Poems

Editorial Staff

Follow this and additional works at: http://dh.howard.edu/newdirections

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://dh.howard.edu/newdirections/vol4/iss3/14

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Howard @ Howard University. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Directions by an authorized administrator of Digital Howard @ Howard University. For more information, please contact lopez.matthews@howard.edu.
Silence
i love the silence
this morning
i can touch it with
my hand
and wrap it around
my fingers
i can take it in
my arms
clasp it to
my breast
fold my soul up in it
and put it away
for safekeeping
Edelin Coleman Fields
Hyattsville, Md.

A Gift of Beauty
I just found out yesterday that
the world is ugly.
I just found out that the only
beauty there will be is that
which we bring.
Let this poem be a gift of beauty.
We must make our world a thing of
beauty.
So let our artists continue to sing,
paint, write and create a world of
beauty.
Let us wipe away from our minds
this world of ugliness.
Let us sing and think together
towards beauty and happiness.
Try to remember that day before
yesterday when the world held
some beauty.
Try to remember when we were
young and warm in our mother's
womb.
Let's create together and paint
a wall of flowers.
Let's think towards peace and
try to ease the tension.

For the world can be beautiful,
just listen to Stevie and he
will paint a picture.
Read this poem and think of your
joys and you will find too that
we must create our beauty.
Evelyn Gunn
Howard University

For A Black Dancer
(To Judith Jamison)
Swirl
Prance
Across your stage
Stirring up souls
Ancient and new
Like an African dream
An American Queen
Rising from the ashes of your people
As the fiery bird
Dying many times
Stir up our dreams again
Dancer
Queen.
Betty Taylor Ashe
New Canadlan, Md.

Lionel Hampton
Ten million devils,
Trembling in terror . . .
Screams of a whip
Hurling its message
With primitive wailing!
Throb of a heart-beat . . .
Strong as all rhythm,
King of jump tempo . . .
Open-mouthed joy!
Mad baton waver . . .
Beater of drum sticks!
Vibraphone master . . .
Pagan adorers
Rocking with him!
Echoes of Africa . . .
Throb of the tom-tom!
Melody cocktail
With plenty of bitters...  
Created by genius—  
Born of frustration...  
Toasts filled with laughter—  
Savage and throaty...  
Eyes gleaming wildly...  
Mallets pounding frantically!  
Ecstatic down-beat...  
Dripping with meaning!  
Vibraphone player...  
Past midnight's idol—  
Baring his teeth  
In grinning good humor...  
Each thrilling chord  
A rose rhapsody gem  
Of synchronized thunder,  
With highlights of tone lightning!  
Atomic note-smasher!  
Pound of the cymbal!  
Roar of ten lions  
Torn from a soul...  
Frenzied percussion!  
End of discussion...  

Lionel Hampton!  
Valerie Parks Brown  
Washington, D. C.

Distant Liberty  
The train whistle blows in the distance heading North.  
Under the southern sun, momma is washing in the yard.  
"Lord will I ever, will there ever be a way,  
to board that train?"
Born in a shack in the Delta  
Deep in the South  
Eking our existence  
Living day by day  
The bus wheels cry on the road heading North.  
Momma is nursing the baby.  
"Lord will I ever, will there ever be a way,  
to catch that bus?"
Born by chance in this place  
Suffering the pains  
Of Living  
Knowing a strange hunger  
The airplane roars in the sky heading North.  
Momma is cooking dinner, a soul food fare.  
"Lord will I ever, will there ever be a way,  
to board that plane?"
In the fields working for the man  
Walking the furrow behind the plow  
The only break  
Is wiping the sweat away  
Lord will I ever, will there ever be a way  
to make a new life  
to assuage my child's new day?  
Will the winds blow with me,  
to bring hope and release?  
Will the sun melt this grief?  
Point me oh Lord, the path and the way,  
to give my child some token that promises!  
c.m.j., sr.  
Washington, D. C.

Africa  
What mask are you carving Mother Africa?  
The ebullient ebony of your beauty  
Or the contorted map of your plight  
Its contours nakedly marked  
Showing a sprinkle of micro-states  
Frail cohesion and weak unity  
In tune of partition  
Stale designs yet acridly colonial  
Like the first scramble of Africa  
History repeats itself in our century.  

No White Yardstick  
I went to the University high on the hill  
Where poems for Black people from the lips of Ossie and Ruby did spill.  
I turned—briefly drinking in enraptured faces—  
Black faces full of understanding and pride,  
Black spirit running free of white laces.  
Black folks held that moment in time,  
Listening to Black reason and Black rhyme.  
I was glad I had lived to see it; the tear on my face became a stream.  
And there was no white yardstick measuring the realization of a Black dream.  

Wilma D. Perry  
Silver Spring, Md.