

September 24-27, 2014
James Madison University

HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

furiously flower

POETRY

*Seeding
the
future
of
African
American
poetry*

OUR THIRD DECADE-DEFINING CONFERENCE
CELEBRATING AFRICAN AMERICAN POETS AND POETRY

“We are each other’s harvest; we are each other’s business;
we are each other’s magnitude and bond.”

• GWENDOLYN BROOKS

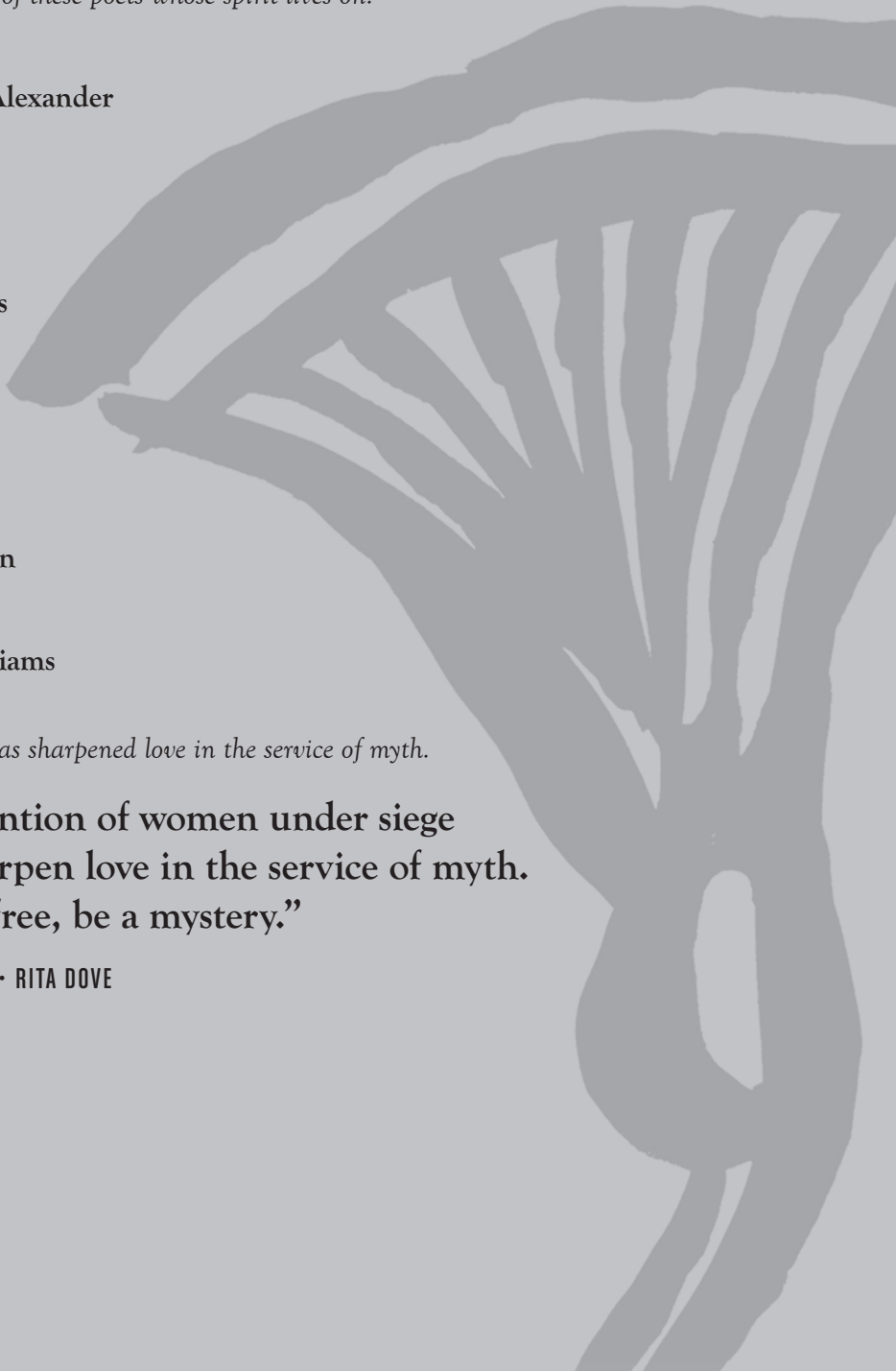
Dedicated to the memory of these poets whose spirit lives on:

Ai
Margaret Walker Alexander
Maya Angelou
Alvin Aubert
Amiri Baraka
Gwendolyn Brooks
Lucille Clifton
Wanda Coleman
Jayne Cortez
June Jordan
Raymond Patterson
Lorenzo Thomas
Sherley Anne Williams

And to Rita Dove, who has sharpened love in the service of myth.

“Fact is, the invention of women under siege
has been to sharpen love in the service of myth.
If you can’t be free, be a mystery.”

• RITA DOVE





September 24, 2014

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to James Madison University, the home of the Furious Flower Poetry Center, for the 2014 Furious Flower Poetry Conference. This, I hope, will be fertile ground for “seeding the future of African American poetry.” I believe that the important work of this conference will be to present poetry that helps us to understand, contemplate, and challenge the world in which we live, and, by chance, imagine a better world without obliteration, erasures, and inhumanity.

Because this conference takes place once every ten years, we have the distinct advantage of ten years of literary hindsight: sight to see poets whose work has earned them laureate’s honors, sight to see the growth of poetic genius that is now in full bloom, and sight to recognize the emerging poets who have the potential to reveal the form, substance, and trajectory of poetry for decades to come.

It has been my privilege to see the Furious Flower movement take shape over the last twenty years. Since 1994, Furious Flower has produced and inspired books, video anthologies, art, CDs, programs, organizations, and perhaps some poets along the way. In doing so we cultivate, honor, and promote the diverse voices of African American poets. So I invite you to celebrate with us here, in this space that poet Nikky Finney has called “black poetry planet,” the bountiful harvest of twenty years.

Sincerely,

Joanne V. Gabbin
Conference Organizer and Executive Director
Furious Flower Poetry Center



FURIOUS FLOWER POETRY CENTER

MSC 3802
500 Cardinal Drive
Harrisonburg, VA 22807
540.568.8883 Phone
540.568.8888 Fax
www.jmu.edu/furiousflower



September 2014

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to James Madison University and our remarkable Furious Flower Poetry Conference. We're honored to be your host and proud to share our campus and community with you.

This conference's history has no doubt raised your expectations about what you'll experience during your time here in Harrisonburg. As in the two previous events, we bring you the giants of American poetry, critical conversations about the development and future of black literature, and provocative art installations and concerts to complement the scholarship.

May your creativity be enlivened again, your love of poetry be re-ignited, and your ideas about what literature can do and mean in our society expand even further. You have my best wishes for a wonderful four days, and I hope you'll find our university to be so welcoming that you'll want to return soon.

Sincerely,

Jonathan R. Alger
President

MSC 7608
91 Alumnae Dr.
Harrisonburg, VA 22807
Office of THE PRESIDENT
540.568.6868 Phone
540.568.2336 Fax

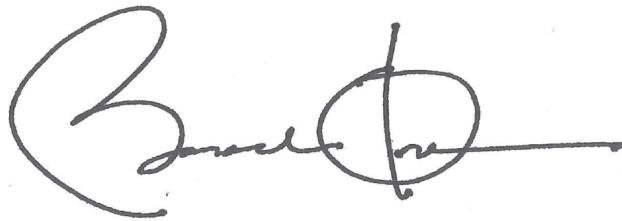
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 28, 2014

Since our Nation's earliest days, African Americans have added rich voices to American poetry, fortifying our artistic heritage. Deepening our understanding of the African-American experience, they have crafted poems that challenge us, change us, and speak to who we are as a people.

By bringing together established and emerging African-American poets, this conference carries forward this proud tradition. Showcasing powerful works of art and honoring accomplished poets of today, you help inspire our next generation to lift up their own unique voices.

As you celebrate poetry's tremendous power to capture our imaginations and tell meaningful stories, I wish you all the best for a rewarding, memorable conference.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be Barack Obama's signature, written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned at the bottom of the page, below the main body of text.

MARK R. WARNER
VIRGINIA



UNITED STATES SENATOR
WASHINGTON, D.C.
September 24, 2014

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to all who are gathered for the Furious Flower Poetry Center's Conference, "Seeding the Future of African American Poetry."

This three-day conference is an occasion to honor the strength of the mission that characterizes your organization. Held once every ten years, this much-anticipated gathering of poets and scholars features readings by many of the best established and emerging African-American poets in writing today. The critically important role of the arts is to enable us to see the world and the human condition differently. In seeing the world through a particular work of art is to see a truth we might not have understood before. Poets raise questions and compel us to think. Poetry can free us to think and dream and sense, and this often proves invaluable.

On this important occasion, I am very pleased to join with your fellow poets, friends and community in wishing the Furious Flower Poetry Center the very best for a successful and fulfilling conference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark R. Warner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Terence R. McAuliffe
Governor

June 30, 2014

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to extend my warm welcome to everyone attending the Furious Flower Poetry Center's "Furious Flower: Seeding the Future of African American Poetry" conference. I send my best regards to you as you honor and celebrate both accomplished and emerging African American poets.

