

Adziko Simba

THE BLACKS AND THE BLUES



Bottom Story (reggae bass line)

It goes like this.
There is the bass, the base, the bass.
There is the basement.

There is a woman
prone
stripped to the bone.
Her fist ball hands
Flay the concrete floor in tune
with her feet.

She is locked inside
her self.
Drowning in give up words
she feels compelled to say
but does not want to hear.

They ricochet,
these dum-dum bullet words,
shattering the one nerve
so tightly strung
inside her
reverberating
harmonic chords
all around
other bodies
so black
they blue

so tuned
they quiver
in sympathetic syncopated time.

Yeah,
Black sure can dance.

Middle Story (blues)

In the stairwell
blackantbodies
run spirals
round white busybodies
with microscopic eyes
neither making head nor tail of
souls sprinting
under science
like we don't know what we doing
like we don't know where we going,
like we don't do nothing but round and round and raound and

Yeah,
Black sure can fly.

Top Story (jazz)

So it goes like this

Her basement blues souls up stairs
Kundalini snaking up the twisting heartache to ejaculate
seeds
exploding from the blackbackbeat of bottombasementbodies
bursting up
and out through one black man on a hot zinc roof
blowing redblackgreen out his
metal mouth
spraying spit libations
to the sky.

don't think rain.
don't carry no umbrella...

Yeah
Blacks sure can Blue.

Calabash

A JOURNAL OF CARIBBEAN ARTS AND LETTERS

Volume 4, Number 2 / Spring-Summer 2007

Information about this work:

THE BLACKS AND THE BLUES

By: Adziko Simba

Start Page: 59

URL: <http://www.nyu.edu/calabash/vol4no2/0402059.pdf>

Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters is an international literary journal dedicated to publishing works encompassing, but not limited to, the Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. The Journal is especially dedicated to presenting the arts and letters of those communities that have long been under-represented within the creative discourse of the region, among them: Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, Maroon societies, and the Asian and Amerindian societies of the region. Calabash has a strong visual arts component.

Calabash is published by New York University. Please contact the publisher for further permissions regarding the use of this work. Publisher information may be obtained at: <http://www.nyu.edu/calabash/about.html>

Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters
© 2007 New York University