

LIBERIAN LITERARY MAGAZINE

**KWEE**

**Theodore  
Hodge**

*Author of the  
Month*

**Richard Ellis**

**Artist of  
the Month**

**Althea Mark  
Diaspora Poet  
According to Eliot**

**Reviews**

**SHORT STORIES  
POETRY SECTION**

**UNSCRIPTED  
LIB PROVERBS**

**Random Thoughts  
GIFTS OF THE MASTERS  
RESURRECTED MASTERS**

Liberian Literary Magazine

# KWEE





**Overview:**

**New Look**

Hurray! You noticed the new design as well right. Well thanks to you all, we are here today. We are most grateful to start our print issue. This would not have happened without your dedicated patronage, encouragement and of course, the belief you placed in our establishment. We look forward to your continual support as we strive to improve on the content we provide you.

**Our Commitment**

We at Liberian Literature Review believe that change is good, especially, the planned ones. We take seriously the chance to improve, adopt and grow with time. That said we still endeavor to maintain the highest standard and quality despite any changes we make. We can comfortably make this

commitment; *the quality of our content will not be sacrificed in the name of change.* In short, we are a fast growing publisher determined to keep the tradition of providing you, our readers, subscribers and clients with the best literature possible.

**What to Expect**

You can continue to expect the highest quality of Liberian literary materials from us. The services that we provided that endeared us to you and made you select us as the foremost Liberian literary magazine will only improve. Each issue, we will diversify our publication to ensure that there is something for everyone; as a nation with diverse culture, this is the least we can do. We thank you for your continual support.

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**Overview**

**Segments**

- From the Editor’s Desk
- Diaspora Poet-A. R. Mark
- Bai T. Moore Poem in Gola
- Authors’ Profiles
- T. Theodore Hodge’s Interview
- Book Review
- Mother’s Month:
- Random Thoughts
- Diaspora Poet - Althea Mark
- We Are Done
- D. Robert Bordua’s Interview
- Review: The Dan N’Gere
- Unscripted: Cher Antoinette
- LaQueisha Malone’s
- Interview
- Martin Kollie-Article
- Resurrected Masters
- Liberian Proverbs
- According to Eliot
- Richard Ellis, Artist of the
- Month
- Poetry Section
- Gifts of the Master
- New Releases
- Meet the Team
- Around Town

**Liberian  
Literature  
Review**

## *Segment Contents*

### *Editorial*

In our editorial, one should expect topics that are controversial in the least. We will shy away from nothing that is deemed important enough. The catch theme here is addressing the tough issues

### *Liberia Classic*

This segment features classic Liberian poetry and prose by our greatest creative minds.

### *Contemporary Liberian Literature*

As the name suggests, deals with *issues* in modern local or *diasporan* literature as seen by Liberian creative artists.

### *Risqué Speak*

This new segment to our print covers the magical language of the soul, music. It will go from musical history, to lyrics of meaning to the inner workings of the rhythm, beats, rhyme, the way pieces connect and importantly, the people who make the magic happen.

Our host and or his guests will delve into the personal life of our favorite musicians, bands and groups like those that we have not seen. This is more than their stories; it is more like the stories behind the stories. They'd shine the spotlight on the many people that come together to make it all happen on and off stage. Watch out for this segment.

### *Diaspora Poet*

The internationally acclaimed poet, Althea Romeo Mark hosts this segment.

### *Authors of the Month Profile*

This is one of our oldest segments. In fact, we started off with showcasing authors. It is dear to us. Each month, we highlight two authors. In here we do a brief profile of our selected authors.

### *Authors of the Month Interview*

This is the complimentary segment to the Authors of the Month Profile one of our oldest segments. In here, we interview our showcased authors. We let them tell us about their books, characters and how they came to life. Most importantly, we try to know their story; how they make our lives easier with their words. In short, we find out what makes them thick.

### *Articles*

Our articles are just that, a series of major articles addressing critical issues. A staffer or a contributor often writes it.

### *Book Review*

One of our senior or junior reviewers picks a book and take us on a tour. They tell us the good, not-so-good and why they believe we would be better of grabbing a copy for ourselves or not. Additionally, we'd print reviews by freelancers or other publications that grab our interests.

### *Gifts of the Masters*

Our world have a way of shattering when we encounter masters of the trade. We bring some of the works of the greatest creative minds that ever graced the earth.

### *Short Stories*

Well what can we say? They are short, engaging and we easily fall in love with them

### *Artist of the Month*

We highlight some of the brilliant artists, photographers, designers etc. We go out of the box here. Don't mistake us to have limits on what we consider arty. If it is creative, flashy, mind-blowing or simply different, we may just showcase it.

We do not neglect our artist as has been traditional. We support them, we promote them and we believe it is time more people did the same. Arts have always form part of our culture. We have to change the story. We bring notice to our best and let the world know what they are capable of doing. We are 100% in favor of Liberian Arts and Artists; you should get on board.

### *Poetry Section*

This is the marrow of the bone; the juicy parts we keep sucking on. We feature established and emerging poets in the array of their diversities. If you can imagine difference, chances are, this is where you will find.

## Editor's Desk

### The Year Ahead



2016 is swinging and thus far, things are on the up. This is our first issue and I am excited for many reasons. We have an improved line up, some segments have changed and others shifted, whilst yet others are, well, NEW.

It appears that we might outdo ourselves this time around. Each issue, we see a better [KWEE](#) and for that we remain thank to you. Yes you. All of you that have stayed by us, that take time off to read and support us in the different ways you do. Thank you once again.

I will try to let nothing out of the bag too early, although I can't promise. The excitement is too much to contain.

Oh here is a teaser, but I'd deny it if quoted! Oops, did I just type that? There goes my plausible deniability.

Anyways, I'm one that likes my bad and not so good news first, that way, I can enjoy the good ones. So

here it goes. Our hot corner [Kulubah's Korner](#) by our sharp wit KLM will not be with us for a while. Sad right? Don't worry, she's not gone yet, trust me, she is on a refresher and will be back with more of her insightful, but truthful opinion bites. Quite frankly, am I the only one who thinks that at times she's just meddling ☺ [-I'm whispering here-]? We will miss you KLM, please hurry back.

We'd also be shifting some of the segments to the blog exclusively. Yeah, we know, but we wish to keep the magazine closely aligned to its conception- *a literary mag*. You will not lose your segments they will only be shifted. The blog is also attached to the new website so you don't have to go anywhere else to access it. It is the last page of the site- [KWEE](#).

We have new segments hosted by poets and authors from all over the world. "I ain't sayin nothin' more" as my grandmamma used to say. You'd have to read these yourself won't say a thing more.

The Poetry section is our major hotspot. It is a fine example of how KWEE manages to be true to her desire of giving you the best form of creative diversity.

We have new poets still finding their voices placed alongside much more experienced poets who have long ago established themselves and found their

voice. They in a way mentor the newer ones and boost their confidence.

In *Unscripted*, as the name suggests, Cher gives it raw. The artist, the poet, the writer-anyone of her talented side can show up and mix the science geek. You never know really what will come up until it does.

Richard Moss goes about his randomness with purpose in his poetry corner, *'Twas Brillig*. He can assume the mind or body of any of his million personifications, ideas or characters or just be himself and write good poetry. I am sure you know what to expect there.

Well, I knew I said only tips I was giving but it is just hard to contain myself considering all the things that are in store.

If there is one message you want to take from here, let it be this-prepare for a roller-coaster this 2016.

We are bringing you a better KWEE every single issue. We will break the boxes; go on the fringes to find what it is we know you would love... Creative Difference- the best of its kind.

From the entire team here at KWEE, we say enjoy the year, sit back, lay back, relax or do whatever it is you do when you hold a copy of our mag and feast along.

**Read! Read! Read!**

KWEE Team

## Father's Month, Random Thoughts

By D. Othniel Forte

Fathers are celebrated in June. In earnest, there is much to be celebrated. It is common for folks to feel that men should be doing this or that and tend to forget to appreciate them for all the things they do. The machoism does not make this notion any easier. If anything, it reinforces it.

But nothing says men should not be celebrated. Trust you me, the dead beats and rolling stones give us ample reasons to commend the men that step up to the plate. Those that do the doubles, the odd jobs, the risky ones, that place the welfare for their children and spouses ahead of their comforts...

### **MEN & RAPE!**

It seems I defeat the purpose of the intro above when I mention rape and men in the very next breath right? On the contrary. Our societies are plagued with case after case of rape. We can put a nice face on this or we can face the issue squarely. The ministry of Gender reports that in the last quarter, rape cases have increased almost twofold as compared to the same time last year. This kind of new breaks one's heart, even one's soul.

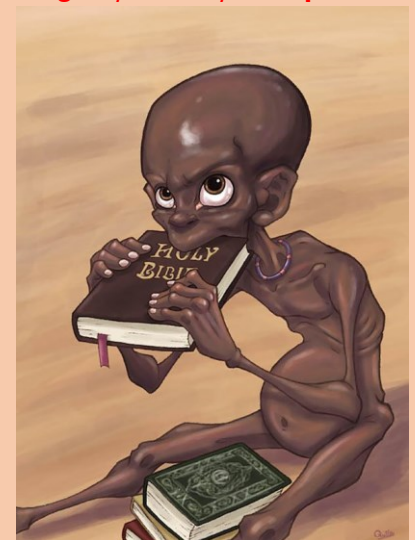
One would think that with the crisis over, rape would be a thing under much control. One would think that with a female president, rape would be a priority. But it is precisely this kind of thinking that causes the problem. The president is but one woman, she can't fix the rape problem of our society on her own. Not even her office can do so. Can she do more about it? I believe so, but if we want to stop this menace, then we need to own it as a community. We must stop shifting blame to the government and law enforcement. Granted they are key players and their complacency or failure to effectively do their jobs hinder the fight, but as we did with the Ebola situation, we must take this by the head and ram it into the ground. We can sit by and wait for others to do it or we can all be keepers of our children. We can all be guardians of our daughters, sisters, aunts, moms and women in general.

This is the sad truth; **rape ain't going anywhere until we decide to kick it out.**

Until we insist that it is **not cool for men to take advantage** of young girls and boys because they can afford it; until parents can refuse money and favors in exchange for their sons' and daughters' bodies;

until we take to reporting our friends, brothers, family members and others who engage these underage children, we will not solve this problem. Rape, like any menace, requires a steadfast commitment; not just lip service. It requires a strong show of will in deeds and not just words and las.

### **Religion/Church/Corruption**



We tackled how the religion encourages laziness and the circle of poverty last month. This month, we continue to look at how religion, at least the organized one is an enabler of corruption and graft.

If one went to church this month, one most likely saw an array of men lined up and celebrated. These were the **Fathers of the Year**. A great concept not so? After all, we began this editorial with a note to commend well meaning, hardworking men for playing their roles faithfully. So why then

would I be saying that this very act of celebration is an enabler of corruption? It's very simple. The act itself is not the problem. The problem is the recipient of the celebration.

Growing up in an orthodox or mainline church, I soon realized that the wealthier one was, the more influence and positions one held in church. Now this trend is not restricted to the orthodox churches. Almost every denomination engages in the practice.



The ushers and cleaners are not often the wealthy folks. They are the men/women presidents, the trustee or administrative boards' chairpersons, the committee heads and so forth. This is simple logic. Placing one of means in position, means that one holds a greater sense of responsibility to ensure the program/project is successful. This is a great business decision. I respect the move. This means the church can raise the necessary funds needed using this means.

However, this policy is exclusionary. It creates a sense of belonging and entitlement. Because it makes little sense in biting the hand that feeds you, religious institutions that employ this method extensively find themselves victims of it. Sure they get money but at the cost of leaving out whole sections of people that can't donate 500 to a couple of thousand dollars at any given occasion.

Now here is the tricky part. These church leaders sit by and watch as their members accumulate wealth illegally and do nothing. Oh they do something but it is mostly geared towards getting their share of the cash. For example, a member takes a government job and overnight, builds a mansion, starts to drop the church chunks of cash, even gives cars or other expensive gifts for the use of the ministry. There is no way in hell that person could afford it on their regular government salaries, but it does not matter as long as the church gets her cut. The situation goes on and next thing you know, this member is the father of the year. s/he is on almost every fund raising committee, every important decision making body. This is in short, their

reward for being good thieves. It says **go and steal some more.**

The worst part is even when these guys are caught with their pants down and it becomes clearer that they were siphoning state money, some of these leaders have the audacity to call them up for prayers because they are going through trying times and would not just stop there. They would defend this charlatan. Can you imagine this? There is nothing wrong being a person's spiritual leader but what happened to the old fashioned truth? What happened to calling and naming and shaming those that do wrong? Do they conveniently forget that these members are



bringing in stolen money for them? I guess it is fine to indulge in stolen loot. I guess it must be okay to reward these folks with church positions and then decry government for failing to fix the broken system.

But the corruption does not just stop at the parents. It is often the case where the children are made leaders in the Sunday schools and youth and young adult departments of the church. After all, it is keeping it in the family right?

This is a sure way to keep it in house. This circle is continued in that for as long as the family keeps dropping the church, its members are bound to end up in one position or another to ensure some of that money comes back.

Thus, the Father of the Year has lost its value. More oft than note, the fathers that should be awarded the titles end up at best as special fathers, a post created to award the fathers that merit it and still take cash from some of those that can afford.

We never see churches calling out members that embezzle, unless it is to give them positions.

**CURRY AND JAMES**



The past NBA finals was magical on many counts. The hype, the games, the players, the teams... it kept getting better. I won't say it was the best but it was one of the best.

The one downside for me is the beef created between James and Curry. These are by far two of the best players to race the game. There is no doubt there. What I find sad is the fact that fans insist on an either or approach to the situation. No one seems to want to get out of the trenches. Why must it be one

or the other? Why can't we just appreciate these two fine players?



I think we need to get past the drama. Black America needs to realize that the rag-to-riches is not the only narrative of success. There is nothing wrong with James' rise. But we all can't rise out of the hood. The undue negative vibe thrown Curry's way because he had well-to-do parents is purely foolish. Since when did success become a bad thing? How many of these guys would not kill to have that or give their children such? So why should it seem that Curry is less black because he grew up with something? Blackness is not defined by struggle in the hood. It is just one narrative. We all want to make a life and we all can't do so using just one route.

The danger to this narrative is that it encourages kids to engage in unwholesome acts. They must be gangsters, hood rats and street hustlers to be bonafide 'made' men and women. I am not sure this is the message we want to be

sending out to our children. Not if we hope to improve their lives in a meaningful way.

No disrespect to King James but Curry is one darn good player and his story is equally amazing. In fact in some aspects it is more so.

Here is a man who had every opportunity to be a spoilt brat but chose not to be. The fact that he comes from such a family and chose to play the game professionally speaks to his will. He has risen this far by his own boots. Not money or favor other than his hard work with the ball on the court.

He has shown what determination can accomplish. He has shown that the single narrative is not fully representative of black America. He shows that one's blackness is not as a result of how much struggle one had in the hood, or how tough one is on the streets. He gives hope to millions of black kids that education and hard work pay.



**D. Othniel Forte**



## HE

He made one too many mistakes, for this, he only gets to see his child from behind bars. The child longs for leadership, he longs for the bond, longs to protect, wishes he'd acted better. You are in our thoughts.

He can no longer weep, he can't be strong anymore, he feels helpless but presses on. He watches his child fade away; snatched by the cold hands of death. What is there to live for? No father should have to bury his child. A prayer is not enough for him. Yet he finds a way to carry on and even live. You are a King.

He is disturbed, this illness has taken over not just his child but everything- the mother, his home as well, for as long as the child is sick, the mother is edgy and sick as well. He takes the double shifts, the odd jobs risking his health, life.... For him, we offer a prayer.

He's broken, ashamed, he's distraught; she's unable to feed his family. He watches them go to bed hungry. Nothing could be worse, yet after a restless night, the next day, he is out there with renewed hope and determination, to make it better. He fights life itself to

prove them meals even if there is no bed. We carry him in our hearts.

He moans only, for tears have long since left his body- all dried out. He has to visit a cemetery today since his child is unable to come by or wish him a happy day. He dreads the moment when she sees the name on the headstone. Sunrise – Sunset. It pierces her heart anew for the sun has not risen nor set since that heart wrenching news. He walks away and drinks his life away, destroying his home in the process, he is angry at everything, at everyone; he fights, gets into rages; almost violent at times; he gambles, he is unable to handle the loss. For he lost one thing, now he is losing everything. For him, we intercede.

He does it all alone, no help, no mom, no family, at least not when they're needed. He's a single dad; it is not a title or badge. He doesn't know what he's doing most of the time, he's lonely, alone, worried many 'a times that he might screw up not just his, but all their lives, but he is a man and must carry on, quitting is not an option. Whether he raises girls or boys, it doesn't matter. For you father[s], we offer special applications.

They fight off, all the time. Now they barely speak or see each other. They haven't for a while now. That father needs his child; that child needs the dad back. We pray for them.

He's far away, distant, gone, deadbeat.... he's forgotten or doesn't care. We admonish you, do the right thing **remember them**

He is expecting, anxiety consumes him; he is both apprehensive and excited for the new life he has given is one he is responsible for. For once, he is scared but won't say it. He needs help so we offer him up to the ancestors.

He's a father to all, he guides, he counsels, he protects. We hold you in a special place

He struggles to find a job, even when he gets, it is still a struggle to keep it, to get there on time, to deal with the challenges he can't afford to slip, she must balance everything we say a prayer.

Every father out there, you have every reason to enjoy this day although to some, this will not be a time of celebration. We say, when things subside, take the moment to smile, laugh and appreciate life.

