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# eNewsletter

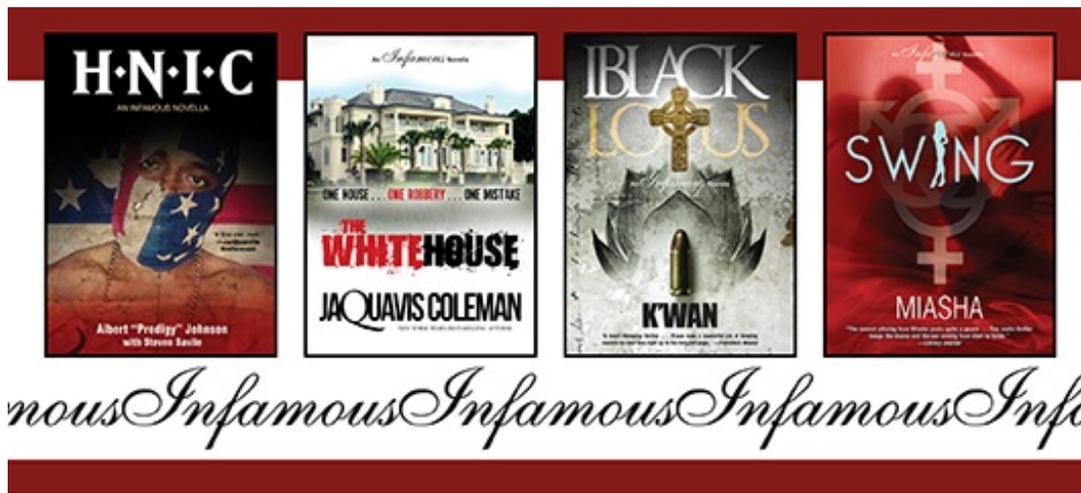
Issue #216 – July 29, 2014

*Black Literature is for Everyone*



This month's eNewsletter is sponsored by

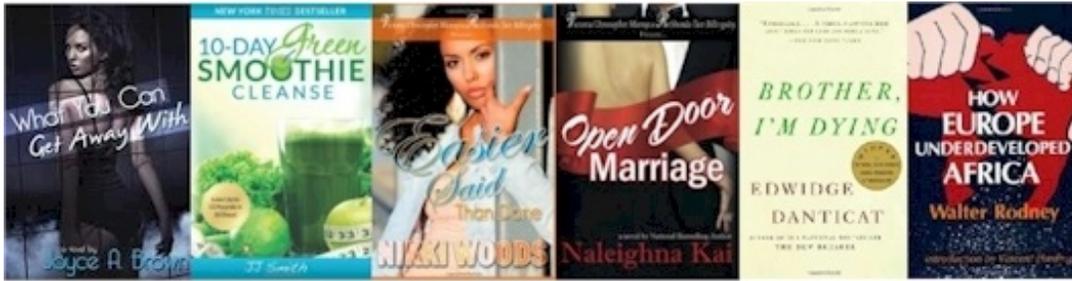
## Akashic Books and Infamous Books



Infamous Books, curated by Albert “Prodigy” Johnson of the legendary hip-hop group Mobb Deep, is a revolutionary partnership that pairs the Infamous Records brand with Brooklyn-based independent publisher Akashic Books. Infamous Books’ mission is to connect readers worldwide to crime fiction and street lit authors both familiar and new. The imprint launched in 2013 with *H.N.I.C.* by Prodigy and Steven Savile, which earned a starred review from *Library Journal* and landed Infamous Books on the front page of the Sunday *New York Times* Arts Section. Our latest releases are *The White House*, by *New York Times* best-selling author JaQuavis Coleman; *Black Lotus*, by K’wan, the author of over a dozen books, including the award-winning novels *Eviction Notice* and *Animal*; and *Swing*, an erotic thriller by best-selling author Miasha. Infamous Books are available wherever books and e-books are sold. For more information, visit [Akashic Books](#).

