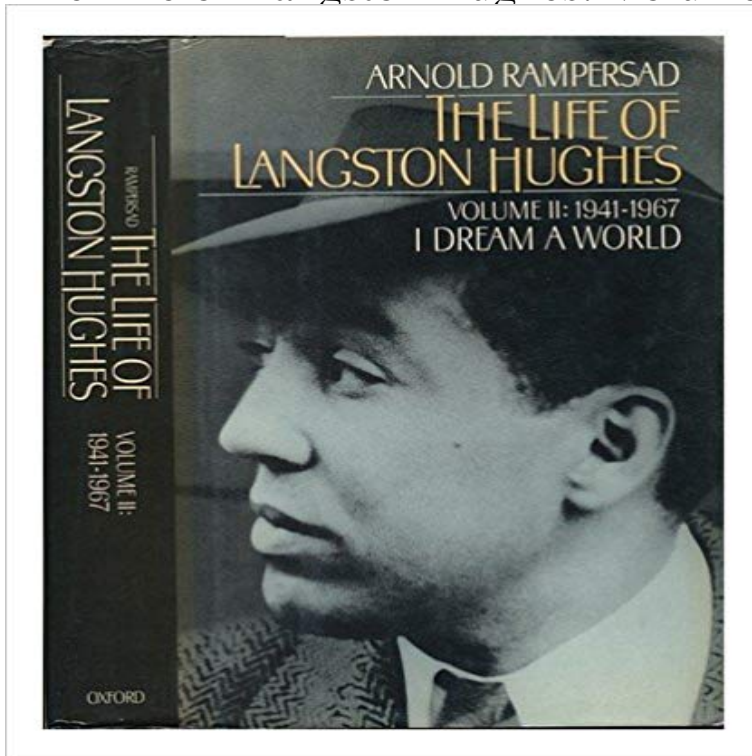


The Life of Langston Hughes: Volume II: 1941-1967: I Dream a World



The first volume of Arnold Rampersad's *The Life of Langston Hughes* was published in 1986 to enormous acclaim. It was hailed as an exquisite orchestration of the fully lived life (*The Boston Globe*), comprehensive and enthralling (*The Washington Post Book World*), and a book I have waited half a lifetime for (*Alice Walker*). It won the Anisfield-Wolf Award in Race Relations and was named one of the best books of the year by *The New York Times Book Review*. Now Rampersad gives us the second and final volume of his epic biography of black America's most original and beloved poet.

Rampersad traces Hughes' life from the humiliations of 1940-41, with his career in jeopardy, to his death in 1967, by which time he was revered not only as the dean of Afro-American writers but also as a world-renowned artist whose poems, plays, and stories had profoundly influenced writers in Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. This volume shows Hughes re-examining his vision of art and radicalism during World War II, when he contributed steadily to the national war effort even as he relentlessly attacked segregation in his country. It recounts his surveillance by the FBI and his hounding by right-wing forces, including Senator Joe McCarthy, who eventually forced him to testify about his radical years. Through all this period, Rampersad reveals, Hughes never lost sight of his greatest goal: to be an artist in words, committed to black life. His desire resulted in books of verse and fiction that reflected his love of jazz and the blues; in operas in which he collaborated with Kurt Weill, William Grant Still, and Jan Meyerowitz; in musical plays that first brought black gospel to the American stage; in a dozen books for children; and in programs for radio and television featuring stars such as Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier. His passion for life and literature brought him into

fellowship--and sometimes sharp conflict--with a wide range of writers, including Richard Wright, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, and Amiri Baraka. Written with Rampersad's characteristic grace and meticulous attention to detail, this book combines with the first volume to offer a matchless panorama of life and culture in America and abroad during the first 70 years of this century.

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