

Who's Afraid of Black Indians?



Poems by
Shonda Buchanan

About the Author



Editor of *Voices from Leimert Park*, Shonda Buchanan is an award-winning poet, fiction and narrative non-fiction writer. A Sundance Institute Writing Arts fellow and a PEN Center Emerging Voices fellow, she has freelanced for the *Los Angeles Times*, the *LA Weekly*, *AWP's The Writer's Chronicle*, and *Indian Country Today*. Currently, she is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Hampton University.

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The title of Shonda Buchanan's new poetry collection asks a question: *Who's Afraid of Black Indians?* It's a powerful question and the book is powerful: an awakening for some, a storehouse of memories for others, a clarification of American history for all. It is also an embrace; the author embraces her lineage and autobiography and self, and because she shares these things with the reader, the reader, too, is embraced. A lovely, eye opening, generous, and fascinating collection!

—*Kelly Cherry, author of The Retreats of Thought: Poems;
Poet Laureate of Virginia, 2010-2012*

Shonda Buchanan's powerful narrative and dense, vibrant language passionately showcase her black Indian heritage. Having escaped from a swampland to Tennessee and later to Indiana and Michigan, the author's determined family surmounts the odds and thrives as Indian, Mulatto, Colored, and Black. Recounted in riveting detail and sometimes raw parlance, the poems in this multifaceted volume shed light on the author's growing awareness of a need to celebrate an ancestry through verse and vernacular, memorable and spiritual.

—*Carolyn Kreiter-Foronda,
Poet Laureate of Virginia, 2006-2008*

About the Cover

Born in Oklahoma (Indian Territory), Diana Fletcher was the daughter of a runaway slave father, and a Florida Seminole mother. Reportedly, Diana's mother died on the Trail of Tears during Indian Removal, and her father remarried a Kiowa woman who taught Diana Kiowa ways: tanning, sewing, basket weaving and other cultural practices. While learning Western customs, Diana maintained and celebrated the heritage, traditions and culture of both her Black and Indian roots, despite pressure from American society to assimilate.