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AALBC.com Best Selling Books — May and June 2014



Our best sellers list is based upon book sales for the period, May 1st through June 30th. The #1 best selling book for the period was Joyce A. Brown's novel *What You Can Get Away with* (Live The Dream Publishers, May 16, 2014). eBooks sales represented 41% of all sales. [See the complete list >](#)

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## Authors You Should Know



### Poet Mari Evans Turns 95

Mari Evans was born on July 16, 1919, in Toledo, Ohio. Fellow Poet, [Eugene Redmon](#), notified AALBC.com of this milestone in Evans' life.

Evans' poetic voice helped defined the 1960s [Black Arts Movement](#). Over the course of her career Evans has been Distinguished Writer and Assistant Professor, African American and Resource Center, Cornell University, she has taught at Indiana University, the State University of New York at Albany, the University of Miami at Coral Gables and at Spelman College, Atlanta. She is the author of numerous articles, children's books, plays, musicals and books of poetry. [Read More >](#)

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### Walter Dean Myers: More Than an Outstanding Writer by Wade Hudson

"Tom [Feelings] is gone. Virginia Hamilton is gone. Leo Dillon and Fred McKissack are gone, too. And now we have lost Walter Dean Myers [8/12/1937 to 7/1/2014]".

"I will miss seeing Walter at Book Expo America, ALA, NCTE and the many other conferences where he often held court, sharing, urging, encouraging, directing, advocating...always trying to make things better.

When Walter's article, *Where Are the People of Color in Children's Books?* appeared in the March 15, 2014 issue of the New York Times, many welcomed it as timely and much needed. But Walter had written an article that appeared in the New York Times in 1986, addressing the same concerns. He was always at the forefront, involved in many initiatives, some that he organized himself. He was determined to increase diversity in our body of literature for children. He also advocated for the inclusion of people of color in the offices of publishing houses." [Read Wade's Entire Tribute >](#)

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### Al-Saadiq Banks

Al-Saadiq Banks has written and published nine novels. He's the co-



founder of True 2 Life Publications. True 2 Life has just ventured into the world of comics, as Al-Sadiq Banks transforms his fiction based novels into graphic novels and comic books.

In his spare time he's a boxing instructor and mentor to troubled youth. He cherishes every opportunity that he's granted to reach out to not just the youth, but even adults who may be going through the tug of war that he went through in life. He's a motivational speaker, who plans to take his show on the road and speak on a national level. [Read More >](#)

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## New Author Videos

### Kamilah Aisha Moon

Moon, a native of Nashville, TN, is a recipient of fellowships to the Cave Canem Foundation, the Prague Summer Writing Institute, the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, MA, and the Vermont Studio Center. She was also a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award and the Audre Lorde Award from the Publishing Triangle. Moon holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Sarah Lawrence College.



Here she reads from her first full-length poetry collection, *She Has a Name*, which is largely about a family whose youngest daughter has autism. [Watch the Video >](#)

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### Elsie Augustave Reads from *The Roving Tree*

Elsie Augustave was born in Haiti and is a graduate of Middlebury College and Howard University with degrees in foreign language and literature. Among her many accomplishments, Augustave choreographed Elima Ngando, a major production for the prestigious National Dance Theater of Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo.



Here she reads from the *The Roving Tree* her debut novel. In the NY Times Book Review, Edwidge Danticat, called *The Roving Tree* a "...gorgeous new novel about a Haitian adoptee finding her way in many different corners of the world." [Watch the Video >](#)

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### As The Pages Turn Book Club's Luncheon

This video shows highlights from the As The Pages Turn Book Club's Literary Luncheon Fundraiser held Saturday June 28, 2014, at the Chateau of Spain Restaurant, in Newark NJ.



Authors featured included NAACP Image Award Winning Author Pamela Samuels Young (Keynote), RM Johnson, Eva Tremains, Sadeqa Johnson, Pat G'Orge-Walker. [Watch the Video >](#)

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## The Book Look Tackles the Latest in Book News Relevant to Our Community.

