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National Museum of African American History and Culture

The Literary Corner: Introduction to African American Poetry with Eugene Redmond—Part 2 (side b)

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[[Music playing throughout]]

<i>Brooks B. Robinson</i>: The literary corner and black writers of the world as he read of analysis and interpretations of black world literature. Today an introduction to Afro-American poetry with professor of English and Poet-In-Residence in Ethnic Studies at California State University Sacramento, Eugene Redmond. Redmond has to his credit over 11 works in literature the most popular of which are Drum Voices, Mission of Afro-American Poetry, Janoia And The Green Stone, and River of Bones, Flesh and Blood. In part one of this introduction to Afro-American poetry, Redmond concluded his presentation with poet Lawrence Dunbar and the period immediately preceding the Harlem renaissance. Today he begins with the Harlem renaissance and concludes with poets of the 1970s.

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<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: The Harlem renaissance represented the first real peak, umm, and when I say peak I'm talking about, you know, media attention, the opening up of publishing outlets. Big, big white publishing houses for the first time in history opened their doors or their printing presses to, to a black writers. And also coincided with a broader cultural revival in Black America as well as in the United States, as well as in the world. And it was spirited on by Nationalists Movements in, in Europe and Africa. But the poets, the poets held the day. Poetry is a very restricted, brief form, it stresses the economy of language. You must go to the heart of the subject, you know in 2 or 3 lines. And so, people like Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Jean Toomer, uhh, lesser writers or lesser-known people. Anna VonTompkins, Sterling Brown, and Spencer, Georgia Douglas Johnson. Splendid writers.

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<i>Brooks B. Robinson</i>: What about James Weldon Johnson?

<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: James Weldon Johnson? Fine poet, one of the older of the renaissance writers. He had already come to fruition as a poet, at least



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