



Into a Light Both Brilliant and Unseen: Conversations with Contemporary Black Poets (Sarah Mills Hodge Fund Publication)

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Malin Pereira's collection of eight interviews with leading contemporary African American poets offers an in-depth look at the cultural and aesthetic perspectives of the post–Black Arts Movement generation.

This volume includes unpublished interviews Pereira conducted with Wanda Coleman, Yusef Komunyakaa, Thylias Moss, Harryette Mullen, Cornelius Eady, and Elizabeth Alexander, as well as conversations with Rita Dove and Cyrus Cassells previously in print. Largely published since 1980, each of these poets has at least four books. Their influence on new generations of poets has been wide-reaching.

The work of this group, says Pereira, is a departure from the previous generation's proscriptive manifestos in favor of more inclusive voices, perspectives, and techniques. Although these poets reject a rigid adherence to a specific black aesthetic, their work just as effectively probes racism, stereotyping, and racial politics. Unlike Amiri Baraka's claim in "Home" that he becomes blacker and blacker, positioning race as a defining essence, these poets imagine a plurality of ideas about the relationship between blackness and black poetry. They question the idea of an established literary canon defining black literature. For these poets, Pereira says, the idea of "home" is found both in black poetry circles and in the wider transnational community of literature.

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