

Unspoken Word Back To Spotlight

Written by Robert ID477

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Music, scriptures, and mature themes take center stage in Mark Anthony Thomas' effort to bring the unspoken word back to the popular trends of poetry. In his second book project, *The Poetic Repercussion*, the 25-year-old member of the Academy of American Poets describes his project as a poetic and musical narrative. The book will be nationally released on Thursday, December 2nd.

"Poetry has integrated pop culture trends for pure performance and live delivery," Thomas said. "With this book, I wanted to show that a young black man could write in cross-cultural forms of traditional and contemporary poetry and music, while addressing the social and generational topics that people would enjoy reading."

Venturing through a multitude of interlinking themes, Thomas narrates through conservative subjects while exploring areas that many will find surprising. Metaphorically set in a psychiatrist's chair, topics include athletics, causalities of the Iraq war, hip hop music's influence on American culture, and the realities of love, sexuality, and social acceptance of promiscuity.

"The process of writing *Repercussion* was difficult because of the nature of the issues addressed," he said. "The initial theme of this project was to write a narrative of humanized and emotional works, but during the writing process, the depth of the issues affected me more than I realized it would."

Heavily influenced by the artists of the Harlem Renaissance, Thomas tributes Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer, and Countee Cullen in his works. All poems align to biblical scriptures, which are noted as instruments associated with each piece. Exceptions are those dedicated to Hip Hop, Martin Luther King, Jr., Halle Berry's academy award, and Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Hamilton Holmes - the pioneers who desegregated Thomas' college alma mater.

Thomas graduated from the University of Georgia in 2001, where he became the first African American editor-in-chief of the independent daily student newspaper, *The Red & Black*, in the school's bicentennial history. He also served as the Student Chairman for the institution's 40th Anniversary of Desegregation Commemoration in 2001. *Black Issues in High Education* named the event one of that year's 10 most notable events.

"Publicly, I've fully focused on developing a thriving professional career," he added. "However, behind the scenes I've been in the trenches studying and writing literature and musical forms to improve my craft."

Since 2001, Thomas has worked on community initiatives with the Federal Reserve System, National Center for Black Philanthropy, Alvin Ailey Dance Troupe, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, and serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors for the nonprofit, *Helping Teens Succeed, Inc.* Thomas chaired the planning for the Southern Regional Council's commemoration of *Brown v. Board of Education* in April 2004. He serves on the leadership team of the Southeastern U.S. Region of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., which named him their 2001 Brother of the Year. Thomas works for the Georgia-Pacific Corporation as a

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communications and community affairs professional and has been featured on National Public Radio, NBC, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and Time Magazine. For more information [HERE](#) .