I commend the organizers for their hard work and dedication to ensuring a successful event. The Furious Flower Poetry Center plays an important role in supporting African American poets by promoting their work to a wide audience and collaborating with artists, literary organizations, and educational and cultural institutions. It is appropriate that your conference is dedicated to the poet Rita Dove. The Commonwealth values Mrs. Dove's contributions to poetry, and is proud to call her a Virginian. As professor of poetry at the University of Virginia, Dove was the youngest person to be named Poetry Laureate of the United States and also served as Poet Laureate of Virginia.

Dorothy and I wish you our best for a successful conference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terence R. McAuliffe".

Terence R. McAuliffe



City Of Harrisonburg
Office of the Mayor

345 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
(540) 432-7701 / FAX (540) 432-7778
www.HarrisonburgVA.gov

Ted Byrd
Mayor

Dear Poets, Scholars, and Critics,

It is with sincere pleasure that I welcome you to the City of Harrisonburg and to the beautiful campus of James Madison University for the "Furious Flower: Seeding the Future of African American Poetry" conference.

On behalf of the City, I would like to congratulate and thank Joanne V. Gabbin for her leadership and dedication to the Furious Flower Poetry Center. I would also like to commend poet Rita Dove in her most recent accomplishment of receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award and continuously inspiring other artists and individuals with her talented words and writings. In addition, I applaud the achievements of Toi Derricotte, Michael Harper, Yusef Komunyakaa, Marilyn Nelson, Ishmael Reed, and Quincy Troupe, Jr., who have all shown to be true literary pioneers. This event continues to flourish each year it is held due to the dedication and enthusiasm of these individuals and their constituents.

It is my hope each of you will be inspired by our history and beautiful scenery. I strongly encourage you to stay a few extra days in Harrisonburg and take advantage of this opportunity to explore our friendly and engaging city. Harrisonburg has natural surroundings, historic sites, outdoor sports and activities, wonderful restaurants and shopping, Farmers' Markets and much more. On behalf of the City Council and the citizens of Harrisonburg, I hope you enjoy your stay and come back to visit us again soon.

Sincerely,

Ted Byrd
Mayor

The City With The Planned Future

GALLERY OPENING AND RECEPTION • DUKE HALL

Time collapses as Nigerian artist Wole Lagunju merges images from the Victorian era with Yoruba Gelede to create intriguing paintings, and pop culture becomes bedfellows with archetypal imagery in his kaleidoscopic works. Such genre bending speaks to the notions of identity, gender, power, and difference. It also generates conversations about multiculturalism, globalization, and transcultural ethos. Meet the artist and view the work during the Furious Flower reception at the Duke Hall Gallery on Wednesday, September 24 at 6 p.m. The exhibit is ongoing throughout the conference, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

FUSION: POETRY VOICED IN CHORAL SONG FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Our opening night concert features solos by soprano Aurelia Williams and performances by the choirs of Morgan State University (Eric Conway, director) and James Madison University (Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy, director). In it, composer and pianist Randy Klein presents his original music based on the poetry of Margaret Walker, Michael Harper, and Yusef Komunyakaa. The concert takes place on Wednesday, September 24 at 8 p.m.



THE GROWING EXHIBIT • CARRIER LIBRARY

C. B. Claiborne, the Furious Flower photographer, captures the spontaneous, impulsive, reflective, and unexpected moments of the 2014 conference on film. Photographs are added to the digital exhibit each day, culminating in a conference vignette. This exhibit is ongoing throughout the conference.

STANDING AMONG POETS • WARREN HALL TRANSITIONS

Photographic images captured and selected by Lynda Koolish feature Lucille Clifton among her poet friends. (These were originally part of an exhibit curated by Joanne Gabbin and shown in 2012 at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum in Baltimore.) Other photographs made by C. B. Claiborne show the spirit of artistic community that formed during previous Furious Flower poetry conferences. The exhibit is ongoing throughout the conference.

BEYOND MOUNTAINS • FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER LOBBY

Photographs by Melissa Carter, Kaitlin Forehand, Rebekah Hall, Brittany Houhoullis, Rachel Lam, Joshua North, and Lindsay Wade: The images are based on Nadine Pinede's poetry chapbook, *An Invisible Geography*. The participating artists were all students in the fall 2013 "Performance for the Lens" class taught by JMU Professor of Art, Corinne Diop.



FURIOUS FLOWER ART RECEPTION • FESTIVAL'S LISANBY MUSEUM

For the Furious Flower Poetry Conference in 2004, Malaika Favorite was commissioned to paint a 24-portrait museum piece to serve as the major attraction, and it is featured here. Favorite layered the portraits of famous black poets with fragments of their writing and images to create, as art historian Maureen Shanahan writes in the *International Journal of Art & Design Education* (June 2010), “an interactive visual-textual body of poets and poetry.” Meet the artist and view the Furious Flower Portrait Quilt and related pieces on Friday, September 26 at 6:30 p.m. This exhibit is ongoing throughout the conference.

LAUREATE'S LUNCHEON • FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM

To honor the poets laureate in attendance at the conference, Furious Flower hosts this special luncheon (ticket required) on Friday, September 26 at 12:15 p.m.

POETRY JAM • FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM

Outstanding poets read and perform their work. Dance music is provided by Baltimore's DJ Phaze for the event on Friday, September 26 at 10:30 p.m. (immediately follows the Lifetime Achievement awards banquet).

RAVI COLTRANE QUARTET • WILSON HALL AUDITORIUM

Praised for his music's “elusive beauty” (*DownBeat*), and for his “style informed by tradition but not encumbered by it” (*Philadelphia City Paper*), saxophonist Ravi Coltrane brings his quartet to JMU for the close of the 2014 Furious Flower Poetry Conference on Saturday, September 27 at 8 p.m.

**FURIOUS FLOWER CONFERENCE EXHIBIT • WARREN HALL TRANSITIONS**

The JMU Bookstore offers a special exhibit featuring the books of poets and critics participating in the conference. In addition, select items from the Furious Flower catalog are on display and available for purchase. More than 100 titles are available in this exhibit, which is ongoing throughout the conference, beginning Thursday, September 25 (2–6 p.m.) and continuing Friday, September 26 (8 a.m.–6 p.m.), and Saturday, September 27 (8 a.m.–6 p.m.).

ARTIFACTS • WARREN HALL PATIO

Vendors are on hand throughout the conference with fabrics, clothing, jewelry, perfumes, art, and artifacts. In case of rain, the vendor exhibits will be housed in Transitions in Warren Hall, approximately 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2014

1 – 5 p.m.	Registration	FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER, UPPER LEVEL
6 – 7:30 p.m.	Gallery opening and reception <i>Art of Wole Lagunju</i>	DUKE HALL GALLERY
8 p.m.	Opening concert <i>Fusion: Poetry Voiced in Choral Song</i> (Ticket required.)	FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2014

8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Registration	FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER LOBBY
8 – 8:30 a.m.	Continental breakfast	FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM
8:30 – 9:15 a.m.	Opening session <i>Documentary: Furious Flower I and II</i> <i>Occasion by Joanne Gabbin, Executive Director of Furious Flower Poetry Center, JMU</i> <i>Welcome by Jonathan Alger, President of James Madison University</i> <i>Remarks by Jerry Benson, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, JMU</i>	FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Critics' roundtable <i>The Black Avant-Garde: Formal Poetic Innovation by Black Artists in America</i> Lauri Ramey (moderator), Aldon Lynn Nielson, Mendi Lewis Obadike, C. S. Giscombe, Douglas Kearney, Mark McMorris, giovanni singleton, Tyrone Williams, Meta DuEwa Jones	FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM
11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch on your own	
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Special session <i>S.O.S. Calling All Black People: Honoring the Memory of Amiri Baraka</i> John H. Bracey, Jr., Sonia Sanchez, James Smethurst; with poetry readings by Tony Medina, Jessica Care Moore, Evie Shockley, Quincy Troupe, Eugene Redmond, Haki Madhubuti	FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM
4 – 5:15 p.m.	Concurrent sessions Black Aesthetics (TAYLOR 302) Moderator: Arlette Miller Smith, John Fisher College <i>Panther Teacher: Sarah Webster Fabio and the Black Arts Movement</i> Michael New, Keene State College <i>Sonia Sanchez: Inviting Ancestors to Chandelier Sound</i> Becky Thompson, Simmons College <i>We Are Cowboys in the Boat of Ra: Sonny Rollins and Ishmael Reed's Black Cowboy</i> Brian Flota, James Madison University	TAYLOR HALL

Schedule



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 20144 – 5:15 p.m. | **Concurrent sessions** | CONTINUED**Black Aesthetics (TAYLOR 302)***Carrying On: Jayne Cortez, Wanda Coleman, and Amiri Baraka*

M. Nzadi Keita, Ursinus College; Jacqueline Jones LaMon, Adelphi University

Chain-Chain-Change Your Mind: The Rhetorical Successes of the Black Arts Movement

Sarah RudeWalker, Penn State University

Black Poetry = Black Pedagogy? (TAYLOR 405)*We Poets Too: The Dynamics and Consequence of Rap as an Area of Concentration for the MFA in Creative Writing*

Dennis Winston, Howard University

Don't Deny My Voice: Seeding Poetry and the Poetics of Effective Instruction and Learning

Jeffrey D. Mack, Albany (GA) State University (moderator); Zanice Bond, Tuskegee University; Deborah Ford, Mississippi Valley State University

