



# A Little Devil in America: Notes in Praise of Black Performance

## Hanif Abdurraqib

*New York Times* bestselling poet, essayist, and cultural critic.  
 Guest curator at large at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), and host of the new SONOS podcast "Object of Sound."

## Nate Marshall

Award-winning writer, rapper, educator, and editor.  
 Author and editor of numerous works including *Finna*, *Wild Hundreds*, and *The BreakBeat Poets: New American Poetry in the Age of Hip-Hop*.

**Tuesday, April 6, 2021, 7:00 PM Central**

[www.bit.ly/HanifFANWebinar](http://www.bit.ly/HanifFANWebinar)

Presented by **Family Action Network (FAN)**,

in partnership with with Baker Demonstration School, Compass Health Center, Evanston Scholars, Evanston Township High School D202, Loyola Academy, New Trier High School D203, Regina Dominican High School, Rogers Park Montessori School, Roycemore School, Sacred Heart Schools, Stevenson High School D125, Wintrust Bank, and Youth and Opportunity United (Y.O.U.)

This event is #freeandopentothe public and will be recorded. Suitable for youth 12+ [familyactionnetwork.net](http://familyactionnetwork.net)  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: HANIF ABDURRAQIB**

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**Tuesday, April 6, 2021, 7:00-8:00 PM, A Little Devil in America: Notes in Praise of Black Performance, a FAN webinar featuring Hanif Abdurraqib. Interviewer: Nate Marshall.**

**REGISTER:** [www.bit.ly/HanifFANWebinar](http://www.bit.ly/HanifFANWebinar).

At the March on Washington in 1963, Josephine Baker was fifty-seven years old, well beyond her most prolific days. But in her speech, she was in a mood to consider her life, her legacy, and her departure from the country to which she was now triumphantly returning. “I was a devil in other countries, and I was a little devil in America, too,” she told the crowd. Inspired by these few words, *New York Times* bestselling poet, essayist, and cultural critic **Hanif Abdurraqib** has written ***A Little Devil in America: Notes in Praise of Black Performance***, a profound and lasting reflection on how Black performance is inextricably woven into the fabric of American culture. Each moment in every performance he examines—whether a schoolyard fistfight, a dance marathon, or the instant in a game of spades right after the cards are dealt—has layers of resonance in Black and white cultures, the politics of American empire, and Mr. Abdurraqib’s own personal history of love, grief, and performance.

Mr. Abdurraqib writes prose brimming with jubilation and pain, infused with the lyricism and rhythm of the musicians he loves. With care and generosity, he explains the poignancy of performances big and small, each one feeling intensely familiar and vital, both timeless and desperately urgent. Filled with sharp insight, humor, and heart, *A Little Devil in America* exalts the Black performance that unfolds in specific moments in time and space—from midcentury Paris to the moon, and back down again to a cramped living room in Columbus, Ohio.

Mr. Abdurraqib’s poetry has been published in *PEN American*, *Muzzle*, *Vinyl*, and other journals. His essays and criticism have been published in *The New Yorker*, *Pitchfork*, *The New York Times*, and *Fader*. He is the author of the poetry collections *The Crown Ain't Worth Much* and *A Fortune for Your Disaster*, the essay collection *They Can't Kill Us Until They Kill Us* and *Go Ahead in the Rain: Notes to a Tribe Called Quest*. Mr. Abdurraqib was named guest curator at large at BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music) beginning in January 2021 and is the host of the new SONOS podcast “Object of Sound.”

Mr. Abdurraqib will be in conversation with **Nate Marshall**, an award-winning writer, rapper, educator, and editor. He is the author and editor of numerous works including *Finna*, *Wild Hundreds*, and *The BreakBeat Poets: New American Poetry in the Age of Hip-Hop*.

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