**D. Othniel Forte**

## Liberian Classic

### Maya i seneo

Bai. T Moore

Gola version

mayaya i sene  
tobaa kerne be  
ilo keu hee  
fila dende ba  
nalowani dee  
amu a kpemgba  
koieja gengee  
amu anda i desi sa  
anda i fili  
fila dende lo  
mayaya i seneo  
amu wot kpafona ka  
wo kena tetaa  
numu kilaa kpotiana  
mu temalo kpan  
n mafo kei-a  
menu la  
poo sane  
1821 bulo  
mua ya kule sunda dan  
ke i be kila fe  
n komu mayaya  
mu koni i fele  
wele tele me la  
mu fa sale ba  
mu hee  
mayaya i seneo  
i sene mayaya i sene

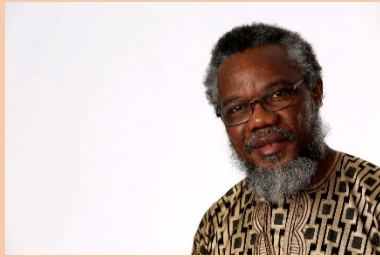
This is the English version

mayaya hello  
truly this one's  
like a dream  
the big sailing ship  
came very slowly  
and lay  
along the sea  
very plainly  
they snatched you quickly  
and put you on the ship  
and you floated  
to the west  
and the path  
between us closed  
it was not til  
yesterday the kwi  
year in 1821  
we heard from you  
saying you were coming  
therefore mayaya  
if today we see you  
our hearts are filled with joy  
mayaya hello  
hello mayaya hello



# Authors of the Month Profiles

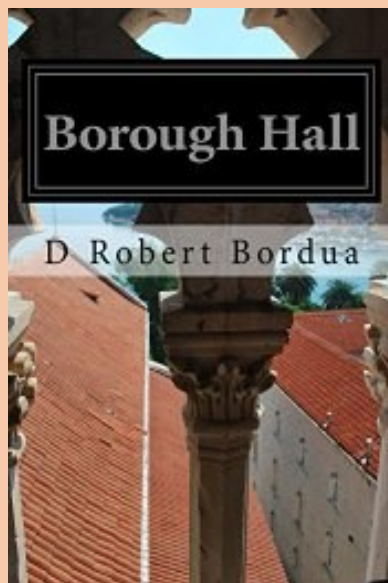
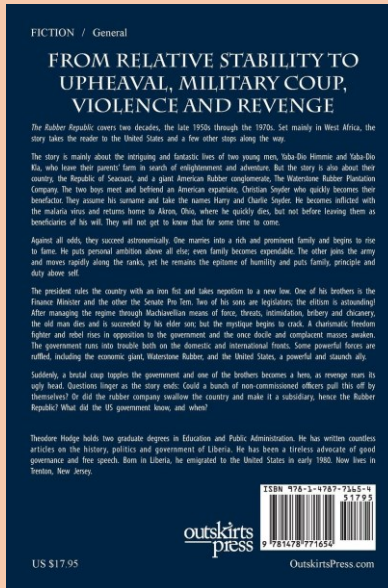
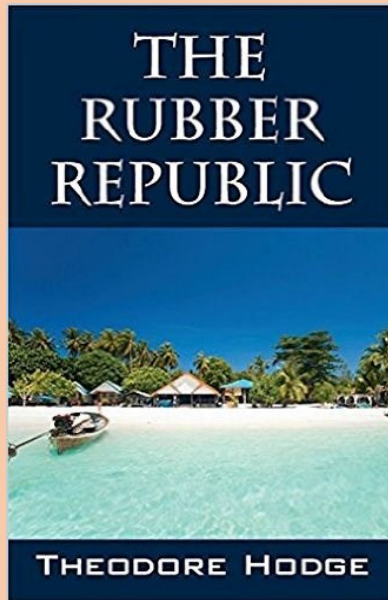
THEODORE HODGE



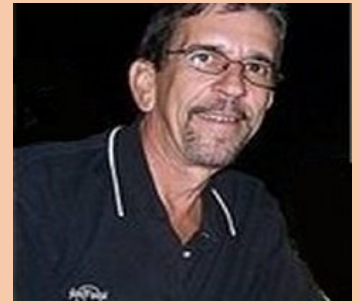
Theodore Hodge

Born in Gedetarbo, Maryland County, a proud product of the Maryland County school system; started school at T.R. Andrews Elementary where my father was principal, spent a year at St. Francis Junior High and another year at Pleebo High before graduating from Bishop Ferguson High School. I left Liberia in early 1980 and have lived in the US since, spending over two decades in Cleveland, Ohio; home away from home.

After finishing an undergraduate degree in Business Administration, worked as an Investment Accountant for PNC Bank and as a Financial Advisor and Stock Broker for American Express before returning to graduate school to earn degrees in Education and Public Administration. Worked in various capacities as an entrepreneur and freelance writer; now simply content to pursue the passion of writing and storytelling.



D. ROBERT BORDUA



D. Robert Bordua

D (Donald) Robert Bordua was born in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1953 to a homemaker and her die maker husband, struggling through tough times, his family of 7 moved to Michigan in 1956. During that time he lost his oldest brother, a Marine serving in Okinawa. It was an accidental drowning during peace time. Donald has no memory of him.

He grew up in DeWitt, Michigan and spent 3 years at a nearby community college until he ended up going to work at an automotive factory. In 2005 he transferred to another plant in Arlington, Texas and retired in 2007. He currently lives in Pelzer, a small town in S. Carolina with his wife. They have 3 Bull Mastiffs and 3 Bengal cats. They have 5 grown children between them and 7 grandchildren.

Donald has always enjoyed reading and just a few years ago, took up writing short stories for personal pleasure. He finally made an attempt at writing his first novel and it was a rewarding experience for him. Borough Hall is the result of that endeavor. He's now working on his second novel which is a sequel. Several of the characters from Borough Hall make repeat appearances though some of them have severely changed. He also introduces completely new characters, some friends and family, some enemies. 2016.

**Our Spotlight author of this issue is a seasoned writer, critic and educator**

**THEODORE HODGE**

## **Author Interview**



**Liberian Literary Mag conducted an interview with**

**THEODORE HODGE**

**LLR: First, we would like to thank you for granting this interview. Tell us a little about you-**

Born in Gedetarbo, Maryland County, a proud product of the Maryland County school system; started school at T.R. Andrews Elementary where my father was principal, spent a year at St. Francis Junior High and another year at Pleebo High before graduating from Bishop Ferguson High School. I left Liberia in early 1980 and have lived in the US since, spending over two decades in Cleveland,

Ohio; home away from home. After finishing an undergraduate degree in Business Administration, worked as an Investment Accountant for PNC Bank and as a Financial Advisor and Stock Broker for American Express before returning to graduate school to earn degrees in Education and Public Administration. Worked in various capacities as an entrepreneur and freelance writer; now simply content to pursue the passion of writing and storytelling.

### **2) Why writing?**

Why do I write? Writing is therapy. Living in a world full of stress, I learned to relax by reading.

Reading has been my most favorite leisure since I was a lad. I've always read to shield myself from activities where I was not too proficient, such as sports. Eventually, a voracious reader must become a writer, hence the exercise. It was Sir Francis Bacon who purportedly said: "Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man."

### **3) What books have most influenced your life/career most?**

Too many to name. An all-time favorite, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* comes to mind.

In recent times, "How Rich Countries Got Rich and Why Poor Countries Stay Poor", by Erik. S. Reinert; "Bad Samaritans: The Guilty Secrets of Rich Countries and the Threat to Global

Prosperity", by Ha-Joon Chang; "The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else", by Hernand de Soto and "From Third World to First: The Singapore Story", by Lee Kuan Yew. This is just an abbreviated list of the many books that fall in this category. Perhaps I should add "Animal Farm", by George Orwell and of course, Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart".

### **4) How do you approach your work?**

No particular method. I do my thing whenever the "spirit" moves me. I work in solitude mostly, but I may be seen scribbling in a public place. Sometimes one has to ignore the public and conform to the inner whisperings. You may never hear that voice again, so the challenge is to listen to oneself always;

sometimes it's okay to be seen talking to oneself. The urge may come in the middle of the night during a bathroom break. My approach is haphazard and not to be recommended to anyone else.

**5) What themes do you find yourself continuously exploring in your work?**

The topics of 'Good Governance' and 'Freedom of Speech' are major concerns. But I try not to limit myself to particular topics, subjects or themes. Sometimes I just like to be a contrarian; I simply take the opposite view to any issue and write against the status quo, just for the heck of it.

**6) Tell us a little about your book[s]- storyline, characters, themes, inspiration etc.**

The Rubber Republic follows two brothers born in a remote village in the fictional country of the Republic of Seacoast. They venture out to seek education and enlightenment; they each succeed spectacularly but become mentally estranged from each other. Through their eyes, we learn about the country they call home; its history,

politics and sociology. We learn about the unique governmental structure and a powerful rubber company. In the end, a military coup topples the government; one of the brothers is killed and the other becomes a hero. But who's behind the coup? That's for you to find out. The story explores various themes including, love, family, honor, ambition and duty to country. The story is especially about love in its most fascinating aspects.

**7) What inspired you to write this title or how did you come up with the storyline?**

The story came to me why I was attempting to write another story. The characters, themes and ideas came to be in an existential sort of a way. Perhaps it is fair to say I couldn't resist telling it.

In creative writing courses, students are advised to write "what you know or care about most". I guess the story was an accumulation of my subliminal thoughts and experiences. When I began to write the story, the details came in an overwhelming rapidity; I didn't have to stop and think...

My surprise was that I waited so long to tell this story; it came so naturally.

**8) Is there a message in your book that you want your readers to grasp?**

That's left to the reader. Many readers will relate to different themes or messages. I tell the story, but I don't dictate what the reader takes away; hopefully the readers will tell us what message or theme grabbed their attention. Is it the deep love between the two brothers and how their perspectives changed eventually?

Is it the betrayal? Is it the struggle between principle and patriotism versus personal ambition? Is it the ugly business of government turned upside down and reduced to personal greed and seen as a zero-sum game?

A plethora of themes are explored; the reader must choose from a smorgasbord.

**9) Is there anything else you would like readers to know about your book?**

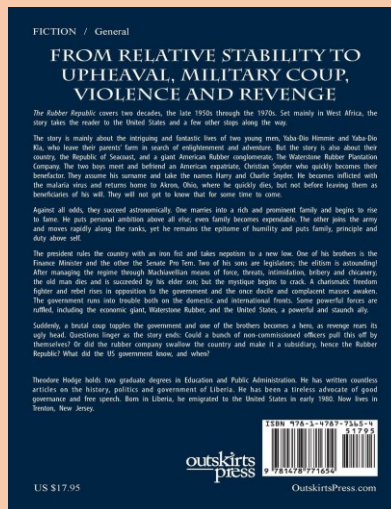
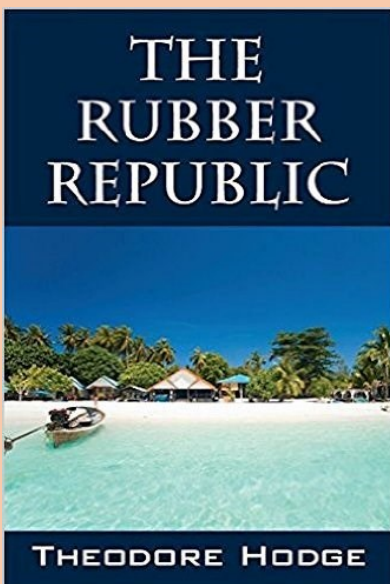
I spin the story from a specific point in a remote village, but it takes on a

much broader setting as the principal characters play on a much broader stage. The themes in the book go from a very personal relationship between two brothers to more intricate and complex themes, as I have already mentioned.

**10) Do you have any advice for other writers?**

No; no specific advice. But on a broader note, challenge yourself. The young Nigerian writer **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** admonishes us to beware the 'danger of a single story'.

The only way to avoid that pitfall is to write as many stories as we can. Your story might be worth telling and sharing; you'll never know until you take that leap. So write it.



**11) What book[s] are you reading now? Or recently read?**

Reading "How the Law is Used to Destroy Equality and Protect the Powerful", a most powerful book by **Glenn Greenwald**. Recently reread "Rules for Radicals", by Saul D. Alinsky.

**12) Tell us your latest news, promotions, book tours, launch etc.**

No news to report. All is still in the working; open to suggestions and invitations.

**13) What are your current projects?**

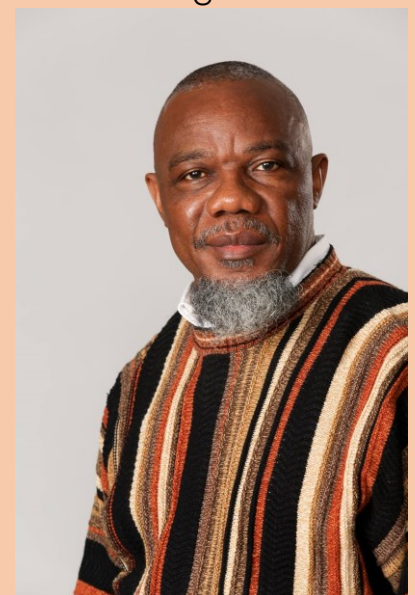
Working furiously on my second book, "Power to the People!" Also working on the possibility of publishing selected articles and essays in a book perhaps to address current issues in the upcoming election in Liberia.

**14) Have you read book[s] by [a] Liberian author[s] or about Liberia?**

I've read a number of books by Liberian authors over the years. The Liberian intellectual whose works impress me most is **Dr. Elwood Dunn**. I find his "History of the Episcopal Church of Liberia" quite a fascinating read. Perhaps my interest in it stems from the fact that I was brought up in the Episcopal Church tradition, although I'm not a practicing Episcopalian anymore. Then there is his seminal work, "Liberia and the United States During the Cold War: Limits of Reciprocity". I recommend this as a must read.

**15) Any last words?**

See you on the circuit. May be the dialogue continue.



**THEODORE HODGE**

## Diaspora Poet

### FRAID

Fraid under de house  
fear screams  
from John-John's eyes  
rushes out his mouth  
grate our ears.

He flees, knees buckling,  
into the arms of anyone  
willing to save him  
from the white orb.  
Mama stops his flight,  
cocoons him.

Fraid under de house  
John-John mumbles  
and thrashes about.  
Mama mops his feverish head,  
rubs him down with bay rum.

Papa prays and counts  
his rosary beads  
and we stand around,  
watch anxiety-gripped  
waiting on mama's command.

Papa has gone out  
to haul buckets of sand  
from a beach nearby  
to spread around the house  
drawing the line between  
the living and the dead.  
Dey won't cross de barrier,  
the elders assure us.

The burden lifted,  
John-John sleeps long.  
A large wooden crucifix  
hangs on his headboard.  
An open Bible rests on a table  
and Christ looks down  
from the wall across the room.

© Althea Romeo-Mark 11.10. 10

### Althea Romeo-Mark



Born in Antigua, West Indies, [Althea Romeo-Mark](#) is an educator and internationally published writer who grew up in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands. She has lived and taught in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, USA, Liberia (1976-1990), London, England (1990-1991), and in Switzerland since 1991.

She taught at the University of Liberia (1976-1990). She is a founding member of the [Liberian Association of Writers \(LAW\)](#) and is the poetry editor for *Seabreeze: Journal of Liberian Contemporary Literature*.

She was awarded the [Marguerite Cobb McKay Prize](#) by *The Caribbean Writer* in June, 2009 for short story "Bitterleaf, (set in Liberia)." *If Only the Dust Would Settle* is her last poetry collection.

She has been guest poets at the International Poetry Festival of Medellin, Colombia (2010), the

Kistrech International Poetry Festival, Kissi, Kenya (2014) and The Antigua and Barbuda Review of Books 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference, Antigua and Barbuda (2015)

She has been published in the US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, the USA, Germany, Norway, the UK, India, Colombia, Kenya, Liberia and Switzerland.

More publishing history can be found at her blog site:

[www.aromaproductions.blogspot.com](http://www.aromaproductions.blogspot.com)



## Author Interview 2

### Spotlight Author

#### D. ROBERT BORDUA



Liberian Literary Magazine conducted an interview with author D. Robert Bordua 😊

**LLM: First, we would like to thank you for granting this interview. Let us kick off this interview with you telling us a little about yourself.... Tell us a little about yourself**

I grew up in a small American town in the state of Michigan during the nineteen fifties. Our family of seven was always close and as we matured we established our own families and laid roots throughout Michigan. I worked for General Motors for thirty plus years before I retired. Married, my wife and I live in South Carolina with three exotic cats and three Mastiff dogs. Our children are grown with their own families.

### Why writing?

I've always enjoyed reading and just a few years ago, took up writing short stories for personal pleasure. I finally made an attempt at writing my first novel and it was a rewarding experience. *Borough Hall* is the result of that endeavor. I'm now working on the sequel to that novel. Several of the characters from *Borough Hall* make repeat appearances, though some of them have severely changed. I'm also introducing completely new characters, some friends and family, some enemies

### What books have most influenced your life/career most?

I enjoy reading mystery novels from the likes of John Grisham, Mary Higgins Clark, Patricia Cornwell and Elmore Leonard (I love his dialogue). A few years ago a friend of mine introduced me to Christine Feehan who writes in the dystopian/paranormal genres. I've grown to love that vein. Of course the 'Twilight' series of books by Stephenie Meyer also influenced me.

### How do you approach your work?

Although many authors use outlines as a structure for their work I simply come up with ideas and write 'by the seat of my pants.' It's probably more work this way but it's what works for me.

If a character needs to rejoin the story line, I'll create a scene for him or her and the subplots develop, often intermingling with others.

### What themes do you find yourself continuously exploring in your work?

Not to sound redundant, but I explore the paranormal.

I'm always discovering new information or aspects of folklore surrounding the theme.

When writing fiction I've come to realize that you don't have to stick to 'tried and true' characterizations.

For example; vampires don't necessarily have to be fearful of crucifixes, succumb to death with a wooden stake or be completely lacking in compassion.



**Tell us a little about your book[s]- storyline, characters, themes, inspiration etc.**

Here is a brief summary:  
Nicolae Tepes and his brother Victor were two hard working young men just helping the family in 14<sup>th</sup> century Bucharest. All was well with the Tepes family until bitterness invaded their solitude by the evil Elliott Goldis. Elliott was a changed man. In fact, he was no longer a man at all. He was vampire, and now he has infected Nicolae. Sworn enemies, the three of them have many encounters through the centuries and around the world. They experience loss, witness history and find love. Ultimately, their covens fight for their very existence. The question is; who will come out alive and who will survive but have to find their own way in the world again?

**What inspired you to write this title or how did you come up with the storyline?** I was looking for a focal point or location for the climax of the story. Many great stories use a location for their titles, a place where most of the events take place. Borough Hall is the name of a mansion sitting on an old plantation in Savannah, Georgia where the Tepes coven ends up after centuries of world

travel. It's also where the final confrontation takes place.

**Is there a message in your book that you want your readers to grasp?**

I suppose the messages I want readers to glean from my novel is that, no matter how disillusioned you may be, no matter what your struggles are, perseverance is the key to survival, and no matter what preconceived notions others may have about someone, deep down there may lie compassion and the need for love.

**Is there anything else you would like readers to know about your book?**

Borough Hall is a journey through several centuries and locations throughout the world. Contained within the story are historical tidbits of information that many may not be aware of. I did lots of research in the writing of this novel.

**Do you have any advice for other writers?**

For new authors in particular, do not give up at the first sign of discouragement. Keep writing. You don't even have to work on your current project just as long as you write every day. I also can't overemphasize research. In order to write about something, you have to know about the

subject. I used to hate history. Through writing this book, I had to research history and through that process I learned more about history than when I was in school and I actually enjoyed it.

**What book[s] are you reading now or recently read?**

The most recent book I read was 'The Last Precinct' by Patricia Cornwell. It follows the continuing life of Medical Examiner, Kay Scarpetta, her daughter, and a police commander as they investigate murders and track down the killer(s).

**What are your current projects?**

I'm currently working on the sequel to Borough Hall. I have as yet to come up with a suitable title, but several are in my head. The Tepes family, or coven, has grown in size and they discover new enemies and new allies. There are three subplots in the story. I feel that this novel will be more intense than the first.

**Have you read book[s] by [a] Liberian author[s] or about Liberia?**

No I have not.

**Any last words?**

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about my work and me.

## Resurrected Master

Edwin J Barclay



This series focuses on the writings of one of the literary giants of Liberia. Unfortunately, more people remember the man as the politician or the masterful lawyer.

Arguably, the Barclays [he and his uncle, both presidents of Liberia] were the sharpest legal minds of their times, rivalled only by an equally worthy opponent JJ Dossen.

What we try to do in this series is spotlight the literary giant, E. J. Barclay was. We attempt to show the little known side of the man- free from all the political dramas.