Here Book Look Host Monda Webb Interviews Mahogany Books' Ramunda Young about the latest and greatest news in Black Books and Events in 2014. From the Harlem Book Fair to the National Black Book Conference, Monda and Ramunda make sure you know what's going on. [Watch the Video >](#)



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## The Sacred Bombshell Handbook of Self-Love - Book Club Questions Answered

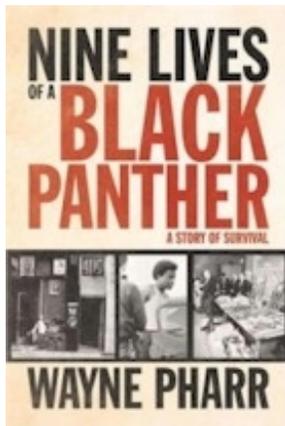
Women's Empowerment Coach and author Abiola Abrams talks about her new book, *The Sacred Bombshell Handbook of Self-Love*. This self-love handbook features empowering life lessons, helpful tools, inspiring dialogues, healing modalities, and life-changing exercises with detailed steps on how to connect to your real strength and activate your most fulfilled life. You learn to "own your bombshell" when you tune into your feminine power.



In this video, made for AALBC.com's readers, Abiola answers many common questions about the book and the subjects it covers. [Watch the Video >](#)

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## Book Reviews



### **Nine Lives of a Black Panther: A Story of Survival by Wayne Pharr**

...while still in his teens, Wayne ended up trapped inside Panther headquarters during a 5-hour gun battle with the police. He was arrested and charged with a host of offenses, but basically beat the rap, thanks to stellar representation by the late Johnnie "If the gloves don't fit, you must acquit" Cochran.

In *Nine Lives of a Black Panther: A Story of Survival*, Wayne revisits that incident and the rest of the BPP's turbulent years, a time when he had intimate interactions with such celebrated Party leaders as Huey Newton, Eldridge Cleaver, Geronimo Pratt, Bunchy Carter and Elaine Brown. The before-and-after memoir also recounts the author's childhood as well as

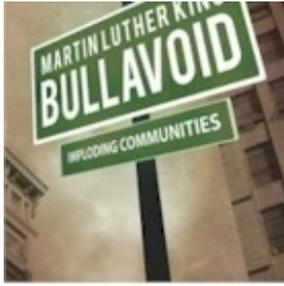
what his life was like in the wake of the assorted struggles which led to the total collapse of the beleaguered organization. [Read More >](#)



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### **Martin Luther King Bullavoid: Imploding Communities by Etta B. Harbin**

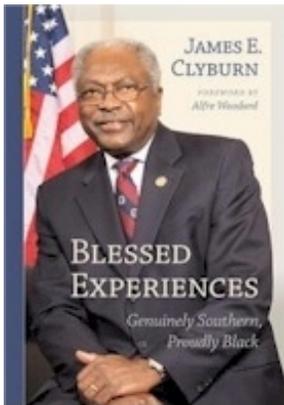
"Amid mounting threats to his life, Martin Luther King chose to step onto



the second floor balcony of the Lorraine Motel in the trajectory of the one-eyed Remington 760 Gamemaster that patiently awaited his arrival...” The resulting riots of the sixties were to ensure that Dr. King didn’t die in vain and for a while it seemed that he hadn’t. Many cities honored King’s memory by designating the site of the riots as Martin Luther King Boulevard, Avenue or Street. Outside businesses were ousted from neighborhoods and replaced with churches and tabernacles.

