The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame

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Poetry Foundation and Chicago Writers Association

PRESENTS

The Fuller Award

FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT TO

ANGELA JACKSON

Thursday, May 17, 2018

The Poetry Foundation | 61 West Superior | Chicago, Illinois

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ANGELA JACKSON

Photo by Toya Werner-Martin

A renowned Chicago poet, novelist, playwright, and biographer, Angela Jackson published her first book while still a student at Northwestern University. Though Jackson has achieved acclaim in multiple genres, and plans in the near future to add short stories and memoir to her oeuvre, she first and foremost considers herself a poet. The Poetry Foundation website notes that "Jackson's free verse poems weave myth and life experience, conversation, and invocation." She is also renown for her passionate and skilled public poetry readings.

Born on July 25, 1951, in Greenville, Mississippi, Jackson moved with her family to Chicago's South Side at the age of one. Jackson's father, George Jackson, Sr., and mother, Angeline Robinson, raised nine children, of which Angela was the middle child.

Jackson did her primary education at St. Anne's Catholic School and her high school work at Loretto Academy, where she earned a pre-medicine scholarship to Northwestern University. Jackson switched majors and graduated with a B.A. in English and American Literature from Northwestern University in 1977. She later earned her M.A. in Latin American and Caribbean studies from the University of Chicago, and, more recently, received an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Bennington College.

While at Northwestern, Jackson joined the Organization for Black American Culture (OBAC), where she matured under the guidance of legendary literary figures such as Hoyt W Fuller. She stayed as a member for twenty years, and became one of the organization's leading authors. During her undergraduate years, Jackson started publishing her poems and winning national acclaim. Her first nationally-published piece appeared in *Black World* in 1971, and her first volume of poetry, *Voo Doo/Love Magic*, came out under Third World Press's *First Poets* banner three years later.

While still an undergraduate, Jackson earned the eighth Conrad Kent Rivers Memorial Award and then the Academy of American Poets Award from

Northwestern University. It would be a precursor to a career in which Jackson would steadily win acclaim and awards. In addition to the major awards Jackson has won (including the American Book Award, the Carl Sandburg Award, and the Pushcart Prize), she has also been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, National Book Award, and a PEN Open Book Award.

In 2002, the Poetry Society of America gave Jackson The Shelley Memorial Award with the following rationale: "She is a marvelous poet with a splendid ear and a poetic voice reminiscent of Maria Callas in its depth and passion. She is a formidable talent. While Jackson's work is informed by her racial identity, it is easily accessible to all."

Jackson has taught writing at six different colleges or universities, including Kennedy-King College, School of the Art Institute, and Columbia College.

Though Jackson's work explores a wide variety of themes and characters, including her family roots in Mississippi, one of her primary settings has been Chicago. The city serves as the setting for two of her plays, both published novels as well as the forthcoming young adult title, short stories, and poems. "Chicago has historically been the crossroads of the United States," Jackson said. "Anything can happen here—and it's not always good."

Currently, Jackson lives in Chicago and works as a mentor in the Northwestern University MA/MFA Program in Writing.

Mama, Daddy, Anela, Margie, Betty, Baby Maras, Rosemary, Debra, Circa 1975, 1976

★ AWARDS ★

- Conrad Kent Rivers Memorial Award from *Black World Magazine* (1973)
- Academy of American Poets Prize from Northwestern University (1974)
- 2nd World Black and African Festival of Arts in Culture, Laos, Nigeria (1977)
- Illinois Art Council Creative Writing Fellowship in Fiction (1979)
- National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship in Fiction (1980)
- Hoyt W. Fuller Award for Literary Excellence (1984)
- DuSable Museum Writers Seminar Poetry Prize (1984)
- Pushcart Prize for Poetry (1985)
- American Book Award for *Solo in the Boxcar Third Floor E* (1985)
- The Carl Sandburg Award for *Dark Legs and Silk Kisses: The Beatitudes of Spinners* (1993)
- *Chicago Sun-Times* Friends of Literature Book of the Year Award (1994)
- ETA Theater Gala Honor (1994)
- Illinois Authors Literary Heritage Award (1996)
- Illinois Art Council Creative Writing Fellowship for Playwriting (2001)
- Shelley Memorial Award of the Poetry Society of America (2002)
- *Where I Must Go: A Novel* (NU Press, 2009) American Book Award winner (2009)
- Chicago Black Alliance Fiction Prize (2010)
- Certificate of Honorary Membership, Cliff Dwellers Club (2017)
- John Gardner Fiction Prize, Binghamton, NY (2018)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

POETRY

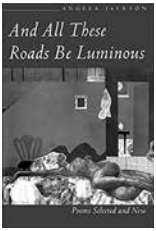
- *Voo Doo/Love Magic*, Third World Press, 1974: Early poems covering a range of topics, written when Jackson was an undergraduate. D.L. Crockett Smith called the collection, "an experiment in style."

- *The Greenville Club*, BookMark Press, 1977 (chapbook): Poems based on the author's experiences in Greenville, including explorations of family.

- *Solo in the Boxcar Third Floor E., Oba House, 1985*: This collection of poems in part explores a community united through its physical space, with many point of views capturing, at once, unity and solitude.

- *The Man with the White Liver, Illustrator Melora Walters, Contact II Publications, 1987:* Three poems that together tell the story of Black culture, "the sacred and the profane," according to Jackson. The title character was based on a legend, told in whispers, that Jackson first heard from a friend, about a man that was bad for women.

- *Dark Legs and Silk Kisses: The Beatitudes of the Spinners,* Northwestern University Press, 1993: The author's first full-length collection of poetry, in which the motif of the spider, presented as both creator and predator, "demonstrates her deliberate reshaping of myth in the context of contemporary human experience," according to NU Press.



- *All These Roads Be Luminous: Poems New and Selected,* Northwestern University Press, 1997: A book, according to the publisher's synopsis, "filled with an impressive variety of characters engaged in compelling explorations of identity, creativity, spiritual experience, and the rites and rituals of race and sexuality."

- *It Seems Like a Mighty Long Time*, NU Press, 2015: A collection spanning American history "inclusive of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, the Great Migration, and 21st-century Blackness," according to Ciara Miller, writing in *Mosaic*. The title is an homage to Barbara Lewis's 1963 hit single "Hello Stranger."

PLAYS

- *Witness!*, 1978: A voice anthology of poetry and fiction; originally done as a staged reading by eta at Harris YWCA.

- *Shango Diaspora: An African American Myth of Womanhood and Love*, 1980: The story of the water girl coming into herself through her involvement with the title character and Yeman Ja, the water mother.

- *When the Wind Blows*, 1984 (better known as the eta production entitled *Comfort Stew*): An urban drama in which Hillary Robinson Clay's stew serves as a metaphor for complex social issues surrounding the disappearance of neighbor Patrice Rodgers's child. In this generational story with interlocking narratives moving backward and forward in time, Hillary frets over the future of her own rebellious daughter, Sojourner, and the fragile institution of family.

- *Lightfoot: The Crystal Stair*, 1984: The story about the continuity of life, realized through the Lightfoot family's decades-long travels through their Chicago neighborhood.