African American  
Perspectives: Pamphlets  
from the Daniel A.P. Murray  
Collection, 1818-1907

### THE SLUMBERS OF THE DEAD [Part II]

Behold Him! Come and  
fallye down,  
Before His throne and  
give Him praise!"  
Nor can we with our  
mortal eyes.  
Behold Him in some far-  
off land,  
Where seeing Him we  
strive to rush,  
And reach the shining  
silv'ry shore,  
Thro' whose most  
verdant fields do flow,  
Rivers of brilliant precious  
ore.  
Nay! we must cease to  
breathe this foul,  
-This murdering mortal  
air, and seek  
Us for the end for which  
we must.  
This life forego. Yet is  
there such  
An end more wanted  
than this life?  
Perchance there be no  
end in death;  
What land is seen when  
Death his blade  
Both sheath? I hear of  
heaven's land  
Whose streets of  
glittering gold are made,  
Whose agate places  
receive  
The passing rays of  
brilliant light,  
From vast Celestia's  
countless suns.

-----  
-----  
But can there any such  
exist,-  
A land material, and  
blest  
With endless day, and is  
not hot  
From having ceaseless  
luminance?  
Whose inmates naught  
but love enhance,  
And where they feed on  
honeyed milk;  
Where all is pleasure and  
content;  
Where night is alien, and  
light  
Unfolds his brilliant rays,  
and reigns  
Eternal Monarch of the  
days!  
And if there doth exist  
this land.  
Who guides us by the  
hand, and heads  
Us to its shores of  
indolence?  
And where doth band  
the troops he leads  
Into this place? But  
cease thee Muse!  
Where soarest thou?  
Unto what plains  
Have you now flown?  
Dost thou not know  
If thou ascendest into  
tho vast  
Ethereal heights, into this  
earth  
Thou will return in fury at  
-----  
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From the Barclay Padmore  
Wiles Families website

Posted by Historical  
Preservation Society of Liberia-  
[hpsol](#)

## Unscripted

Cher Antoinette



MAY 2016

### STOLEN DREAMS

The appointment was made. Time became finite. It would soon be over.

Today was my eighteenth birthday, a milestone as I was no longer considered a child in my mother's eyes; in my father's I had become a woman a long time ago.

\*\*\*\*\*

Being an only child, Mum and Dad were my best friends and we had the most wonderful time together. There were advantages to not having siblings; birthdays, Easter and Christmas were highlights in every year. The presents and chocolate eggs and gifts of Barbie dolls and colouring books from Santa Claus, it was brilliant. Every night I slept with my parents in the king size bed; additional protection was provided

by Mr. Chinkles, my floppy purple dog.

Unfortunately, everything changed the night of my ninth birthday. It was eight o'clock and my cousins and classmates had finally left the party. Pink and silver ribbons were strewn all over the carpet, the pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey tail was firmly affixed to

Mr. Chinkles, and the old rocking chair in the corner was swaying under the weight of

"Yaaawwwwn", I collapsed in the settee and watched as Mum got a large black garbage bag and started clearing the mess. Dad returned just then from dropping my cousin Jason to his home, he called from the corridor.

"Hey Pumpkin, you still awake?"

"Yes Daddy, I in here with Mummy."

As he entered the room he stepped on a small balloon that was escaping from

"Whoosh! Pop pop!"

I jumped and he laughed; a deep throaty chuckle that sounded like our old Hillman Hunter during a cold start.

"Pumpkin, I have one last surprise for you." My eyes lit up and I was no longer sleepy. "Do you want to see it?"

"Yes! Yes please," I nodded, my head

bobbing up and down like a slinky.

"Close your eyes." Holding hands, he steered me out of the living room. At the end of the hallway, under the stairs there was a door that for as long as I could remember was kept locked.

I heard a key turning and felt a draft. "Open your eyes."

It was a princess's room. The twin bed was covered in pink and yellow patterned sheets and pillows. Two cloth dolls sat on the bed, waiting to play. There was also a small plastic drawer unit and a tiny pink and white fluffy floor mat. At the time the room seemed really big to me, but now in reflection it was no larger than a space that could fit the single bed, its length crushed to the sidewall with its bed-head and foot crammed between the opposite end walls.

"Happy birthday, Pumpkin!"

I squealed with glee, and sprang into my father's arms, holding him tightly around the neck and kissing his face with as many kisses as I could. He laughed and laughed and twirled me around and around. It was the happiest moment of my life. I was a big girl now.

\*\*\*\*

“Please stop, please, you are hurting me.”

I begged. I cried. He never listened.

My mother ignored me, she never believed me. She beat me – said it was my fault. She cried. I cried.

This was my family.

Someday, I wished to have a family of my own, someday. I dreamed of a God-fearing, all loving home. That’s what I wanted.

It would never happen. Not now, it could never happen.

The cramping in my belly intensified and the waves of nausea were getting worse. Memories I had buried deep in the forbidden vault of my mind were escaping; rising to the surface with a volatility that belied their virtual form. I lay on the narrow gurney and stared at the cream sterile tiles on the ceiling in the surgery.

The attending nurse smiled and inserted the long silver needle into my vein. I drifted into unconsciousness.

\*\*\*\*

Hushed voices intruded my thoughts. Blurred images added to my confusion.

“Where am I?”

There was no response. Didn’t anyone hear me? And then, I remembered.

Instinctively, placing my hand on my tummy, I felt for changes. The cool cover sheet offered no comfort, just a physical barrier to the incisions of a few hours before.

I remembered – the choice I had made, the choices that were taken from me, the choices I no longer possessed. A wave of emotion crested and fell over my empty self.

There was no turning back now.

My vision cleared – there was a woman and a man standing a few feet from the foot of the bed. I recognized my mother. She was crying, sobbing uncontrollably. Why was she crying? Shouldn’t it have been me, crying?

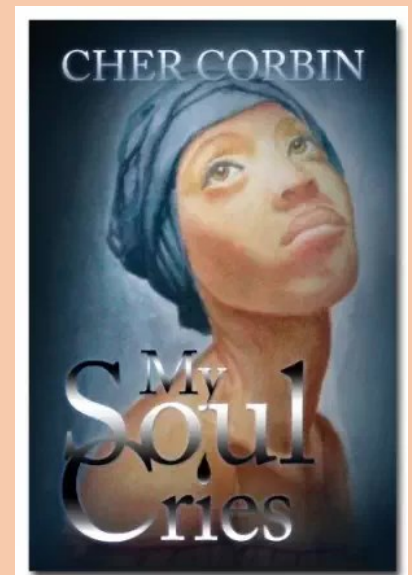
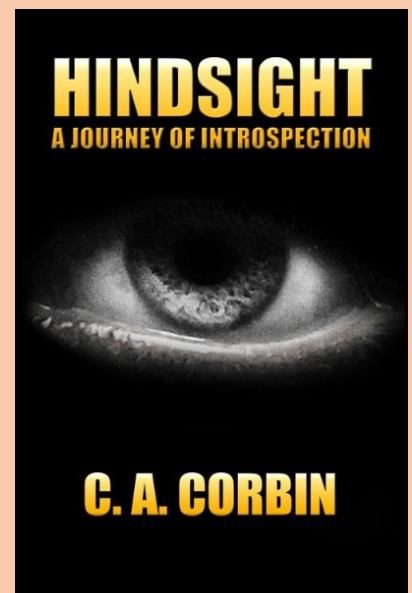
“They took it, they took it all,” she screamed and ran out of the room.

Turning my head away, tears spilling on my pillow, I knew, I understood. It was done. My family never was and now, never ever could be.

The man came closer. The determined echo of his shoes on the vinyl floor threw shivers down my spine.

I was afraid to look in his direction. He squeezed my shoulder, kissed me on the cheek and whispered “Happy birthday, Pumpkin!”

\*\*\*\*



© Cher Corbin”

Cher-Antoinette is a mother of two, a forensic scientist and is a multiple silver and bronze award winner at the Barbados National Independence Festival of Creative Arts (NIFCA) in Photography, Visual Arts and Literary Arts.

Cher-can be contacted at [cher.insight@gmail.com](mailto:cher.insight@gmail.com) and has a social media presence at <https://www.facebook.com/CorbinGirl> <http://cher-insight.blogspot.com> and on Twitter @cherinsight Instagram @CherAntoinetteStudio



Writer | Publisher | Project Manager

**Ophelia S. Lewis**

KEEP IN TOUCH



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**Facebook**

**Linked In:**

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/elmashaw>

Contact Person: **Elma Shaw**

## Author Interview 3

SPOTLIGHT AUTHOR

**LAQUEISHA MALONE**



**LaQueisha Malone**

**Thank you for taking this time with us, we appreciate it. Let us kick off by you telling us a little about you - childhood, education, upbringing etc. Tell us a little about yourself**

I am a mother to a beautiful daughter. I'm a Poet, Author, & Publisher. I've also done some modeling. I love R&B and Gospel music of the 80's, 90's, & 2000's. I'm a perfectionist, which tends to be a curse at times. I love all aspects of Creativity – Art, Music, Writing, & Dance. I idolize the late-great Aaliyah Haughton.

**Why writing?**

I have always written. Ever since before I could remember I've had a pen, pencil, and paper in

my hand. I grew without many friends, because I didn't trust a lot of people; therefore, I would write my feelings as a way to cope with everyday situations.

**What books have most influenced your life/career most?**

Books that have most influenced my career are books by Maya Angelou – *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, any book by Nikki Turner & Carl Weber.

**How do you approach your work?**

I approach my writing with prayer and seeking of God. I want to make sure that what I see, hear, & feel will be translated in a way that offers hope, inspiration, and change in someone's life.

**What themes do you find yourself continuously exploring in your work?**

I find myself continuously exploring themes related to Young Adult social issues such as bullying, suicide, peer pressure, abandonment, & family issues. These situations touch my heart deeply and I want to write characters who find positive solutions to their problems in multiple ways that my readers can relate to.

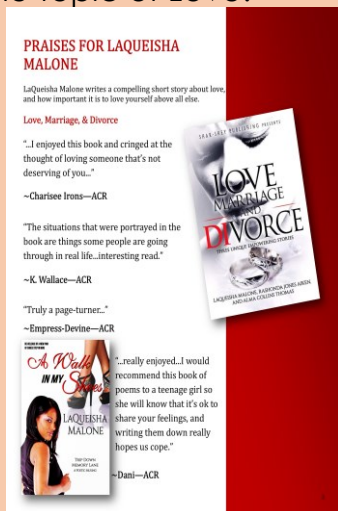
**Tell us a little about your book[s]- storyline, characters, themes, inspiration etc.**

*Cell of the Mind* (2008) is a poetry compilation that relates to love, betrayal, acceptance, and spiritual awareness. *A Walk In My Shoes* (2011) is my second poetry compilation related to family issues and relationship issues. *Love, Marriage, & Divorce Anthology* (2016) is an anthology written by myself and two other ladies. I wrote the topic of Love which is about a woman who has to learn to love herself.

**What inspired you to write this title or how did you come up with the storyline?**

The title to *Cell of the Mind* came from the two parts of the book I wanted to reflect on. I felt as though there are times when we are going through things in our life we often feel like there's a spotlight on us and we are trapped by the recurrences in our minds of the situation. It's like being trapped in prison *Cell of the Mind*. For *A Walk In My Shoes* the title came because I knew that it would be my last poetry release and I

wanted my readers to walk in my shoes and take a trip down memory lane with me as I published poetry from my high school years. Love, Marriage, & Divorce Anthology is an anthology I did with another publishing house. The publisher wanted to have three authors tell three unique stories of Love, Marriage, and Divorce. I was given the topic of Love.



**Is there a message in your book that you want your readers to grasp?**

The message I want readers to grasp from my short story in Love, Marriage, & Divorce is that before you can truly love someone effectively you must love yourself first. Anything other than that you are loving improper and it can affect one internally.

**Is there anything else you would like readers to know about your book?**

One other thing I want my readers to gain from reading Love, Marriage, & Divorce is that even though it may feel like this is all that I am worth, you are worth so much more.

**Do you have any advice for other writers?**

My advice to other writers will be to research, research, and research. Research and study all aspects of your craft. Find your writing voice and share it with the world.

**What book[s] are you reading now?**

Or recently read? Books I'm reading now are the upcoming releases from my authors under Strawberry Publications, LLC as we gear for their release dates. I am also reading ROOTS. Other titles on my list to read are books by authors who have requested a review.

**Tell us your latest news, promotions, book tours, launch etc.**

The latest news for me is that I'm participating in another anthology called Sex, Lies, & the Church. I have a book signing charity event for the Children of St. Jude in October. My first YA novel, Secrets Amongst Friends is set to release in

early 2017. I am the 2015 Poet of the Year from the AAMBC Literary Awards in Atlanta, GA.

**What are your current projects?**

My current projects is the grand opening of my children's book and young adult publishing company Strawberry Reads, my magazine I preparing to launch, my radio show I seeking a hostess for, a Literary Event for my community of authors, and starting up my Creative Writing Classes again in my community.

**Have you read book[s] by [a] Liberian author[s] or about Liberia?**

I must I have never read a book by a Liberian author, but when I looked over the website I was very intrigue to purchase. So it will definitely be on my list of things to do. I love autobiographies and memoirs, and that's what some of the books reminded me of.

**Any last words?**

Never give up, don't let anyone tell you it's impossible, & everyday find something that will bring you closer to your dreams.

Author bio:



**LAQUEISHA MALONE**

Award-winning Author, LaQueisha Malone was born and raised in Arkansas, where she currently resides with her family. She has worked as a Psychiatric Aide at a children's Habilitation Center for nine years, and is currently the Education Administrative Assistant at the same Habilitation Center.

Writing has always been a part of her life. She began writing fiction stories and poetry about the age of 13. It was her way of coping with everyday situations. She accredits Dr. Maya Angelou for her love of writing poetry.

Her poetry has been entered into numerous contests, and many of them were published in book and CD compilations through *The International Library of Poetry*. She also won many awards for these publications.

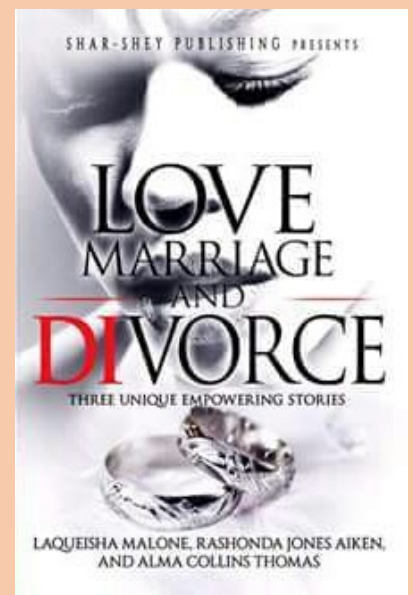
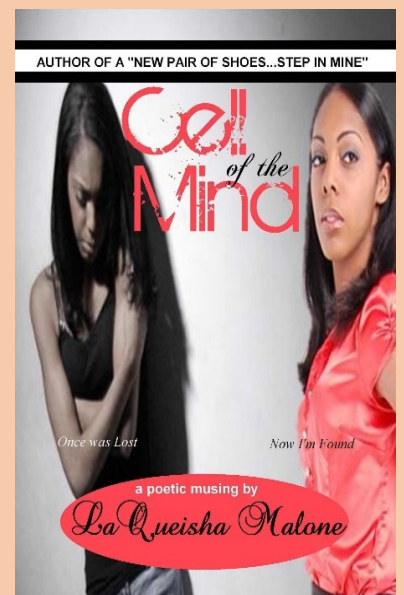
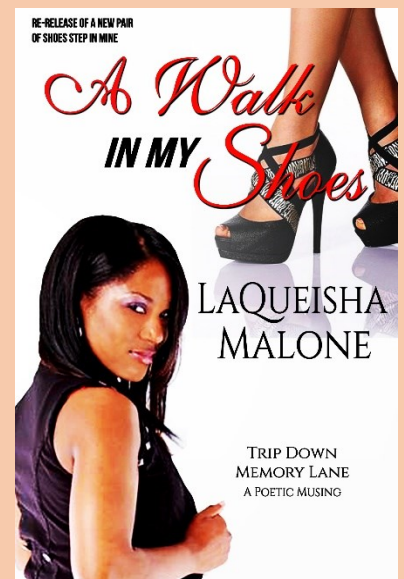
She taught Creative Writing at The Lighthouse of Wisdom for three years, and has released three books *A New Pair of Shoes Step In Mine*, *Cell of the Mind*, and *A Walk In My Shoes*.

She has been featured several times online from Blogs, Radio, and Magazines such as Sledge Rock City, NuSouth Magazine, KnowUrEnemyBlogTalkRadio, The Essence Radio, TUR BlogTalk Radio, One West Radio, The Urban Release, Urban Grapevine Magazine, and more. She also taught Creative Writing in her community for 3 years.

In 2013, LaQueisha Malone launched her own publishing company Strawberry Publications, LLC. She wants to offer Authors a ripened experience of publishing. LaQueisha was Awarded 2015 Poet of the Year at the AAMBC Literary Awards.

Her future goals are to create youth based writing groups and workshops to give the youth a voice.

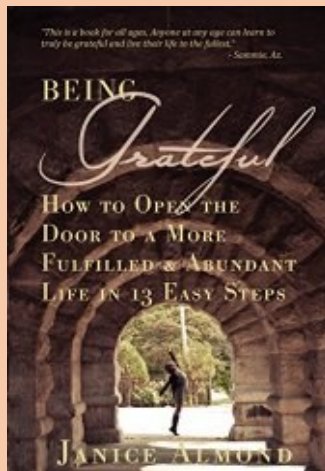
Here is a Sneak Peek into my latest release: [bit.ly/LoveMarriageDivorceUALExcerpt](http://bit.ly/LoveMarriageDivorceUALExcerpt).



**Laqueisha Malone**



## Finding Meaning in Everyday Living



Janice Almond

### MAKE A CHOICE TO BE STEADFAST

#### MAKE A CHOICE TO BE STEADFAST.

Make a choice to be immovable. Make a decision to stand firm and remain firm. Why do we, much of the time, dilly-dally, vacillate, and keep from making a decision? Or once we have made one, don't stick with it? Where does this indecisiveness come from? Why won't we stand our ground? What are we afraid of? I've heard it said, "You must stand for something, or you will fall for anything."

There has never been a truer statement. Make a determined effort to stand up for what you believe. Don't be intimidated. As a Christian, I stand up for my beliefs. James 1:8 says, "...a double-minded man is unstable in ALL his ways." Can't have "two" minds. If you are not steadfast, you will always be unstable, unsteady, and unsure.

Whatever you have decided to do with your life, you have an allotted amount of time. We need to admit that we haven't always been steadfast. We have wavered. We can't and won't get anywhere with our dreams by vacillating. Let's face it. We

have dilly-dallied more times than we want to admit or count.

The important question is, "How do we stop from vacillating and make the needed changes?" "How do we get rid of these "two" minds in our head?" It takes extreme focus. Ask yourself, "How well do you pay attention?"

This is what you need to do to be steadfast and practice steadfastness. You need the ability to pay attention. We all have this ability. We just don't always use it.

Take a minute and think of someone you know who started something; a career, a sport, a relationship, a marriage, a family, etc., and didn't finish it? What happened? They lost focus. They stopped paying attention. They decided for some reason that it just wasn't worth it to keep pursuing what they thought they wanted. It happens every day.