Craft Focus: Metaphor (TAYLOR 305)*Metaphor beyond Hermeneutics in the Book of Isaiah*

Valerie Sweeney Prince, Allegheny College

Navigating the Binary and the Redefinition of Blackness

Hoke (Bro Yao) Glover, Bowie State University

Recapitulation, Prophecy, and Power: Metaphor, Mullen, and Muse Drudge

Monifa A. Love Asante, Bowie State University

In the Tradition (TAYLOR 309)*Celebrating the 21st Anniversary of a Seminal Anthology of Young Black Writers*

Kimberly A. Collins, Spalding University (moderator); Artress Bethany White, Carson-Newman University; Esther Iverem, Washington, D.C.; Tony Medina, Howard University; Thomas Sayers Ellis, Lesley University

Poets of Place: Margaret Walker and Brenda Marie Osbey (TAYLOR 306)

Moderator: Deborah McDowell, University of Virginia

For Her People: A Tribute to Margaret Walker

Page Laws, Norfolk State University

Summoning Our Saints: The Poetry of Brenda Marie Osbey

Thadious Davis, University of Pennsylvania; John Wharton Lowe, University of Georgia; Reggie Scott Young, University of Louisiana, Lafayette; Malin Pereira, University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Poetry of the Black Diaspora: Transgressing Borders (TAYLOR 402)*The Metic Experience of the Black British Writer: Challenging the Margins*

Malika Booker, London, England; Roger Robinson, London, England; Nick Makoha, London, England.

8 – 9:15 a.m. | Concurrent sessions | CONTINUED

The Crucible of Affrilachia (TAYLOR 400)*The Affrilachian States of America: Making a Space for Black Regional Poetry*

Keith S. Wilson, Covington, Kentucky

“Scratch Out a New Picture”: Seven Years of pluck! Magazine

Mitchell L. H. Douglas (moderator), Indiana University; Phillip B. Williams, Washington University, St. Louis; Aziza D. Barnes, New York; Nate Marshall, University of Michigan; Ama Codjoe, Bronx, New York

Form as Resistance: Performance and Composition Strategies in the Avant-Garde (TAYLOR 305)

Moderator: Hilary Holladay, University of Virginia

“Who Stole the Soul?”: An Avant-Garde History of the Dark Room Collective

Keith D. Leonard, American University

“Soundtrack for a Generational Shift”: The Visual Representation of Music in*Evie Shockley’s The New Black*

Laura E. Vrana, Penn State University

Loud and Queer: Spoken Word Poetics and Sexual Politics

McKinley Melton, Gettysburg College

Sex as Resistance in the Poetry of Melvin Dixon

Christopher Rose, Portland Community College

Green Is the New Black (TAYLOR 404)*Black and Green and Read All Over: African American Nature Poetics*

Camille T. Dungy, Colorado State University (moderator); Douglas Kearney, CalArts; Gregory Pardlo, Columbia University; Kendra Hamilton, Presbyterian College

Keeping the Torch Lit (TAYLOR 402)*The Furious Flower Poetry Summer Seminars on Lucille Clifton (2009) and Sonia Sanchez (2011)*

DaMaris Hill, University of Kentucky (moderator); Becky Thompson, Simmons College; Antoinette Brim, Capital Community College; Sandra Staton-Taiwo, Alabama State University; Patricia Biela, Hampton, Virginia; Colena Corbett, University of South Carolina

The Power of Collectives (TAYLOR 405)*Carolina African American Writers Collective: A Critical Fellowship*

Lenard D. Moore, University of Mount Olive; L. Teresa Church, Durham, North Carolina; Raina J. Leon, St. Mary’s College; Grace C. Ocasio, Charlotte, North Carolina

The Watering Hole: A Space that Sustains Black Poetry and Community

Candace G. Wiley, University of South Carolina; Monifa Lemons, Columbia, South Carolina; Remica Bingham-Risher, Old Dominion University; Amoja “MoMan” Sumler, University of Arkansas at Little Rock; Jennifer Bartell, Coastal Carolina University

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2014

Schedule

8 – 9:15 a.m. | **Concurrent sessions** | CONTINUED

Publishing Visionaries (TAYLOR 306)

Willow Books and the Future of African American Poetry

Reginald Flood, Eastern Connecticut State University; Derrick Harriell, University of Mississippi; Randall Horton, University of New Haven; featuring readings by Kelly Norman Ellis, Chicago State University; Curtis L. Crisler, Indiana University, Perdue University Fort Wayne

10 a.m. – 12 p.m. **Critics' roundtable** FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM

Diaspora Poetry: Black Poetry Crossing, Expanding, and Challenging Borders

Daryl Cumber Dance (moderator), Kwame Dawes, Brenda Marie Osbey, Lorna Goodison

12:15 – 1:45 p.m. **Laureate's luncheon** FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM

Introduction by Nikki Giovanni, Distinguished Professor of English at Virginia Tech

Keynote by Rita Dove, Commonwealth Professor at University of Virginia

Closing remarks by Dolores Kendrick, Poet Laureate of the District of Columbia

(By reservation only.)

2:15 – 4:45 p.m. **Poetry reading** WILSON HALL AUDITORIUM

Rita Dove, Frank X Walker, Mariahadessa Ekere Tallie, Elizabeth Alexander, Cornelius Eady, Toi Derricotte, Yusef Komunyakaa, Ishmael Reed

6:30 – 7 p.m. **Gallery opening and reception** LISANBY MUSEUM (FESTIVAL)

Art of Malaika Favorite

7:30 – 10 p.m. **Lifetime Achievement awards gala** FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM

Rita Dove presented by Elizabeth Alexander

Toi Derricotte presented by Cornelius Eady

Michael Harper presented by Anthony Walton

Yusef Komunyakaa presented by Hermine Pinson

Marilyn Nelson presented by Opal Moore

Quincy Troupe presented by Keith Gilyard

Ishmael Reed presented by Mursalata Muhammad

Special performance by members of Tra-Co-Dram and Orchesis Dance

Ensemble, Bethune-Cookman University (Carla Lester, director)

10:30 p.m. – 1 a.m. **Poetry jam** FESTIVAL CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM

Mendi Lewis Obadike, Tyehimba Jess, Kamilah Aisha Moon, Dawn

Lundy Martin, Douglas Kearney, Tennessee Reed,

Duriel Harris; with music by DJ Phaze



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 20147:30 – 8:30 a.m. **Continental breakfast** TAYLOR HALL (307)8 – 9:15 a.m. **Concurrent sessions** TAYLOR HALL**Archaeologies and Archives: Uncovering the Silenced Voices of Women (TAYLOR 302)**

Moderator: Patricia Lespinasse, Binghamton University

“It Is Dangerous to Defy the Gods”: The Poetics and Politics of Silence in Women’s Poetry of the Harlem Renaissance

Michelle J. Pinkard, Tennessee State University

Recognizably (new) Black: Reading Evie Shockley’s “mesostics”

Sequoia Maner, University of Texas at Austin

Archaeologies of Black Women’s Memory: Grace Nichols’s I is a long memored woman and Nagueyalti Warren’s Margaret

Shirley Toland-Dix, UNCF/Mellon Programs

Beast Inside: The Trope of the Animal in African American Poetry (TAYLOR 306)*Writing as Metamorphosis in Thylis Moss’s Slave Moth*

Jeffery Westover, Boise State University

Everything Is Animal

Aracelis Girmay, Hampshire College; Rachel Eliza Griffiths, Sarah Lawrence College; Kamilah Aisha Moon, Medgar Evers College; Samantha Thornhill, Juilliard School

Interrogating the Avant-Garde (TAYLOR 400)*What Is African American about the Black Avant-Garde?*

Erica Hunt, New York (moderator); Tonya Foster, City University of New York; Dawn Lundy Martin, University of Pittsburgh; John Keene, Rutgers University; Tyrone Williams, Xavier University; Evie Shockley, Rutgers University

Reimagining Tropes (TAYLOR 305)

Moderator: Dana Williams, Howard University

Landscape, Love, and the Likeness of Black Women in the Poetry of Frank X Walker

Shauna Morgan Kirlaw, Howard University

“Shut Your Rhetorics in a Box”: Social Commentary in Gwendolyn Brooks’s *The Anniad*

Bryan Duncan, Bridgewater College

“Live in the Along”: Temporal Vocabularies in Gwendolyn Brooks’s Poems of Childhood

Rachel Conrad, Hampshire College

In between the Sacred and the Violated: Understanding Rita Dove’s Mother Love

Althea Tait, University of Arizona

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2014

8 – 9:15 a.m. | **Concurrent sessions** | CONTINUED

Technology-Driven Composition (TAYLOR 402)

Visual Poetry

Reginald O. Johns, Hampton, Virginia

Electronic Corpse: The Role of Social Media in Collaborative Poetry-Making

M. Ayodele Heath, Atlanta, Georgia; Christina Springer, Santa Clara, California;
Joel Dias-Porter, Atlantic City, New Jersey

Golden Shovel Anthology Honoring Gwendolyn Brooks

Peter Kahn, Chicago, Illinois; Patricia Smith, College of Staten Island, CUNY

10 a.m. – 12 p.m. **Critics' roundtable** **GRAFTON-STOVALL THEATRE**

Going Too Far: The Queer Poetics Distraction from Issues of Race and Class

Jericho Brown (moderator), Mendi Lewis Obadike, Roger Reeves, L. Lamar
Wilson

12 – 1:15 p.m. **Lunch on your own**

12:30 – 5 p.m. **Special session for K–12 teachers** **TAYLOR HALL (405)**

Presented by University of Virginia's Center for Liberal Arts

An introductory panel on teaching African American poetry (confers
professional development credits and requires separate registration, which is
available on site just before the session convenes).

