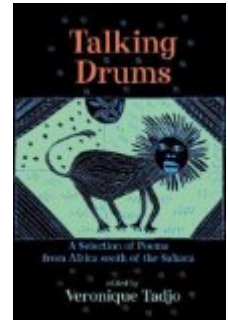


Veronique Tadjo. *Talking Drum: A Selection of Poems from Africa South of the Sahara*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2004. 96 pp. \$15.95, cloth, ISBN 978-1-58234-813-1.



Reviewed by Michael O. Afolyan

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Multiple Voices of African Poetry

Talking Drum is an excellent anthology of poems drawn from across Africa. It is a celebration of nature, beauty, and the universe that black Africa represents. The strength of this book of poetry lies in its multidisciplinary and multi-thematic configuration. Readability is another plus for this literary piece. The selected poems are simple enough to be appreciated and comprehended by students of upper elementary through senior high schools. The book is inundated with illustrations in almost all of its ninety-some pages. The pictures add color and lucidity to the poems. This means so much when seen through the eyes of the book's younger readers.

Although this is an excellent collection, it falls short of being acknowledged as an outstanding literary piece simply because it is not an original composition. The editor, Veronique Tadjo, a well-celebrated writer and poet in her own right, pulls together works of more than thirty outstanding poets and dozens of sayings from various African traditions but does not include any of her own work. In spite of this shortcoming, I recommend

this anthology to schools across the Americas or anywhere the curriculum targets basic knowledge of the African world.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at
<https://networks.h-net.org/h-afrteach>

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