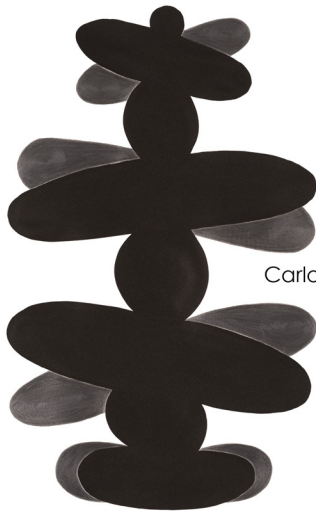


THE HIGH ALIVE



Carlos Sirah

AN EPIC HOODOO DIPTYCH

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THE HIGH ALIVE

AN EPIC HOODOO DIPTYCH

by Carlos Sirah

The High Alive: An Epic Hoodoo Diptych, published tête-bêche (head to toe), is made up of *The Light Body* and *The Utterances*. Together, they take up excess and extinction in speculative lyric. Page is transformed into space for a performative prose in this mythopoesis of blackness and queerness, of return and foray.

The Light Body surveys the spiritual architecture of the site where longing encounters memory, and grief allows survival, inside and against the reverberations of war. Noah and Micah return to their home in rural Mississippi, where the lovers call upon -SHU-, a manifestation of the owner of roads and doors. The lovers embark on a journey that takes them from home to the woods to the desert to the wilderness.

In *The Utterances*, *The War that Settled Dust* reorganized the city. One thousand years later, *Theory of Bessie*, a cult devoted to recollection—of fragment, of breath, of sound—invite us to consider the besieged body, family, city. Moving beyond apocalypse, *Theory of Bessie* invite us to consider collective redress; claiming that amidst ruin, there is always possibility.

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR THE HIGH ALIVE

This could as easily have come out on a vinyl. The smell of the cellophane, the clap of the disc onto the turntable, the needle's hunt for the groove, the whirling discoveries, as through resonance and reverberation, gut-deep and heart-bright, our understanding of melody expands, and we gather new rhythms to fuel perseverance and responsibility: chants operations. - **Erik Ehn, Playwright**

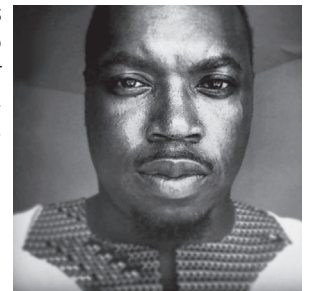
Staged in the mind as well as in the found world, this brilliant, devastating, necessary literature takes us way past easy understandings of war. Echo-dogs are seedpods and shadows and legs, and nouns grow into lovers, and stories turn into vital poetics of inbreath and take on what we barely grasp, even as it happens through us. Being alive floats in fields of bodies, and we are alive as theories of staying that way. This is Carlos Sirah's war, taking things back from all missing things, to show us the breath on the mirror. - **Thalia Field, Author of *Leave to Remain* (Legends of Janus)**

Thank all there is for Carlos Sirah. He is showing us ways through the inferno. His tellings are harrowing, unsentimental and beautiful beyond measure. We have been waiting for wisdom like this. Carlos Sirah's voice—by turns titanic and gentle—extends the redemptive project of legendary writers Robert Hayden, Henry Dumas and Toni Morrison. He invites us to reclaim the page and the stage as holy sites of witness and remaking. This book will rearrange you. The High Alive is a breathtaking and breath giving achievement. - **Daniel Alexander Jones, Performance Artist & Playwright**

The High Alive marks the print debut of an essential voice and vision. Carlos Sirah's "Hoodoo diptych" works its choreopoetic roots to cast an indelible spell. Watch and read The High Alive, and you will get lifted too!" - **John Keene, author of *Counternarratives***

You have to be willing to flow in the broken open form of this work—to say yes to your own imagination and freedom—to read what the silences in the line breaks have to say—to be open to getting shook by da Holy Ghost n dem. You got to be grown, and willing to honor Blackness/queerly to receive all that this book is. This writer gots swagga. Makes me want to cuss and twirl . . . and hold this book tight. - **Sharon Bridgforth, Writer & Performing Artist**

Carlos Sirah is a writer and performer from the Mississippi Delta. His work encounters exile, rupture, displacement, and migration. A 2017-2018 Lambda Literary Fellow, Playwrights Center Core Apprentice, and recent Millay Colony residential fellow, Sirah has performed and developed work with a wide array of place-based, social justice and arts organizations across the country from New York to Virginia to Arkansas to California. He is a facilitator with Warrior Writers, a community of veterans who make art. Sirah received his MFA from Brown University in 2017.



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