I remember when I lost focus. It was during my first six months of marriage. My dream of becoming a news broadcaster was changed by my circumstances. I had changed my mind because now all I wanted to do was to be a wife and a mother.

At the time, my husband was attending Los Angeles Community College. While there, he came across a radio producer who wanted to interview me for a radio station in Hollywood. I told my husband, "No." He couldn't believe it. He thought I had lost my mind.

You know why I changed my mind? I was three months pregnant, and I didn't want to work. I no longer had that dream of becoming a news broadcaster. To this day, my husband tells me, "You could have been the next Oprah Winfrey!" Just think of it, I could have her billions now if I had remained steadfast.

Why must we be steadfast? We pay a BIG price when we waver. We cannot and will not pursue our dreams without determination.

Determination causes us to struggle. You cannot be steadfast without a struggle. Steadfastness or determination takes effort. Too many times, we want ease.

Now, think of someone you know that you would consider steadfast. They are stable, dependable, reliable, and firm in purpose. This person stays and stands true. Are you this type of person?

You may even consider this person your "rock of Gibraltar." He or she is always steady. You most likely admire this person, don't you?

In fact, some of you are going through a situation right now. If you are not "firm in purpose," not only will you not see a way out, there will be no way out. Now is the time to hold tight to your dreams. Now is the time to focus.

"Concentrate all your thoughts upon the work at hand. The sun's rays do not burn until brought to a focus," Alexander Graham Bell.

Do this. Tell "one" of your minds to get lost! You remember that Dr. Seuss book, *The Cat in the Hat*? You remember, Thing 1 and Thing 2? Well, pick Thing 1 and tell Thing 2 to take a hike! Tell him to get packing! I'm serious about this. Stay with "one" mind. Be resolute. Hold fast.

Choose steadfastness from this day forward. Choose to get rid of the "two" minds. You can do it. You must do it. Your character and your future are at stake.

Here's an exercise:

Write down a few reasons why you should be steadfast. **DO IT NOW.**

## WHY I MUST BE STEADFAST.

List five to ten reasons if you can. How does that make you feel?

### COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE:

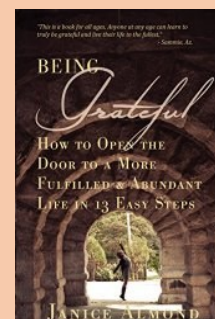
The things that I will do to be more steadfast are...

This is an excerpt from my upcoming book, *BEING DETERMINED: How to be Relentless in Pursuing Your Dreams in 15 Simple Ways*. Available on Amazon.com May 31, 2016.

Join my email list & get my first book free. Go to [www.janicealmondbooks.com/contact](http://www.janicealmondbooks.com/contact)



**Janice Almond** is the author of the **Being Grateful** book series. Her first book in the series, *Being Grateful: How to Open the Door to a More Fulfilled & Abundant Life in 13 Easy Steps* is available on her website: [www.janicealmondbooks.com](http://www.janicealmondbooks.com). Follow Janice on Twitter: @**JalmondjoyRenee**



## 'Twas Brillig

Richard Wilson Moss

### MARS

Below old skies  
Reading of World War  
I laugh at collapsing  
trenches  
I laugh at poets buried  
alive  
I yawn at the rise of an  
another sun.  
Between sand and this  
sun

Reading of Manila  
Forty-thousand killed  
Rebels with balls  
imperial.  
Thousands of miles  
before and behind this  
sun  
The full moon falls so  
perfectly and so quick  
Rising, I am the lunatic.

On these cold shores  
starving gulls quoted  
Aristotle  
A multitude of wilted  
wings  
Had become one black  
ancient tongue.  
Thousands of miles  
before and behind this  
sun  
The dying traces of  
reptilian reason saves  
none.

Reading of Pacific Wars  
At Saipan mass suicide  
at Morubi Bluffs  
Japanese women clutch  
their children and leap  
into the sea

Troops pull and hold their  
pins  
I like to think at the  
botton of this sea  
There are no sins  
Mothers yet nurse their  
young  
Soldiers clasp swords and  
cry Banz!

At gentle undercurrents.  
I read of incendiary  
bombings of Dresden  
and  
Tokyo  
Later the blossom in  
surrounding hills  
Of yellow and orange  
chrysanthemums  
The delicate and fiery  
vomit of stopped  
mouths.  
Much later profits of  
tremendous sums.

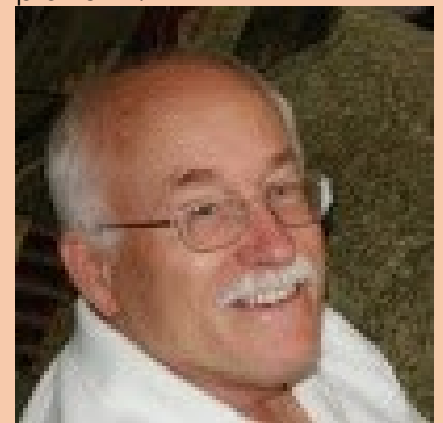
I read many hands upon  
radiated wombs felt the  
first kick  
But radiation seemed no  
more than strong  
mouthwash  
The sweet breath of an  
isotope  
And the Chicago Clock  
did not yet tick  
I read they penciled in  
unscheduled paradise  
for a thousand years  
I read there were  
parades protected with  
iron rope.  
Bands played the music  
of the spheres.  
I read of cracked  
cymbals in  
northeasternly winds  
Broken oboes, flat  
trumpets, unamped  
electric guitars

Over electrified violins  
Bad rehearsals not  
concerts  
Rehearsals of what was  
I can almost hear it  
quietly infecting ears  
Like the flit of bees that  
never buzz.

Thousands of miles  
before and behind this  
sun Blackberrys vibrate,  
androids tease  
But the earth cannot  
speak  
Except by scraping a  
hand upon desolate dirt  
Between rows of fertile,  
gigantic grapefruit trees  
Dropping my book I  
raked up the gray bones  
of a squirrel  
The paws were gone,  
the breast bone now  
brittle was once thick.

Rising  
I am the lunatic  
copyright 2005 Richard Wilson  
Moss

**Richard Moss** is the author  
of numerous full length  
poetry books. You can find  
his books on every major  
platform.



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## **The Love Of Liberty Brought Us Together: A Review**

**By David S. Yadeh Chea**

Reading **The Love of Liberty Brought Us Together** is to come to grip with yet the finest of Konneh's characteristic use of soothingly provocative language. Konneh wrinkles no word, distinctively dishing out his thoughts in a rough but ready language that resonates with authenticity and actuality, and a reality and renaissance that reassures the reader of a refined work of arts.

Though replete with collages of personal experiences ranging from an innocent life in the back-bush enclave of Saclepea, in northeastern Liberia through the gruesome groans of civil war to a resultant raving refugee sprint, the collection vibrates with a broad spectrum of human experiences, decrying in disappointment the ills and vices of war and injustice meted by vampires who build empires on flood of blood, and celebrating in cuddling cadence, the ecstasy and exuberance of love and some of the best of human virtues.

Moreover, in **The Love of Liberty Brought Us Together**, Konneh attempts to contribute cogently to the conversation in the pursuit of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence of the peoples of his native Liberia, a nation whose heart still beats with the crevices created by a series of civil crises.

Konneh's collection of poems with wide ranging and divergent themes neatly knitted into a fine tapestry of poetry is a reflection of his yearning and belief that Liberia with all her peoples of divergent views and persuasions form a fine mosaic of a people who choose to live together

because the love of liberty has brought them together. It is a call for his countrymen to rise and live up to that calling.

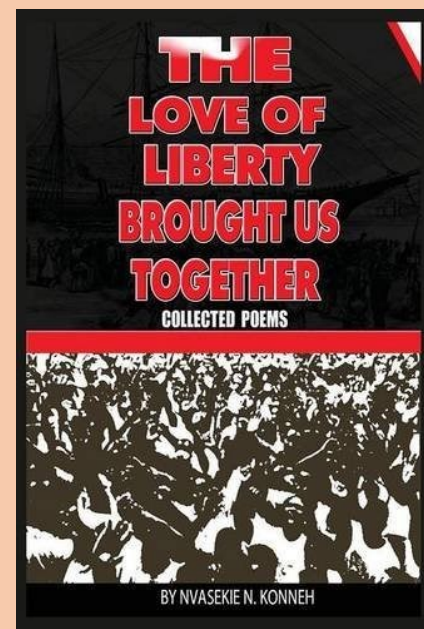
This work should make a reassuring read for all Liberians and all those who love the nation Liberia, as well as all peoples of the world who make up the one human family.

I commend Konneh and highly recommend the work.

**David S. Yadeh Chea**

Past President

Liberia Association of Writers (LAW)



**Reviewed by**

**David S. Yadeh Chea**

**The Love of Liberty Brought Us Together, by Nvasekie Konneh**

- **Paperback:** 128 pages
- **Publisher:** Clarke Publishing and Consulting G (May 27, 2016)
- **Language:** English
- **ISBN-10:** 0989804267
- **ISBN-13:** 978-0989804264

## Transparency is a Taboo in Liberia

By **Martin K. N. Kollie**

From the balcony of the Executive Mansion to the bicameral chambers of the National Legislature, there is an increasing wave of corruption, greed, bribery, nepotism and patronage. From the courtrooms of the Supreme and Subordinate Courts to the Correction Centers, justice is on sale at the detriment of those who do not have deep pockets as well as those who are far away from the power that be.

From the offices of various ministries to public enterprises and agencies, almost everyone who claims to be working for the good of the people is in hurry to get rich, especially with less than 15 months to a crucial electoral process in 2017. Transparency has become a taboo in a small and underpopulated country like Liberia as bribery remains a top priority for those at the helm of national leadership.

Today under a canopy of democracy, accountability to the people is prohibited as public dishonesty pollutes every echelon of our society. Sometimes, I am left to wonder whether our 'leaders' are really sincere about fighting corruption or they are pretending to be fighting it. This menace (corruption) continues to pose severe danger to peace, stability and national unity in Liberia.

From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Embassies and Consulates, the collective interest of the nation is mortgaged and sold cheaply in return for selfish gains. From the National Investment Commission to the National Bureau of Concessions, the natural resources of Liberia are rapidly commercialized without any plan to improve the living condition of those who own those resources.

These are routine and domineering trends in Liberia's governance structure that continue to hamper national security, economic growth and genuine development. From every indication, corruption is now presiding as Commander-In-Chief (CIC) of Africa's oldest republic. When those in authority siphon public resources, they are not held accountable or liable simply because they have big connections and deep pockets.

No one is yet to account for the US\$60 million the European Union gave Liberia to improve its health sector. No one has been held accountable for the bankruptcy of the National Oil Company

(NOCAL). Who has ever accounted for the US\$10.5 million given by CHEVRON for social development? Nobody has ever been held liable for ratifying and approving over 66 bogus concession agreements. No one is yet to account for the US\$2.6 million stolen Ebola fund.

The 65 audit reports released by former Auditor General John S. Morlu are getting dusty on the shelf. The Global Witness Report is gradually dying as Liberians remain curious to know who are Big Boy 1 and Big Boy 2. The half a million (US\$500,000.00) clandestinely pocketed by Big Boy 1 and Big Boy 2 could build 5 modern primary schools or 5 public libraries. This money could equip 2 high-tech computer labs at the state-run university or any private institution of higher learning for that matter.

More than US\$14,933,334.00 has been spent since 2008 just to renovate an eight-storey Executive Mansion, but this project is far from completion. The Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs must give an account of this money. The over US\$16.9 billion foreign direct investment since 2006 has made no real impact. Life expectancy is still low while food insecurity remains high. The pace of unemployment, poverty, infant and maternal mortality, disease and ignorance is exponential as a result of unpatriotism and bad governance.

The nation is beclouded and eclipsed by a small group of born-again rascals and political hustlers. They are ruining our State and plunging its destiny into a ditch of entrenched paralysis. These mountebanks and micro-nationalists are on an expedition to leech onto Liberia's wealth. Leadership for them is not about service, but self-gains. They are the real originators of the 'Get, Grab and Go' formula.

### **The Invisible Twins**

On May 11, 2016, the invisible twins that Liberians have never known and seen before were given birth to suddenly by a damning Global Witness report under the caption 'The Deceivers'. No twins have ever been given such a name (Big Boy 1 and Big Boy 2) in our history. What is even intriguing and mindboggling is that these twins are invisible. The Liberian people know them by pseudonym (Big Boy 1 and Big Boy 2), but they are yet to see them physically after more than 2 months of public outcry. These invisible twins covertly pocketed US\$500,000.00 out of the

US\$950,000.00 Sable Mining bribery scandal in 2010 according to Global Witness.

Almost everywhere including market places, haita centers and street corners, the Global Witness report is being discussed. The Global Witness report further justifies that corruption has been given residential permit in Liberia. There is huge public anxiety currently for government to dig out the hard facts surrounding this report. The desire of the Liberian people to know who are Big Boy 1 and Big Boy 2 remains unquenchable. Every effort to detect or unearth the Invisible Twins (Big Boy 1 and Big Boy 2) seems futile. Even the Special Presidential Task Force headed by Cllr. Fonati Koffa is yet to identify these invisible twins.

It has been more than 2 months since Global Witness, an international anti-graft institution, released a shocking report linking top officials of the Liberian government to bribery. This report has brought national disgrace and embarrassment to our nation; thereby provoking many in and out of Liberia to call for an independent, speedy and comprehensive investigation. The Liberian people are still in doubt as to whether something will ever come out of this report and the culprits of such grave crime (bribery) will be dealt with in accordance with the law.

There are many other reports of similar nature linking top officials of government to bribery, conflict of interest, corruption, and unethical behaviors. Unfortunately, nothing has come out of those reports. Bribery in government is preventing millions of Liberians from accessing quality education, improved health care, better housing, electricity, safe drinking water, good roads, job opportunities, social welfare and other basic services. This unscrupulous practice is even detrimental than a venom.

Bribery is a grave crime. It is a second degree felony according to Subchapter D Section 12.50. Bribery also violates section 9.1 of the Code of Conduct and Chapter 11 Article 90(a) of the 1986 Constitution. Since this crime or offence is so injurious, then it means that Liberians must stand up to demand an impartial investigation in order to uncover hidden truths in this bribery case. Those who have been accused by Global Witness must be given an opportunity to exonerate themselves through a transparent legal process. On the other hand, Global Witness must also be accorded similar opportunity to prove its claims or allegations against those accused.

We hope this other case will serve as a turning point in the fight against corruption in Liberia. Corruption must come to an end – it has to! The Liberian people have endured a lot as a result of this menace. Moving forward will not just require the establishment of anti-corruption watchdogs like the GAC, LACC and IAA, but it will require strong political will and sincerity. Those who are in the constant habit of abusing power and misusing public resources must be held liable in accordance with the Law.

The Law is the only legal instrument that binds us together. Nobody is above the Law. The Law is above everybody. The proper and unbiased administration of the law is fundamental to sustaining peace and maintaining stability in the absence of UNMIL. Justice is not selective. It knows no one's name, title, status, background, religion, or political affiliation. Justice must be dispensed without fear or favor to ensure that public safety or interest is guaranteed.

The Liberian people deserve to know who are Big Boy 1 and Big Boy 2. The government of Liberia must do all it can in the shortest possible time to unearth these invisible twins and ensure that the actual facts of the Global Witness report are revealed. Anything less than this, the confidence of the people in the government would diminish even further. As a means of fast-tracking this case and getting at its bottom, it is crucial for the government of Liberia to seek support or assistance from the United Nations, Transparency International, Carter Center, the US government, the British government, etc.

Liberia can get better if we begin to uproot economic vampires and vultures through a concrete mechanism of accountability and justice. Impunity has no space under the doctrine of democracy. From the largest slum of West Point and the top of Ducor, I see a new Liberia rising above the African Continent. Change is possible even in the midst of impossible odds.

**About the Author:** *Martin K. N. Kollie is a Liberian youth activist, a student leader, an emerging economist and a young writer. He hails from central Liberia, specifically Bong County. Martin currently reads Economics with distinction at the University of Liberia and he is a loyal stalwart of the Student Unification Party (SUP). He can be reached at: [martinkerkula1989@yahoo.com](mailto:martinkerkula1989@yahoo.com)*

## *According to Eliot*

### St Augustine Grass

Listening to Philip Glass;  
repetitive chords of a song.  
I hear the sound of grass.

My mind discordant madness.  
Tuneless as an old gong  
I listen to Philip Glass.

Waiting for drought to cease,  
for rain that is forgotten.  
I hear the sound of grass.

Flared grey clouds pass.  
Watching from the window alone  
I listen to Philip Glass.

Low Symphony ends too fast.  
Notes die and are gone,  
I hear the sound of grass.

The rain I see will not last.  
Memory soon a reflection  
as I listen to Philip Glass  
I hear the voice of St Augustine Grass.

### The French Man

We laughed  
watching the French man.  
Pushing his way  
through a small audience.  
His cries, 'The girls the girls.'

Just a bunch of majorettes,  
not a Broadway troupe.

Now at sixty,  
sitting in a Breton bar.  
His day passed.  
And the girls will be mothers.  
Mothers of majorettes.

© John Eliot

We were lucky, my wife and I, to be visiting another continent. We never believed that we would ever visit Africa (see my poem in the May issue) and now India.

The following poem is about my first night spent in the India. Fans and air conditioning were a must. In my half sleep and dreams I believed I was listening to a monsoon.

### Chennai Summer

Sounds of the street  
0548 in another country

Here the horns sound  
From dawn to dusk

Dusk to dawn  
With a lingering sigh

At perhaps the darkest hour  
Where for a few minutes at least

There is complete silence  
But for the whirr of the fan

And air con  
Sounding like waiting  
For steady cool rain

I will never again taste coffee as good as I drank in the Ratna Café. An off-beat tourist guide recommended it for breakfast, so off we went, down a side street frequented only by locals. I ordered coffee. Took a sip. Straightaway ordered another. I was determined to go back, but time overtook us. Sadly, all that remains of the Ratna Café is a memory and this poem.

### Ratna Café

South India coffee  
tastes fresh as the morning sounds  
of the street

in the café  
from the road  
where people

walk the pavement  
passing  
a cowbell rings

heard just  
for a moment  
before horns

engines turn  
diesel fumes mix the steam of coffee  
essence of memory

The following poem is written from my wife's point of view. We visited a massive Hindu shrine. We had to walk barefoot. Our feet were burning as we sought shade. We were given a garland to wear. My wife tried to put it in her hair, not very successfully. A Hindu woman gave her a clip and fastened it for her. I felt that we travelled halfway round the world, meeting people that we had nothing in common with, yet the gestures last forever. Our common bond of being human.

The poem is split into two parts. I lived in Leicester UK, part I, which has the largest Hindu population in England.

