

Haki Madhubuti, Mahmoud El Kati at Harvest Prep book reading

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The name Haki means "just" or "justice," and Madhubuti means "precise, accurate and dependable," in Swahili. So it is no surprise that Haki Madhubuti has long been a pivotal figure in the development of a strong Black literary tradition, emerging from the Civil Rights and Black Arts era of the 1960s and continuing to the present.

"Art and literature are dependable and powerful weapons in the struggle for social equality," he says, "The best way to stop the brothers from being destructive is to reawaken their creative spirit."

He has published more than 28 books (some under his former name, Don L. Lee) and is one of the world's best-selling authors of poetry and non-fiction. His *Black Men: Obsolete, Single, Dangerous?: The African American Family in Transition* (1990) has sold more than 1 million copies. Madhubuti will present his newest book, *Liberation Narratives: New and Collected Poems 1966-2009*, at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, May 26, at Harvest Preparatory School, 1300 Olson Memorial Hwy.

He will be joined by Twin Cities based historian and educator, Prof. Mahmoud El-Kati, whose newest book, *Hiptionary*, explores the rich nuance of Black language.

"This book represents my life's work," said Madhubuti of the \$24.95 500-page collection of more than three decades of his distinctive poetry.

Spanning a long career, these poems helped define and sustain a movement that added music and brash street language to traditional poetics. From the angry calls to action from his earlier work, to spoken-word poetry (which recently garnered the author a Grammy nomination) and "message" poetry aimed at community healing, *Liberation Narratives* offers a complete collection of the author's poetic journey through a troubled time in America.

A protégé of the late Pulitzer-Prize winning poet Gwendolyn Brooks, with whom he shared a long friendship, Madhubuti successfully transformed from poet-activist to modern-day visionary and continues to challenge the status quo in pursuit of justice and peace and advocate for the necessity of art in a violent and discouraging world.

The event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be offered.