Forty-five years have passed since Dr. King’s death and Etta B. Harbin posits that most of the thoroughfares that bear his name are “deplorable” reminders of his death. Today the few entrepreneurs that are on the boulevard do business through iron bars and bulletproof revolving servers. [Read More >](#)

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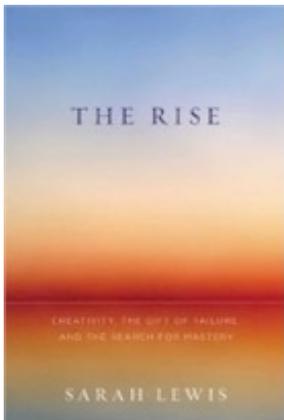


### **Blessed Experiences: Genuinely Southern, Proudly Black by Congressman James E. Clyburn**

Whenever House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) calls a press conference, she is invariably accompanied at the podium by the next two ranking Democrats, namely, Minority Whip Steny Hoyer and Assistant Leader James Clyburn. Clyburn (D-SC) is a very visible and important historical figure as the first African-American to represent South Carolina in the House of Representatives since Reconstruction.

During his tenure there, he has also done stints as Majority Whip and as Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. Still, not much has been known about his private life prior to the publication of *Blessed Experiences: Genuinely Southern, Proudly Black*, an intimate autobiography which leaves you with a lasting impression of just who Representative Clyburn is as a person. [Read More >](#)

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### **The Rise: Creativity, the Gift of Failure, and the Search for Mastery by Sarah Lewis**

The idea of ‘fessing up about ones foibles sounds sort of counter-intuitive to this critic, given that we now live in an age when careers are routinely ruined by a mere slip of the tweet or the tongue. Sadly, society puts pressure on individuals to present themselves as squeaky clean and picture perfect from the cradle to the grave, since the slightest sophomoric post on Facebook, Instagram or elsewhere on the internet is supposedly certain to haunt you for the rest of your days.

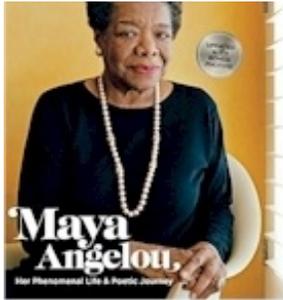
Nevertheless, *The Rise* represents a contrary tribute to the indomitability of the human spirit which encourages all to freely acknowledge flaws revealed by their passionate pursuit of perfection. [Read More >](#)

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## Book Recommendations

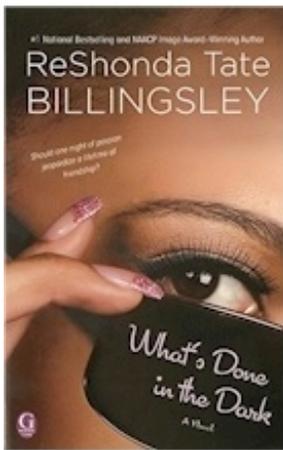


### **Maya Angelou: Her Phenomenal Life & Poetic Journey**



*Essence* magazine’s Editor-in-Chief Vanessa K. Bush’s introduction discusses Angelou’s legacy. The book includes a recent interview with Angelou and the writer’s groundbreaking essay in honor of *Essence*’s 25th anniversary. The colorful tome, which includes rare and exclusive images, also documents Angelou’s impact on two generations of African-American women writers, scholars and poets with reflections from Pulitzer Prize winner and former Poet Laureate Rita Dove, New York Times best-selling authors Pearl Cleage and Edwidge Danticat, National Book Award –winning poet Nikky Finney, acclaimed poet asha bandele, American Book Award winner Sonia Sanchez and commentator Melissa Harris-Perry, a professor at Wake Forest University, where Dr. Angelou was a devoted faculty member. [Buy This Book >](#)

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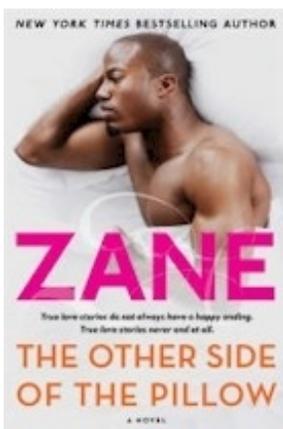
### **What's Done In the Dark Paperback by ReShonda Tate Billingsley**

Felise is not the kind of woman to cheat on her husband—especially with her best friend’s man. But after one perfect storm of a night, it happened ...and she can hardly believe it herself. To top it off, when she woke up in the morning, she found that the man to whom she guiltily made passionate love died of a heart attack overnight. Felise, who is a nurse and a good citizen at that, leaves the hotel room without reporting his death.