## The Gift

I  
Diwali by the rec  
Huge bonfire blazed  
Coconuts edged in ash  
Lights of communion joy  
Flesh for the body  
Milk for the spirit

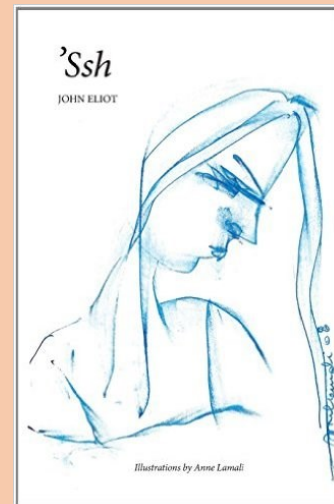
II  
Lighting a candle  
The heat of the flame  
Burning the souls  
Of my feet  
As I look with English reverence  
Upon the Gods  
I never understand

simplicity of the spirit  
cannot be fathomed

In my room  
The gesture remembered  
Was tying in my hair  
The flowers  
Gift from the Hindu  
To me

**John Eliot** is a poet. He shares his time between Wales and France. In Wales he lives close to a capital city where he spends a lot of time reading his poetry to an audience. In France he lives in a tiny village and enjoys the silence to write. John was a teacher. He is married with children and grandchildren. He has one book of poetry published '**Ssh**' available on Amazon and a new one will be coming out in the Autumn, titled '**Don't Go**'. Both books are published by Mosaïque Press of England."

## John Eliot



"The photograph of John Eliot was taken by Dave Dagers during a live poetry reading. Dave is a professional photographer and artist. He has contributed drawings to John's new collection of poetry, '**Don't Go**' which will be out in the Autumn."



## **Liberian Proverbs**

Excepted from, **The Elders' Wisdom**

1. **Marriage is like a peanut, you have to crack it to see what is inside.** When one decides to get married, one will never know fully what it entails until you are in it. It is a journey that can only happen when you leave for it. It is true we can get glimpses of our partners, but the real thing is only when the marriage ceremony is over. In this case, one has cracked the ground pea and with time, one will know if it was good or not.
2. **Marriage is bittersweet.** Married people fight and make up just like everyone else.
3. **No child laughs at the ugliness of its mother.** Just as it is related in another parable, the sentiments hold true. There is no bad bush for a child. The child has none for its parents as well. The child sees its mother in ways that transcends any negativity others may see.
4. **No man is an island.** We need others in life as much as they need us. We can do many things alone, but in substance, our lives depend on so many others and what they provide to make us live peaceably or happily.
5. **No matter how cold a monkey gets, he doesn't warm himself in leopard skin.** There are some things that do not happen. The monkey in this case has and knows its limits. It will never consider wearing a leopard's skin as something of a play not even if it is facing a desperate situation.
6. **No matter how long a log may float in the water, it will never become a crocodile.** What you are, you are; what you are not, you are not. We can't change the natural order of certain things. They are just the way they are.
7. **No matter how low a cotton tree falls, it is still taller than grass.** Some things are just way beyond our reach or abilities. The grass at its tallest still falls short of the cotton tree at its lowest point.
8. **No matter how tight a monkey's trousers are, he has to leave space for his tail.** We carry along with us some ingrain things. They never leave us, in fact, we make a conscious effort to provide for them. The monkey here never covers up or leaves its tails hidden, not even for a tight pant.
9. **No one can uproot the tree, which God has planted.** As mentioned before, the concept of God is not limited to one kind. Liberians are religious on many counts. We believe that fate/destiny has a way of taking its proper place at the proper time. For the traditionalists or the Christians/Muslim etc. it is practically the same.
10. **No sane person sharpens his machete to cut a banana.** The relative softness of the banana makes it seem foolish for one to use a sharpened knife on it. Some tasks are so obvious or have easy solutions that when others try to make them complicated, it gives room to question their sanity. In this case, the one who sharpens the knife is viewed as insane.

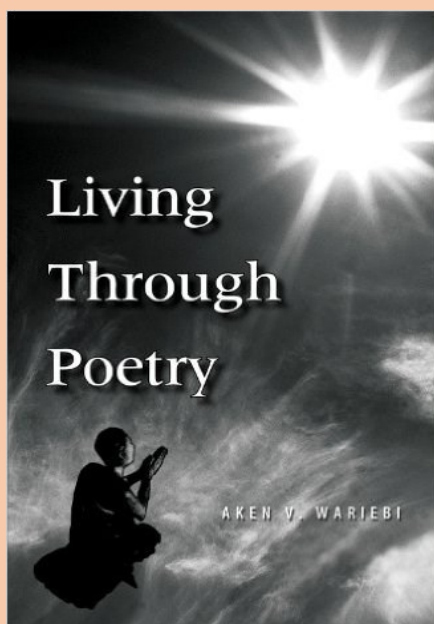
## Aken-bai's- A Flow of Thoughts



**Aken Vivian Wariebi** is an avid reader and writer and the latter began more frequently since grade school. A graduate from both Rutgers and Syracuse Universities, respectively, she never left a book nor a

pen behind. Today, a Poet and Advocate for the most vulnerable, Ms. Wariebi finds joy in inspiring and helping others in any positive way that she can. Some say her Poems speak to their heart and soul and for Ms. Wariebi life speaks to her pen. Others describe her writings as life short stories. No matter how it is felt, Ms. Wariebi speaks to your heart and soul from hers and hopes that all can find a little more light along their journey of life in her work as she has in her writings. She is originally from Monrovia, Liberia and currently resides in the USA.

[www.facebook.com/inspirewithlove](http://www.facebook.com/inspirewithlove)



## Accepting You

The world has demands and expectations that are high and may seem impossible to meet.

These expectations and demands open doors to doubt, low self-esteem, finding our flaws and being ashamed of them. Emotionally, we may become drained or exhausted or even depressed if we absorb those feelings of insecurities. Insecurities are like poison only they affect our relationships deep inside of us and to others connected to us as well. In many aspects of it is where jealousy is developed.

Ever thought of you as beautiful or handsome or okay even with our imperfections? A bigger or smaller breast, butt, waistline, thicker or thinner lips or hips, longer or shorter hair, higher height et cetera? Or what we imagine other than who we are? We could be what isn't really us, that is if you consider all of these. Perhaps we may prefer "Fake".

If we, however, recognize and accept imperfections of us and allow ourselves to grow from our talents, skills and gifts, our flaws won't be as noticeable to others nor us. As we accept us, our confidence is build and our best self, elevates to the best us that we are and can be. Know that the world's fakeness is the realness that life has become. Hence, realness and truth are almost always behind or may never be accepted nor acknowledged or validated. But really is that what we prefer?

Focusing too much on that path of life trying to be fitted into a perfection mode is or can be a vicious circle that can deplete us to the point of us losing ourselves altogether. So let's accept ourselves, as we are; skinny or short, fat, or plump, tall or fluffy and awkward. We are wonderfully made.

Remember, those who love us will stay in our lives and within our circle and the rest will go sooner or eventually. Let's enjoy who we are, embracing it every step of the way and the process of our journey just the way we are. In the end, the result of that impact is truly on us and no one else.

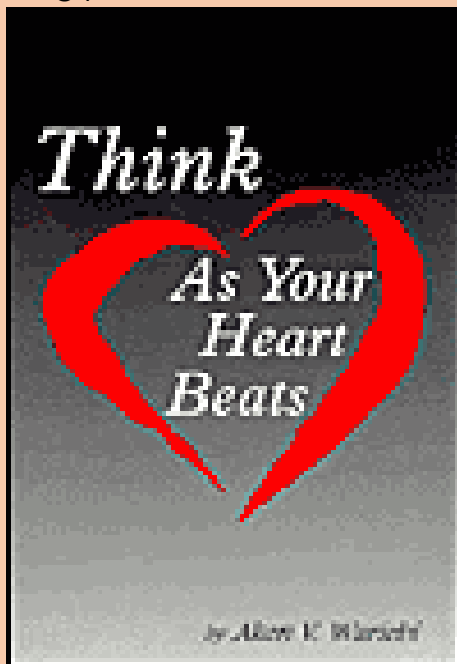
Accepting who we are is truly about us. Making comparisons usually won't help. The world simply sees how we portray our acceptance of us on the canvas we call life, making it a good one should be our utmost goal. Because God doesn't make nor like ugly, he never has and never will.



© Aken V. Wariebi



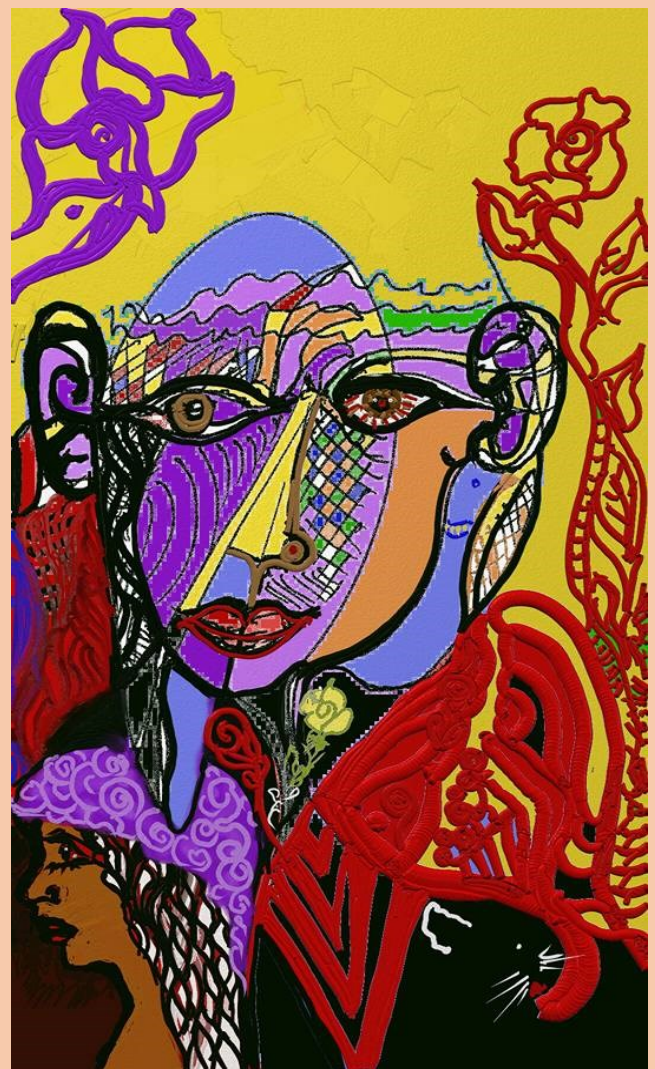
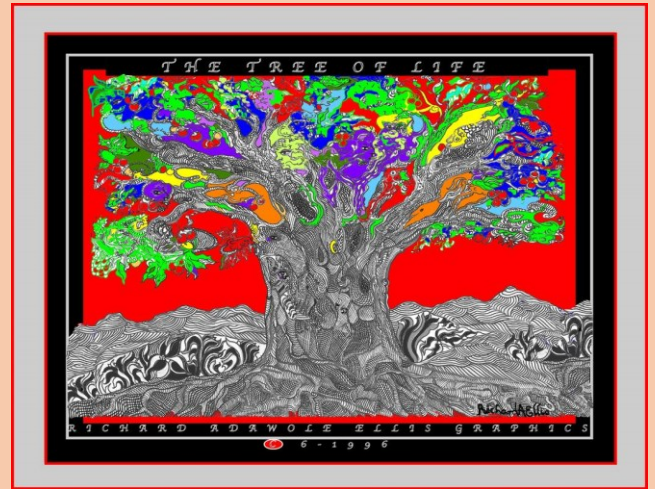
Aken V. Wariebi, MSW



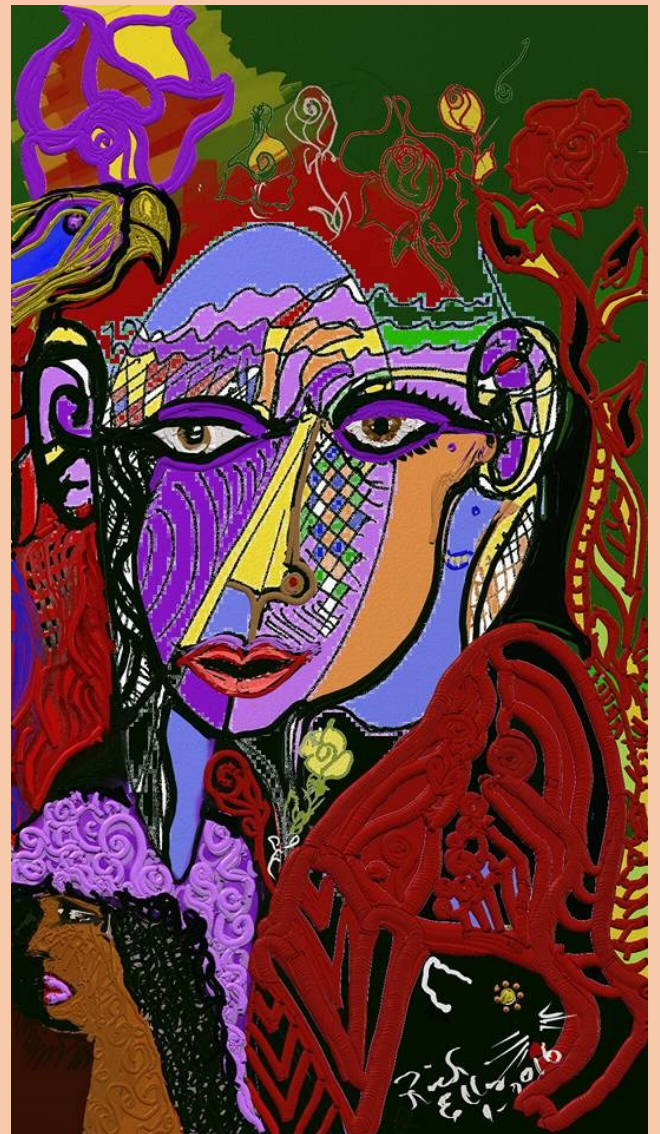
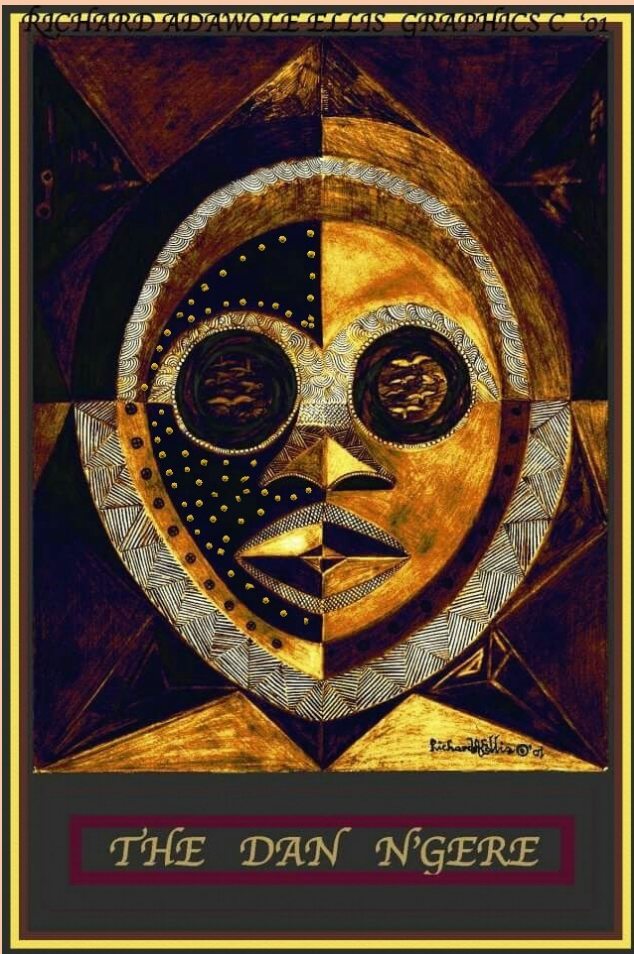
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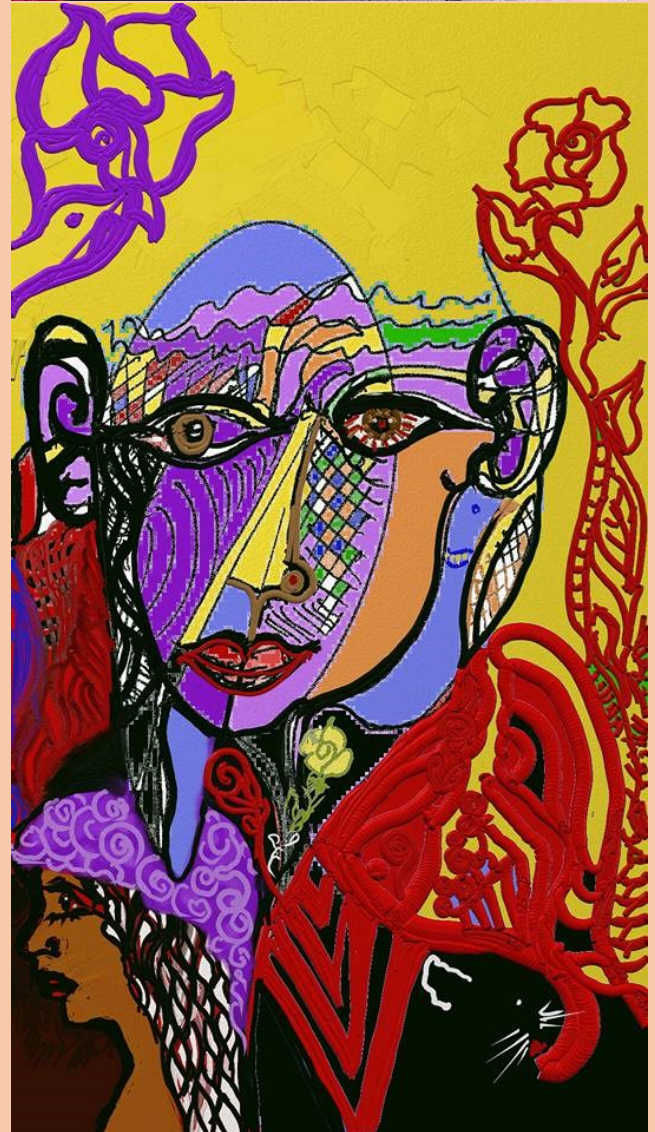
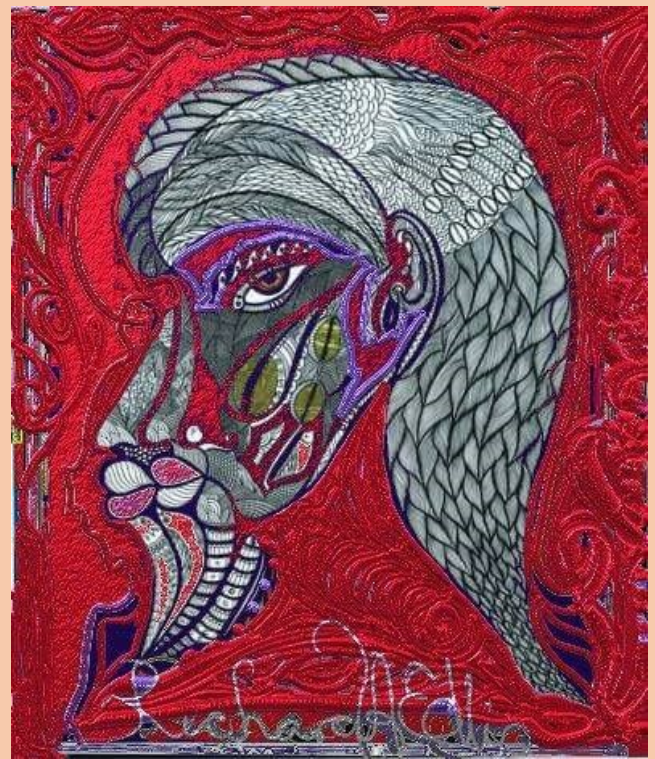
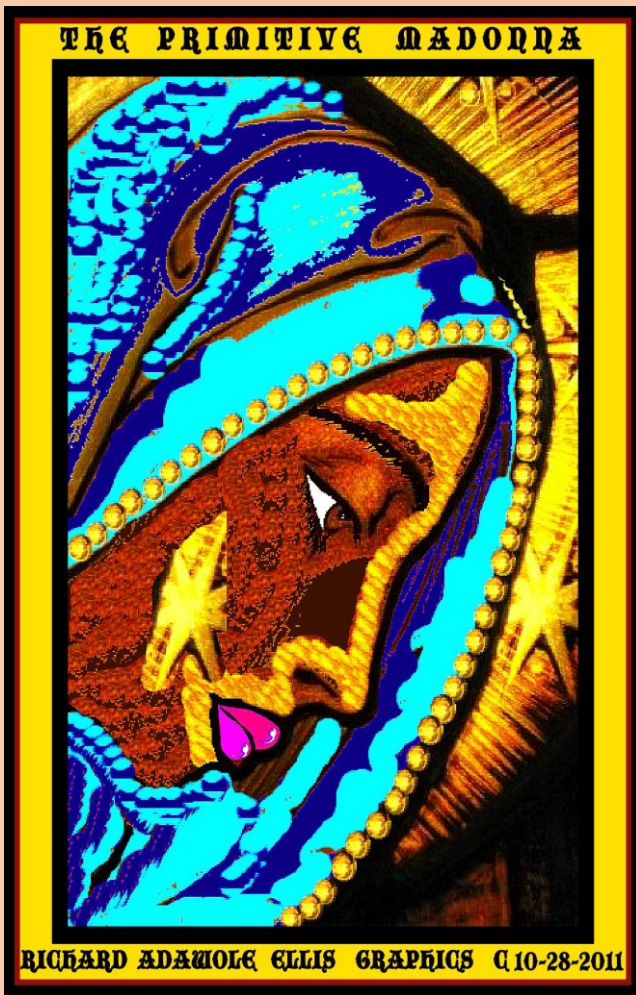
## Artist of the Month

