



Beloved Harlem: A Literary Tribute to Black America's Most Famous Neighborhood, From the Classics to The Contemporary

By William H. Banks

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Beloved Harlem: A Literary Tribute to Black America's Most Famous Neighborhood, From the Classics to The Contemporary By William H. Banks

A passionate ode to an American mecca, *Beloved Harlem* is a literary look into the vibrant African-American haven, edited by one of its celebrated native sons. William H. Banks, Jr., combines the classics with the contemporary as he showcases some of the best essays, short stories, and novel excerpts inspired by the diversity of Harlem life, from the early twentieth century to the new millennium.

The days and nights of black Manhattan come alive in the words of historically famous writers like W.E.B. Dubois, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, Dorothy West, Ossie Davis, and Toni Morrison, along with the works of brilliant newcomers to the neighborhood, including Brian Keith Jackson's witty examination of identity politics in *The Queen of Harlem* and Rosemarie Robatham's "Dreaming in Harlem," a moving tale about a woman at the edge of society who finds sanctuary with a stranger.

From renaissance through tough times to revitalization, this triumphant homage gives Harlem the historical perspective it so rightly deserves. *Beloved Harlem* is a welcome addition to the libraries of readers who are either already in love with Harlem or ready to take the fall.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Editorial Review

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The Harlem Writers Guild, created in 1950 by John Oliver Killens, Rosa Guy, Walter Christmas, and Dr. John Henrik Clarke, has provided a haven for writers to encourage and disseminate black culture and to speak out against injustice. Banks offers a collection of 29 excerpts and short stories that celebrate black culture, prefacing each selection with a short biography and the piece's literary context. Part 1 focuses on the 1910s through the 1930s, the heyday of the Harlem Renaissance, and includes works by James Weldon Johnson, W. E. B. DuBois, white author Carl Van Vechten, Claude McKay, and Zora Neale Hurston. Part 2, the 1940s through the 1960s, includes works by Dorothy West, James Baldwin, and Langston Hughes. Part 3 focuses on the years 1970--2000 and includes Louise Merriweather, John A. Williams, Grace F. Edwards, Toni Morrison, and Walter Dean Myers. Part 4 explores new voices reinventing Harlem literature, including those of Rosemarie Robotham and Brian Keith Jackson. Readers will appreciate the chronological and literary breadth of the collection. *Vanessa Bush*

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From the Inside Flap

A passionate ode to an American mecca, "Beloved Harlem is a literary look into the vibrant African-American haven, edited by one of its celebrated native sons. William H. Banks, Jr., award-winning writer and Executive Director of the esteemed Harlem Writers Guild, combines the classics with the contemporary as he showcases some of the best essays, short stories, and novel excerpts inspired by the diversity of Harlem life, from the early twentieth century to the new millennium. Served up in rich prose, the days and nights of black Manhattan come alive in the words of historically famous writers like W.E.B. Dubois, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, Dorothy West, Ossie Davis, John Oliver Killens, Grace F. Edwards, and Toni Morrison, along with the works of brilliant newcomers to the neighborhood, including Brian Keith Jackson's witty examination of identity politics in "The Queen of Harlem and "Dreaming in Harlem," Rosemarie Robotham's moving tale about a woman at the edge of society who finds sanctuary with a stranger. From renaissance through tough times to revitalization, this triumphant homage gives Harlem the historical perspective it so rightly deserves. "Beloved Harlem is a bountiful collection and welcome addition to the libraries of readers who are either already in love with Harlem or ready to take the fall.

About the Author

WILLIAM H. BANKS, JR., is the executive director of the Harlem Writers Guild. His first book, *A Love So Fine*, was published in 1974 and is widely regarded as the first African American romance novel. He is a professor at New School University and the host of *In Our Own Words*, the only regularly scheduled television program dedicated exclusively to black writing.

Users Review

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