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Tim'm West Re-Issues Bare

By [David Jones](#) | Published 10/3/2007 | [Book Reviews & Excerpts](#) | Unrated

Tim'm West Re-Issues Bare

DAVID JONES



I am a young black author (unpublished as of yet) that writes poetry and prose. My I am inspired by Baldwin, Tim'm West,

Lourde and others and hope to find in this particular forum a platform for encouraging work that will uplift us all as black gay men. [View all articles by David Jones](#)

Tim'm T. West's luminous chapbook *Bare*, long out of print, has been recently expanded, rebound and re-issued by the much-lauded artist. I must confess, *Bare* is a terribly difficult read, not because West has lost any of his extraordinary power as a master poetic spellbinder; his lyrics are as fluid and liquid as they have ever been; his coloristic range is still awesomely broad, his ability to reach long buried emotions and unearth long forgotten blood-memories intact. It is simply that Tim'm Terrell West has other assets, namely himself. On *Bare's* new cover, there is a painfully gorgeous picture of the artist shirtless, flaunting mahogany skin marble-like in its smoothness, a deliciously muscular chest and finely chiseled arms, long, flowing messianic locks, all crowned by a heart-stopping face wearing a mixture of masculine solemnity, wide-eyed vulnerability and flaming, volcanic eroticism barely held beneath the surface. With all this, it might take readers awhile to get past the cover.

Once a reader is able to tear himself away, however, he finds a Garden of Eden, West inviting his readers into his own spiritual and emotional nakedness unafraid. Most of the pieces in *Bare* are inspired by, and dedicated to, close friends of West's (blessed souls!) and he pours out his gifts on them unstintingly, producing an art diamond-like in its endurance and piercing in its sweetness. *Get Well Presence* is a promise of tenderness, intimacy and belonging of such delicacy and poignancy it can scarcely be voiced. *Learning to Cry* is a heart-rending, bronze-voiced utterance, a rare and unusual perspective; we are finally able to hear the voice of sorrow in the low resonant key of masculinity and the beauty of the song is nearly unbearable. West has always been a remarkable essayist and his offerings in *Bare* are worthy of his highest standards; *Notes On a Perfect Partner* is rich with elegantly voiced perspectives and sparkling humor and *This is What Tim'm's Brain Looks Like Under Oshun's Microscope* invites the reader into the very inner sanctum of West's heart. In short, *Bare* is a little miracle and it creates stupendous expectations for the next wondrous gift from the poet-king.

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