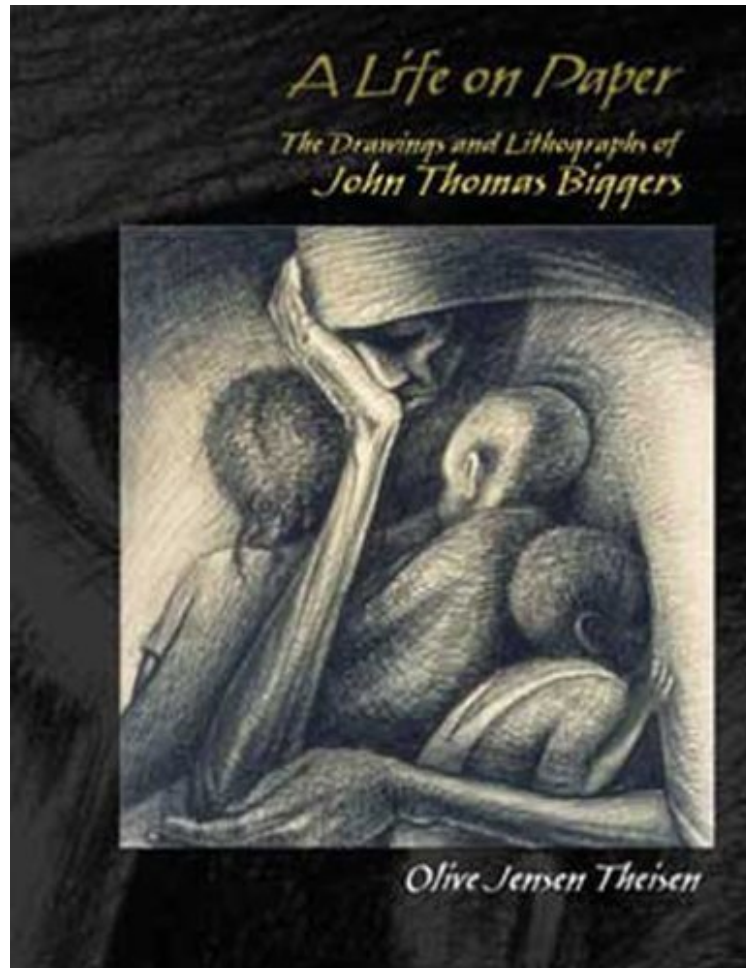



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A Life on Paper: The Drawings and Lithographs of John Thomas Biggers

Olive Jensen Theisen

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John Thomas Biggers (1924-2001) was a major African American artist who inspired countless others through his teaching, murals, paintings, and drawings. After receiving conventional art training at Hampton Institute and

Pennsylvania State, he had his personal and artistic breakthrough in 1957 when he spent six months in the newly independent country of Ghana. From this time forward, he integrated African abstract elements with his rural Southern images to create a personal iconography. His new approach made him famous, as his personal discovery of African heritage fit in well with the growing U.S. civil rights movement. He is best known for his murals at Hampton University, Winston-Salem University, and Texas Southern, but the drawings and lithographs that lie behind the murals have received scant attention - until now. Theisen interviewed Dr. Biggers during the last thirteen years of his life, and was welcomed into his studio innumerable times. Together, they selected representative works for this volume, some of which have not been previously published for a general audience. After his death in 2001, his widow continued to work closely with Theisen, resulting in a book that is intimate and informative for both the scholar and the student.

"Its charm and readability will appeal to a wide range of readers." -- R. William McCarter, Regents Professor of Art, University of North Texas
About the Author
Olive Jensen Theisen holds a Ph.D. in art education from the University of Minnesota and has taught art at Texas Tech, the University of North Texas, and other institutions. Theisen was awarded the Minnie Stevens Piper professorship in Art Education in 1991. Her *Murals of John Thomas Biggers, American Muralist* for the Hampton University Museum is considered the definitive book on the subject. She lives in Little Elm, Texas.