When her best friend, Paula, finds out about her husband’s sudden death a day later, Felise is overcome with guilt and grief. She must be there for her friend and her family, but when her husband repeatedly tries to apologize for his absentminded behavior and Paula starts investigating who Stephen was with the night he died, Felise finds it hard to hold herself together.

Should she come clean and tell everyone what she did? Or should she just let it go and move past the mistake on her own? [Buy This Book >](#)

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### **Zane's The Other Side of the Pillow: A Novel**

The New York Times bestselling Queen of Erotica, Zane is back with a new novel about a testy love affair that emerges between a woman who’s had enough and a man who’s had it all.

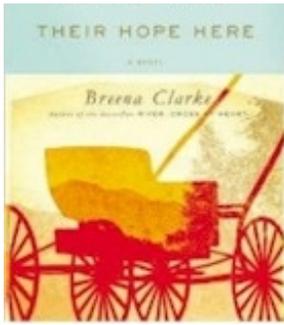
Jemistry Daniels is a bitter woman and not trying to hide it. Even though she is beautiful, intelligent, and makes six figures a year as a high school principal in Washington, DC, one man after another has failed her. So she decides to give up and join the party by adapting the entire “friends with benefits” mentality with a couple of men that she beds on the regular but refuses to hold any kind of real conversation with, in fear that she might actually catch feelings. [Read More >](#)

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### **Angels Make Their Hope Here by Breena Clarke**

From the author of the bestselling *River, Cross My Heart*—a compelling and lyrical new novel about a young black woman in the Civil War era who



finds refuge in a racially tolerant community.

Russell's Knob is not paradise. But already in 1863 this New Jersey highlands settlement is home to a diverse population of blacks and whites and reds who have intermarried and lived in relative harmony for generations. It is a haven for Dossie Bird, who has escaped north along the Underground Railroad and now feels the embrace of the Smoot family: Duncan (so much older than Dossie; could he expect her to be his helpmeet?), his reticent sister, his exuberant nephews, and a circle of friends that includes the local spirit woman, Noelle. Tentatively, Dossie

begins to lay down roots-until an act of violence propels her away from Russell's Knob and eventually into the mayhem of New York City's mean streets. [Read More >](#)

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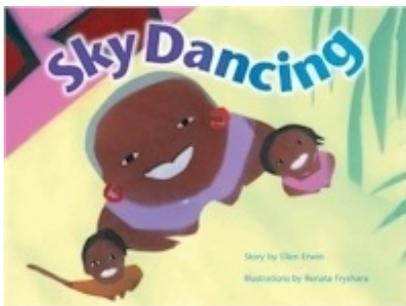


### Must-Read Romances Recommendations from USA TODAY

“From the first page, Marian L. Thomas grabs your wrist to have a seat and listen to a story. *Blue Butterfly* has a wonderful quality within its prose that enables you to hear the words, the dialogue, the ballet movement and music powerfully told in the story. A literary style that reminds me of Sue Monk Kidd’s.

The story is rich with history and romance told to entertain and educate with a layered approach. Page after page, chapter after chapter, you go deeper into these lives where hope for them stirs. Once you've met them, you can't let them go until the end. And maybe not then. Definite book club recommend.” —Michelle Monkou, Special for *USA TODAY*. [Read More >](#)

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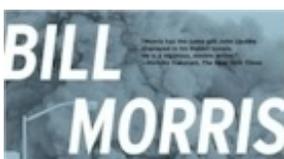


### Sky Dancing by Ellen Erwin

Here come the mocko jumbies! Children and adults alike love these colorfully clad Caribbean stilt dancers who move like graceful giants. Ruby and Jamal want to learn how to be stilt walkers, but only boys can join the local mocko jumbie troupe. Follow their adventures in this wryly sweet story of perseverance, friendship, and fun. Lavish illustrations sparkle and shine with the colors of the Caribbean, and will engage even the youngest readers.

