## KEORAPETSE KGOSITSILE Collected Poems, 1969–2018 KEORAPETSE KGOSITSILE EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY PHILLIPPA YAA DE VILLIERS AND UHURU PORTIA PHALAFALA

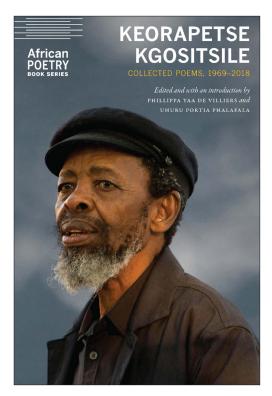
"If I could sing, after a sudden rain, I would certainly praise in my song Keorapetse Kgositsile's poetry because it was shaped by his body and his soul, both of them existing all along a marvelous and historical lifetime—Willie's property—forever beginning, forever laughing, like he did himself, inspired, nourished by Afrika, the deep and wise homeland of our own. His transparent voice was given to the service of freedom, all over the planet. Kgositsile is like his fellow poet David Diop, a strong 'spirit, ever since unchained.' And I will always say to him: Thanks, brother, 'You are what Man should be.'"—Nancy Morejón, author of Before A Mirror, The City and Homing Instincts/Querencias

"The young want to move and they want everything else to move—including poetry. Willie Kgositsile's poetry lunges, strains its muscles—and barks or howls or richly murmurs or screams."—Gwendolyn Brooks, introduction to My Name Is Afrika

Keorapetse Kgositsile, South Africa's second poet laureate, was a political activist, teacher, and poet. He lived, wrote, and taught in the United States for a significant part of his life and collaborated with many influential and highly regarded writers, including Gwendolyn Brooks, Sterling Plumpp, Dudley Randall, and George Kent. This comprehensive collection of Kgositsile's new and collected works spans almost fifty years.

During his lifetime, Kgositsile dedicated the majority of his poems to people or movements, documenting the struggle against racism, Western imperialism, and racial capitalism, and celebrating human creativity, particularly music, as an inherent and essential aspect of the global liberation struggle. This collection demonstrates the commitment to equality, justice, and egalitarianism fostered by cultural workers within the mass liberation movement. As the introduction notes, Kgositsile had an "undisputed ability to honor the truth in all its complexity, with a musicality that draws on the repository of memory and history, rebuilt through the rhythms and cadences of jazz." Addressing themes of Black solidarity, displacement, and anticolonialism, Kgositsile's prose is fiery, witty, and filled with conviction. This collection showcases a voice that wanted to change the world—and did.

Keorapetse Kgositsile (1938–2018) was chosen as South Africa's national poet laureate in 2006. He taught at the University of Dar es Salaam, Nairobi University, and Sarah Lawrence College. His publications include The Present Is a Dangerous Place to Live, If I Could Sing: Selected Poems, and This Way I Salute You. Phillippa Yaa de Villiers is an award-winning South African writer, performance artist, and lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand. Uhuru Portia Phalafala is a lecturer at Stellenbosch University.



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