

## Foreword

Every once in a while, I encounter a student who discovers my secret love of music and dance. It is through those two obsessions that I bonded with my former Humanities student, Jasmin Drain, in 2003-2004, for she too feels that kind of love. Undoubtedly, Jasmin knows more about those subjects than I ever could. The evidence is *Internal Cries of Life*, her first book of poetry, in which she coaxes, inspires and forces words to make music and dance.

Her lyrics, of love, friendship, youth, politics, Blackness, femininity, and power are moving. *Internal Cries of Life*, like any good album, entices listeners to nod their heads to the beat, compels them to pause and rewind a moving lyric or rhythm, and encourages them to dance and sing along. And like any good artist Jasmin's voice is free and honest. Her work is difficult to resist.

Likewise, it is difficult to resist the overwhelming pride I feel at Jasmin's creativity and perseverance with this book. It is joyful to see a young woman be inventive and bold enough to say what many others do not. I pray that her artistry not only finds its way into many collections, but also inspires other young people to sing their own gifts to the world.

Ginea Briggs