1:30 – 3 p.m. **Open mic** **GRAFTON-STOVALL THEATRE**

Emcee: Tim Seibles, Old Dominion University

*Special performance by dance students, JMU School of Theatre and Dance
(Cynthia Thompson, director)*

3:30 – 5:30 p.m. **Poetry reading** **GRAFTON-STOVALL THEATRE**

Remica Bingham-Risher, Jericho Brown, Camille Dungy, Patricia
Spears Jones, Samantha Thornhill, A. Van Jordan, Michael Harper

5:45 – 7:45 p.m. **Dinner on your own**

8 – 10:30 p.m. **Conference finale** **WILSON HALL AUDITORIUM**

Ravi Coltrane Quartet

(Ticket required.)

Schedule



1994

F*urious Flower: A Revolution in African American Poetry* took place from September 29 to October 1, 1994 at James Madison University. It was a watershed event in African American literature because it was the first conference to focus solely on black poetry. National in scope, it attracted four generations of poets, some of whom had begun writing in the 1940s. The conference brought together 90 poets, critics, and scholars to discuss the development of black poetry from 1960 to 1994. More than 300 registered participants came from all over the country, while an additional 2500 from the surrounding area attended readings and other events. Dedicated to Gwendolyn Brooks (1917–2000), the conference attracted literary notables including Brooks herself, Naomi Long Madgett, Nikki Giovanni, Arnold Rampersad, and Haki Madhubuti.

One participant predicted, “The Furious Flower Poetry Conference will aid current and future efforts to understand and appreciate the wide range of significance of African American poetry in American life.” Over the past 20 years, that conference has born impressive fruit. Most notably, it inspired the creation of the Furious Flower Poetry Center, dedicated in 1999 and located in Cardinal House on the JMU campus.

In 2004 Furious Flower marked the tenth anniversary of the first conference with a second: *Furious Flower: Regenerating the Black Poetic Tradition*. Honoring poets of the Black Arts Movement, this conference assessed the legacy of African American poets whose careers began in the 1960s. Dedicated to Amiri Baraka and Sonia Sanchez, the conference featured readings by Lucille Clifton, Marilyn Nelson, and Eugene Redmond. Again, it attracted impressive crowds.

Both conferences resulted in video anthologies featuring leading writers reading and discussing their poetry. These valuable reference works, distributed by California Newsreel, offer intimate portraits of some of the most important poets of this century. The producer was Judith McCray of Juneteenth Productions, and the director was John Hodges, technology manager in the School of Media Arts and Design at JMU.

In addition Joanne Gabbin, conference organizer and executive director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center, edited a collection of essays and conversations titled *The Furious*

“This is the proper moment to look back—after the first decade of the twenty-first century has given us the illusion of distance, after we reconciled ourselves to owning this scary new millennium by looking forward before we’ve begun to forget. The past is never more truly the past than now.”

• RITA DOVE | INTRODUCTION TO THE PENGUIN ANTHOLOGY OF 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN POETRY



PHOTO: FRED VIEBACH

Flowering of African American Poetry and an anthology titled *Furious Flower: African American Poetry from the Black Arts Movement to the Present*. Outstanding critics such as Houston Baker, Lorenzo Thomas, and Kalamu ya Salaam commended the collection, which is a significant contribution to the curriculum needed to teach critical and cultural perspectives of African American poetry.

Furious Flower has a history of creating and implementing visionary programs. Since 1999, it has celebrated major black writers and debuted works in more than 50 public programs. In 2010 Joanne Gabbin and Nikki Giovanni hosted a celebration of Lucille Clifton called “73 Poems for 73 Years,” which featured poets from across the nation reading Clifton’s work and reflecting on her legacy. In 2012 Furious Flower partnered with Virginia Tech, Maya Angelou, and Nikki Giovanni to present “Sheer Good Fortune: Celebrating Toni Morrison.” More than 4,000 attended, and a live feed, archive footage, and a documentary made it accessible to thousands more.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary since James Madison University made history by hosting the first national conference dedicated to African American poetry. This event looks to the future of the genre by honoring the diversity within black voices and examining new avenues of artistic and critical inquiry. The conference seeks to encourage innovation by providing a serious venue for emerging poets of color while honoring literary trailblazers who have shaped the field.

2014 FURIOUS FLOWER: SEEDING THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN POETRY

The conference examines the significance and development of black poetic expression over the last century, assesses the current conversations and controversies in the field, and suggests new avenues of inquiry for the next 25 years. The conference also considers the impact of African American poetry on poets and scholars around the world, with an emphasis on emerging voices. Marking the twentieth year since our historic 1994 conference, this conference asks what’s next for black poetic expression.

INTERPRETIVE APPROACHES

The Black Avant-Garde. Poets and scholars discuss how poets have made homes for themselves under the banners of “experimental” writing and “black” writing while confronting questions about authenticity and allegiance.

Diaspora Poetry: Black Poetry Crossing, Expanding, and Challenging Borders. Distinguished scholars talk about poetry as a cultural and imaginative force uniting members of the African diaspora. They discuss how globalization and technology are upsetting definitions of race and opening avenues for cultural exchange.

Going Too Far: Queer Poetics Distraction from Race and Class. The panel responds to comments by poet Ishmael Reed that the gay movement is a “middle-class” movement that distracts from the “real issues” affecting the black community. Scholars and poets discuss how the voices of black writers challenge cultural mythologies and stereotypes of sexuality and gender.

2014



Joanne Veal Gabbin is Executive Director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center and Professor of English at James Madison University. She is the author of *Sterling A.*

Brown: Building the Black Aesthetic Tradition, which was published in a new edition by the University Press of Virginia in 1994. She edited *The Furious Flowering of African American Poetry* and *Furious Flower: African American Poetry from the Black Arts Movement to the Present*, and she wrote a children's book, *I Bet She Called Me Sugar Plum*. Gabbin has published essays in *Wild Women in the Whirlwind*, edited by Joanne M. Braxton and Andree Nicola McLaughlin, and *Southern Women Writers: The New Generation*, edited by Tonette Bond Inge. Her articles have also appeared in *The Dictionary of Literary Biography*, the *Zora Neale Hurston Forum*, *The Oxford Companion to Women's Writing*, the *Langston Hughes Journal*, *Callaloo*, *The Oxford Companion to African American Literature*, and *Black Books Bulletin*. As director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center, Gabbin has organized three international conferences for the critical exploration of African American poetry and produced two Furious Flower video and DVD series. She is also the founder and organizer of the Wintergreen Women Writers' Collective. Her latest publication is *Shaping Memories: Reflections of African American Women Writers*, a collection of short essays by members of the Wintergreen Women Writers' Collective on pivotal moments in their lives.



PHOTO: MICHAEL T. KIERNAN

FURIOUS FLOWER POETRY CONFERENCE STEERING COMMITTEE

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- Susan Facknitz, Department of English
- Annette Federico, Department of English
- Gary Freeburg, Duke Hall Gallery of Fine Art
- Alexander Gabbin (chair), School of Accounting
- Valarie Ghant, Center for Multicultural Student Services
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- Elizabeth Hoover, Furious Flower Poetry Center
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- Sang Yoon, School of Art, Design & Art History

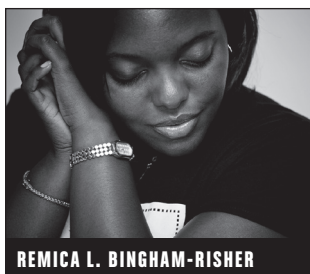
FURIOUS FLOWER POETRY CENTER ADVISORY BOARD

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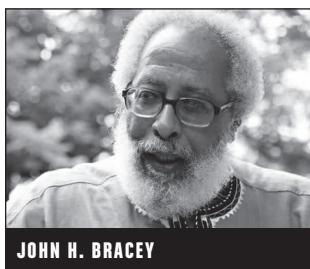
ELIZABETH ALEXANDER

Writer and teacher **Elizabeth Alexander** has published six books of poems, including her most recent title, *Crave Radiance: New and Selected Poems 1990–2010* (2010 Paterson Prize for Poetry). In 2009, she composed and delivered “Praise Song for the Day” for the first inauguration of President Barack Obama. Her poems are included in dozens of collections and have been translated into several languages. Currently at Yale University, Alexander has taught for more than twenty years at colleges and in poetry communities such as the Cave Canem poetry workshop, which she helped establish.



REMICA L. BINGHAM-RISHER

Remica L. Bingham-Risher is a Cave Canem fellow and a member of the Affrilachian Poets. Her first book, *Conversion*, won the Naomi Long Madgett Poetry Award. Her second book, *What We Ask of Flesh*, was published by Etruscan Press in 2013. She is the Director of Writing and Faculty Development at Old Dominion University. *Photo by Rachel Eliza Griffiths.*



JOHN H. BRACEY

John H. Bracey, Jr. has taught in the W. E. B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst since 1972. During the 1960s, he was active in the Civil Rights, Black Liberation, and other radical movements in Chicago. His publications include several co-edited volumes, including most recently *African American Mosaic: A Documentary History from the Slave Trade to the Present*.



