

# Memorial Celebration in Boston to Honor African American Literary Figure Samuel Allen

BOSTON, Mass., Sept. 1, 2015 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – A public memorial celebration will be held Saturday, October 10, at 2 p.m. ET. at the Museum of African American History, 46 Joy Street, Beacon Hill, Boston, MA to celebrate the life and legacy of Samuel Washington Allen – who also wrote under the pen name of Paul Vesey. The noted poet, professor, lawyer and translator passed away peacefully surrounded by family and friends at the age of 97 on June 27, 2015 in Norwood, Mass.

The memorial celebration will feature contributions from family members as well as fellow board member and Museum of African American History Executive Director Beverly Morgan-Welch; Whirlwind Magazine publisher, poet and protege Lamont Steptoe; Boston University Professor of African Studies Laurence Breiner, PhD and Langston Hughes Award recipient Everett Hoagland.

Attendees are encouraged to RSVP by email – [Samuel.Allen.Memorial@gmail.com](mailto:Samuel.Allen.Memorial@gmail.com) – or phone / text – (617) 294-9889.

Samuel Allen's collections of poetry consist of the bilingual *Elfenbeinzahne* (Heidelberg, 1956); *Ivory Tusks* (New York, 1968); *Paul Vesey's Ledger* (London, 1975) and *Every Round* (Detroit, 1987). He translated Sartre's "Orphee noir" essay in 1951 while in Paris and was the editor and one of the translators of *Poems from Africa* (Crowell, 1973).

While majoring in sociology at Nashville's Fisk University, Allen studied writing with Harlem Renaissance poet, novelist and critic James Weldon Johnson. He graduated with high honors in 1938.

Allen then attended Harvard Law School where he earned his Doctor of Jurisprudence in 1941 – later becoming deputy assistant in the New York district attorney's office.

Samuel Allen then relocated to Paris on a GI Bill to study at the Sorbonne. There, he joined other African American ex-patriots – including Richard Wright, Langston Hughes and James Baldwin. Wright introduced Allen into the Presence Africaine circle – where his first published poems appeared in 1949.

After returning to the United States, Samuel Allen served as an attorney with the federal government in Washington under the administrations of presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

In 1968, Allen committed himself fully to literature – teaching at Tuskegee Institute, Wesleyan and Boston University. He gave readings throughout the United States – including before the Library of Congress. He received numerous fellowships, residencies and lifetime achievement awards. On April

2, 2010 Samuel Washington Allen was inducted into the International Literary Hall of Fame for Writers of African Descent at the Gwendolyn Brooks Center for Black Literature and Creative Writing at Chicago State University.

“While many African-American writers have sought to incorporate African elements into their works, few have realized that goal as elegantly and powerfully as Samuel W. Allen,” stated James Manheim in Contemporary Black Biography, 2003.

A legacy giving opportunity will be announced at the memorial to benefit Fisk University.

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\* PHOTO for media: [Send2Press.com/wire/images/15-0901-sam-allen-300dpi.jpg](http://Send2Press.com/wire/images/15-0901-sam-allen-300dpi.jpg)

\* Photo Caption: Samuel Washington Allen – 1917-2015 Poet, Translator, Professor, Attorney.

News issued by: Family of Samuel Allen



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