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LEGACIES

The poetry of Nikki Giovanni read by
NIKKI GIOVANNI



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LEGACIES

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Side I

1. Once A Lady Told Me
2. Everytime It Rains
3. Mother's Habits
4. Conversation
5. The Geni In The Jar
6. Mothers
7. The December of My Springs
8. The Women Gather
9. The Life I Led
10. Legacies

Side II

1. How Do You Write A Poem
2. The World Is Not A Pleasant Place To Be
3. Nikki-Rosa
4. Poem (for Nina)
5. Categories
6. Housecleaning
7. Scrapbooks
8. Dreams
9. Beautiful Black Men
10. Always There Are The Children

All Poetry by Nikki Giovanni
Copyright ©1968, 1970, 1972, 1974, 1975 by Nikki Giovanni
from **The Women and the Men; My House; Re:Creation;**
Black Feeling Black Talk/Black Judgement; and
Ego Tripping and Other Poems For Young People

I think of poetry as being autobiographical. That doesn't mean all poets put their lives between the pages of a book but it does mean, at least to me, that we who write believe our poems. A couple of years ago Marion Williams, the gospel singer, recorded a song that says "I've got to live the life I sing about in my songs..." I think that goes further than an artist should ask of herself. Many of the themes I've explored in my poetry I couldn't possibly know...but I do believe old women are within the scope of my interest. And though I've never experienced starvation I do understand that in this world starvation is unacceptable.

Like any writer I have looked for a writing voice. I prefer

the first person singular or plural because I do believe we will do it together...whatever it is. Live and love; live and hate. Create a better world; destroy the one we have. Unlike some theoreticians I do not believe we are either a part of the problem or a part of the solution. I think we are a part of both. And since this is our world we must take responsibility for it.

Those who have gone before and those who are yet to be birthed—it is to these that we owe our legacies. I am hopeful we are at least as strong as our foreparents and I am confident we will be as intelligent as the next century requires.

Nikki Giovanni
New York City 1975

NIKKI GIOVANNI born: 6-7-43 Knoxville, Tennessee; Moved to Cincinnati, Ohio when two months old
education: 1967 Fisk University; Major: History

BOOKS

- 1968 *Black Feeling Black Talk*
(Broadside Press) Poetry
- 1969 *Black Judgement*
(Broadside Press) Poetry
- 1970 *Black Feeling Black Talk/Black Judgement*
(William Morrow Company) Poetry
- 1970 *Night Comes Softly*
(Niktom, Ltd.) Poetry Anthology
- 1970 *Poem of Angela Yvonne Davis*
(Niktom, Ltd.) Broadside Poem
- 1971 *Gemini*
(Bobbs-Merril Company) Essays
- 1971 *Spin a Soft Black Song*
(Hill and Wang; now Farrar, Strauss and Giroux)
Children's Poetry
- 1972 *A Dialogue: James Baldwin and Nikki Giovanni*
(J.B. Lippincott Company) Conversations
- 1973 *My House*
(William Morrow Company) Poetry
- 1973 *Ego Tripping and Other Poems for Young Readers*
(Larry Hill Company) Young People's Poetry
- 1974 *A Poetic Equation: Conversations Between Nikki Giovanni and Margaret Walker*
(Howard University Press) Conversations
- 1975 *The Women and the Men*
(William Morrow Company) Poetry

RECORDS:

- 1971 *Truth is On Its Way*
(Right On Records) with Gospel Music
- 1973 *Like A Ripple On A Pond*
(Niktom, Ltd.) dist by Atlantic Records
with Gospel Music
- 1975 *The Way I Feel*
(Niktom, Ltd.) dist. by Atlantic Records
produced by Arif Mardin



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AWARDS:

- 1972 Honorary Doctorate of Humanities
Wilberforce University
- 1974 Honorary Doctorate of Literature
The University of Maryland
Princess Anne Campus
- 1974 Honorary Doctorate of Literature
Ripon University
- 1975 Honorary Doctorate of Literature
Smith College
- 1971 *Mademoiselle* Magazine Award
for Outstanding Achievement
- 1972 Woman of the Year — Youth Leadership Award
Ladies Home Journal Magazine
- 1971 Meritorious Plaque for Service
from the Cook County Jail
- 1971 Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Award for
Outstanding Contribution to Arts and Letters
- 1972 Life Membership and Scroll from
The National Council of Negro Women
- 1972 Key to the city of Lincoln Heights, Ohio
- 1972 Key to the city of Dallas, Texas
- 1972 Key to the city of Gary, Indiana
- 1972 N.A.T.R.A. Award for Best Spoken Word
Album — *Truth Is On Its Way*
- 1973 American Library Association commends
My House as one of the Best Books for
Young Adults

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Editorial Consultant
Encore American and Worldwide News Magazine

COLUMNS:

"One Woman's Voice" (Newspaper Syndicate)
Anderson-Moberg Syndicate of the *New York Times*
Encore American and Worldwide News Magazine Column
"The Root of the Matter"