JERICO BROWN

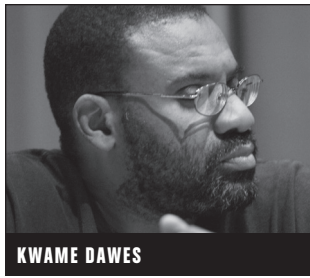
Jericho Brown is the recipient of fellowships from the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University and the National Endowment for the Arts. His poems have appeared in *The Nation*, *The New Yorker*, *The New Republic*, and *The Best American Poetry*. His first book, *Please*, won the American Book Award. *The New Testament* was recently published by Copper Canyon Press. He is an assistant professor at Emory University in Atlanta.



DARYL CUMBER DANCE

Daryl Cumber Dance is a much-lauded professor at the University of Richmond and the author of numerous works including *Shuckin’ and Jivin’* and *Long Gone*. Her most recent anthology is *From My People: 400 Years of African American Folklore*, which won the 2004 Storytelling World Award and was selected as one of *Booklist’s* “Top 10 African American Nonfiction Books” in 2001. She has also served as the Advisory Editor of *Black American Literary Forum* since 1978, and as the Editorial Advisor of the *Journal of West Indian Literature* since 1986.





KWAME DAWES

Kwame Dawes is the author of sixteen collections of poetry, including *Duppy Conqueror*, *Wheels*, *Back of Mount Peace*, and *Hope's Hospice*. He has also published two novels, *Bivouac* and *She's Gone*, winner of the 2008 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award for Best First Novel. Until 2011, Dawes was Distinguished Poet-in-Residence, Louis Frye Scudder Professor of Liberal Arts, and executive director of the South Carolina Poetry Initiative, which he founded. He is Chancellor Professor of English and the Glenne Luschel Editor of *Prairie Schooner* at the University of Nebraska.



TOI DERRICOTTE

Toi Derricotte's most recent book is *The Undertaker's Daughter*. Her honors include the 2012 Paterson Poetry Prize for Sustained Literary Achievement and the 2012 PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry. Her poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *American Poetry Review*, and *The Paris Review*. She co-founded Cave Canem with Cornelius Eady in 1996. *Photo by Lynda Koolish.*



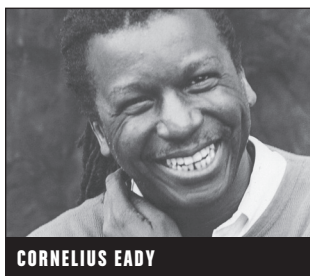
RITA DOVE

Rita Dove is a former U.S. Poet Laureate (1993–1995) and recipient of the 1987 Pulitzer Prize in poetry for *Thomas and Beulah*. The author of nine poetry collections, most recently *Sonata Mulattica* and *American Smooth*, she also edited *The Penguin Anthology of Twentieth-Century American Poetry*. Dove's numerous honors include the 1996 National Humanities Medal from President Clinton and the 2011 National Medal of Arts from President Obama. Rita Dove is Commonwealth Professor of English at the University of Virginia. *Photo by Fred Viebahn.*



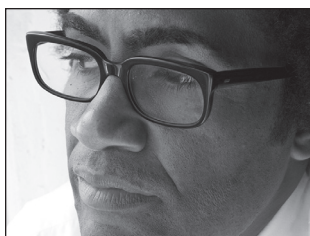
CAMILLE T. DUNGY

Camille T. Dungy is the author of *Smith Blue*, *Suck on the Marrow*, and *What to Eat, What to Drink, What to Leave for Poison*. She edited *Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry*, and co-edited *From the Fishhouse: An Anthology of Poems That Sing, Rhyme, Resound, Syncopate, Alliterate, and Just Plain Sound Great*. Her honors include an American Book Award, two Northern California Book Awards, a California Book Award silver medal, and a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Dungy is currently a professor in the English department at Colorado State University.



CORNELIUS EADY

Cornelius Eady is the author of eight books of poetry, including *Hardheaded Weather: New and Selected Poems* and *Brutal Imagination*, a finalist for the 2001 National Book Award. Eady's work in theater includes "Running Man," which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Drama in 1999. His play *Brutal Imagination* won *Newsday's* Oppenheimer ward in 2002. In 1996 Eady co-founded Cave Canem with Toi Derricotte. Eady is currently a professor at the University of Missouri. *Photo by Lynda Koolish.*



THOMAS SAYERS ELLIS

Thomas Sayers Ellis is the author of two full-length poetry collections including *The Maverick Room*, for which he received a Whiting Writers' Award and the 2006 John C. Zacharis First Book Award. His book *Breakfast and Blackfist: Notes for Black Poets* is forthcoming from the University of Michigan Press. In 1988 Ellis co-founded The Dark Room Collective. Ellis is a contributing editor to *Callaloo* and *Poets & Writers*.



NIKKI GIOVANNI

Nikki Giovanni is a world-renowned poet, writer, commentator, activist, and educator. Her autobiography *Gemini* was a finalist for the National Book Award. The recipient of some 25 honorary degrees, Giovanni was the first recipient of the Rosa L. Parks Woman of Courage Award and was also awarded the Langston Hughes Medal for poetry. Giovanni is a University Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. *Photo by Logan Wallace.*



ARACELIS GIRMAY

Aracelis Girmay is the author of the poetry collections *Teeth* and *Kingdom Animalia*. *Teeth* was awarded the GLCA New Writers Award and *Kingdom Animalia* won the Isabella Gardner Poetry Award and was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. Girmay is also the author of the collage-based picture book *changing, changing*. She is on the faculty of Hampshire College's School for Interdisciplinary Arts, and she teaches poetry in Drew University's low-residency MFA program. *Photo by Kalamzoo Poetry Festival.*



C. S. GISCOMBE

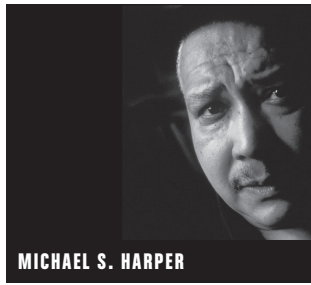
C. S. Giscombe teaches creative writing at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of six books of poetry, including *Prairie Style*, which won the 2008 American Book Award. He received the Stephen E. Henderson Prize in Poetry from the African American Literature and Culture Society and Carl Sandburg Prize given by the Chicago Public Library, as well as fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fund for Poetry, and the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars.



LORNA GOODISON

Lorna Goodison is one of the Caribbean's most distinguished contemporary poets. Her work appears in the *Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces*, and her many honors include the Commonwealth Poetry Prize, Americas Region. She is the author of numerous books of poetry, most recently *Travelling Mercies* and *Turn Thanks: Poems*, as well as two collections of short stories. Translated into many languages, her work is widely published and anthologized.





MICHAEL S. HARPER

Michael S. Harper is professor emeritus of English at Brown University, where he has taught since 1970. He is the first Poet Laureate of the State of Rhode Island. He has written 15 books of poetry, two of which were nominated for the National Book Award (1970, 1977). In 1990 he received the Robert Hayden Poetry Award from the United Negro College Fund. Other awards include the George Kent Poetry Award (1996), and the Claiborne Pell Award for excellence in the arts (1997).



DURIEL E. HARRIS

Duriel E. Harris is the author of *Drag and Amnesiac*, and the poetry video *Speleology*. Co-founder of The Black Took Collective and poetry editor for *Obsidian*, Harris holds degrees from Yale and New York University, and a PhD from the University of Illinois. A MacDowell and Millay Colony fellow, Harris has received grants from the Illinois Arts Council, the Cave Canem Foundation, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Current projects include the sound compilation “Black Magic” and *Thingification*, a one-woman show. *Photo by Gina Sandrzyk.*



MAJOR JACKSON

Major Jackson is the author of three collections of poetry: *Holding Company*; *Hoops*; and *Leaving Saturn*. He is the editor of *Countee Cullen: Collected Poems*. He is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Pushcart Prize, and a Whiting Writers’ Award. He is the Richard Dennis Green and Gold Professor at University of Vermont, and he serves as the poetry editor of the *Harvard Review*.



TYEHIMBA JESS

Tyehimba Jess is the author of *leadbelly*, which was a winner of the 2004 National Poetry Series, and *African American Pride: Celebrating Our Achievements, Contributions, and Enduring Legacy*. He is a former artist-in-residence with Cave Canem. His various awards include a Whiting Writers’ Award, a Chicago *Sun-Times* Poetry Award, and a Gwendolyn Brooks Open Mic Poetry Award. Tyehimba Jess is Assistant Professor of English at College of Staten Island. *Photo by Keliy Anderson-Staley.*



META DUEWA JONES

Meta DuEwa Jones is Associate Professor of English at Howard University. She earned her bachelor’s in English from Princeton and her master’s and doctoral degrees in English from Stanford University. Her book *The Muse is Music: Jazz Poetry From the Harlem Renaissance to Spoken Word* highlights the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality within the jazz tradition and its legacy in hip hop. It recently received honorable mention for the William Sanders Scarborough Prize from the Modern Language Association.