NOVELS

- *Where I Must Go*, Northwestern University Press, 2009: Magdalena Grace's move from a working-class Black neighborhood to an elite, mostly White Eden University creates a contrast in life styles and also an awareness of the social injustices in the larger world. Set in the late 1960s, Maggie's coming-of-age narration leads her readers into the heart of the American Civil Rights movement while also exploring the importance of family, community, and solidarity.

- *Roads Where There Are No Roads*, Triquarterly, 2017: In this sequel to *Where I Must Go*, Maggie Grace is back at Eden University, and with her beloved Treemont Stone again finds herself on the front lines in the fight for social justice. According to the publisher, the couple is "advocating for civil rights, black consciousness, black feminism, the rights of the poor, and an end to the war in Vietnam."

- *Miracle and The Fellas*, Third World Press, Summer, 2018: A young adult novel about two cousins, Kwame and Thaddeus, searching for their missing relative in an effort to save her from danger.

BIOGRAPHY

- *A Surprised Queenhood in the New Black Sun: The Life & Legacy of Gwendolyn Brooks*, Beacon Press, 2017: Published during the legendary poet's centennial year, Jackson's book "brings fresh perspective to Brooks' achievements as a leading black poet-activist of her generation and beyond," according to Lew Whittington, writing in *New York Journal of Books*.

WHAT IS THE FULLER AWARD?

By Valya Dudycz Lupescu

"The Fuller" is awarded by the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame to a Chicago author who has made an outstanding lifetime contribution to literature. The first four Fuller Awards were presented to Gene Wolfe (2012), Harry Mark Petrakis (2014), Haki Madhubuti (2015), and Rosellen Brown (2016).

The Fuller Legacy: A Quick Look at a Literary Pioneer

The award was inspired by the literary contribution of Henry Blake Fuller, one of Chicago's earliest novelists and author of *The Cliff-Dwellers* and *With the Procession.* Both novels use the rapidly developing city of Chicago as their setting and are considered by many to be the earliest examples of American realism. Theodore Dreiser called *With the Procession* the first piece of American realism that he had encountered and considered it the best of the school, even during the days of his own prominence. There are additional layers of meaning to the word "fuller." A fuller is also a tool used to form metal when it's hot, an important part of building and a nice metaphor for Chicago, home to the "First Chicago School" of architecture that rose up from the ashes of the Chicago Fire of 1871. Between 1872 and 1879, more than ten thousand construction permits were issued. Chicago emerged as a resilient city that took risks and made bold decisions—using iron and steel to frame its buildings, giving rise to the world's first skyscraper. The fuller was one such

> "I cannot think of a more deserving artist to receive such an honor. Her work about our lives and times engulfs us in its rich, melodious imagery and lore while compelling us to social action. Angela Jackson has been a major influence in my life and work because of her artistry and social consciousness that deconstructs but lifts us up in beauty and love."
>
> *– Eileen C. Cherry-Chandler*

tool that made it happen, a symbol of possibility and perseverance. Inspired by the sleek lines and art deco style of Chicago sculptor John Bradley Storrs, whose sculpture Ceres is on top of the Board of Trade building, the award statue for the Fuller was based on Hephaestus, the Greek god of the blacksmith's fire and patron of all craftsmen. According to legend, Hephaestus was the only god who worked, and he was honored for having taught mankind that work is noble and one should excel at their craft. The patron of artists and craftsmen, he seemed a fitting symbol to capture the spirit of excellence embodied by the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame's Fuller Award.

Ron Swanson, Jr., who created the Fuller Award statue, is the founder and owner of R.E. Sculpture, Inc. Over the course of his career, Ron has worked on large sculptures, including public figures as part of an artist group at Friends of Community Public Art in Joliet. He has also worked on many original toy prototypes and various licensed character sculpts.

www.resculpture.net

> *"* I first approached Angela Jackson to write a celebratory biography of Gwendolyn Brooks two years ago. More than a few people recommended her as the perfect writer for the project. They could not have been more right. Her writing was exquisite, knowing and alive. I could practically smell the South Side of Chicago on the page. The fact that Angela wrote the book in only six months is testament to her superhumanness. So it's about time she receive a lifetime achievement award. Shoot, give her two! *"*
>
> *– Rakia Clark*

TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

Donald G. Evans ..... Emcee

Stephen Young ..... Introducing the Poetry Foundation

Carole A. Parks ..... "*What I Said As A Child": Experiencing Angela Jackson As Weaver of Magic, Skill and Generations*

Reginald Gibbons ..... *Angela Jackson's Achievement*

Johnetta Anderson ..... *Angela Jackson: Mentor and Teacher*

Cornelia Spelman ..... *A Holding Heart: The Deep Emotional Intelligence in Angela Jackson´s Poetry and Fiction*

Useni Eugene Perkins ..... *The Mythical Lyrics of Angela Jackson*

Anne Gendler ..... *Where This (Comma) Must Go: An Editor's Perspective on Working with Angela*

Sarah Odishoo ..... *Who is that Bird Reporting the Storm?*

Kemati Janice Porter ..... *Angela Jackson: Multi "Colored" Woman*

Haki R. Madhubuti ..... *Personal Reflections*

Ann E. Smith ..... *Angela Jackson's* For Our People

State Senator Jacqueline Y. Collins ..... *Angela: My Roommate*

Angela Jackson ..... Acceptance Speech

OUR HOST: THE POETRY FOUNDATION

The Poetry Foundation works to create and encourage a vigorous presence for poetry through *Poetry*, free public programming offered in our building in Chicago, programs created with partners throughout the United States and abroad, and a website that hosts more than 3 million visits each month. The Foundation increasingly supports programs that intertwine poetry and other art forms: music, dance, theater, and visual arts.

Founded in Chicago by Harriet Monroe in 1912, *Poetry* is the oldest monthly devoted to verse in the English-speaking world. The work of Chicago poets such as Margaret Burroughs, Carl Sandburg, Sandra Cisneros, Ed Roberson, Nate Marshall, Eve L. Ewing, Kevin Coval, and Fatimah Asghar has been published in *Poetry*. Harriet Monroe's "Open Door" policy, set forth in volume 1 of the magazine, lives on in the Foundation's mission and programming.

From 2017's year-long celebration of Gwendolyn Brooks' centennial to this year's third annual Poetry Block Party, the Foundation is committed to the poetry of Chicago and communities that make that poetry possible. Learn more about our programming at PoetryFoundation.org

Photo credit: Charles Osgood

PARTICIPANTS

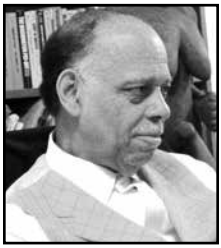
Johnetta Anderson is a performance poet and educator who uses Hip-Hop to promote Black culture. Known for her potent poems and compelling Hip-Hop songs, Johnetta has a bold and fearless way of approaching each performance, lecture, and lesson. She has designed a course *Black Feminism and Hip-Hop: A study of the Woman Emcee* and taught at The School of the Art Institute and at Chicago State University. She was a visiting English Teacher at Mothercare International Ghana School. Johnetta is a recipient of several awards and grants for her work, including the Harold & Virginia Haydon Scholarship, and The New York State Summer Writers Institute Award.

