



# Hirschfeld's Harlem: Manhattan's Legendary Artist Illustrates This Legendary City Within a City

*Al Hirschfeld*

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## **Hirschfeld's Harlem: Manhattan's Legendary Artist Illustrates This Legendary City Within a City** Al Hirschfeld

(Applause Books). Decades before the PBS documentaries, before Bill Clinton, Al Hirschfeld went to Harlem. No artist ever captured Harlem's dangerous highs and bluesy lows like this Master of the Performing Curve. Hirschfeld began his artistic Harlem odyssey six decades ago, charting that legendary New York neighborhood's special rhythms and moods in splashy feverish hues. Hirschfeld's Harlem opens onto a special portfolio of these full-color works, a pictorial essay of the Swing Era. Wynton Marsalis, Quincy Jones, Lena Horne and Harry Belafonte, among a dozen other Harlem artists and critics, supply accompanying commentary, reminiscences and analysis each voice focusing on one portrait. Then it's back to Hirschfeld in his signature black and white takes on forty Harlem artists and public figures: Gregory Hines, Duke Ellington, James Earl Jones, Ethel Waters and dozens more all have been caught in the creative act by one of our greatest artists. Each drawing is accompanied by a thumbnail narrative by Hirschfeld about the most famous inhabitants and transients of these fabled streets. Hirschfeld's Harlem opens a picture window into nearly a century of Black American artistry and life.

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