Richard A. Ellis



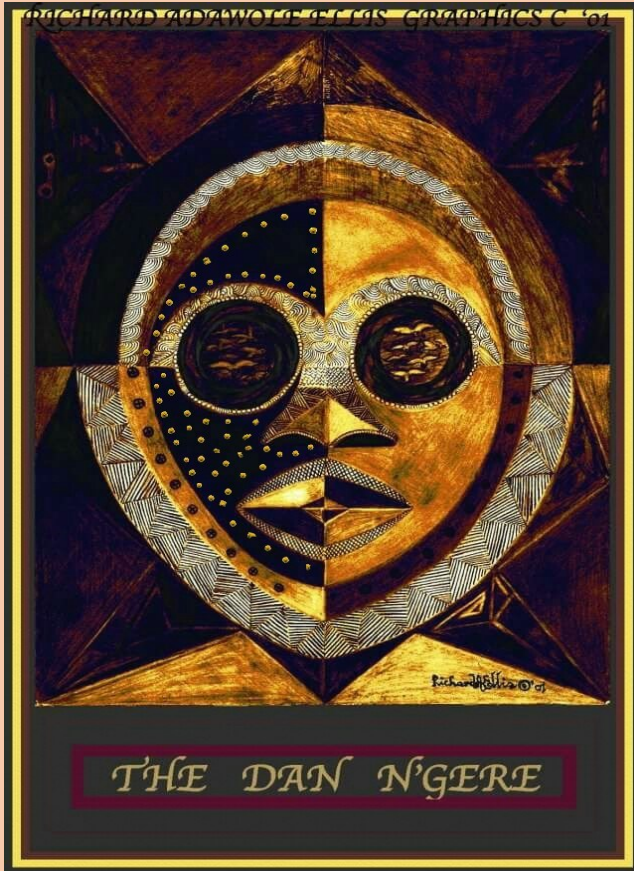
Richard Ellis is a Liberian artist, based in the United States. His works insist that viewers engage in the aesthetic abstracts, the subliminal before bringing them back into the realm of realism. His mastery of his colors is impossible to miss. Each tells a story within the paintings. They do more than complement the pieces.





## A Review of *The Dan N'Gere*

By: D. Othniel Forte



**The Dan N'Gere** is a masterpiece. It is a rendition of African woodsman-ship at its finest. The Dan tribe is arguably the master mask makers in all of Liberia. In this piece of perfect geometric symmetry as well as slight distortions, the artist tackles the powerful theme of dualism. Spirituality vs naturalism; man vs spirit, life vs death, here as against now. To grasp the fullness of this piece, one must understand the process of mask making in the Dan tradition. The Dans believe that the one carving the mask was practically carving their soul or spirit into that mask. It was not a process to be taken lightly. They underwent training for years and when the time came, the artist was left alone in a secluded place, mostly deep in the Nimba forest. Far away from distraction or foolery. It is believed that they had to wait on their guiding spirit to reveal what shape and form the mask would take. This was necessary because the spirit would be dwelling therein and it needed a host that was both representative of its essence and embodied its power. Powerful

spirits are said to love fearful masks, of course there is no way to really disprove this because one must be within the traditional society to know this and what power each spirit held.

The mask maker would not leave the forest until the mask is complete. If the spirit is dissatisfied, they would fell another tree and begin the process all over. This often made spirits unhappy since another life [tree] would be wasted because of this. It is said that spirits that were unhappy with the humans they were assigned to, could cause serious damage to them and or the village upon entering a mask unbecomingly their presence. The mask maker was supposed to find a purpose and define/express it within the artistry of the mask. Each geometric object employed had to not just mean something but must represent a meaning of the maker's essence, characteristic. They were crafted in proportion/measure possessed by the maker. This made no two masks made to turn out the exact same. Imagine the power in this concept. The individuality expressed within the greater whole. So for as many men there were, there existed a unique mask.

The wood, its thickness, its shade, its weight were all believed to be proportionate to the power of one's spirit. Thus, the maker had to choose carefully. He had to craft a mask that he felt embodied the spirit based on their interactions.

It was more than one just crafting the biggest, baddest mask. That was the level of dishonesty that brought trouble to his kin. One had to feel the connection, internalize it and find within oneself a true representation of one's characteristics, one's intended path and then one would call on one's guide to take up residence in the mask.

With this background, one must view the mask above in a different light. The art is not just in the symmetry, angles, and shadings. It is not just in the collective of the smaller pieces. It derives its beauty and essence from the individuality that created it.

**Richard Ellis** captures all these and more in this piece. I can dare say that any spirit would be glad to dwell within this mask. It befits the most powerful. It befits a ruler in the spiritual realm. The **Dan N'Gere** is a masterpiece by a master for a masterful spirit. It is a perfect dwelling place capable of containing immense power.





## Herbert Logerie

### My Papa, My Best Friend

(Dedicated to All Fathers)

My dad was more than a father,  
More than a great friend, more than a brother.  
In fairness to the sufferings of our divine mothers,  
Who carried us for multitude moon-quarters,  
His sacrifices could rival the tons  
And the heavy burdens of my emotions.

My father has been gone for more than a decennium,  
After so many seasons, his candle is still twinkling in my sanctum.  
His blood is flowing in my veins day and night.  
When I laugh, he smiles from his height.  
When I cry, he comforts me,  
Encourages me and carries me daily  
To unknown destinations where  
Doors are never shut; his devotions will live forever.

I just explained that my dad is not dead  
His spirit is in the air, among the living and the dead.  
My dad has returned to his father's home,  
Deep inside the dust, deep in the womb of Mother Earth,  
Among the gray sand of the beach turf,  
And the slothful current of the windstorm.

My papa was to me more than a father,  
He was my best friend and my best brother.

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## Mon Papa, Mon Meilleur Ami

(Dédié à Tous Les Papas, Birago I.Diop et à Gustave)

Mon papa était plus qu'un père,  
Il était plus qu'un bon ami, plus qu'un frère.  
Pour ne pas minorer les douleurs des mères  
Qui nous ont portés pour plus de neuf mois,  
Ses sacrifices pouvaient rivaliser les poids  
Et les lourds fardeaux mémorables de l'émoi.

Mon père n'est plus, depuis plus d'une décennie;  
Jusqu'à présent, je ne veux pas le mettre au passé simple de la vie.  
Son sang coule dans mes veines le jour et la nuit,  
Quand je rie, il rie aussi.  
Quand je pleure, il me reconforte,  
Il m'encourage, il m'emporte  
Chaque jour vers un destin où les portes  
Ne sont jamais fermées; ses dévotions ne sont pas mortes.

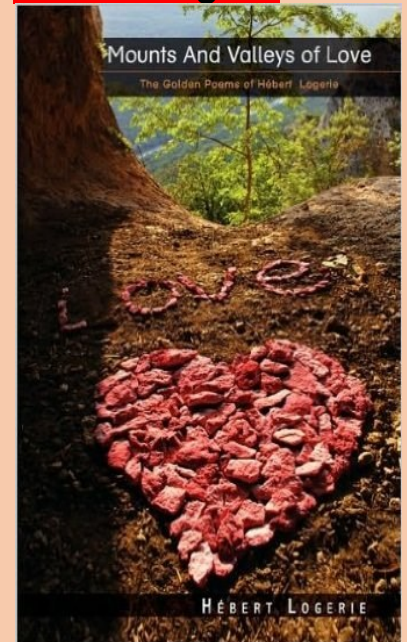
J'ai bien expliqué, mon papa n'est pas mort,  
Son esprit est dans l'air, parmi les vivants et les morts.  
Mon papa est retourné à la chaumière,  
Au fonds de la poussière, dans la terre,  
Parmi les graviers sablonneux de l'océan  
Et dans le lent courant du vent.

Mon papa était pour moi plus qu'un père,  
Il était mon meilleur ami et le meilleur de mes frères.

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Hébert Logerie est l'auteur de

quatre recueils de poèmes: 'Étincelles de l'Amour', 'Monts et Vallées de l'Amour', 'Sparkles of Love' and 'Mounts and Valleys of Love'

### Hebert Logerie



### Hebert Logerie

is the author of several collections of poems.

Alumnus of: 'l'Ecole de Saint Joseph'; 'the College of Roger Anglade'in Haiti; Montclair High School of New Jersey; and Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, USA.

He studied briefly at Laval University, Quebec, Canada. He's a Haitian-American.

He started writing at a very early age. My poems are in French, English, and Creole; I must confess that most of my beautiful and romantic poems are in my books.

<http://www.poemhunter.com/herbert-logerie>

<http://www.poesie.webnet.fr/vospoemes/logerie>

**Alonzo "Zo" Gross**

**Awaken Thy Love...**

Awaken Thy Love,  
let our eyes be consumed,  
with the passing of the tides,  
as our destinies collide.

Upon the shores of evermore,  
I wast mesmerized by ur smiles-

Verily, I Sendeth u my kisses,  
whilst they travel forth,  
through Earthly-Oceans &  
Heavenly-Niles-.

Awaken Thy Love,  
from ur deepest slumber,  
U maketh my heart warm in Coldest  
Winter, the breeze of Thy perfume,  
is the coolest wind of my summer.

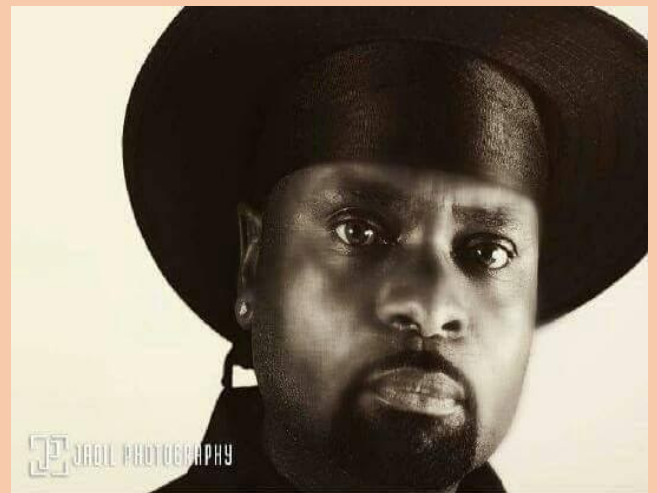
Awaken Thy Love,  
U duly Art Thou fairest of all maidens,  
In ur touch is mine comfort,  
Im truly lost in ur loving-lips gazing.  
But Alas...

Awaken Thy Love,  
as u gather ur senses,  
4 on the morrow If ye shall perish,  
agony & tragedy wouldst render I  
senseless.

Wherefore...  
I dream of the 2 of us,  
Amidst Mercurial-Meadows,  
near the white picket fences.

O' I doeth Pray I again c u Soon^  
& whence our paths Again Intertwine,  
let our spirits in Unison Shine,  
as we dwelleth upon dew,  
under the Blissful-Decadent- Moon^.

© Alonzo "Zo" Gross



**Alonzo "Zo" Gross**

Born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, raised in Allentown Pa. Zo graduated from William Allen High School. He went on to graduate from Temple university with a BA in English literature and a Minor in Dance. Zo started Dancing, writing songs, poetry, and short stories at the age of 7. Zo successfully performed at the Legendary Apollo Theater as a dancer at 18. Zo signed a contract with Ken Cowle of Soul Asyum Publishing in 2012, & released the book of poetry and art "Inspiration Harmony & The Word Within" Noveber 2012.

On December 2nd 2012 he won the Lehigh Valley Music Award for "Best Spoken Word Poet" at the LVMAS. In October 2014 Zo traveled to Los Angeles, California to be one of the featured poets/musicians in a documentary film called "VOICES" Directed by Gina Nemo. The Film is slated to be released in 2016. Zo was again Nominated for "Best Spoken Word Poet" again in 2016. Zo's Poetry has been featured in several anthologies, as well as magazines.

Zo's New Book of Poetry & Art "Soul EliXiR"... The WritingZ of Zo will be released in 2016, along with His Debut Rap CD "A Madness 2 The Method" to be released the same year.

**Jack Kolkmeier**



**skin deep**

the depth of our color  
can only be measured

in the hues  
that have mixed themselves

into the pigments of our genealogical  
time  
and cultural embrace

the true spectrum  
of humanistic tints and shades  
is a pastiche

of chromatic conquer and divide  
and hide and seek  
among the hidden valleys  
and expansive settlements  
of the eternal comings and goings  
of all those who have peopled  
the places both sacred and profane  
that we have called our homes  
for millennia

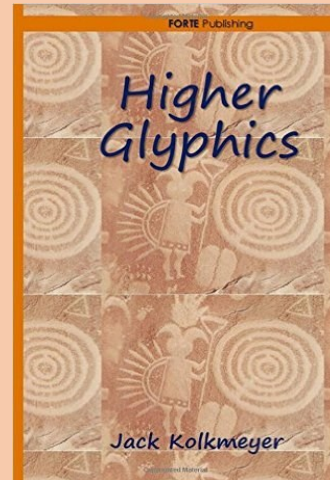
for now we know  
beyond a rainbow of a doubt  
that everybody is colored  
and everyone has tone

and that we are not just temporal  
henna stains  
or a painted nightshade blush  
flax among gamboge  
chromate tracks in the saffron sand  
for

everybody is colored  
just right

because you see

everybody has a mother  
and a bag of white bones



**FORTE Publishing**

**Renee' B. Drummond-Brown**

### The Greatest of All Time

You floated like a butterfly  
You stung 'em' like a bee  
You taught  
Us  
Black lil' 'chillins'  
How to be  
The Greatest  
While humbly bowing  
To 'da' King of ALL Kings

You stood for 'evr'ythang'  
Fell for 'nothin'  
Not ev'n  
'Dat' 'Nam' war  
And  
'Twasn't'  
Unequivocally  
NOBODY'S  
Step 'N' fetch it  
Gofer  
Lil' Boy  
'Dat'  
Simply 'twasn't' you  
Cassius Clay,  
Muhammad Ali  
'Whicheva'  
You SO 'choosed'???

You hit 'dem' opponents  
'Wit' razor sharp rhymes  
And YES  
LET ME MAKE THIS CLEAR  
YOU ALONE  
ARE  
THE GREATEST  
OF  
ALL TIME(S),  
Love  
Cherished  
Prized  
And  
Revered!!!

You ev'n said  
"I've wrestled with alligators  
I've tussled with a whale  
I done handcuffed lightening  
And  
Throw thunder in jail" (Ali)  
Yes, Ali,  
You walked your talk  
'Witout'  
'Shuttin' up  
Or  
'Puttin' up  
Bondsmen nor anybody's bail

'Dat' final  
Knock out round  
(6-3- 16)  
TOOK  
Faith, Hope  
And  
Love  
And Yes you are  
The Greatest of ALL TIME  
But the greatest of these  
Was God's LOVE  
For CHAMPION  
MUHAMMAD ALI'S  
FLOATING, STINGING, RHYMES, AND  
GLOVES.

Author: Renee' B. Drummond-Brown

Dedicated to: Whose BAD???

Please support my write(s) by sharing this post and ordering my e-Book, Hardback and soft back

(Authored: "Renee's Poems with Wings are Words in Flight-I'll Write Our Wrongs" and books on Amazon, Barnes and Noble and/or on my Face Book Page.

"SOLD: TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER". Note\* each book ranked 5 stars!!!)

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## Gifts of the Masters

In this segment, we run poems from some of the greatest literary masters that ever lived.

**LANGSTON HUGHES**

**GWENDOLYN BROOKS**

**Let America Be America Again**

### The Good Man

The good man.  
He is still enhancer, renouncer.  
In the time of detachment,  
in the time of the vivid heather and  
affectionate evil,  
in the time of oral  
grave grave legalities of hate - all real  
walks our prime registered reproach and  
seal.  
Our successful moral.  
The good man.

Watches our bogus roses, our rank wreath,  
our  
love's unreliable cement, the gray  
jubilees of our demondom.  
Coherent  
Counsel! Good man.  
Require of us our terribly excluded blue.  
Constrain, repair a ripped, revolted land.  
Put hand in hand land over.  
Reprove  
the abler droughts and manias of the day  
and a felicity entreat.  
Love.  
Complete  
your pledges, reinforce your aides, renew  
stance, testament.

### The Independent Man

Now who could take you off to tiny life  
In one room or in two rooms or in three  
And cork you smartly, like the flask of wine  
You are? Not any woman. Not a wife.  
You'd let her twirl you, give her a good glee  
Showing your leaping ruby to a friend.  
Though twirling would be meek. Since not a  
cork  
Could you allow, for being made so free.

A woman would be wise to think it well  
If once a week you only rang the bell.

Let America be America again.  
Let it be the dream it used to be.  
Let it be the pioneer on the plain  
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers  
dreamed--  
Let it be that great strong land of love  
Where never kings connive nor tyrants  
scheme  
That any man be crushed by one  
above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty  
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,  
But opportunity is real, and life is free,  
Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There's never been equality for me,  
Nor freedom in this "homeland of the  
free.")

