

Exhibit Explores Life of Writer Tom Dent

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The Amistad Research Center is celebrating the life and work of Tom Dent, one of New Orleans' renowned poets, playwrights and oral historians, with a reception today (July 29) to open a new exhibition, "Tom Dent: A Heavy Trip Through the South."



This photograph of New Orleans writer and oral historian Tom Dent was taken in the late 1960s. (Photo from the Amistad Research Center)

Celebrating the opening of the Tom Dent papers, the reception is at 6 p.m. at Tilton Hall on the Tulane uptown campus.

The brief program will feature conversations about Dent by John O'Neal, artistic director of Junebug Productions, and New Orleans poets Kalamu ya Salaam and Quo Vadis Breaux. The audience of friends and colleagues will be encouraged to participate in a forum to share their personal reflections on Dent.

Taken largely from Dent's collection of personal papers housed at Amistad, materials on display relate Dent's early interest in writing, his departure and return to New Orleans, and the many theatrical, literary and oral history projects he engaged in throughout his life. The exhibit, which provides a look at the culture, history and literature of the South during the late 20th century, continues through Sept. 30.

Dent was an active participant in the black arts and civil rights movements. A New Orleans native who died in 1998, he was a leading literary figure in the city, publishing two books of poetry, *Magnolia Street* (1976) and *Blue Lights and River Songs* (1982), and a prolific oral historian, whose work culminated with the publishing of his book, *Southern Journey: A Return to the Civil Rights Movement* (1997).

For more information, call the [Amistad Research Center](#) at 504-862-3222. Based at Tulane University, the center is the nation's oldest, largest and most comprehensive independent archive specializing in the history of African Americans and other ethnic minorities.