Jacqueline Y. Collins is Illinois State Senator for the 16th Legislative District. A former journalist and Emmy-award nominated editor at CBS-TV, Senator Collins has used her journalism experience and communication skills to support progressive agendas that seek to create economic and social welfare policies that reduce inequality, expand opportunities and strengthen communities. As Senate Majority Whip and chairperson of the Senate Financial Institutions Committee, some of her major legislation fighting mortgage foreclosures and predatory lending have been the Mortgage Rescue Fraud Act and the Payday Loan Reform Act for which she received the 2005 Monsignor John Egan Campaign Leadership Award. Senator Collins is a 1998 Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow and also had the distinction of serving as a 2001 Legislative Fellow for Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton in Washington, D.C. Senator Collins is a graduate of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard Divinity School, and majored in journalism at Northwestern University.

Anne Gendler is the managing editor and director of the editorial, design, and production department at Northwestern University Press, where she has worked since 2004. Previously, she was the production editor and then editorial director at the Great Books Foundation in Chicago. A native of St. Louis and a graduate of Reed College in Portland, Oregon, she has lived in Chicago since 1985 and in Evanston since 1994. Anne worked with Angela Jackson on

her novels *Where I Must Go* and *Roads, Where There Are No Roads*, as well as on the poetry collection *It Seems Like a Mighty Long Time*.

Reginald Gibbons is a poet, fiction writer, and translator, and a Frances Hooper Professor of Arts and Humanities at Northwestern University, where he is directing the new MFA+MA program in writing.



Haki R.Madhubuti is an award-winning poet, one of the architects of the *Black Arts Movement,* an essayist, educator, founder and publisher of Third World Press and Third World Press Foundation. He is the author of over thirty books of poetry and nonfiction including *YellowBlack: The First Twenty-One Years of a Poet's Life; Liberation Narratives: New and Collected Poems 1967-2009; Honoring Genius, Gwendolyn Brooks: The Narrative of Craft, Art, Kindness and Justice*; the best-selling *Black Men: Obsolete, Single, Dangerous?* He retired in 2011 after a distinguished teaching career that included Chicago State University and DePaul University where he served as the Ida B. Wells-Barnett University Professor. Madhubuti is a co-editor of *Not Our President: New Directions from the Pushed Out, the Others, and the Clear Majority in Trump's Stolen America* (2017).

Sarah Odishoo teaches at Columbia College Chicago, where she has worked for 33 years. Her classes include Mythology, Literature, and Film, with topics in The Magician, The Lover, The Goddess, Archetypal Characters, Science Fiction, and The Warrior. Most of the work she has published recently has to do with Virtual Reality as a reality….and its logic and logistics.

She has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and *the Best of Net Anthology*; won *The Best Nonfiction Essay* in 2012; and was named Notable Contributor from *The Best American Essays* in 2013. Her nonfiction essay "Inside, the Labyrinth" will be published in *Juked;* "Virtual Playground: Planet Earth" was published in *Adelaide*; and "Neo Died in the Matrix: The Spectacle of Unreal Reality," in *Drunk Monkeys*.

Carole A. Parks credits Black activism in the 1960s for her opportunity to obtain editorial positions in New York with *Esquire* and Doubleday upon graduating from the University of Illinois-Champaign. In 1970, she returned to Chicago to join Hoyt W. Fuller at Johnson Publishing Co.'s *Black World*, formerly *Negro Digest*. Five years later, the cultural community supported Fuller and Parks in founding *First World* magazine in Atlanta, GA. While there, Parks also served as director of communications for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Back in Chicago, she established Parks Consulting Associates in 1985. One of her clients was the Organization of Black American Culture, which Fuller had started several years earlier to nurture young talent like Angela Jackson. Parks edited two anthologies for OBAC--*NOMMO: A Literary Legacy of Black Chicago (1967-1987)* and *NOMMO 2: Remembering Ourselves Whole* (1990).

Useni Eugene Perkins, a native of Chicago**,** had two successful careers. As a human service practitioner, he has been the president of the Better Boys Foundation in Chicago, president of the Portland Urban League and director of the Chicago State University Family Life Center. As a poet, playwright and author, he has served as president of the DuSable Museum of African American History, president of the African American Arts Alliance and was the chairman of the Artists for Harold Washington, a city wide coalition of artists that campaigned on behalf of Chicago's first black mayor. He also is the presiding elder for the National Rites of Passage, a history maker and was inducted into the Gwendolyn Brooks National Literary Hall of Fame for writers of African descent in 1999.

Kemati Janice Porter, a native of Memphis, TN, is a producing artistic director. She has been a member of the eta Creative Arts Foundation since 1976. She earned a B.A. in Creative Writing and Advertising from Columbia College of Chicago and received her MFA in Directing from The Theatre School of DePaul University where she was the recipient of the Michael Maggio Directing Scholarship. She served as an artistic associate at McCarter Theatre in Princeton, New Jersey and was a recipient of the Theatre Communications Group New Generations Fellowship at McCarter Theatre in Princeton from 2005-2007. Kemati was the

Artistic Director of The Martin Luther King, Jr. Cultural and Performing Arts Complex and The Student Theatre Arts Repertory in Columbus, Ohio.

Ann E. Smith, a native of Missouri, is President Emeritus of the Gamaliel Foundation, an organizing network of 60 faith-based affiliates in the U.S., Great Britain, and South Africa. Dr. Smith is a noted interpreter of poetry and motivational speaker. Because of her background in business and higher education administration she often delivers lectures to women interested in developing their own business. Dr. Smith received her PhD from Union University in Cincinnati, Ohio, her MA from the University of Iowa, and her BA from Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri. She had taught at Eastern Illinois University, the University of Indiana and Northeastern Illinois University. She worked as Vice President of Endow, Inc., an insurance planning and consulting firm she had co-founded.

Cornelia Spelman was a therapist with children and families before turning full-time to writing and art. Her eleven books for young children, described by reviewers as "sensitive" and "compassionate," have been translated into several languages. Cornelia is the author of *The Way I Feel* series of picture books for young children; of *MISSING*, a memoir about the emotional legacies in her family; and of a podcast series *Diaries, Letters, Stories*. Cornelia has earned several awards from the Illinois Arts Council, was a finalist for the Penelope Niven Creative Nonfiction award from Salem College. She has been a friend and reader of Angela´s work for over 30 years.

> *"* Angela never allowed her roots to emerge from the ground level of the community and migrate somewhere else. She has remained anchored in the fruitful soil of South Side Arts Center, OBAC, and the activities of Third World Press. She is a very, very fine writer, near the top of her generation. *"*
>
> *– Sterling Plumpp*

A VOICE LIKE A STAR: CELEBRATING ANGELA JACKSON

by Christina Pugh

When I consider the many literary achievements of Angela Jackson, the first word that comes to my mind is *voice.* This is not just because I've had the pleasure of seeing rooms full of people captivated by the sound of hers, whether she's reading her own poems at the Poetry Foundation or Gwendolyn Brooks's "the mother" at UIC. It's also because the voice within her poems reaches out to the reader, offering a hand and revelations and a beautiful directness. And, most recently, because her biography of Gwendolyn Brooks, *A Surprised Queenhood in the New Black Sun*, shepherds the reader through Brooks's life and poetry in a manner that's not only knowledgeable and authoritative, but also accessible and companionable. In Jackson's hands, biography, no less than poetry, becomes an accurate version of storytelling.

