

THE LANGSTON HUGHES REVIEW: A SPECIAL ISSUE

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Call for Papers

Date:

November 15, 2017

Location:

Kansas, United States

Subject Fields:

African American History / Studies, Literature, Cultural History / Studies, Popular Culture Studies, Black History / Studies

"Art and Politics: Reexamining Langston Hughes and Amiri Baraka"

The inaugural issue of the new Langston Hughes Review invites essays that analyze the complex and multifaceted relationship between Langston Hughes and Amiri Baraka. The Editor welcomes submissions that engage with any aspects of the interrelationships between their writings as well as the literary conversations they had over the course of their relationship. When Baraka "rediscovered" Hughes through the posthumous publication of the latter's *Good Morning, Revolution*, for instance, it prompted him to reexamine Hughes's writings and cultural politics. Hughes had embraced Carl Van Vechten's sobriquet "The Poet Laureate of the Negro Race," and envisioned himself as a father figure to the younger generation of black poets. But Baraka appeared to divorce himself and his writing from the tradition that Hughes embodied. He criticized Hughes's work as an anthologizer. Likewise, Hughes chastized Baraka for using vulgarity in *Dutchman*, and criticized Baraka's nationalist politics in his essay "That Boy LeRoi." Despite this somewhat vexed relationship, however, the correspondence between the two writers, archived in the Beneicke Library, reveals mutual respect and a great deal of admiration for each other's work. It also unpacks a deep-seated understanding of the functionality of vernacular culture in effecting social change. This special issue of *LHR* is especially invested in probing Baraka's renegotiation of Hughes's continuing influence as he transitioned from Beat aesthetics to Black Arts, and black nationalism to Third World Marxism. In what ways do Hughes's Depression era writings prefigure Baraka's Marxist writings in the 1970s and thereafter? And how might these writers' analyses of America's racial problems enhance and/or inform our readings of and responses to the rise of white supremacy in the twenty-first century? We also welcome essays on lesser examined aspects of Hughes's and Baraka's writings, especially their playwriting, memoirs, fiction, and essays of social criticism.

Other topics include but are not limited to:

Jazz poetry recordings

Blues aesthetics

Jesse B. Semple vis-a-vis Baraka's aesthetics

Representations of gender and sexuality

Hughes and Baraka as cultural philosophers

Comparative approaches to popular culture

Abstracts are due November 15, 2017, and full articles (20-25 pages) must be submitted by June 15, 2017. Interested scholars should send abstracts to Tony Bolden, tjbolden@ku.edu, and Jean-Philippe Marcoux, Jean-Philippe.Marcoux@laval.ca.

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