

FOREWORD:

POETRY, PROSE AND MUSIC: THE LYRICAL VOICE OF BLACK ARTS MOVEMENTS

By Alicia L. Moore & La Vonne I. Neal

During 2016 we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Black Panther Party, and this year we celebrate the lyrical voice of the Black Arts Movement, or as noted by Larry Neal, “the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept.”¹

The Arts Movement is radically opposed to any concept of the artist that alienates him from his community. Black Art is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept. As such, it envisions an art that speaks directly to the needs and aspirations of Black America. In order to perform this task, the Black Arts Movement proposes a radical re-ordering of the western cultural aesthetic. It proposes a separate symbolism, mythology, critique, and iconology.²

Throughout this issue, guest editor Gena Brooks Flynn takes us on a fantastic voyage of re-imagining the appeal of Western culture using poetry, prose, and music to illustrate how artists lift us up during times that are turbulent. Poet Judy Juanita, via a personal narrative, shares her poetry and a transformational encounter during the 1960s when she met LeRoi Jones (aka Amiri Baraka). Prepare yourself to reflect on the prose of David E. Kirkland and Hui-Ling Malone about rap lyrics as the echoes of pain. As you continue to read on, Ronnie Wooten is as compelling as percussive beats when he describes the musical genius of Black female conductors and their resistance to marginal representation. Leslie David Burns concludes this fantastic voyage with a collage of cultural knowledge such as hip hop as poetry and re-designed knowledge to spark genius in classrooms.

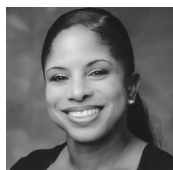
Teacher Resources:

1. John H. Bracey Jr., Sonia Sanchez, and James Smethurst, eds., *SOS—Calling All Black People: A Black Arts Movement Reader* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014)
- Bambara, Toni Cade. *The Black Woman: An Anthology*. New York: New American Library, 1970.
- Baraka, Amiri (LeRoi Jones), and Larry Neal. *Black Fire: An Anthology of Afro-American Writing*. New York: Morrow, 1968.
- Brown, Patricia L., Don L. Lee, and Francis Ward, eds. *To Gwen with Love: An Anthology Dedicated to Gwendolyn Brooks*. Chicago: Johnson, 1971.
- Sanchez, Sonia, ed. *We Word Sorcerers: 25 Stories by Black Americans*. New York: Bantam Books, 1973.
- Melhem, D. H. *Heroism in the New Black Poetry: Introductions & Interviews*: Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1990.

- Ward, Jerry W. Jr. *Trouble the Water: 250 Years of African-American Poetry*. New York: Penguin, 1997.
- Braxton, Joanne M., and Andree Nicola McLaughlin, eds. *Wild Women in the Whirlwind: Afro-American Culture and the Contemporary Literary Renaissance*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990.
- Gayles, Gloria Wade, ed. *Conversations with Gwendolyn Brooks*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2003.
- Ongori, Amy Abugo. *Spectacular Blackness: The Cultural Politics of the Black Power Movement and the Search for a Black Aesthetic*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009.
- Thomas, Lorenzo. *Don't Deny Me My Name: Words and Music and the Black Intellectual Tradition*. Edited and with an introduction by Aldon Lynn Nielsen. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008.

Notes:

1. John H. Bracey Jr., Sonia Sanchez, and James Smethurst, eds., *SOS—Calling All Black People: A Black Arts Movement Reader* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014), 55.
2. Ibid.



ALICIA L. MOORE, Ph.D., holds the Cargill Endowed Professorship in Education at Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas;
Email: moorea@southwestern.edu



LA VONNE I. NEAL, Ph.D., is Associate Vice President—Administration & Finance and Professor of Special Education at Northern Illinois University;
Email: lneal1@niu.edu