



The
HARLEM WORD GALLERY
a collection of short poems by

Langston
Hughes



Langston Hughes was a prolific writer. In the forty-odd years between his first book in 1926 and his death in 1967, he devoted his life to writing and lecturing. He wrote sixteen books of poems, two novels, three collections of short stories, four volumes of "editorial" and "documentary" fiction, twenty plays, children's poetry, musicals and operas, three autobiographies, a radio and television scripts and dozens of magazine articles.

In addition, he edited seven anthologies. The long and distinguished list of Hughes' works includes: Not Without Laughter (1930); The Big Sea (1940); I Wonder As I Wander" (1956), his autobiographies. His collections of poetry include: The Weary Blues (1926); The Negro Mother and other Dramatic Recitations (1931); The Dream Keeper (1932); Shakespeare In Harlem (1942); Fields of Wonder (1947); One Way Ticket (1947); The First Book of Jazz (1955); Tambourines To Glory (1958); and Selected Poems (1959); The Best of Simple (1961).

Born in Joplin, Missouri, James Langston Hughes was born into an abolitionist family. He was the grandson of grandson of Charles Henry Langston, the brother of John Mercer Langston, who was the the first Black American to be elected to public office in 1855. Hughes attended Central High School in Cleveland, Ohio, but began writing poetry in the eighth grade, and was selected as Class Poet.

His father didn't think he would be able to make a living as at writing, and encouraged him to pursue a more practical career. His father paid his tuition to Columbia University on the grounds he study engineering. After a short time, Langston dropped out of the program with a B+ average, all the while he continued writing poetry. His first published poem was also one of his most famous, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers", and it appeared in Brownie's Book. Later, his poems, short plays, essays, and short stories appeared in the NAACP publication Crisis Magazine and in Opportunity Magazine and other publications.



dreams
dreams

*Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.*

*Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.*

dreams...