



Blue Notes: Essays, Interviews, and Commentaries (Poets on Poetry)

Yusef Komunyakaa

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Blue Notes offers an assortment of poet Yusef Komunyakaa's writing on contemporary poetry and music. The book is arranged in four sections. The first gathers essays on the work of poets and blues and jazz musicians influential to Komunyakaa's work, from Langston Hughes and Etheridge Knight to Ma Rainey and Thelonious Monk; the second collects a gallery of Komunyakaa's poems and the poet's commentary about each of them. The third selects interviews that reveal the development of the poet's aesthetic sensibility. The final section consists of four artistic explorations that reflect the poet's current interests. Two of these texts, "Tenebrae" and "Buddy's Monologue," have been recently performed.

As editor Radiclan Clytus makes clear in the volume's introductory essay, although Komunyakaa's poetry has its roots in the stylistic innovations of early twentieth-century American modernists, his writing often reflects his understanding that a "black" experience should not particularize the presentation of one's art. This volume, according to the editor, is an attempt to understand Komunyakaa's critical eclecticism within the context of his own words.

Yusef Komunyakaa's books of poetry include *I Apologize for the Eyes in My Head*, *Magic City*, *Thieves of Paradise*, and *Neon Vernacular*, for which he received the Pulitzer Prize and the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award in 1994.

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