



Montage of a Dream: The Art and Life of Langston Hughes

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Over a forty-six-year career, Langston Hughes experimented with black folk expressive culture, creating an enduring body of extraordinary imaginative and critical writing. Riding the crest of African American creative energy from the Harlem Renaissance to the onset of Black Power, he commanded an artistic prowess that survives in the legacy he bequeathed to a younger generation of writers, including award winners Alice Walker, Paule Marshall, and Amiri Baraka.

Montage of a Dream extends and deepens previous scholarship, multiplying the ways in which Hughes's diverse body of writing can be explored. The contributors, including such distinguished scholars as Steven Tracy, Trudier Harris, Juda Bennett, Lorenzo Thomas, and Christopher C. De Santis, carefully reexamine the significance of his work and life for their continuing relevance to American, African American, and diasporic literatures and cultures.

Probing anew among Hughes's fiction, biographies, poetry, drama, essays, and other writings, the contributors assert fresh perspectives on the often overlooked "Luani of the Jungles" and *Black Magic* and offer insightful rereadings of such familiar pieces as "Cora Unashamed," "Slave on the Block," and *Not without Laughter*. In addition to analyzing specific works, the contributors astutely consider subjects either lightly explored by or unavailable to earlier scholars, including dance, queer studies, black masculinity, and children's literature. Some investigate Hughes's use of religious themes and his passion for the blues as the fabric of black art and life; others ponder more vexing questions such as Hughes's sexuality and his relationship with his mother, as revealed in the letters she sent him in the last decade of her life.

Montage of a Dream richly captures the power of one man's art to imagine an America holding fast to its ideals while forging unity out of its cultural diversity. By showing that Langston Hughes continues to speak to the fundamentals of human nature, this comprehensive reconsideration invites a renewed appreciation of Hughes's work—and encourages new readers to discover his enduring relevance as they seek to understand the world in which we all live.

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