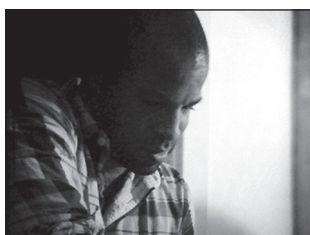
PATRICIA SPEARS JONES

Patricia Spears Jones is an award-winning author of three collections, most recently *Painkiller*; four chapbooks including *Living in the Love Economy*; and two plays commissioned and produced by Mabou Mines. Editor of *Think: Poems for Aretha Franklin's Inauguration Day* and *Ordinary Women: An Anthology of Poetry by New York City Women*, Jones is a contributing editor to *Bomb Magazine*. She is a Senior Fellow at the Black Earth Institute, a progressive think tank. She teaches at The City University of New York. *Photo by Thomas Sayers Ellis.*



A. VAN JORDAN

A. Van Jordan is the author of four collections, most recently *The Cineaste*. Jordan's honors include a Whiting Writers' Award, an Anisfield-Wolf Book Award, and a Pushcart Prize. Jordan currently serves as a professor in the Department of English at the University of Michigan, teaches in the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College, and is the Henry Rutgers Presidential Professor at Rutgers University, Newark.



DOUGLAS KEARNEY

Poet/performer/librettist **Douglas Kearney's** second, full-length collection of poetry *The Black Automaton* was Catherine Wagner's selection for the National Poetry Series. Red Hen Press published Kearney's third collection, *Patter*, in 2014. He has received fellowships at Cave Canem and Idyllwild, among others. He teaches at California Institute for the Arts, where he received his MFA in writing. *Photo by Eric Plattner.*



YUSEF KOMUNYAKAA

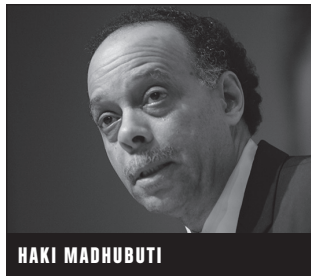
Yusef Komunyakaa is the author of several poetry collections, including *Neon Vernacular: New and Selected Poems*, which was awarded the Pulitzer Prize and Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award in 1994, and *The Chameleon Couch*, which was a finalist for the 2011 National Book Critics Circle Award. Other honors include the William Faulkner Prize from the Universite Rennes, the Thomas Forcade Award, the Hanes Poetry Prize, and the Bronze Star for his service in Vietnam, where he served as a correspondent and managing editor of the *Southern Cross*.



DAWN LUNDY MARTIN

Dawn Lundy Martin is the author of *A Gathering of Matter / A Matter of Gathering* which was selected for the 2007 Cave Canem Poetry Prize. *Discipline* won the 2009 Nightboat Books Poetry Prize and was a finalist for both the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize and the Lambda Literary Award. In 2004, she co-edited, with Vivien Labaton, *The Fire This Time: Young Activists and New Feminism*. Martin is a co-founder of both the Third Wave Foundation in New York and the Black Took Collective.





Haki Madhubuti was a prominent figure throughout the Black Arts Movement. He has published several collections of poetry, including *Think Black*, *Black Pride*, *We Walk the Way of the World*, *Direction Score: Selected and New Poems*, *Book of Life*, and *Don't Cry, Scream*. In addition Madhubuti also published a collection of critical essays entitled *Dynomite Voices: Black Poets of the 1960s*. Madhubuti continues to write and is the founder and editor of Third World Press in Chicago.



Mark McMorris is the author of *Entrepôt. The Blaze of the Poui* was a finalist for the Lenore Marshall Prize, and *The Black Reeds* won the Contemporary Poetry Series prize from the University of Georgia Press. From 2006 to 2009, he was director of the Lannan Center for Poetics and Social Practice at Georgetown University, where he is currently a professor in the Department of English.



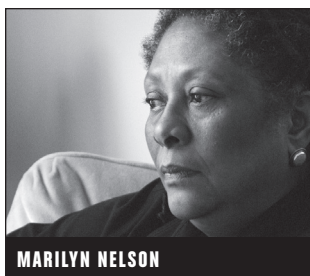
Tony Medina is Professor of Creative Writing at Howard University. Two-time winner of the Paterson Prize for Books for Young People for *DeShawn Days and I and I*, *Bob Marley*, he is the author of a number of books for adults and young people, including, most recently, *The President Looks Like Me & Other Poems* and *Broke Baroque*, which was a finalist for the Julie Suk Book Award. He recently received the Langston Hughes Society Award.



A recipient of fellowships to the Prague Summer Writing Institute, Cave Canem, and the Vermont Studio Center, **Kamilah Aisha Moon** has published work in the *Harvard Review*, *jubilat*, *Callaloo*, *The Ringing Ear*, and *Gathering Ground*. A Pushcart Prize winner and finalist for the Lambda Literary Award and the Audre Lorde Award from the Publishing Triangle, Moon is the author of *She Has a Name* and holds an MFA from Sarah Lawrence College.



Jessica Care Moore is the CEO of Moore Black Press, executive producer of Black WOMEN Rock!, and founder of the literacy-driven Jess Care Moore Foundation. An internationally renowned poet, playwright, performance artist, and producer, she is the 2013 Alain Locke Award Recipient from the Detroit Institute of Arts. Her most recent poetry collection is *God is Not an American*. Photo by Moses Mitchell.



MARILYN NELSON

Marilyn Nelson's books include *The Homeplace*, *The Fields of Praise*, *Carver*, *Fortune's Bones*, *The Freedom Business*, *A Wreath for Emmett Till*, *Faster than Light*, and *How I Discovered Poetry*. The 2012 recipient of the Robert Frost Medal, she was Poet Laureate of Connecticut for five years. She is a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets and Poet-in-Residence of The Poets Corner at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. *Photo by Frank Funk.*



ALDON LYNN NIELSEN

Aldon Lynn Nielsen is the George and Barbara Kelly Professor of American Literature at Pennsylvania State University. The first winner of the Larry Neal Award for poetry, he has published seven volumes of verse, most recently *Mantic Semantic* and *A Brand New Beggar*. His book *Reading Race* won the SAMLA Studies Prize, a Myers Citation, and the Kayden Award for best book in the humanities. Nielsen's edition of *Don't Deny My Name: Words and Music and the Black Intellectual Tradition* by Lorenzo Thomas won an American Book Award.



MENDI LEWIS OBADIKE

Mendi Lewis Obadike makes literature, art, and music. She is the author of *Armor and Flesh: Poems* and, with Keith Obadike, *Phonotype*, *Four Electric Ghosts*, and *Big House / Disclosure*. They have also released two albums together, *The Sour Thunder* and *Crosstalk*, and exhibited and performed at the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum, among other institutions. Obadike is Assistant Professor of Humanities and Media Studies at Pratt Institute.



BRENDA MARIE OSBEY

2005 Louisiana Poet Laureate **Brenda Marie Osbey** is the author of poetry and prose nonfiction in English and French. Her books include *History and Other Poems* and *All Saints: New and Selected Poems*, which received the 1998 American Book Award. For more than 25 years she has researched and recorded the history of the Faubourg Tremé, a community founded by free Blacks in New Orleans. Osbey is currently Distinguished Visiting Professor of Africana Studies at Brown University.



LAURI RAMEY

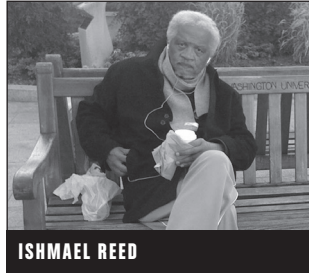
Lauri Ramey is director of the Center for Contemporary Poetry and Poetics and Professor of Creative Writing, African American Literature and Culture, and American Studies at California State University, Los Angeles. Her books include *Slave Songs and the Birth of African American Poetry*, *The Heritage Series of Black Poetry, 1962-1975*, *Every Goodbye Ain't Gone* and *What I Say* (both with Aldon Lynn Nielsen) and *Black British Writing* (with R. Victoria Arana).





EUGENE B. REDMOND

Eugene B. Redmond is the author/editor of 25 volumes of poetry, collections of diverse writings, and plays for stage and TV. He was the 1976 Poet Laureate of East St. Louis. His honors include an NEA Creative Writing Fellowship, an Outstanding Faculty Research Award, a Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses, an American Book Award for *The Eye in the Ceiling*, and the St. Louis American Foundation's Lifetime Achievement Award.



ISHMAEL REED

Ishmael Reed is the author of ten novels, seven plays, six books of poetry, ten books of essays, and editor of thirteen anthologies. He has received prizes and awards in all of these categories. He is also a songwriter whose work has been recorded by Macy Gray, Gregory Porter, Cassandra Wilson, and Taj Mahal, among others. His most recently published poetry collection is *Ishmael Reed: New and Collected Poems, 1964–2007*. Photo by Tennessee Reed.



SONIA SANCHEZ

Sonia Sanchez is the author of more than 20 books, most recently *Morning Haiku*. She has received numerous awards, including those from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She is also a winner of the 1985 American Book Award for *Homegirls and Handgrenades*, and received a Pew Fellowship in the Arts for 1992–1993, and the Langston Hughes Poetry Award for 1999. *Does Your House Have Lions?* was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. In December 2011, Sonia Sanchez became Philadelphia's first Poet Laureate, with mayor Michael Nutter calling her "the longtime conscience of the city."



