

# DREAD BEAT AND FREEDOM



## LINTON KWESI JOHNSON and the UNFINISHED REVOLUTION

with Author **DAVID AUSTIN**

and introduced by **LEWIS GORDON**

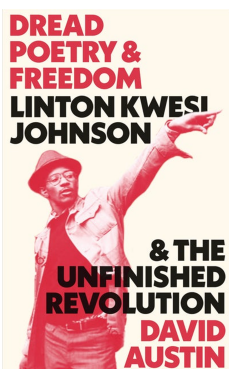
**FRIDAY, JANUARY 25, 7:00 - 9:30 PM**

**@The Peoples Forum, 320 West 37th Street, NYC**

*What is the relationship between poetry and social change?*

Standing at the forefront of political poetry since the 1970s, Linton Kwesi Johnson (LKJ) has fought neo-fascism, police violence and promoting socialism while putting pen to paper refuting W.H. Auden's claim that "poetry makes nothing happen". For LKJ, only the second living poet to have been published in the *Penguin Modern Classics* series, writing has always been *a political act* and poetry *a cultural weapon*.

In *Dread Poetry and Freedom* — the first book dedicated to the work of this *political poet par excellence* — David Austin explores the themes of poetry, political consciousness and social transformation through the prism of Johnson's work. David's book draws from the Bible, reggae and Rastafari, and surrealism, socialism and feminism, and in dialogue with Aime Cesaire and Frantz Fanon, C.L.R. James and Walter Rodney, and W.E.B. Du Bois and the poetry of d'bi young anitafrika. In the process, we see demonstrated why poetry is a vital part of our efforts to achieve genuine social change in times of dread.



**DAVID AUSTIN** is the author of the Casa de las Americas Prize-winning *Fear of a Black Nation: Race, Sex, and Security in Sixties Montreal*, *Moving Against the System: The 1968 Congress of Black Writers and the Making of Global Consciousness*, and *Dread Poetry and Freedom: Linton Kwesi Johnson and the Unfinished Revolution*. He is also the editor of *You Don't Play with Revolution: The Montreal Lectures of C.L.R. James*.

**LEWIS GORDON** teaches in the United States and in South Africa, where he is the Nelson Mandela Visiting Professor of Politics and International Studies, and in Toulouse, France, where he holds the European Union Visiting Chair in philosophy. His recent book *What Fanon Said* has become a primary source on understanding the work of Fanon. He is known not only for his writings on Frantz Fanon, W.E.B. Du Bois, Frederick Douglass, Anna Julia Cooper, Steve Bantu Biko, and many others, but also his work in philosophy, politics, and varieties of thought in the global south.

**THIS TALK IS ALSO THE INAUGURAL EVENT IN THE MUSIC and CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS SERIES**

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just a few blocks from either Penn Station or Port Authority