Journal Examines Politics as President Obama Gets to Work

With the presidency of Barack Obama nearing the end of its first month, the literary journal Callaloo has published a special issue on politics (Vol. 31, issue 4) featuring several prominent authors, including Nobel Prize winner Derek Wolcott.

The issue, guest edited by Texas A&M University associate professor of English Michael Collins focuses on the importance of “equivalent say,” or the notion of giving the thoughts of opposite sides comparable weight.

“The phrase ‘equivalent say’ has hung in my head like a kind of universal password to everything that happens in the world. It has led me to conclude that politics, from the level of nation states to that of would-be lovers deciding whether to call or to wait for the other to call, is the art of equivalent say,” Collins writes in his introduction to the issue. The article will be available online for a short time at http://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/announcements.html.

Callaloo, published by the Johns Hopkins University Press, is the premier African Diaspora literary journal with original fiction, poetry, plays, critical essays, cultural studies, interviews, and visual artworks of black writers and their works across the world.

Wolcott, a poet, playwright, and essayist, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992. His poem “On Empire” appears in the issue.

David A. Hollinger, the Preston Hotchkis Professor of History at the University of California, Berkeley, and Vice President of the Organization of American Historians, contributed an essay entitled “Obama, the Instability of Color Lines, and the Promise of a Postethnic Future.”

The issue celebrates Obama’s election with a powerful cover photograph of Obama banners in his hometown of Chicago taken by Chicago Tribune photographer Jose Osorio. Contributors include renowned economist Jagdish Bhagwati and National Book Award finalist Jessica Hagedorn while Collins interviews several important figures such as Munir Akram, the Ambassador to the United Nations for Pakistan from 2002 to 2008.

For more information on Callaloo, visit http://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/callaloo/.

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