EVIE SHOCKLEY

Evie Shockley is an associate professor of English at Rutgers University. She is the author of *Renegade Poetics: Black Aesthetics and Formal Innovation in African American Poetry*, a critical study, as well as two books of poetry, including *the new black*, winner of the 2012 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award in Poetry. Her honors include the 2012 Holmes National Poetry Prize, fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. She is the creative editor in the *Feminist Studies* editorial collective.



GIOVANNI SINGLETON

giovanni singleton is founding editor of *nocturnes (re)view of the literary arts*, a journal committed to experimental work of the African diaspora. Her debut poetry collection *Ascension* received the 81st California Book Award Gold Medal. She was selected for the Poetry Society of America's biennial New American Series. singleton has taught poetry at Saint Mary's College, Naropa University, and throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. She coordinates Lunch Poems, the monthly poetry reading series at UC-Berkeley under the direction of Robert Hass.



JAMES SMETHURST

James Smethurst is a professor of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is the author of *The New Red Negro*, *The Black Arts Movement*, and *The African American Roots of Modernism*. He co-edited *Left of the Color Line, Radicalism in the South Since Reconstruction*, and *SOS—Calling All Black People: A Black Arts Reader*.



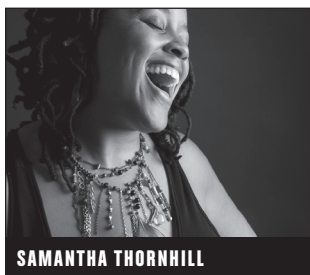
PATRICIA SMITH

Patricia Smith's six books include *Shoulda Been Jimi Savannah*, winner of the 2013 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize from the Academy of American Poets, and *Blood Dazzler*, a finalist for the National Book Award. Her work has appeared in *Poetry*, *The Paris Review*, *Best American Poetry*, *Best American Essays*, and *Best American Mystery Stories*. A 2014 Guggenheim fellow, Smith teaches at the College of Staten Island and in the MFA program at Sierra Nevada College. *Photo by Rachel Eliza Griffiths.*



MARIAHADESSA EKERE TALLIE

Mariahadessa Ekere Tallie's first poetry collection *Karma's Footsteps* was published in 2011. She is poetry editor of *African Voices*. Her work is the subject of the film *I Leave My Colors Everywhere*. Widely published in anthologies and journals including *North American Review*, *Specter Magazine*, *Bomb*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Oya N'Soro*, and *Listen Up!*, Tallie has taught at Medgar Evers College and York College (CUNY). She records with The Quiet Onez. *Photo by Dominique Sindayiganza.*



SAMANTHA THORNHILL

Samantha Thornhill is a poet, author, and educator from Trinidad and Tobago. Since she arrived in New York City more than a decade ago, she has taught poetry to actors, nonfiction seminars to high school youth at the Bronx Academy of Letters, and creative writing workshops to senior citizens for Poets & Writers Inc. She is currently at work on her debut poetry collection, a third children's book, and a documentary film. She is the founding curator of Poets in Unexpected Places.



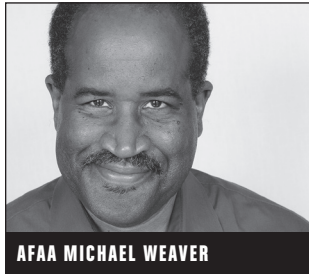
QUINCY TROUPE

Quincy Troupe is an award-winning poet, best-selling author, editor, and professor emeritus of the University of California, San Diego. He has published 19 books. His most recent book is *Earl the Pearl: My Story*; his most recent book of poetry is *Errançities*. Troupe edits *Black Renaissance Noire*. Among his awards and distinctions are the 2007 Paterson Award for Sustained Literary Achievement, two American Book Awards, and several lifetime achievement awards. *Photo by Jerry Jack.*

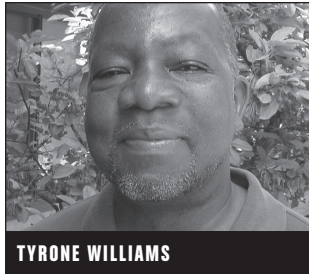




Frank X Walker is a founding member of the Affrilachian Poets, editor of *America! What's My Name?*, *The "Other" Poets Unfurl the Flag*, and *Eclipsing a Nappy New Millennium*; author of four poetry collections; and the winner of the 35th Annual Lillian Smith Book Award. His poetry collection *Affrilachia* was a Kentucky Public Librarians' Choice Award nominee. Walker currently serves as an associate professor in the Department of English at the University of Kentucky and is the editor and publisher of *pluck! The Journal of Affrilachian Art & Culture*. Photo by Rachel Eliza Griffiths.



Afaa Michael Weaver's twelfth collection of poetry, *The Government of Nature*, won the 2014 Kingsley Tufts Award. His other honors include three Pushcarts, a Fulbright, a Pew fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts award, and the May Sarton Award. In playwriting he was awarded the PDI award from ETA Creative Arts Foundation. His new collection *City of Eternal Spring* is due from the University of Pittsburgh Press in September. Weaver teaches at Simmons College and in the Drew University MFA program. Photo by Catherine Laine.



Tyrone Williams teaches literature and theory at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. He is the author of five books of poetry, including *On Spec*, *The Hero Project of the Century*, *Adventures of Pi*, and *Howell*. He is also the author of several chapbooks, including a prose eulogy, *Pink Tie*.



L. Lamar Wilson's first collection, *Sacreligion*, was selected by Lee Ann Brown for the Carolina Wren Press Poetry Series. His poems have been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and won the 2011 Beau Boudreaux Poetry Prize. Wilson has received fellowships from the Cave Canem Foundation, the *Callaloo* workshops, the Alfred E. Knobler Scholarship Fund, and the Arts and Sciences Foundation at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Photo by Rachel Eliza Griffiths.

Jonathan R. Alger
President, James Madison University

Jerry Benson
Provost and Senior Vice President, JMU

Charles W. King, Jr.
Senior Vice President, JMU

Teresa Gonzalez
Vice Provost for Academic Development, JMU

David K. Jeffrey
Dean, College of Arts and Letters, JMU

George Sparks
Dean, College of Visual and Performing Arts, JMU

David Owusu-Ansah
Special Assistant to the President, JMU

Gary Freeburg
Director, Duke Hall Gallery, JMU

Valarie Ghant
*Director, Center for Multicultural Student Services,
JMU*

Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy
School of Music, Director of Choirs, JMU

Eric Conway
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*Our fearless, fearsome,
furious chairperson
joined the board as a
businessman and
blossomed into a
fierce fan of
poetry, the truest
poet among us.
Thank you,
Merle!*

—FFPC Advisory Board

JOANNE GABBIN

*When we walked up the steep
incline of the final years of the
last millennium, we witnessed
the staccato light from the
tracers and anti-aircraft fire
above the ancient river beds of
Iraq. • We witnessed wars in
many regions. • We saw the
dismantling of the Berlin Wall;
the Iron Curtain turned to
filigree; Nelson Mandela's
walk to freedom after 27 years'
imprisonment. • Today we
come to a world once again in
upheaval. Thus it is more
important than ever to
celebrate those who educate,
enlighten, create and
encourage: Professor Joanne
Gabbin, our leader, our
teacher, our inspiration, and
guardian of the Furious Flower
Poetry Center.*

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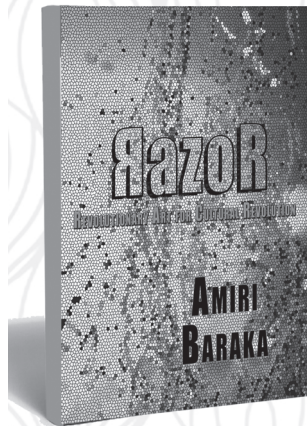
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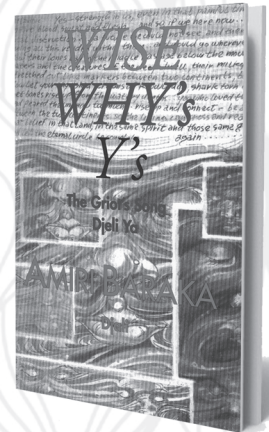
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- Haki R. Madhubuti



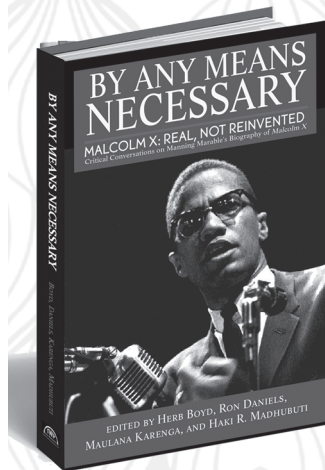
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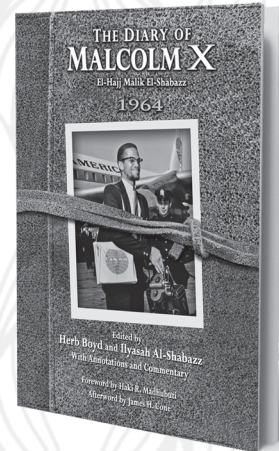


