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TRIBUTES TO 'KAPO' REYNOLDS

SINCE the passing of Mallica "Kapo" Reynolds at the Nuttall Hospital in Kingston last week, many tributes have been paid to this Jamaican artist of international repute.

The Star arts critic, Archie Lindo, in his tribute, recalls an article written by him in 1982 and published in a magazine, *Tune-In*. Since then, Kapo lost both legs to illness "but with his indomitable spirit and bravery and fortitude he went on to win the Norman Manley Award for Excellence and to continue his work," said Mr. Lindo.

In 1982, Mr. Lindo wrote:

"If a quiz was being conducted and the question was asked: 'Name a Jamaican Bishop who is also a sculptor and painter', I wonder how many of you would be able to give the correct answer?"

"The answer is KAPO, or Malica Reynolds. Kapo was ordained as patriarch Bishop of St. Michael's Revival Apostolic Tabernacle of Kingston in 1976. Having been a well-known Revivalist for quite some time, the ordination came as no surprise to many of his 'flock'.

Drama and music

"Colourfully attired, the men and women who generally accompany Kapo, especially at art shows, add drama and music — singing — while he beats the drum in bright accompaniment. The last occasion on which I saw this happen was at the recent opening of the National Art Show at Devon House. So infectious was the rhythm that many people started to dance to the 'beat' and among them, believe it or not, was artist Edna Manley!

"Born in 1911 at Byndloss, a district near Linstead, St. Catherine, Kapo had trouble with the police when, in his early days of revivalism, he was falsely accused of practising obeah and had his premises searched. But even when some of his fellow revivalists began viewing his work with suspicion, he would give up neither his religion nor his sculpting.

"After his first shows in the fifties, there was to follow a long list of exhibitions in Washington, Kingston and New York, among other places. His 'Black Madonna' is in Amsterdam in the Stedelijk Museum, and his Solomon in the Museum of Modern Art's Latin American collection.

Early years

"During those early years, Kapo added another jewel to his artistic cap — he started painting and became sometimes even more proficient in this medium (in the opinion of some).

"Awards have come thick and fast. There was a gold medal from Emperor Haile Sellassie of Ethiopia and a Silver Musgrave Medal. He has also won gold and silver medals at various art shows here in Jamaica. The highest Government award came in

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1977 when he received the Order of Distinction for his outstanding contribution to the Arts. Last year, his painting A New Spring was selected as the gift from the Government and People of Jamaica to their Royal Highnesses Prince Charles and Princess Diana on the occasion of their wedding.

Harsh blows

"Life can sometimes deal harsh blows to the individual and sickness is no respecter of persons. Two years or so ago, Kapo was stricken ill and he had to be rushed to hospital in the United States to save his life. The 'miracle' was accomplished with the loss of a leg but Kapo has since recovered from his illness.

"Now, Kapo is receiving the signal honour of having the Larry Wirth collection of his works mounted to mark the opening of the National Gallery at its new home, The Roy West Building on the Kingston Mall — a fitting tribute to his contribution to the heritage of art and artists in Jamaica."

Kapo has passed on but in his art he has left his great contribution to the art of his country in his carvings and drawings — left them to the present generation and to posterity.

Yesterday is gone
Can never be replaced.

I saw a light
— a faithful landmark
and slowly it faded

Patriach
A son of Jamaica
— A legendary landmark
Your life an open book
Artistically written.

We mourn your loss
but honoured to have had
you in our midst

Go where the lights are
brighter
Go where the maker waits
—“Oh Shepherd”

Where there is no sorrow
Go where there is no pain
Death no victory
only an open door

The weary road has ended
Lord grant him Thy peace
and take him home
for all — eternity

By Delroy Lee