



## Teducation: Selected Poems

*Ted Joans*

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## **Teducation: Selected Poems** Ted Joans

Black Dues! Black Blues! Black News! , Ted Joans trumpets in his tribute to Langston Hughes. What Library Journal wrote in 1969 holds true today: "This collection of his work clearly reveals the influence of Langston Hughes, his mentor and friend. Joans, however, has the harsher and more strident tone necessary to accurately reflect today's society. As he says in one poem: 'We must fall in love and glorify our beautiful black nation / We must create black images / give the world / a black education.'"

One of the first black poets to become involved in surrealism and a first generation Beat, Joans is an expatriate poet whose work is enjoying renewed interest. This major collection of poems written during the past forty years is a significant contribution to American letters. *Teducation* is the first single-volume collection representing the life's work of Joans, a once roommate of Charlie Parker and a contemporary of Allen Ginsberg and Bob Kaufman.

Energetic African American Beat poet, surrealist painter, longtime Paris-based expatriate, African traveler, jazz expert and jazz musician, the versatile 71-year old Joans (*Black Pow Wow Jazz Poems*) has published 35 books, but never, till now, a selected. Joans's rakish, unsatisfiable sensibility can make his work in Beat modes as technically innovative as Burroughs, as polemically exuberant as Ginsberg and as comic as Corso. His early work, like theirs, depends heavily on surrealist modes; "The rhino roam in the bedroom/ where the lovely virgin wait/ the owl eats a Baptist bat/ adn God almighty is too late." The masterful longer "Timbuktu Tit Tat Toe" packs a few hundred years of Black America's relationship to aftica into four pages of giddy declamation. Likke Amiri Baraka (who lauds Joans's verse), Joans came to embrace an aesthetic of people's poetry, creating exuberant forms to meet his needs, stirring the pot with neologism and slogan, and calling on an arsenal of heroes from Malcom X to Jean-Michael Basquiat. "And Then There Were None" locates political rage in Louis Armstrong's famous grin: "you tried to turn him into your 'musical golliwog doll'/ you wanted his trumpet to blow what you said so/ you misinterpreted his wide smile." Repudiatin

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