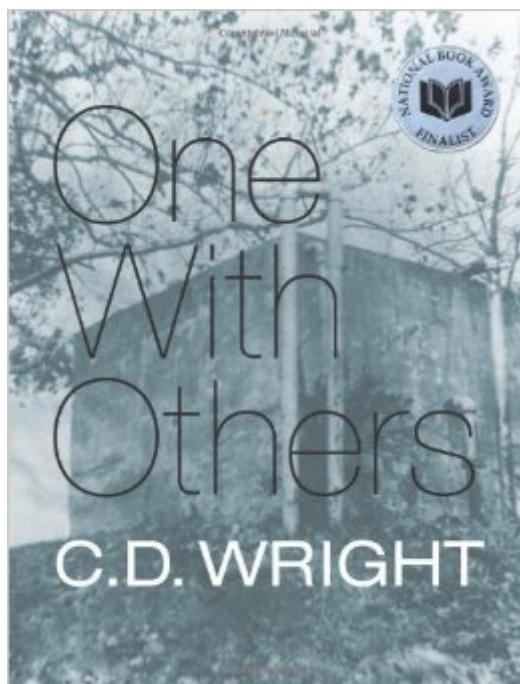


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One With Others: [a Little Book Of Her Days]



Synopsis

Honored in "Best Books of the Year" listings from The New Yorker, National Public Radio, Library Journal, and The Huffington Post. "One With Others represents Wright's most audacious experiment yet." "The New Yorker" [A] book . . . that defies description and discovers a powerful mode of its own." "National Public Radio" [A] searing dissection of hate crimes and their malignant legacy." "BooklistToday, Gentle Reader, the sermon once again: "Segregation After Death." Showers in the a.m. The threat they say is moving from the east. The sheriff's club says Not now. Not no kind of how. Not never. The children's minds say Never waver. Airfanned by a flock of hands in the old funeral home where the meetings were called [because Mrs. Oliver owned it free and clear], and that selfsame air, sanctified and doomed, rent with racism, and it percolates up from the soil itself . . . In this National Book Award finalist and National Book Critics Circle Award finalist, C.D. Wright returns to her native Arkansas and examines explosive incidents grounded in the Civil Rights Movement. In her signature style, Wright interweaves oral histories, hymns, lists, interviews, newspaper accounts, and personal memories; especially those of her incandescent mentor, Mrs. Vittitow; with the voices of witnesses, neighbors, police, and activists. This history leaps howling off the page. C.D. Wright has published over a dozen works of poetry and prose. Among her honors are the Griffin Poetry Prize and a MacArthur Fellowship. She teaches at Brown University and lives outside of Providence, Rhode Island.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

You have your life until you use it. You forfeit the only life you know or go to your grave with the song curdled inside you. --C. D. Wright, in *One with Others*

I've been circling C.D. Wright for years, sensing that she might be a little too...taxing, aim a little too close to the major arteries. Now that I've read *One with Others* (2010, Copper Canyon Press), I see that I was right to be afraid. This book-length poem is journalistic, but "aspires to the borrowed-tuxedo lining of fiction." It is narrative but not often chronological. "In the end," says Wright in her first stanza, "it is a welter of associations." This is too modest a claim. "One with Others" is the portrait of a woman (Wright calls her V), the place she found herself living, and the people she felt drawn to. Finally it's about the manner in which she gave her life away. In the summer of 1969, in the smallish, segregated Arkansas town Wright calls Big Tree, sixty-six percent of the population is Negro and "invisible." (Wright uses the rejected vocabulary of those years, with the exception of the "N-word," and by repetition renews its power to wound. She makes the states' defense of interposition and nullification sound like a particularly cruel means of execution.) Martin Luther King, Jr. has been dead for a year, and in this part of the country at least, as Wright so convincingly illustrates, "after they slew/ the dreamer" they "began to slay/ the dream." A teacher at the all-black junior high school is fired for writing a letter to the superintendent in which she complains that "the Negro has no voice," and black students march in protest to the white school.

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