Say, who are you that mumbles in the  
dark?  
And who are you that draws your veil  
across the stars?

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed  
apart,  
I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.  
I am the red man driven from the land,  
I am the immigrant clutching the hope I  
seek--  
And finding only the same old stupid  
plan  
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the  
weak.

I am the young man, full of strength and hope,  
Tangled in that ancient endless chain  
Of profit, power, gain, of grab the land!  
Of grab the gold! Of grab the ways of  
satisfying need!  
Of work the men! Of take the pay!  
Of owning everything for one's own  
greed!

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.  
I am the worker sold to the machine.  
I am the Negro, servant to you all.  
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean-  
-  
Hungry yet today despite the dream.  
Beaten yet today--O, Pioneers!  
I am the man who never got ahead,  
The poorest worker bartered through the  
years.

Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic  
dream  
In the Old World while still a serf of kings,  
Who dreamt a dream so strong, so  
brave, so true,  
That even yet its mighty daring sings  
In every brick and stone, in every furrow  
turned  
That's made America the land it has  
become.  
O, I'm the man who sailed those early  
seas  
In search of what I meant to be my  
home--  
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's  
shore,  
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy  
lea,  
And torn from Black Africa's strand I  
came  
To build a "homeland of the free."

The free?

Who said the free? Not me?  
Surely not me? The millions on relief  
today?

The millions shot down when we strike?  
The millions who have nothing for our pay?  
For all the dreams we've dreamed  
And all the songs we've sung  
And all the hopes we've held  
And all the flags we've hung,  
The millions who have nothing for our pay--  
Except the dream that's almost dead  
today.

O, let America be America again--  
The land that never has been yet--  
And yet must be--the land where every  
man is free.  
The land that's mine--the poor man's,  
Indian's, Negro's, ME--  
Who made America,  
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith  
and pain,  
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow  
in the rain,  
Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you  
choose--  
The steel of freedom does not stain.  
From those who live like leeches on the  
people's lives,  
We must take back our land again,  
America!

O, yes,  
I say it plain,  
America never was America to me,  
And yet I swear this oath--  
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster  
death,  
The rape and rot of graft, and stealth,  
and lies,  
We, the people, must redeem  
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.  
The mountains and the endless plain--  
All, all the stretch of these great green  
states--  
And make America again!

## **A Prayer for My Daughter**

**William Butler Yeats**

(from Michael Robartes and the Dancer, 1921)

Once more the storm is howling, and half hid  
Under this cradle-hood and coverlid  
My child sleeps on. There is no obstacle  
But Gregory's wood and one bare hill  
Whereby the haystack- and roof-levelling wind,  
Bred on the Atlantic, can be stayed;  
And for an hour I have walked and prayed  
Because of the great gloom that is in my mind.

I have walked and prayed for this young child  
an hour  
And heard the sea-wind scream upon the tower,  
And under the arches of the bridge, and scream  
In the elms above the flooded stream;  
Imagining in excited reverie  
That the future years had come,  
Dancing to a frenzied drum,  
Out of the murderous innocence of the sea.

May she be granted beauty and yet not  
Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught,  
Or hers before a looking-glass, for such,  
Being made beautiful overmuch,  
Consider beauty a sufficient end,  
Lose natural kindness and maybe  
The heart-revealing intimacy  
That chooses right, and never find a friend.

Helen being chosen found life flat and dull  
And later had much trouble from a fool,  
While that great Queen, that rose out of the  
spray,  
Being fatherless could have her way  
Yet chose a bandy-legged smith for man.  
It's certain that fine women eat  
A crazy salad with their meat  
Whereby the Horn of plenty is undone.

In courtesy I'd have her chiefly learned;  
Hearts are not had as a gift but hearts are  
earned  
By those that are not entirely beautiful;  
Yet many, that have played the fool  
For beauty's very self, has charm made wise.  
And many a poor man that has roved,  
Loved and thought himself beloved,  
From a glad kindness cannot take his eyes.

May she become a flourishing hidden tree  
That all her thoughts may like the linnet be,  
And have no business but dispensing round  
Their magnanimities of sound,  
Nor but in merriment begin a chase,  
Nor but in merriment a quarrel.  
O may she live like some green laurel  
Rooted in one dear perpetual place.

My mind, because the minds that I have loved,  
The sort of beauty that I have approved,  
Prosper but little, has dried up of late,  
Yet knows that to be choked with hate  
May well be of all evil chances chief.  
If there's no hatred in a mind  
Assault and battery of the wind  
Can never tear the linnet from the leaf.

An intellectual hatred is the worst,  
So let her think opinions are accursed.  
Have I not seen the loveliest woman born  
Out of the mouth of plenty's horn,  
Because of her opinionated mind  
Barter that horn and every good  
By quiet natures understood  
For an old bellows full of angry wind?

Considering that, all hatred driven hence,  
The soul recovers radical innocence  
And learns at last that it is self-delighting,  
Self-appeasing, self-affrighting,  
And that its own sweet will is Heaven's will;  
She can, though every face should scowl  
And every windy quarter howl  
Or every bellows burst, be happy still.

And may her bridegroom bring her to a house  
Where all's accustomed, ceremonious;  
For arrogance and hatred are the wares  
Peddled in the thoroughfares.  
How but in custom and in ceremony  
Are innocence and beauty born?  
Ceremony's a name for the rich horn,  
And custom for the spreading laurel tree.

## **Only a Dad**

**Edgar A. Guest (1916)**

Only a dad with a tired face,  
Coming home from the daily race,  
Bringing little of gold or fame

To show how well he has played the game;  
But glad in his heart that his own rejoice  
To see him come and to hear his voice.

Only a dad with a brood of four,  
One of ten million men or more  
Plodding along in the daily strife,  
Bearing the whips and the scorns of life,  
With never a whimper of pain or hate,  
For the sake of those who at home await.

Only a dad, neither rich nor proud,  
Merely one of the surging crowd,  
Toiling, striving from day to day,  
Facing whatever may come his way,  
Silent whenever the harsh condemn,  
And bearing it all for the love of them.

Only a dad but he gives his all,  
To smooth the way for his children small,  
Doing with courage stern and grim  
The deeds that his father did for him.  
This is the line that for him I pen:  
Only a dad, but the best of men.

Look how I shave her thumbnail down  
so carefully she feels no pain.  
Watch as I lift the splinter out.  
I was seven when my father  
took my hand like this,  
and I did not hold that shard  
between my fingers and think,  
Metal that will bury me,  
christen it Little Assassin,  
Ore Going Deep for My Heart.  
And I did not lift up my wound and cry,  
Death visited here!  
I did what a child does  
when he's given something to keep.  
I kissed my father.

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## The Gift

### LI-YOUNG LEE

To pull the metal splinter from my palm  
my father recited a story in a low voice.  
I watched his lovely face and not the blade.  
Before the story ended, he'd removed  
the iron sliver I thought I'd die from.

I can't remember the tale,  
but hear his voice still, a well  
of dark water, a prayer.  
And I recall his hands,  
two measures of tenderness  
he laid against my face,  
the flames of discipline  
he raised above my head.

Had you entered that afternoon  
you would have thought you saw a man  
planting something in a boy's palm,  
a silver tear, a tiny flame.  
Had you followed that boy  
you would have arrived here,  
where I bend over my wife's right hand.

## Danse Russe

### WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

If I when my wife is sleeping  
and the baby and Kathleen  
are sleeping  
and the sun is a flame-white disc  
in silken mists  
above shining trees,—  
if I in my north room  
dance naked, grotesquely  
before my mirror  
waving my shirt round my head  
and singing softly to myself:  
"I am lonely, lonely.  
I was born to be lonely,  
I am best so!"  
If I admire my arms, my face,  
my shoulders, flanks, buttocks  
against the yellow drawn shades,—

Who shall say I am not  
the happy genius of my household?

William Carlos Williams, "Danse Russe" from  
*The Collected Poems of William Carlos*



Williams, Volume I, 1909-1939, edited by Christopher MacGowan. Copyright 1938, 1944, 1945 by William Carlos Williams. Reprinted with the permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.

## On the Beach at Night

### WALT WHITMAN

On the beach at night,  
Stands a child with her father,  
Watching the east, the autumn sky.

Up through the darkness,  
While ravening clouds, the burial clouds, in  
black masses spreading,  
Lower sullen and fast athwart and down the  
sky,  
Amid a transparent clear belt of ether yet left  
in the east,  
Ascends large and calm the lord-star Jupiter,  
And nigh at hand, only a very little above,  
Swim the delicate sisters the Pleiades.

From the beach the child holding the hand of  
her father,  
Those burial-clouds that lower victorious soon to  
devour all,  
Watching, silently weeps.

Weep not, child,  
Weep not, my darling,  
With these kisses let me remove your tears,  
The ravening clouds shall not long be victorious,  
They shall not long possess the sky, they devour  
the stars only in apparition,  
Jupiter shall emerge, be patient, watch again  
another night, the Pleiades shall emerge,  
They are immortal, all those stars both silvery  
and golden shall shine out again,  
The great stars and the little ones shall shine out  
again, they endure,  
The vast immortal suns and the long-enduring  
pensive moons shall again shine.

Then dearest child mournest thou only for  
Jupiter?  
Considerest thou alone the burial of the stars?

Something there is,  
(With my lips soothing thee, adding I whisper,  
I give thee the first suggestion, the problem and  
indirection,)  
Something there is more immortal even than the  
stars,  
(Many the burials, many the days and nights,  
passing away,)  
Something that shall endure longer even than  
lustrous Jupiter  
Longer than sun or any revolving satellite,  
Or the radiant sisters the Pleiades.

## On the Birth of a Son

### SU TUNG-PO

TRANSLATED BY **ARTHUR WALEY**

Families when a child is born  
Hope it will turn out intelligent.  
I, through intelligence  
Having wrecked my whole life,  
Only hope that the baby will prove  
Ignorant and stupid.  
Then he'll be happy all his days  
And grow into a cabinet minister.

## Anecdote for Fathers

### William Wordsworth (1798)

I have a boy of five years old;  
His face is fair and fresh to see;  
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,  
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,  
Our quiet home all full in view,  
And held such intermitted talk  
As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran;  
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,  
Our pleasant home when spring began,

A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear  
Some fond regrets to entertain;  
With so much happiness to spare,  
I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet  
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,  
From shade to sunshine, and as fleet  
From sunshine back to shade.

Birds warbled round me—and each trace  
Of inward sadness had its charm;  
Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,  
And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim  
And graceful in his rustic dress!  
And, as we talked, I questioned him,  
In very idleness.

“Now tell me, had you rather be,”  
I said, and took him by the arm,  
“On Kilve’s smooth shore, by the green sea,  
Or here at Liswyn farm?”

In careless mood he looked at me,  
While still I held him by the arm,  
And said, “At Kilve I’d rather be  
Than here at Liswyn farm.”

“Now, little Edward, say why so:  
My little Edward, tell me why.”—  
“I cannot tell, I do not know.”—  
“Why, this is strange,” said I;

“For, here are woods, hills smooth and warm:  
There surely must some reason be  
Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm  
For Kilve by the green sea.”

At this, my boy hung down his head,  
He blushed with shame, nor made reply;  
And three times to the child I said,  
“Why, Edward, tell me why?”

His head he raised—there was in sight,  
It caught his eye, he saw it plain—  
Upon the house-top, glittering bright,  
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,  
And eased his mind with this reply:

“At Kilve there was no weather-cock;  
And that’s the reason why.”

O dearest, dearest boy! my heart  
For better lore would seldom yearn,  
Could I but teach the hundredth part  
Of what from thee I learn.

## The Little Boy Lost

**William Blake (from Songs of Innocence, 1791)**

“Father! father! where are you going?  
O do not walk so fast.  
Speak, father, speak to your little boy,  
Or else I shall be lost.”

The night was dark, no father was there;  
The child was wet with dew;  
The mire was deep, & the child did weep,  
And away the vapour flew.

## To Her Father with Some Verses

**Anne Bradstreet (1678)**

Most truly honoured, and as truly dear,  
If worth in me or ought I do appear,  
Who can of right better demand the same  
Than may your worthy self from whom it came?  
The principal might yield a greater sum,  
Yet handled ill, amounts but to this crumb;  
My stock’s so small I know not how to pay,  
My bond remains in force unto this day;  
Yet for part payment take this simple mite,  
Where nothing’s to be had, kings loose their right.

Such is my debt I may not say forgive,  
But as I can, I’ll pay it while I live;  
Such is my bond, none can discharge but I,

Yet paying is not paid until I die.

## **My Father Was a Farmer: A Ballad**

**Robert Burns (1782)**

(sung to the tune of "The weaver and his shuttle, O.")

My father was a farmer upon the Carrick border, O,  
And carefully he bred me in decency and order,  
O;  
He bade me act a manly part, though I had ne'er a farthing, O;  
For without an honest manly heart, no man was worth regarding, O.

Then out into the world my course I did determine, O;  
Tho' to be rich was not my wish, yet to be great was charming, O;  
My talents they were not the worst, nor yet my education, O:  
Resolv'd was I at least to try to mend my situation, O.

In many a way, and vain essay, I courted Fortune's favour, O;  
Some cause unseen still stept between, to frustrate each endeavour, O;  
Sometimes by foes I was o'erpower'd, sometimes by friends forsaken, O;  
And when my hope was at the top, I still was worst mistaken, O.

Then sore harass'd and tir'd at last, with Fortune's vain delusion, O,  
I dropt my schemes, like idle dreams, and came to this conclusion, O;  
The past was bad, and the future hid, its good or ill untried, O;  
But the present hour was in my pow'r, and so I would enjoy it, O.

No help, nor hope, nor view had I, nor person to befriend me, O;  
So I must toil, and sweat, and moil, and labour to sustain me, O;  
To plough and sow, to reap and mow, my father bred me early, O;  
For one, he said, to labour bred, was a match for Fortune fairly, O.

Thus all obscure, unknown, and poor, thro' life I'm doom'd to wander, O,  
Till down my weary bones I lay in everlasting slumber, O:  
No view nor care, but shun whate'er might breed me pain or sorrow, O;  
I live to-day as well's I may, regardless of to-morrow, O.

But cheerful still, I am as well as a monarch in his palace, O,  
Tho' Fortune's frown still hunts me down, with all her wonted malice, O:  
I make indeed my daily bread, but ne'er can make it farther, O:  
But as daily bread is all I need, I do not much regard her, O.

When sometimes by my labour, I earn a little money, O,  
Some unforeseen misfortune comes gen'rally upon me, O;  
Mischance, mistake, or by neglect, or my goodnatur'd folly, O:  
But come what will, I've sworn it still, I'll ne'er be melancholy, O.

All you who follow wealth and power with unremitting ardour, O,  
The more in this you look for bliss, you leave your view the farther, O:  
Had you the wealth Potosi boasts, or nations to adore you, O,  
A cheerful honest-hearted clown I will prefer before you, O.

## **The Child Is Father To the Man**

**Gerard Manley Hopkins (1918)**

"The child is father to the man."  
How can he be? The words are wild.  
Suck any sense from that who can:  
"The child is father to the man."  
No; what the poet did write ran,  
"The man is father to the child."  
"The child is father to the man!"  
How can he be? The words are wild!

## TOXIC LOVES. Literary review of Bai T. Moore's *Murder in the Cassava Patch*

**THE AUTHOR** [Paul Faraway](#)

*Murder in the Cassava Patch* tells the story of a toxic relationship that ends in murder.

**Gortokai, the main character**, is madly in love with Tene, a coquettish woman who likes to string along several men at the same time. Kai (short for Gortokai) is not at all aware of this side of Tene and he has no qualms in marrying this woman that he is head-over-heels in love with. He has paid the dowry and seems to have convinced their entourage of his intent. However, slowly but surely he encounters unexpected issues, leading to a disturbing revelation when he consults a witchdoctor – **Tene has other men in mind**.

This is where Gortokai's ordeal starts. In despair, the young Liberian resorts to the witchdoctor, asking him to do some 'workings' on Tene to ensure that the girl will fall into his snare. But it's no easy task. Gortokai not only is tasked with finding complicated objects and getting hold of delicate body parts from Tene's body (such as hairs), he also gradually realises that the girl is still very difficult, despite the spell. **Along the way, the young man stumbles against a few enemies**, such as Tene's sister Kema, a haggish whore who not only apparently wants to sleep with him at first, but is also trying to convince her sister to set her eyes on richer men.

Kema's influence turns out to be the worst of them all when it comes to Kai's interests, as he slowly discovers that his platonic love is actually an 'evil woman'. But it's not only Kema; Kai soon finds out that his supposedly best friend, Bubu, doesn't actually like him that much. **To make matters worse, Tene falls pregnant by another man**. What's more, Kai accidentally hears Tene frivolously utter words that denote a lack of respect for him. To top it off, Kai then discovers that Tene regularly receives clothes and jewels from a rich man. Everything is ruined.

Now in utter despair, the young African drifts aimlessly for a while, then take refuge in alcohol and negative thoughts, becoming evermore violent and filling his head with aggressiveness. That is, until one day, he ends up murdering Tene in a cassava plantation. Before the murder, **Kai trips over and hurts his head**. The author, i.e. Kai himself, therefore seems to insinuate that his mind was negatively altered for a few moments, leading him to commit the crime.

I must say that, generally speaking, the book entertained me although I wouldn't necessarily say I liked it.

It is written in a simple, direct and clear way and it is well-paced. What we have here is clearly a lesser work in terms of literature, but the fact that it addresses an issue that so many people can identify with make it accessible to the universal reader.

On the other hand, *Murder in the Cassava Patch*, has some structural problems, which means that sometimes the pieces don't fit together. But the structure includes some interesting aspects nonetheless. These appear at the end, when the reader finds that the story has been cut short – out of the blue, as if there were an interruption or dispersal by mistake. Nevertheless, the reader discovers the explanation behind those unexpected disjointed scenes further down the line when they appear once again in the exact same way, but this time accompanied by a much-needed expounding background. So everything falls into place in the end. However, despite this literary pirouette, I am not fully convinced by its implementation (especially the literal repetition). It is worth adding that the story begins at the end: **Gortokai narrates the events from his prison cell at South Beach in Monrovia**.

In addition, the novel contains some typical African ingredients, such as Kai's wanderings around Liberia, aimlessly walking for the sake of it. Secret societies and 'workings' also have their place. In this respect, the book directly or indirectly defends the theory that those 'workings' are not always successful, and can in fact lead to obsessions and fatal errors. Slavery is also mentioned: Kai is the son of a slave of the Spanish crown. Alcohol also plays an important role (of course it is not exclusively African): Kai and the other main characters always end up drunk sooner or later.

Regarding the characters, although they are not brilliantly accomplished, they can distinguished. The dialogues are also well devised. Lastly, I'd like to underscore the main subject of this novel: toxic love.

**Many people have been through the experience of falling in love** (or thinking that they have) with a person who turns out not to be good for them. And yet the person in love and in despair insists on going after the 'bad guy' or 'bad girl', believing that they can transform them and design them to their liking, which almost never is the case. This type of 'love' causes much suffering, significantly lower the self-esteem and tending to end in a mess.



