking about one of her paintings will make you wish you had ([links.sfgate.com/ZCLB](http://links.sfgate.com/ZCLB)). In it, she exudes a combination of seriousness and warmth of spirit seen too rarely among contemporary artists.

**The Black History Month** series of profiles of African Americans from the past runs Monday through Friday through February. For more information,

including the Jan. 27 Sunday Datebook coverage of Black History Month, go to [sfgate.com/entertainment](http://sfgate.com/entertainment).

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/02/14/DDC4V0CRN.DTL>

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