

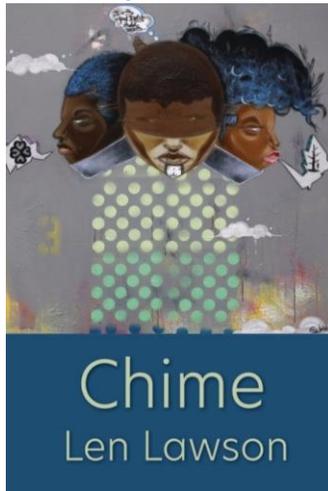


P.O. Box 901, Union Township, NJ 07083

www.getfreshbookllc.com

Victoria Robinson, Publicist victoria@getfreshbooksllc.com

Chime by Len Lawson



Cover Art by Cedric Umoja

The poetry collection *Chime* is a reclamation and preservation of the body, especially the black body, which has been under attack in recent years if not since its creation. It is a celebration of the body's metamorphic phases. The body is always changing, adapting, searching, analyzing, and cataloguing its environment. It is more than a host for other organisms. It is art and science. It sings. It wails. It chimes.

PRAISE for *Chime*

Len Lawson's *Chime* is the rough melody reverberating from the whirlwind of these times and past times touching the singular and collective Black body. While the poems have a broad preoccupation with mortality and trauma, they are ultimately life-affirming. This collection reminds us that the grief and anxiety in the Black community are only recognition that what is far too often, too brutally and too unjustly lost is substantial, important and invaluable. Here are words that you need to read, that we all do.

--Cortney Lamar Charleston, author of *Telepathologies*

Len Lawson's *Chime* announces a poet's state of interiority in America now, striking necessary notes of dissonance—"the rumble of my tribe"—and clarity within chords of individual and collective black consciousness at this fraught historical juncture...an insistent sounding from those who "see everything as it is...." He declares: "Call me anything but blind / Who is anyone to call me / anything but a celestial body...." Confessing conflicted love for a Southern homeplace that "romances" and "bludgeons" him, while naming the ironies and entrapments of a larger American (and human) identity, Lawson eloquently reveals a ruminating self—male, black, besieged, bewildered, yet certain, too, of its own song and grace.

— Sharan Strange, author of *Ash*, a memoir-in-poems



Photo by Michael Dantzler

About the Author

Len Lawson is author of *Chime* (Get Fresh Books, 2019) and the chapbook *Before the Night Wakes You* (Finishing Line Press, 2017). His poetry has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and *Best of the Net*. He has received fellowships from Callaloo, Vermont Studio Center, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and the North Carolina Poetry Society. His poetry appears in *Callaloo Journal*, *African American Review*, *Verse Daily*, *Mississippi Review*, and elsewhere. Len is also a Ph.D. student in English Literature and Criticism at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He currently teaches English at University of South Carolina Sumter and is a Poetry Reader for *Up the Staircase Quarterly*. His website is www.lenlawson.co

From *Chime*

The Black Body Is a Wind Chime

Perfect for whistling bullets through
Singing discordant yet delicious screams
Symphonic scent of burning flesh
Climbing Kilimanjaro leaving trails of blood
The black body is a piccolo
Blown into but never kissed
Blistering white lips race to apply breath to it
But never desire real intimacy
Muscular music makes men mad
With black notes filling their nostrils
String the black bare skin bamboo together
And call them bones of holy ghosts
Sold on the auction block to the highest sinner
A chanting wind whips resistance through them