**Happy  
Father's Day  
to the men of  
Liberia**

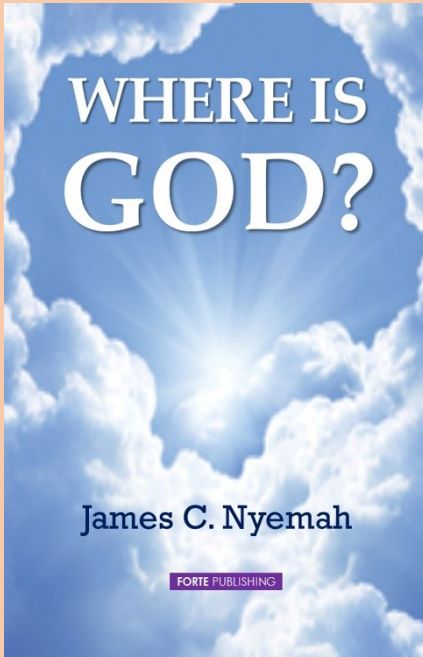
**Happy  
Father's Day  
Long Live  
Liberia**



## Recommended Reads

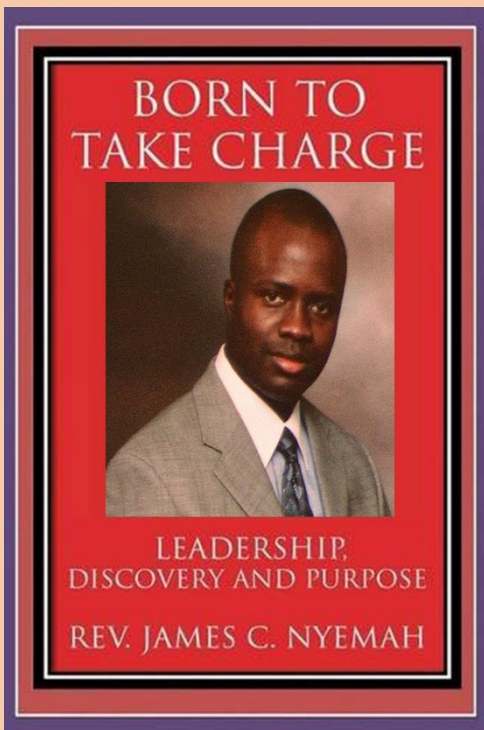
Published by **FORTE Publishing**

### *WHERE IS GOD?*



“Where is God?” A most difficult question no doubt but a necessary one about God and life. If things are worse, we even go further and ask all sorts of questions. For example, “If God is such a loving and caring father,

why does he allow bad things to happen to good people, including Christians?



*We were all born to do something or for a reason, even if one does not know or has not yet figured out theirs.*

*Grab a copy of this book and be inspired.*

*Pastor James*

*Nyemah writes a powerful motivational book that spurs one to do one thing... TAKE CHARGE.*



**MOMOH SEKOU DUDU**

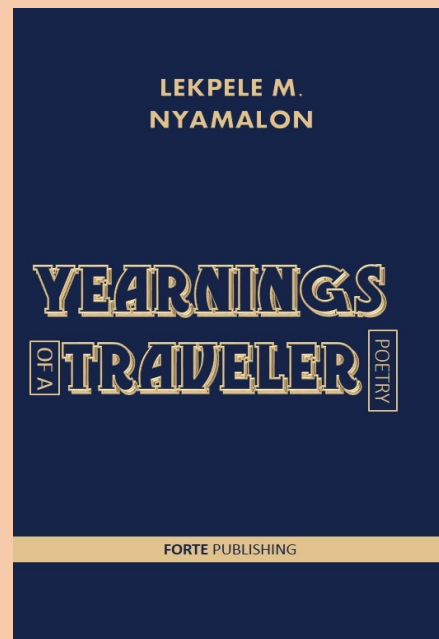
takes us on a mental journey in his latest release, *When The Mind Soars*, poetry from the Heart.

He exposes us to a Liberia as freshly, honestly and

chaotic as he sees it. He presents us a broken Liberia that is pulling herself up by its own boot straps. Let your minds fly, soar with ideas.

### *Yearnings of A Traveler*

We all have a yearning for something. For



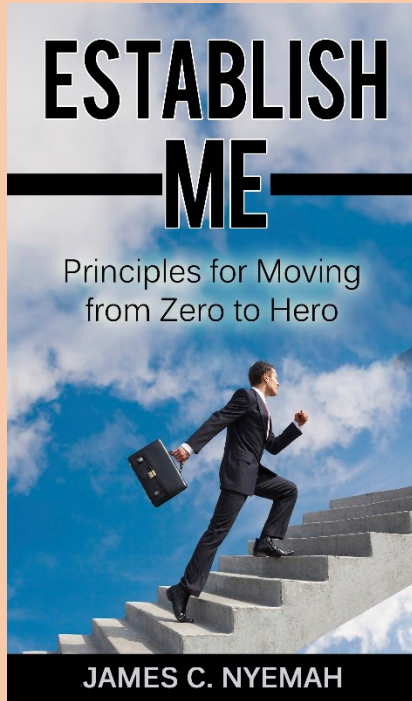
Lekpele, his has been a message of self worth, as we see in his signature piece, My Body is Gold; one of patriotism, as in Scars of A Tired Nation; one of Pan Africanism as in the piece, Dig The Graves. He

also has a message of hope as seen in his award winning poem, Forgotten Future. He is an emerging voice that one can't afford to ignore. Yearning is the debut chapbook by Liberian poet, Lekpele M. Nyamalon.

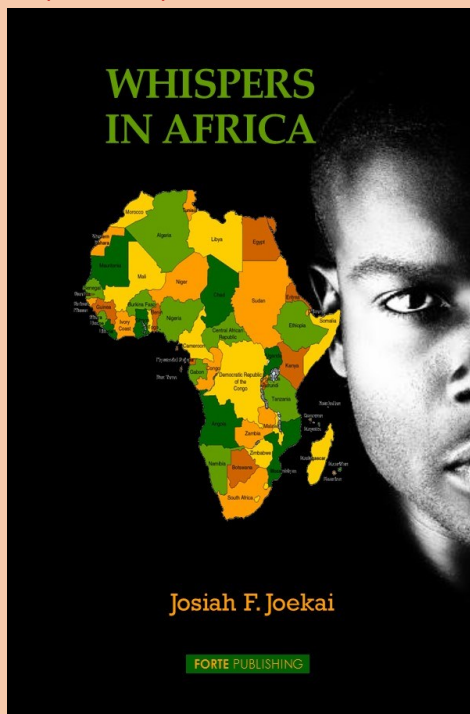
Recommended Reads

ESTABLISH ME in the world is Liberia?

WE GET BROKEN, DAMAGED, THORN UP BY THE DIFFICULTIES OF LIFE. IT RIPS US APART, IT SQUASHES US. WE FEEL DEJECTED, REFUSED, ABUSED AND USED. WE OFTEN DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH OUR SHATTERED SOULS. WE SEEK A PLACE OF REFUGE, OF CALM, A PLACE TO MEND THOSE PIECES. WE SEARCH FOR A PLACE SET APART FROM THIS WORLD TO PULL US TOGETHER

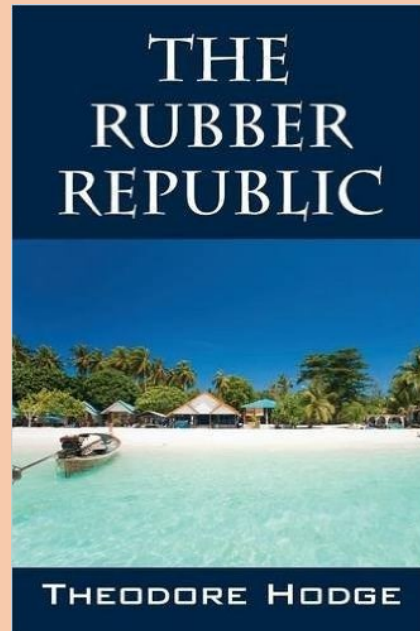


In his latest work, Ps. Nyemah lets us know that God can **Fix Us, Mold Us, Create Us** and then **Establish US**.



Coming soon from FORTE Publishing

The Rubber Republic

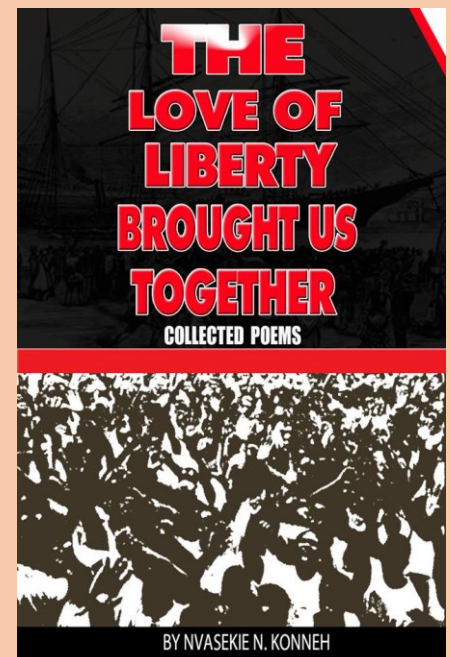


From relative stability to upheaval, military coup, violence and revenge. . . **The Rubber Republic** covers two decades, the late 1950s through the 1970s. Set mainly in West Africa, the story takes the reader to the United States and a few

other stops along the way. The story is mainly about the intriguing and fantastic lives of two young men, Yaba-Dio Himmie and Yaba-Dio Kla, who leave their parents' farm in search of enlightenment and adventure. But the story is also about their country, the Republic of Seacoast, and a giant American Rubber conglomerate, The Waterstone Rubber Plantation Company. **READ MORE????**

Nvasekie Konneh

In his latest endeavor, writes about things that divide and unite Liberians. The book title plays on the motto of Liberia, THE LOVE OF LIBERTY BROUGHT US HERE.



Coming soon from

Clarke Publishing by Nvasekie Konneh



Ansu, is a stubborn boy, he doesn't like to listen to his parents. He prefers to do naughty things.

He runs off to avoid working and encounters a strange creature. What will happen?

Follow Ansu as he journeys through the deadly Liberian forest. **Ansu And The Ginah**, is a part of the **EDUKID** Readers Series.

In this book, the father and daughter duo combine to bring a great reading experience to little ones as they begin their life's journey of reading.

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Miatta, an orphan, lives with her foster parents. She is hardworking and focuses on her studies. Life is dull, boring and quiet. She is ordinary, or so she thinks. Accidentally, she stumbles on a magical kingdom deep in the Liberian countryside where she learns that not only is she welcome, she is a princess.

**Miatta The Swamp Princess** recounts her adventures into the African forest.

**Belle Kizolu** is one of the youngest published Liberian authors. She lives in Monrovia where she attends school. She is in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

**FORTE Publishing Int'l**



Around Town

Note the Message



Happy Father's Month



A Powerful message in support of arts/artists



PHOTO BY: B Yourfee Kamara from Gbarnga



Traditional Dancer from the Gio Tribe-Gio Devil



Photo: S. Mark

City Center



A scenic view of Monrovia, city center



DK, one would only ask if they are unfamiliar with LIB





Bomi County, a perfect view



Down town Pehn Pehn Hustle



This exotic waterfall is a great opportunity  
To expand tourism if developed.



Forget us not

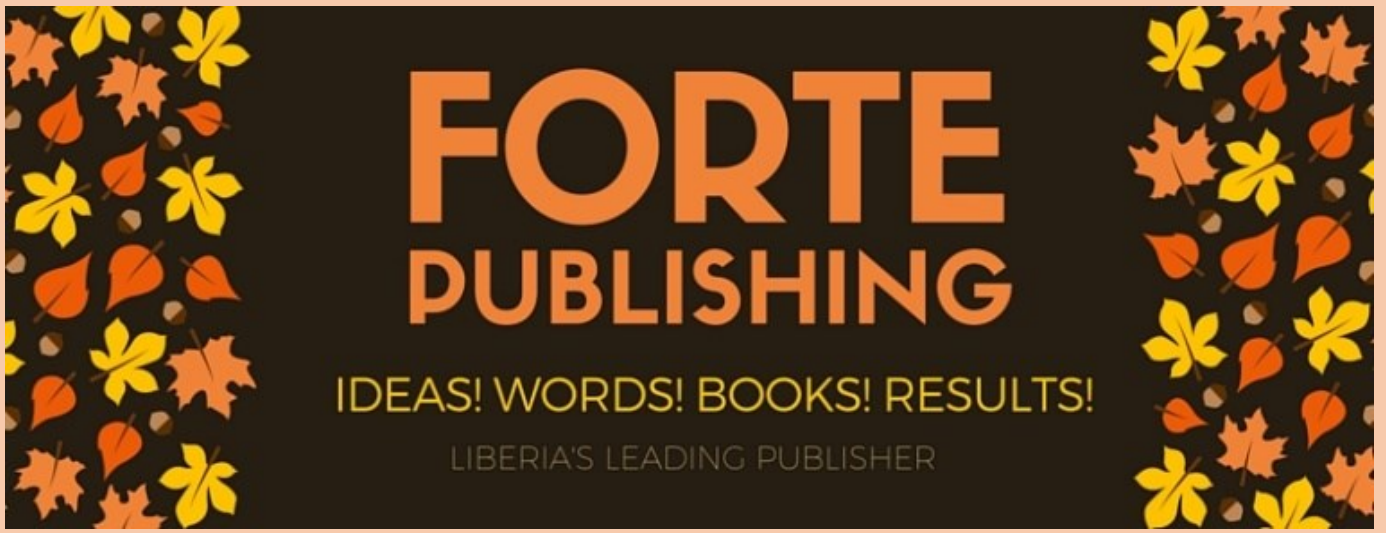


The People's Monument



Broom & Mop sellers. Hustle; real life situations

*Credit: Darby Cecil & Daily Pictures from around Liberia*



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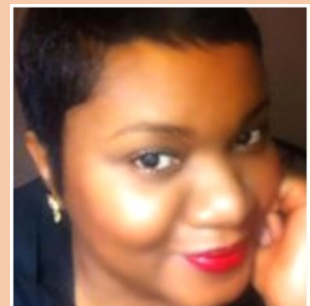
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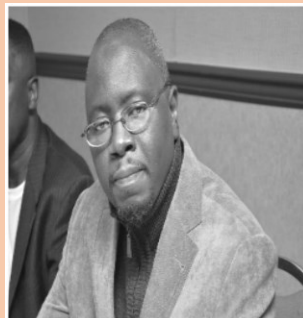
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**VAMBA SHERIF**  
Editor - Short stories

He was born in northern Liberia and spent parts of his youth in Kuwait, where he completed his secondary school. He speaks many languages, including Arabic, French, English and Dutch, and some African languages like Mande, Bandi, Mende en Lomah. After the first Gulf War, Vamba settled in the Netherlands and read Law. He's written many novels. His first novel, *The Land Of The Fathers*, is about the founding of Liberia with the return of the freed slaves from America in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This novel was published to critical acclaim and commercial success. His second, *The Kingdom of Sebah*, is about the life of an immigrant family in the Netherlands, told from the perspective of the son, who's a writer. His third novel, *Bound to Secrecy*, has been published in The Netherlands, England, France, Germany, and Spain. His fourth *The Witness* is about a white man who meets a black woman with a past rooted in the Liberian civil war. Besides his love of writing and his collection of rare books on Africa, he's developed a passion for films, which he reviews. He divides his time between The Netherlands and Liberia. You can see more of his work on his [website](#)

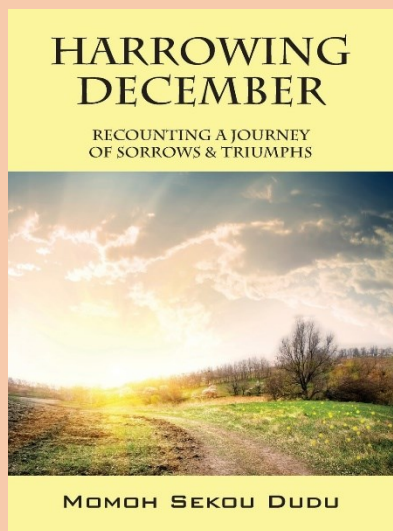


**MOMOH DUDUU**  
Editor- Reviews

Is an educator and author. For the last decade, he has been an instructor at various Colleges and Universities in the Minneapolis metro area in the state of Minnesota, U.S.A. At present, he is the Chair of the Department of Business and Accounting at the Brooklyn Center Campus of the Minnesota School of Business at Globe University.

His works include the memoir 'Harrowing December: Recounting a Journey of Sorrows and Triumphs' and 'Musings of a Patriot: A Collection of Essays on Liberia' a compilation of his commentaries about governance in his native country.

At the moment, he is at work on his maiden novel tentatively titled 'Forgotten Legacy.'



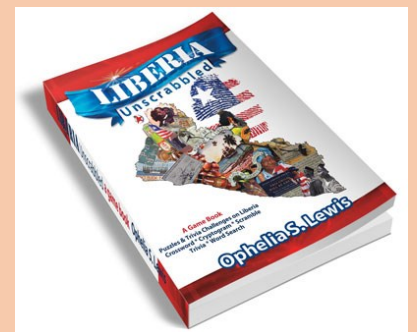
Find out more [here](#).



**OPHELIA LEWIS**  
Editor- Anthology

The founder of Village Tales Publishing and self-published author of more than ten books, Lewis is determined to make Village Tales Publishing a recognized name in the literary industry. She has written two novels, three children's books, a book of poetry, a book of essay and two collections of short stories, with the latest being *Montserrat Stories*.

As publisher-project manager, she guards other authors in getting their work from manuscript to print, using the self-publishing platform. Self-publishing can be complicated, a process that unfolds over a few months or even years. Using a project management approach gives a better understanding of the format process and steps needed it take to get an aspiring writer's book published.



Find out more [here](#)

[Editors](#)

**Editor**

**D. Othniel Forte**



PHOTO BY: Melisa Chavez

Here at Liberian Literary Magazine, we strive to bring you the best coverage of Liberian literary news. We are a subsidiary of [Liberian Literature Review](#).

For too long the arts have been ignored, disregarded or just taken less important in Liberia. This sad state has stifled the creativity of many and the culture as a whole.

However, all is not lost. A new breed of creative minds has risen to the challenge and are determined to change the dead silence in our literary world. In order to do this, we realized the need to create a *culture of reading* amongst our people.

A reading culture broadens the mind and opens up endless possibilities. It also encourages diversity and for a colorful nation like ours, fewer things are more important.

We remain grateful to contributors; keep creating the great works, it will come full circle. But most importantly, we thank those of you that continue to support us by reading, purchasing, and distributing our magazine. We are most appreciative of this and hope to keep you educated, informed and entertained.

Promoting  
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& Culture

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# Liberian Literary Magazine

# KWEE

Jun Issue

Iss. # 0620

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FATHER'S  
MONTH!**

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Malone**

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Reviews**

**Authors of  
the Month**

**Liberian Classics  
Gifts of the Masters**

**Wright Better  
Liberian  
Proverbs**

**Featured Poets:**

Althea Romeo Mark  
Richard Wilson Moss  
Herbert Logerie  
Aken Wariebi  
Cher Antoinette  
John Eliot  
Walt Whitman  
Jack Kolkmeier  
Thomas Hardy  
Langston Hughes  
Gwendelyn Brooks  
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