So I think it's fitting that Jackson chose to open her poem "Why I Must Make Language" with these lines: "For/ a Voice / like a star." Consider the Dickinsonian capitalization of the noun "Voice" -- as well as the "For" (and its deceptive tentativeness) that constitutes its own exiguous line: in these choices, and the deliberateness with which they move, I read Jackson's deep reverence for poetic voice.

It also goes without saying that for Jackson, voice is not simply self-contained. A star-like voice is inseparable from the grounding work that her poems do -- and their grounding in powerful connections to the lived history of African American experience, both familial and in a wider social sense. The province of a star is a grounded life, with its necessary naming of injustice as well as beauty. When Jackson says, "Your mouth is a flat blue coin purse," it's a dazzling conceit; but it also acts as a commentary on African American poverty during Reconstruction.

Jackson's poetry entwines beauty, work, and violence, as we see in her poems about her complicated father, a postal worker. And in a stunning reversal of Robert Hayden's "Those Winter Sundays," in which a father woke early and "made

/ banked fires blaze," it is Jackson's mother who lights the family's furnace in a basement that had been "my father's / territory." Here and elsewhere, Jackson's poems know the pain of women's growth into independence. This is lifetime-work. And for women and men both, unending work is strangely emblazoned in the body: "The spine itself a 'Chain Gang,'" Jackson writes in an astonishing metaphor that locates servitude in the structure of a worker's very anatomy.

While what I've referenced here is necessarily only a partial constellation of Jackson's work and its achievements, I hope it helps to convey what we honor in her voice and in her literary output – and what the Fuller Award for Lifetime Achievement so justly celebrates. Congratulations, Angela!

Celebrated and Revealed

" I first remember her as her mother's daughter.

Then I remember her as my teacher.

Then she became Dolly, a friend equal in stature to the best of family and friends.

Our work together was always remarkably in the same universe, which allowed us to bump into each other with ease.

I'm most grateful that our work was never work, it was never a meeting, never ever a committee assignment.

It was always two friends talking over meal or over the phone, simply being and doing.

This is the way God gets things done.

He places two innocent people in pews near one another, watches over and waits as they think through and share over their doings.

Lo and behold, angels and Angelas appear with greater wisdom and higher truths and revelations that make things clearer and people nearer.

The French philosopher, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin taught "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience." Congratulations to the creative, cultural, competent, clever spirit character, Angela Ruth. I'm glad you are Being celebrated and being revealed."

– Fr. David Alan Jones

FOR CHICAGO'S DAUGHTER OF GRANDEUR AND GRIT

by Patricia Spears Jones

Angela Jackson's imaginative writing elaborates on Chicago's powerful mix of aspiration and desperation especially on the part of Black Americans—those who made their way to the city during the Great Migration and the legacy of that journey. The folk brought with them a scarred humanity and a desire to make homes safe enough to raise up families, communities—their experiences, good and bad have given Chicago writers great inspiration and Angela has been truly inspired. She hears the music of Chicago: from the bars, from churches, in the rattle of the downtown elevated. She invents new blues, claims important histories, portrays the extraordinary in ordinary people, allows love's mystery to remain unsolved. She is a true daughter of Chicago who sees all too well its grandeur and grit. She has made a rich and remarkable life in poetry and storytelling and she's just getting started.

ANGELA'S WAY(S)

by Nora Brooks Blakely

Angela Jackson. I just love her. I love the way she works words, I love her commitment to sitting down and just *getting it done*, and I love, love, love that laugh, that snicker, that giggle, that… oh, you know what it is.

As long as I can remember, Angela has been one of my spirit guides for writing. Oh sure I had my mother but Angela is my age. Mama was the lighthouse, Angela's the beacon for what could be *(if I get myself organized!)*. I didn't show my mother everything I wrote. I knew she would *(as I told her)* take out her pen and bleed all over my paper.

I'm thoughtful about what I show Angela, too. Not because of any propensity for bloodletting but because of the value I place on her opinion. I bring only my most precious words and ideas, gently unwrap the tissues of hope and anticipation, confident of a wise and welcoming eye.

Talent, vision, compassion, humor and friendship make up the warm, satisfying batch of beautiful business that is Angela Jackson. Kind of like, in her own words, a *"comfort stew."*

ANGELA JACKSON: SHE DREAMED BIG WHEN SHE WAS LITTLE

by Donald G. Evans

Sundays around the Jackson dinner table were a riotous affair—the sprawling family, in which Angela sat dead middle among nine children, plus a rotating cast of aunts, uncles and cousins. Angela's mom, Angeline, from whom she got her name, cooked lavish meals she'd learned first as a short order cook in Mississippi and then as the cook-housekeeper at St. Carthage and St. Anne's, sometimes chicken cacciatore or maybe a wholesale rump roast that had been socked away in the freezer. The relatives who would descend, mostly from her dad's side of the family, contributed homemade ice cream and other treats. Angela's father, George, told tales of the post office, where as a mail handler he hoisted heavy sacks on and off trucks, or of his side jobs as a trained carpenter, where he might rehab a basement or build a small addition. He'd scowl about one colleague or another, "That old scoundrel," or "That unscrupulous man." George was diagnosed as bi-polar in his middle age (as Angela would be at the same time in her life), and resistant to medication he would sometimes ramble or stray toward delusion, only increasing the entertainment value. There was Aunt Tumpy, George's sister, an unabashed liar whose exaggerations and flat-out inventions angered her nephew Diego and her nieces and just about everybody but Angela, who laughed and laughed at stories such as a made-up pregnancy that played out through the child's supposed birth and adoption by nuns who deemed the baby "so beautiful they had to keep it." Aunt Tumpy called Angela "Look Alike," because of their physical resemblance. There was also Aunt Toodoo and Aunt Teedlelump, and Uncle Sweet, who would become a Muslim. But as the stories zigged and zagged across the table, the topic often returned to home, the place in Greenville, Mississippi which the Jacksons had left as part of the Great Migration, in search of better lives.

"Being a part of a big family set me up for dealing with a whole lot of personalities and characters and keeping them straight in fiction," says Angela, who was just one when her family moved to Chicago. "Also, being a middle child helped me as a poet, because you're sensitive to both ends. And the middle child has to do something to stand out."

Perhaps it's a stretch to say that Angela's eventual literary career got its start at those Sunday dinners, but it's true enough that very early on Angela was absorbing lessons of family, Black culture, social justice, and so many other subjects that would insinuate their way into her work and elevate her to the status of "one of our nation's greatest writers," according to poet Haki R. Madhubuti, whose Third World Press published Angela's first poetry collection, *Voo Doo/Love Magic*, in 1974. "She has gone on to grace this community and Chicago and Illinois with some of the best poetry, fiction, and nonfiction," Haki says. "She has not disappointed us in any way."