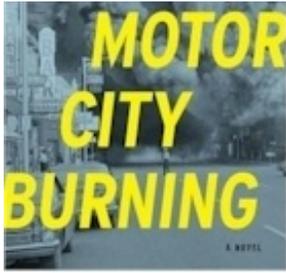
This story was written by Ellen Erwin and illustrated by Renata Fryshara, two “blond, blue-eyed women,” who are learning that getting attention for a book with Black characters is even more difficult when you don't happen to be black. [Buy This Book >](#)

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### Book of the Week: Motor City Burning by Bill Morris

Willie Bledsoe, once an idealistic young black activist, is now a burnt-out case. After leaving a snug berth at Tuskegee Institute to join the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, he has become bitterly disillusioned

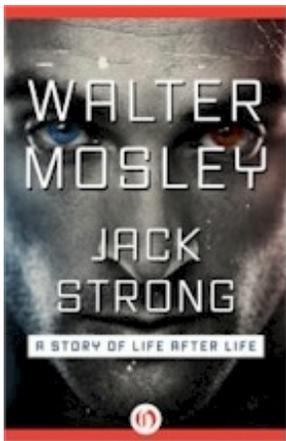


with the civil rights movement and its leaders. He returns home to Alabama to try to write a memoir about his time in the cultural whirlwind, but the words fail to come. The surprise return of his Vietnam veteran brother in the spring of 1967 gives Willie a chance to drive a load of smuggled guns to the Motor City and make enough money to jump-start his stalled dream of writing his movement memoir. Then, Willie learns some terrifying news: the Detroit police are still investigating the last unsolved murder from the bloody, apocalyptic riot of the previous summer, and a white cop named Frank Doyle will not rest until the case is solved. And Willie is his prime

suspect.

MahoganyBook's of the Week Amazon's price, \$20.61 (%17 off); Our Price, \$17.47 (30% Off) [Buy This Book Now >](#)

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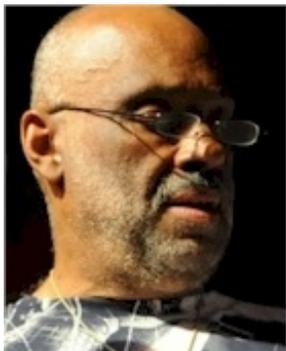
### **Jack Strong: A Story of Life after Life by Walter Mosley**

Dreaming, Jack hears voices: a frightened child in a hospital, a woman cheating on her husband, a death-row inmate. When he wakes, the voices recede, but they do not vanish. He is in a luxurious hotel room on the Vegas strip, and his body is covered in scars. Jack Strong is a patchwork man, his flesh melded together from dozens of men and women, and his mind is the same way. Countless lifetimes are contained within him: people whose time was cut short, and who see their place in Jack as a chance to make things right.

**Be the first of five subscribers to win a free copy** of *Jack Strong: A Story of Life after Life* (Open Road Media Sci-Fi & Fantasy, July 29, 2014)

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## Interviews



### **Daniel "Danny" Simmons**

Danny Simmons, a renowned painter of abstract-expressionist oil works which can be seen all over the world and in such prominent establishments as Chase Manhattan Bank, The Smithsonian, the United Nations and more. His work is highly respected within the art world and he has become extremely collectible; devoted fans of his work include music industry executive and producer Lyor Cohen and actor Will Smith.

