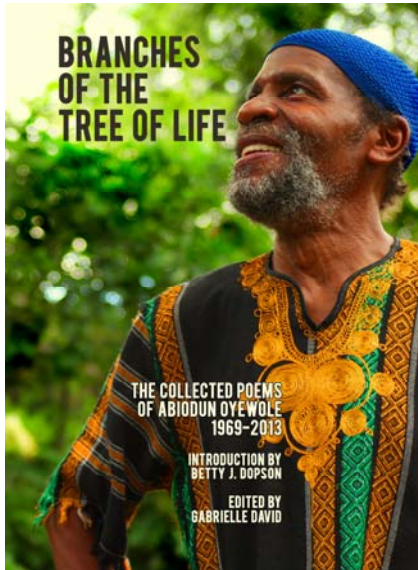


Branches of the Tree of Life

The Collected Poems of Abiodun Oyewole, 1969-2013



PHOTOS & COVER DESIGN: Vagabond



Abiodun Oyewole

BRANCHES OF THE TREE OF LIFE is the first comprehensive volume of poems by Abiodun Oyewole, many of them never before published. Oyewole's poems are powerful, often political, always lyrical and profoundly moving. Over the course of his forty year career and his long affiliation with The Last Poets, Oyewole is one of several poets credited for liberating American poetry by creating open, vocal, spontaneous, energetic and uncensored vernacular verse that paved the way for spoken word and Hip Hop. Using the spiritual, the sacred and the mystical, Oyewole often turns to the tree as a symbol of change and growth. His poetry re-branches into different directions, becoming grandeur in its proportions, and more complexly diversified in its structure. BRANCHES OF THE TREE OF LIFE is a living testament to a stunning career that confirms Abiodun Oyewole's place at the forefront of poetic achievement.

"In *Branches From the Tree of Life*, Abiodun Oyewole, best known for his lifelong membership in The Last Poets, takes a well-deserved solo turn. . . Abiodun's collected poems faithfully shift gears one after the other, from praise to revolutionary exhortation and back again. A gift from a venerated lion in winter, they're meant to fortify and inspire us, to remind us to treasure our history and to do the work necessary to create the future of our fondest dreams."

— Bill Adler, co-author of
Def Jam: The First 25 Years of the Last Great Record Label

"I have been listening to Abiodun since middle school and have had the honor to grace many stages with him. He is truly a pioneer . . . He will go in the archives for centuries to come."

— Etan Thomas, poet, author and NBA champion

"Dune is a one man poetic army, his word and that big, booming voice of his are his weapons, but that heart – his love for poetry and people are the healing salve."

— Toni Blackman, Artist/U.S. Hip Hop Ambassador

"*Branches of The Tree of Life* is a literary treasure. Abiodun Oyewole is a living legend who speaks truth to power and celebrates the life, struggles, triumphs, beauty and realities of being African in America. Kudos to this magnificent collection of one of the world's foremost poetic giants."

— Linda H. Humes, African Studies Dept. John Jay College
Founder, Yaffa Cultural Arts Inc"

About the Author

ABIODUN OYEWOLE is a poet, teacher, and founding member of the American music and spoken-word group The Last Poets, which laid the groundwork for the emergence of Hip-Hop. Over the years, Oyewole has collaborated on more than a dozen albums and several books. He travels around the world, performing poetry and teaching workshops.

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