Those formative years, for Angela, were also filled with reading. Angela would walk more than a mile with sister Rose and brother Prentice from their brick two-flat home at 55th and Wentworth to the Chicago Public Library's Kelly Branch at 60th and Normal. In Louise May Alcott's Jo March, a writer, Angela found her literary role model. She also devoured *Old Yeller*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, and other classics.

Angela's mother read for relaxation, and in those days sometimes did daywork—cleaning and cooking--on Saturdays for Mrs. Rupp, whose daughter Susan read voraciously. When Susan finished her Trixie Belden, Bobbsey Twins, Nancy Drew, and other books, Mrs. Rupp would give them to Angela's mom, who in turn would gift them to Angela.

"My mother would bribe me with books," Angela says. "She wouldn't give me the Susan Rupp books until I washed dishes."

The piles of Susan Rupp books included Florence Crannell Means's *The Moved-Outers*, which made a deep impression on a young Angela Jackson. Means was a White woman writing about girls of color, and in *The Moved-Outers* she wrote about a Japanese girl named Ohara who was placed with her family in an internment camp. She also wrote about a Black girl named Antoinette Tolliver who attended Tuskegee Institute, at which George Washington Carver

> "Congratulations to Angela Jackson on the lifetime achievement award. Among my favorite poets and story tellers, recognition for her talents is well deserved and long overdue. Bravo, Miss Jackson!"
>
> *– Ana Castillo*

conducted his famous research on peanuts.

"I was in the 5th or 6th grade when I read these books and they had enormous impact on me," says Angela.

Angela wrote her first poem when she was eight, a rhyming story about her mother. "I remember reading it to her in the kitchen," Angela says. "She was sitting on the radiator under the stove." The only line Angela remembers clearly is, "My mother JUMPED for joy!"

When Angela was just eleven, in 1962, she had been in Cook County Hospital with what was eventually determined to be mononucleosis but what doctors for a time feared was Hodgkin's Disease. That summer, as Angela was convalescing at her grandmother's house in Greenville, she sent off a letter to her now-oldest friend Janice Jefferson in which she proclaimed to be writing a novel about "Southern hospitality." The term was meant sarcastically, an indication that not only was Angela primed for early literary achievement, but that she was already focused on issues of race and social justice.

"They say poets are born," Angela says. "I had a poet's sensitivity and seriousness. I like to laugh and joke but I am very serious. Just not a serious student. I did well in everything Black. I have always had 'lofty' ideas and ideals."

That seriousness traveled with Angela from St. Anne's Catholic School at 55th and Wentworth to Loretto Academy on East 64th Street, where a video on the Pulitzer Prize-winning Black woman poet Gwendolyn Brooks "spoke" to her. "It awakened something in me," she said. "Miss Brooks was a Chicagoan like me!" Among Angela's many juvenile attempts at literature was a poem called "All's Well on Walnut Street" about the murder of a young Black boy in an alley, which was published in her senior class journal "Myself" in 1968. "I was ahead of myself then," Angela says.

Still, Angela did not set her compass to literature. With her scholarship to Northwestern University in hand, Angela began studying medicine. Again, Angela's reading inspired this life choice, particularly humanitarian and anti-Communist doctor Tom Dooley's memoirs. "When I told people I wanted to be a writer, they didn't know anything about that," Angela said. They did know about being a doctor: it was prestigious, worthy, and potentially lucrative.

Angela had gotten good feedback and read well in the sciences, but it was a different matter at NU, where she did poorly in calculus and chemistry. "All I wanted to do was write poems in my blue-gray notebook," Angela said. "I followed my instincts and switched to English."

Two people helped solidify Angela's decision to write: Margaret Walker and Hoyt W. Fuller. Walker was Angela's African American Literature teacher, and Fuller a visiting lecturer. She was developing a support system that included her roommate Christine Henderson, who encouraged Angela to show Fuller her poems. "He took my poems, kept them for three weeks, returned them and said, 'You have a way with words.' He invited me to OBAC."

OBAC was the Organization of Black Arts and Culture, and Fuller led its prestigious creative writing workshop. Haki (then Don Lee) and Carolyn Rodgers, a decade Angela's seniors, were among the luminaries leading the group. It was October of 1969 when Angela hopped the el train from Evanston and found herself looking up at the green and red OBAC letters written on the Yoruba Temple windows at 77 E. 35th Street, right across from the De La Salle Institute, where her brothers had gone to high school. Walter Bradford opened the door for Angela, and she was welcomed by a host of accomplished writers, including Chicago school teacher E. Van Higgs. Angela, a teenager still, wearing a blue eye neck blouse and black pumps, or what she called "my Sunday Go To Meeting" outfit, took a seat way off in the corner. She looked around as the space filled. Haki slid into the room with a trench coat over

> "I first discovered Angela's work when I was researching Chicago poets to feature in the "Poetry in Motion" program which we launched in this city in 1996. I was living in New York City at that time and running the Poetry Society of America. We chose an excerpt from her poem, "Art: African-American Woman Guild, or The Spider Explains her Art to the Blind." It is such a powerful poem and continues to resonate: "I am the singer with no name/fine-tuning screams to grace that keens/ crisscrossing in the sky. . . .I am beaming in the doorway./Either come inside or/Get out of my light." I have admired Angela and her work over these years. With gratitude to you, Angela, for your outstanding poems and for your incredible contribution to contemporary literature!"
>
> *– Elise Paschen*

his arm; Ann E. Smith was right behind him. Others followed—most a good two decades older than Angela, and most dressed casually. Finally, Fuller moved a desk up to the front, where he would lead the session. He spotted Angela and smiled at her.

"I was home," Angela said.

OBAC provided Angela what she did not get at Northwestern: exposure to different people and writing, as well as a nurturing but challenging environment. OBAC's mission statement was to create a Black aesthetic, to unapologetically explore the Black experience regardless of White critical response. To speak directly to, for, and from Black people. At Northwestern, which Angela called "an alien environment," she took belladonna to relieve stress-induced stomach pain; at OBAC, she was herself.

"Angela as a writer, she possessed a rare literacy early on," says poet Sterling Plumpp. "Angela never allowed her literary aesthetics to get bogged down with political ideological rhetoric, though she is one hundred percent committed to her African people and her African roots."

Around that same time, late 1969 or early 1970, Angela took a job as "slide girl" for the artist Jeff Donaldson, head of the OBAC visual arts workshops. Donaldson was teaching Afro American art at Northwestern as a PhD candidate. Christine, who was Donald's cousin and secretary, helped Angela land the gig.

