



# Herbert Woodward Martin and the African American Tradition in Poetry

*Ronald Primeau*

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Herbert Woodward Martin is a prize-winning poet and performer, an actor and playwright, a singer and opera librettist, a professor, and a scholar. Born in Alabama in 1933 Martin and his family moved to Toledo, Ohio, when Herbert was twelve years old. His parents appreciated literature and music and saw to it that their young son was immersed in the arts. Martin began to write poetry during his undergraduate years at the University of Toledo, from which he graduated in 1964. *Herbert Woodward Martin and the African American Tradition in Poetry* chronicles the writing and performing career of Herbert W. Martin, focusing on the way his life has informed his art and situating his creative work within the context of the African American tradition. Author Ronald Primeau examines Martin's place in American literature with particular emphasis on his multidisciplinary talents and his contributions to the arts through his highly regarded performances of poetry (especially that of Paul Laurence Dunbar) and his acting, playwrighting, and composing. Even though Martin's work is well-respected, has received numerous awards, and has been anthologized and taught, Primeau's study is a long-overdue discussion and assessment of this poet-scholar's considerable achievements.

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