Simmons most recent book, *The Brown Beatnik Tomes* presents a collection of prose and paintings; this is his most wide reaching and multi-disciplined project to date. Among the most impressive artists of his day,

*The New York Times* says that he "injects freshness" into his abstracts, and that they are "meticulously rendered and decoratively impressive." [Read More >](#)

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### **Justin Robinson: On His Latest Album "Alana's Fantasy"**

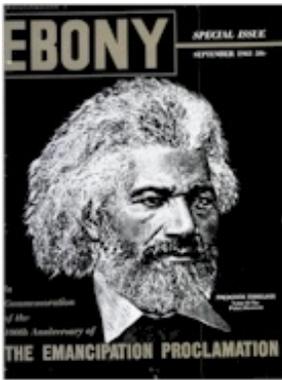


Justin Robinson is a jazz saxophonist and flutist. Robinson established himself as a child prodigy when, while still a teenager, he began running after-hours jam sessions at the renowned Blue Note Jazz Club in New York City the late 1980's. He released his debut album "Justin Time" in 1991, which featured saxophone legends such as Bobby Watson and Gary Bartz. Robinson has shared the stage with greats like Diana Ross, Abbey Lincoln, the Dizzy Gillespie All-Star Big Band, and currently tours with trumpeter Roy Hargrove. His newest album, *Alana's Fantasy*, comes out today under the Criss Cross Jazz label. Robinson was interviewed by Nick

Antoine. [Read More >](#)

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## Related Articles & News



### **Ebony Has Earned its Place Among the Paragons and Pioneers of Black Journalism.**

"...it was during my generation that black resources became under utilized because the drive for integration was on and this meant forsaking what was 'all-black' while eagerly embarking on incursions into the white world that was opening up for us. But there was one exception back then. During the infancy of TV and the absence of the Internet, the print media was the home of literary and intellectual discussion. When it came to a black dialogue on these subjects a showcase was provided by a 'Negro' counterpart of *LIFE* magazine that was relatively new to the field. This upstart publication was *Ebony* and it quickly became the flagship for black communication, providing a voice for all segments of the African American

population which included the successors to the Harlem Renaissance crowd who always found an outlet for their output on the pages of *Ebony*."

The September 1963 issue of *Ebony* (cover shown) included an article, "Negro in Literature Today," written by [John A. Williams](#) (a literary giant himself) who offered a terrific, now historical, snapshot about the best Black writers in 1963. [Read More >](#)

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### **Would You Be Happier Without Facebook?**

This is not to suggest that you are not happy now, but consider whether the questions is worth asking. It was recently uncovered that Facebook was surreptitiously experimenting with altering our moods by manipulating the content we see in our news feeds. The experiment indeed revealed that if Facebook presented us with information that skewed negative, our posts skewed negative. The practice of manipulating what we see raised numerous ethics questions by the scientific community. What else is Facebook doing?

My own anecdotal observations of the type of information Facebook shares most frequently, though quite profitable for Facebook, is not serving us well. It is also worth asking, is social media bringing people closer to each other, or is it strengthening our bonds to electronic devices with escalating monthly fees? [Read More >](#)

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## JET Magazine Goes From Print to Digital Only

JET magazine, whose first issue was published Nov 1, 1951, by the late John H. Johnson, is no longer available as a printed magazine. The final print issue was published June 9, 2014, after a 63 year run.

The new weekly digital magazine app will leverage a variety of storytelling tactics, including video interviews, enhanced digital maps, 3D charts and photography from the JPC archives. Breaking news will be updated daily. The app will be available on all tablet devices and mobile platforms. In addition, JET will publish an annual special print edition. [Read More >](#)



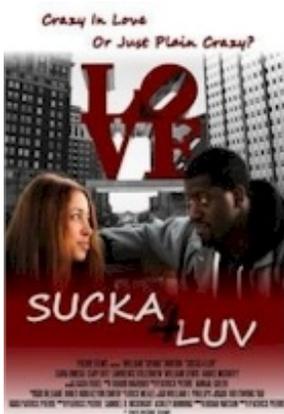
## The Hue-Man Experience Bookstore - Case Study

Often self-published authors are the most critical of Black owned bookstores.