"In those days, somebody had to put the slide in a slot and pull it through and then file it," Angela says. "I was in back of class, taking class, taking notes, and doing my job at same time. He was talking about Marvin Gaye's *Can I Get a Witness*. I remember thinking, 'I want to be a witness: to a time, to a people, to a generation.' That is what I set out to do in fiction. I remember thinking, 'I want to tell the story of my Black generation starting from the Sixties.' "

Her switch from medicine to literature might have been difficult on Angela's family, but meeting Fuller, with whom they were duly impressed, helped win their support. Then Angela won a National Endowment for the Arts scholarship to further validate her life choice. All along, Angela was translating those family

times into art. She wrote about her mother the cook in the poem *Mama and Blue and White and Love*, and also retold one of her stories in *Hope*. Uncle Sweet became the model for Uncle Blackstrap in *Where I Must Go*, and Aunt Tumpy inspired Aint Kit in the same novel. *In My Father's House Are Many Stories* is a long narrative poem giving homage to all those tales, or "Stories told a thousand times." Angela was actualizing her vision to map out the story of her generation.

In all Angela's work, but especially the poetry, there is an unmistakable musicality. It's not just the line breaks or the rhyme schemes or even the voice, but an exacting ear for language and a relentless insistence on the right words and syllables and placement. Her writing has a beat. "I knew that I wanted to sing like Aretha and be as stylized as Billie Holliday in my poetry," says Angela. "Because Billy Holliday sang the way Prez [Lester Willis Young] played his horn, each note had a different shading, had a different meaning. I wanted to do that in my poetry."

In those childhood years, Angela listened to a lot of rhythm and blues. In her early 20s, it was jazz. She went with Carole Parks to the Association for the Advancement of Jazz Musicians. Attended Northwestern University with tenor saxophonist Chico Freeman and pianist Steve Colson. Saw a range of great performers from Pharoah (Farrell) Sanders to Henry Threadgill to to Lena Horne to Teddy Pendergrass to the Delfonics to the Stylistics.

"Her poetic voices are filled with both terrific energy and also grace," wrote poet and novelist Reginald Gibbons in a tribute. He added, "No contemporary American poet has a greater ear for the life of our language, or a stronger sense of how living through time we are made by our time and we shape our own lives through time."

The Jackson family lived in that home on 55th and Wentworth from the time they first arrived in Chicago from Mississippi in 1962 until it burned down in

> *"* Novelist and poet, poet and novelist, Angela Jackson is one of the great tellers among us. She has written with descriptive vividness, deep psychological acuity, great generosity of spirit, a wise understanding of human choices and the human sense of identity. *"*
>
> *– Reginald Gibbons*

2012. Those sixty years represent a lot of family stories, many of which have seeped into Angel's impressive and lasting body of literature. Angela's niece, Imani Jackson, decided a decade ago to become a poet herself, thus extending the reach of those stories whose origins travel back to Greenville but now find their roots in Chicago. Even Angela's little baby nephew, Marcus, barely a year old, mimics, in story, the game in which his mother Sharon yells, "Boo," and he feigns fright. "She say, *Boo*, she say *Boo*; me say, *Ahhhh*, me say, *Ahhhh*."

Poet Patricia Spears Jones notes that, "[Angela] hears the music of Chicago: from the bars, from churches, in the rattle of the downtown elevated."

Angela is now a decorated and revered writer whom the younger generation looks up to, much as she did to Gwendolyn Brooks, Rodgers, and so many others when she first stepped foot in the OBAC workshop. In just the past year, Angela has been honored with a Cliff Dwellers lifetime membership, seen her play *Comfort Stew* reprised at eta Creative Arts Foundation, published two books (including her first biography), and given the Leon Forrest lecture at Northwestern University. She could be content to accept the accolades and let her achievements stand. But she won't.

"I was computing my age now," she says, by way of indicating that she's aware of time. "I'm about to sit down and type another book of poetry. I'm taking notes for another novel. I'm formulating a play that's been swirling in back of my mind for a couple years; it started to make sense a couple weeks ago. There's a collection of short stories; some have been published, others are in draft form. I have to get that collection finished. Oh, I started talking about an autobiography: *Apprenticeship in the House of Cowrie Shells*, the life of a writer."

Angela sighs, realizing the monumental challenge of all the literary aspirations still pressing her to write, and write, and write. She looks off into the distance. "I'll get it done," she says.

> "Miss Angela Jackson is a virtuoso. Her vibrant, musical prose is rich in prosody and depth. Her poetry is bristling, delicate in emotion and meaning. Every utterance is a world of feeling and wonder. Whatever Miss Jackson touches is gold."
>
> *– Quraysh Ali Lansana*

THE MONA LISA OF BLACK POETRY

by Parneshia Jones

Neophyte and knee high in the world of poetry, I came across a pocket-size sliver of a poetry collection titled, *Voo Doo/Love Magic* by Angela Jackson. Published in 1974 by Third World Press (another force that would change the course of my life), this staple bound, first printing of supernatural poetics opened my heart and mind that black folks were writing their stories. Stories that needed to be in the wider world.

I sat in the stacks of the library at Chicago State University—past my bedtime, past the time I checked in with my mother to let her know her only daughter was alive and safe--and became enthralled by this poet. Here was a black woman who collected words like hymns and keepsakes for us, for me, this girl of nineteen still figuring out her place in the world. In that small library on the south side of Chicago, I was touched and saved.

I will always be grateful to Angela Jackson whom I claim as my first introduction to black poetry, to poetry by women. No one, Angela or I, could have guessed years later that I would be her editor at Northwestern University Press. That I would be sitting with her in the Harold's Chicken Shack #55 on 87th off the Dan Ryan Expressway, editing her first collection of poetry in seventeen years, *It Seems Like a Mighty Long Time*.

I will always be grateful that she was the first love in my love of poetry. I will always be grateful for the poems, "Hattie", "grits", "greenville", and "greens." I will never take for granted *Dark Legs and Silk Kisses*, *And All These Roads Be Luminous*, and finally, *It Seems Like a Mighty Long Time*. It is not lost on me the poet was always a novelist, always a playwright and for years quietly in the workshop of her heart, brought to life the worlds of Magdalena Grace that now the world finally gets to feast on with *Where I Must Go*, *Roads*; *Where There Are No Roads*. The world of theater has *Comfort Stew* to simmer. I will always call people's attention to Angela's love of black art with her unwavering requirement that the work of black artists grace all her book covers.

Kept in the quietest and closest pocket of my heart I watched Angela, with

herculean writing hands, give breath to the biography of Gwendolyn Brooks, *A Surprised Queenhood in the New Black Sun: The Life & Legacy of Gwendolyn Brooks*. It will never be lost on me that she loved and remembered Gwendolyn Brooks, Carolyn Rodgers and so many other black women who wanted a world of art and survival. It will never cease—my personal kinship with her and my deep, turnip root love for a black woman, a poet, an artist who has helped shape our lives mostly when no one was looking. Angela, I'm grateful we now are paying attention to a brilliance that is unwavering, still neckbone and champagne, still Greenville and Chicago, still beguiling as that first line in *Voo Doo/ Love Magic* that put the most beautiful spell on me. I am grateful we can take the deepest bow of acknowledgement and thunder the most rousing of ovation to this woman, black in life and poetry.

And as she says in my most favorite of her poems, *His song ends on the edges of her Mona Lisa smile*, I say the Mona Lisa of black poetry takes her place. And how luminous she is.