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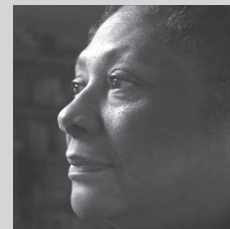
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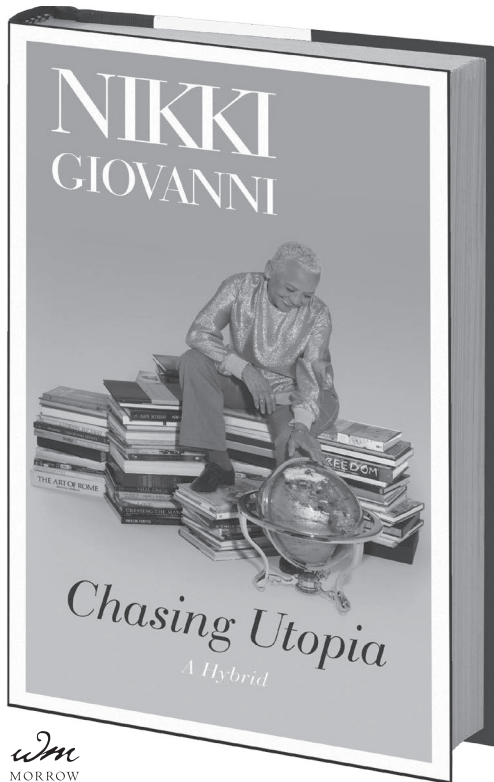


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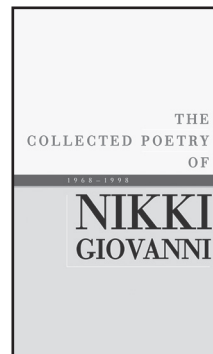
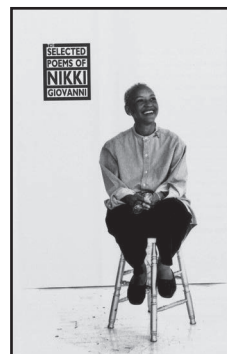
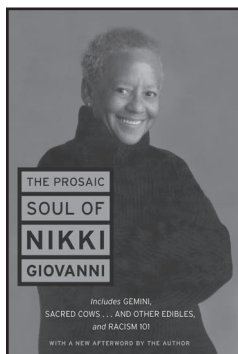
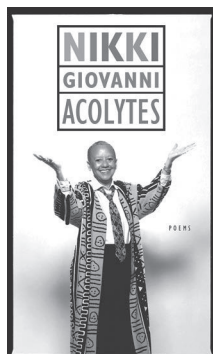
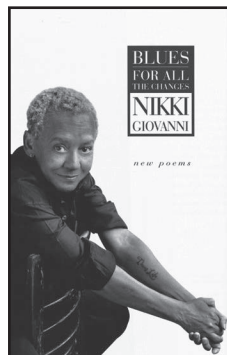
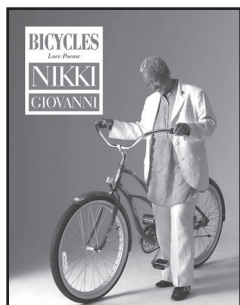
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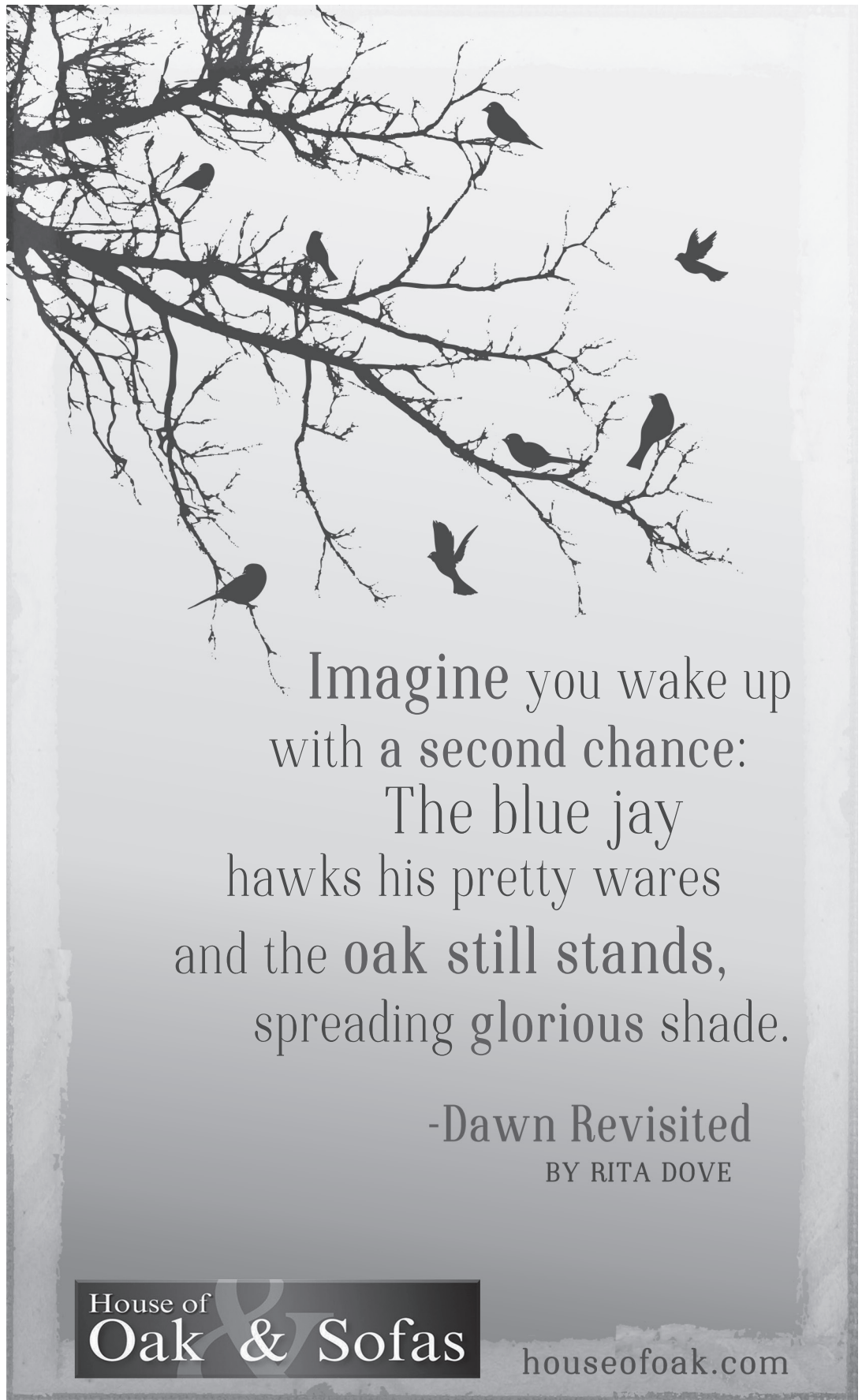
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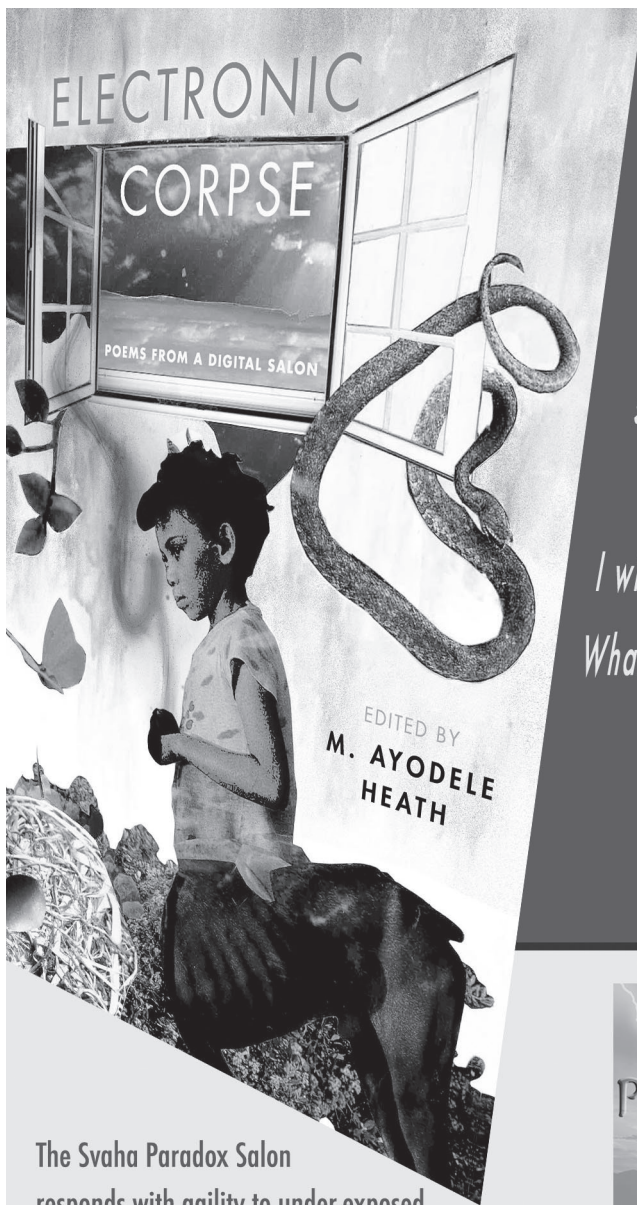
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