It may make perfect sense for a person running a physical store to not invest a lot of time in a very long book, written an unknown author. The business decision of carrying a book is not that same as determining if a book has literary merit. In an ideal world that might be the case, but in the real world it does not always work out that way. [Read More >](#)

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## Film Reviews



### Sucka 4 Luv

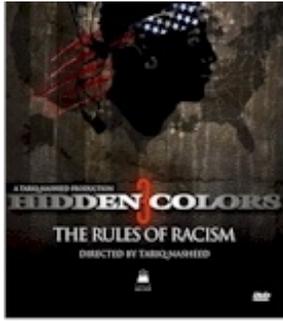
*Sucka 4 Luv*, the third feature-length offering from Patrick Pierre (*The City Is Mine*). The movie represents a bit of a departure for the Haitian-American writer/director in terms of both setting (Philly as opposed to his adopted hometown of Trenton) and genre (lighthearted comedy as opposed to gritty urban drama).

Here, with the help of a talented cast and crew, he successfully made a compelling, character-driven tale of romance and redemption on a modest budget. Accolades are especially in order for Spank Horton and Xavia Omega for carrying the production playing a couple of colorful lead characters who manage to generate oodles of screen chemistry. [Read More >](#)



### Hidden Colors 3: The Rules Of Racism

*Hidden Colors 3: The Rules Of Racism* is the third installment of the



critically acclaimed documentary *Hidden Colors* series. This installment of tackles the taboo subject of systematic racism. The film explores how institutional racism effects all areas of human activity, and the rules, laws, and public policies that are utilized to maintain this system. *Hidden Colors 3* features commentary from a diverse group of scholars, authors, and entertainment icons, which includes actor/rapper David Banner (*The Butler*), comedian Paul Mooney (*The Chapelle Show*), New York Times Best selling author [Tariq Nasheed](#), Civil Rights activist/comedian Dick Gregory, Hip-Hop legend Nas, and many more.

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## Upcoming Events



**The Baltimore African American Book Festival** will take place October 11, 2014, from 10am to 5pm, at the Enoch Pratt Central Library, 400 Cathedral St Baltimore Md 21201. Scheduled speakers include; [Trice Hickman](#), author of new novel *Troublemaker*; Sherri Booker, winner of an [NAACP Image Award](#) for her memoir *Nine Years Under: Coming of Age in an Inner City Funeral Home* ; [Nikki Woods](#), senior producer of the “Tom Joyner Morning Show” and author of the AALBC.com #1 bestseller, *Easier Said Than Done* ; Ella Curry, Owner of [EDC Creations](#); and AALBC.com’s Founder, Troy Johnson. [Learn More >](#)



### **Exhibit Your Book at the Frankfurt Book Fair, October 8 -12, 2014**

Author and Book Promoter [Irene Smalls](#) will lead a team of four professionals who will actively seek opportunities for, promote, and answer questions about your book during the Frankfurt International Book Fair, the world’s largest. Have your book hand sold and promoted to 300,00 people and 1750 exhibitors from 120 countries. [Learn More >](#)

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## Power to the Publisher

### **Dedicated Sponsored Email**

Send a rich email message to our mailing list of over 15,000 readers, supporters and advocates of Black literature, with our Dedicated Sponsored Email (DSE) service. DSEs are special emails that are



dedicated to a single business, author or event.

This is not a traditional “eBlast” service; as DSE mailing are limited to just one per month and are curated to include only information we believe our readers will find valuable. Our list is one of the most targeted available to reach readers who enjoy Black literature. The DSE is only one of two emails subscribers receive from AALBC.com each month. DSEs are also permanently archived on AALBC.com. [Read an example of a DSE.](#)



All recipients of DSEs are eligible to receive cash prizes. [See who won the \\$50 prize from our Nina Foxx contest!](#)

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Dear Troy,

As always, if you've read something in our eNewsletter, you enjoyed or felt was important, please share it with others. We are responsible for ensuring the depth and breadth of our stories are told, shared, and archived.



In order to continue our work, and to improve our offerings, we still need your support. Please consider purchasing or renewing your [subscription to AALBC.com's monthly eNewsletter](#)—less than a dollar an issue.

If you are interested in providing more substantial [support of our mission](#) please contact [Troy Johnson](#).

Peace,  
Troy Johnson,  
Founder and Webmaster

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