New Worlds

" I met Angela for the first time while she was still a Northwestern undergraduate at, of all places, the Playboy Building. It was a fundraiser for literary magazines, and Angela was, even then, editing. The reception was full of Chicago literary figures; she was certainly the youngest writer there. She had then—has always had—a broad, if somewhat complex smile, quick and acceptant and at the same time slightly quizzical, even ironic, and punctuated with a short knowing laugh.

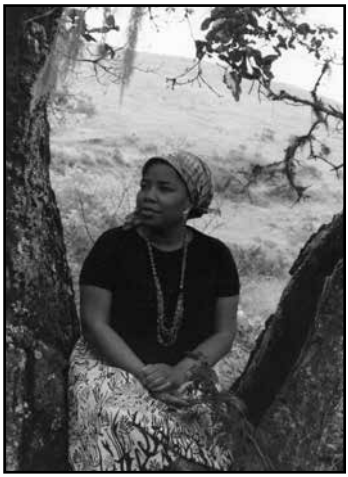
Angela has qualities of mind and voice that any writer might envy, an ability to see the mythic lurking in the ordinary and imbue the most exacting physical description with melody. Her poetry draws out a complex, often edgy terrain for us with spidery precision. Her fiction is scrupulous in is fidelity to character and place and filled with magic and wonder.

Speaking once to a conference filled with Illinois librarians, Angela described herself as a child walking from a south side branch library carrying new worlds home with her each week. She has been carrying "new worlds" to us ever since. "

– Michael Anania

MOVING OUT OF THE WAY OF HER POEMS

by Michael Warr, San Francisco, May 2018



I hear Angela Jackson's voice, with all its gravitas and soulfulness, so clearly, that it is as if she is reciting "The Man With the White Liver" in my living room. I track the lines of her language across the page and it feels like I am being led to hidden and sacred artifacts. Discovery occurs organically in the literary maps she sketches. The expeditions through her lush landscapes are always rich and revealing. To be wrapped in her words, borrowing from the late "Chi-Town" poet David Hernandez, "is good."

As I reminisce about Chicago Word Dealers I am contemplating rarity. Witnessing the most recent, ever-expanding, and long-deserved beyond Chicago acknowledgment of Angela Jackson's singular and multifarious talent, I hope that the attraction is akin to the gold fever of those dream seekers from around the world drawn by irresistible possibility. I am writing this tribute to Angela in San Francisco – not far from the epicenter of the California Gold Rush.

It turns out that gold is not only difficult to find, it is challenging to recognize in its natural state. At times embedded in hard rock, and dulled by the presence of other shiny distracting metals, it is often impossible to identify the raw material as gold. Even the claim of its presence can be denied. After newspapers initially reported the discovery of gold on the banks of Sutter Creek, it was dismissed by the public in disbelief. The fever only took hold months later, when a storekeeper ran through the streets of San Francisco waving a bottle with gold dust, and shouting "Gold! Gold! Gold!"

Angela Jackson exemplifies the writers that Studs Terkel praised as presenting "the vision of a city of flesh and blood, men and women, rather

than a city of things." As an honorary, card-carrying, member of the Chicago diaspora I am thrilled to see the expanding universe of literary treasure hunters who are finding what many of us had already discovered with Angela's first book of poems, *Voodoo Love Magic*, published by Third World Press. She is one of those Chicago artists whose works should be bottled like gold dust and waved on the Magnificent Mile, the Avenue of the Americas, London's Fleet Street, the digital networks spanning the newest New World, and yes, Wakanda.

The Chicagoan in me knows that Angela emerged out of a community of creators in which she was both an architect and a builder. She was already making a difference as a member and eventually a chairperson of OBAC (the Organization of Black American Culture) by the time I arrived on the scene in the Seventies. OBAC was one of a diverse family of organizations and institutions that were contributing to social and cultural change across Chicago with national repercussions. For me that family included Third World Press, the Gwendolyn Brooks Black Writers Conference at Chicago State University, Guild Books and then the Guild Complex, TriQuarterly, Seminary Co-op Books, Women and Children First, the Green Mill Lounge, Tia Chucha Press, the Hot House, and many more. Knowing her work in that Chicago-centric context is part of what made me a "fanboy."

I also had the good fortune of knowing her through my work as a curator of the stage and page. It is impossible to organize an appearance by Angela without at some point morphing into an audience of one. It was the same for me whether sitting alone and reading a poem she had submitted, turning the pages of *And All These Roads Be Luminous* for the first time, or listening from the back of the room at a Guild Books fundraiser at "Blues Etc." I watched Angela bless the stage at an array of venues across the city. She did not levitate her audiences. She did, however, lift them. Believer or Non-believer, if you were in a space where she was sharing something she wrote you were suddenly in a kind of church. You were moved emotionally, and intellectually, and spiritually, maybe

your body was moving a little too as if a tambourine was being shaken and a bass drum being beaten.

Sometime in 2013 I asked Angela to write about her evolution as a poet in what I called an "I Statement" to be published in the anthology *Of Poetry & Protest – From Emmett Till to Trayvon Martin*. Her brief, but powerful biographical essay included:

I truly became a poet in college when Hoyt Fuller came to Northwestern University, read my poetry, and invited me to OBAC, the Organization of Black American Culture Writers Workshop. At OBAC, in 1969, I began my life as a poet. OBAC offered raison d'etre, purpose and clarity, greater possibilities. This call to create poems that speak to and from and for the magnificent and maligned African-American people and experience has been my driving wheel.

My influences are as rich as the African diaspora. I learned musicality from Billie Holliday and Aretha Franklin. I learned poetic devices and language gestures from Gwendolyn Brooks, Robert Hayden and Langston Hughes. I benefited from the drylongso sensitivity of Carolyn Rodgers and the irony of Mari Evans. I learned by immersion in Black poetry and other

"Angela Jackson and I worked together for over ten years at Kennedy-King College in the Communications Department. I was Chair of the department from 2007 to 2014. Most terms Professor Jackson would teach African American Literature and composition if she felt like it. But the AAL class was reserved for her expertise--she always came across as personable and committed to her students. Some of the students didn't know her status among Black poets and the Black Arts Movement, but would later find out. Once a student came to my office to complain about the workload in her class. I told the student to google Professor Jackson's name and come back later. She came back the next day and was very apologetic about the whole thing. So, this showed the kind of respect commanded by Professor Jackson. Last, she has always been willing to critique some of own creative writing, which I have always valued."

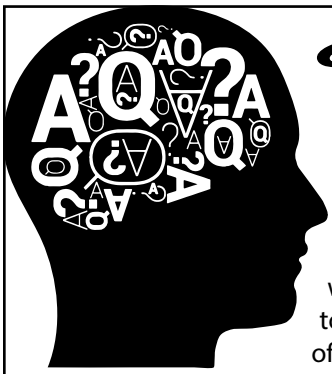
– Terry Clark

poetry. I move out of the way of each poem and let the poem become on its own terms. A poem is a living being and will make its way. In the end, I help it to its final fruition with a sense of strictness and honesty. I write for myself and ourselves because we must be healed and filled with well-being. I write from the heart and head and spirit because in order to transform, these parts must be engaged fully.

All of that resonates with me. I've already shared Angela's influence on me as a citizen of Chicago, as a fan, and as a curator and editor. I want to conclude with the impact she has had on me as a writer. Yes, the way she sculpts a sentence makes me want to shape words like that. Makes me want to match that mastery. Her excavation and exhibition of African-ness inside of her American-ness reinforces my attempts to creatively pay tribute to tradition. Her encompassing of a multitude of themes: magnificence and malignment, love and hatred, status quo and revolutionary, the historic and the present, and much more, is a trait that I covet and a way of writing that I try to practice. It is her impact outside of one writer on another writer that is more significant to me.

I think of Angela Jackson as one of the vanguard in a modern literary movement that created fissures and then disrupted the division between the world of the academy and an ultimately inescapable world that was open to writing, teaching, reading, performing, filming, projecting, chronicling, animating, embedding and injecting increasingly diverse styles, forms, and content. That movement infused new people with distinct and divergent ways of making and living a literary life. Turning the literary world upside down meant first cracking it open. The locked out forced their way in. Allies unlocked doors from the inside. In that new world, the word was extended beyond lecture halls and classrooms to churches and living rooms, bookstores and bars, beaches and prisons, museums and gardens, subways cars and street corners. There was a democratization of poetry.

Novelist, essayist, playwright, biographer, poet and changemaker Angela Jackson personifies that democratization beyond poetry.



Trivia Night
& Silent Auction Fundraiser

On June 30, The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame will be hosting a night of trivia and silent auctions to benefit our programming throughout the rest of this year. You're invited to get together a team, register as an individual, or just come to check out the auction room. The event will take place in **Hyde Park from 5-8 p.m.**

Trivia categories include: Chicago Writers, Pulitzer Prize Winners, and Chicago Streets. Auction items include: art, collectible books, cultural experiences, sports memorabilia, various tickets, and a lot more.

We are seeking donations to include in the auction.

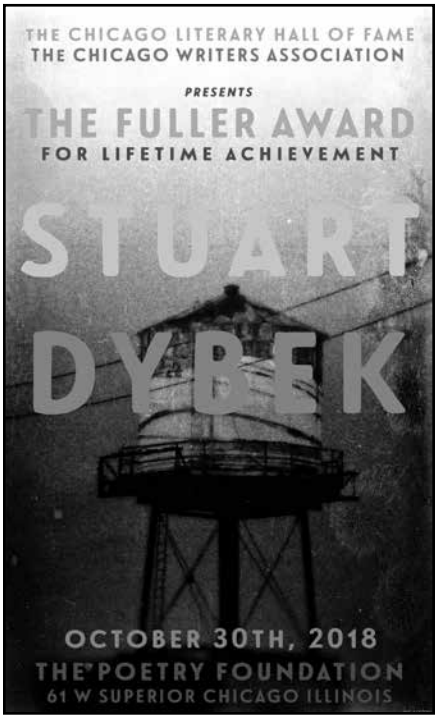
For details on how to register or donate, email dgevans@chicagoliteraryhof.org or go to our website (www.chicagoliteraryhof.org) for more information.

CLHOF to Begin Literary Tour Schedule

The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame will begin a full schedule of literary tours later this spring and continuing through late fall.

The first offering will be an hour-and-a-half guided walk--Downtown Chicago Literary Tour—on June 1. This tour will be repeated numerous times, with some variations, over the next five months. We'll also lead guests on the Chicago Black Renaissance Literary Tour, the Chicago's Gold Coast Literary Tour, the Oak Park Literary Tour, and Literary Mysteries Chicago Tour.

Full details, including registration and group bookings information, will soon be available on our website.



SPECIAL THANKS

Lisa Wagner: Guru

Bob Boone:
Friend of Chicago Literature

Ron Swanson: Award Sculptor

Barry Jung: Boots on the Ground

Nonna Working: Editorial and Writing

Hannah Jennings: Web support

Floyd Sullivan: Marketing

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Breaker Press: Printing

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Denise Billups (Borel Graphics):
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Rana Segal (Ravensvoyage
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AMERICAN WRITERS MUSEUM

Congratulates Angela Jackson on her lifetime of work in poetry, prose and playwriting. Her contributions to Chicago's culture make the literary arts vibrant and vital.

americanwritersmuseum.org

POETRY FOUNDATION

Enthusiastically congratulates Angela Jackson on receiving the Fuller Award. Across several genres, including poetry, fiction, playwriting, and biography, she has shown again and again that language can be fierce yet tender, lyrical and just. "I set my people free in me," she writes in one poem, striking a noble light by which all might see.

poetryfoundation.org

GUILD LITERARY COMPLEX

Congratulates Angela Jackson on receiving the Fuller Award from the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame for her brilliant career as poet, novelist and playwright. She has been a treasured and preeminent participant in the nearly thirty years of Guild programming.

guildcomplex.org

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY PRESS & TRIQUARTERLY

are proud of our long association with Angela Jackson and her tremendous books. Congratulations, Angela, on your work already in print and the work still to be printed.

nupress.northwestern.edu

chicago writers association

Salutes one of the very best in a city of fine writers. Thanks, Angela Jackson, for making our whole literary culture that much richer and deeper.

chicagowrites.org

ARGUS
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Raises a glass to Angela Jackson on her special day.

Glencoe Study Center
Since 1979

Congratulates
Angela Jackson,
who has inspired and
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Proposes a toast to
Angela Jackson for all
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Angela Jackson Among Speakers to Dedicate Gwendolyn Brooks Statue

The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame will dedicate sculptor Margot McMahon's bronze portraiture of Gwendolyn Brooks on June 7 at Brooks Park. The installation, which has been taking place for the past several weeks, includes stepping stones, a gravel circle, and a porch modeled after the poet's childhood writing spot. The program will be part of the Chicago Park District's Night Out in the Parks festivities, and will be free and open to the public.

The evening's lineup includes an array of dignitaries closely associated with Brooks, as well as institutions supportive of her legacy and this project. Angela Jackson, along with Reginald Gibbons, Ydalmi Noriega, APG, Alderman Sophia King, Kelly Norman Ellis, Haki Madhubuti, and Nora Brooks Blakely will each give short speeches.

Jackson said, "Gwendolyn Brooks was like a fairy godmother that made things possible for me in a magical unobtrusive way."

The dedication will be a neighborhood affair, with a mixture of people intimately familiar with the beloved poet's magical ways, as well as those learning of her for the first time. For more information, go to our website: www.chicagoliteraryhof.org.

The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame Presents

Gwendolyn Brooks: The Oracle of Bronzeville Dedication

Thursday, June 7, 2018 • 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Brooks Park, 4542 S. Greenwood, Chicago, Illinois

This will be a transformative moment in the history of public art in Chicago, with the unveiling of a new sculpture *Gwendolyn Brooks: The Oracle of Bronzeville* by renowned Chicago artist, Margot McMahon.

HELP MAKE HISTORY!

We invite you to become a part of this important project and Chicago history. A donation of any amount to this fundraising page is meaningful and helps get us one step closer to realizing this sculptural work and portrayal of Gwendolyn Brooks - a Chicago hero and literary icon. Please consider a contribution: **www.gf.me/u/hauc4p**