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## BETWEEN THE COVERS



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Between the Covers Podcast

## Ama Codjoe : Bluest Nude

[POETRY](#)

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“On Seeing and Being Seen” is the title of an Ama Codjoe poem but it could just as easily be a description of her debut collection *Bluest Nude* as a whole. *Bluest Nude* is a book that engages with ways of seeing, and its poems often engage with visual art—poems that look at art forms made outside of language but with language, poems that look at how artists look when making art. But more principally *Bluest Nude* is engaged with looking at how the Black female figure has been (mis)represented in art and asking how a Black female poet can write a poetry that claims a sovereign point of view, that reclaims a Black female subjectivity much as Lorraine O’Grady and Simone Leigh, two of the artists she engages with in her collection, have done in their own work in performance and visual art. These questions of how we see and how we are seen, both by others and by ourselves, call into question notions of selfhood, and the mysteries of how we construct a self, something that only happens in engagement with others, how they see us, how we see them seeing us.

For the bonus audio archive Ama Codjoe presents us with three different strategies to write ekphrastic poetry, poetry that engages with visual art. And much like Dionne Brand did when she contributed readings of forthcoming work from 2023 books by Canisia Lubrin and Christina Sharpe, Ama first reads and discusses a poem by Evie Shockley from her forthcoming collection *suddenly we*, then she reads some of her own poems, and finally she ends with a long poem by

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Terrance Hayes from his forthcoming collection *So to Speak*. To learn how to subscribe to the bonus audio and the many other potential benefits of joining the Between the Covers community as a listener supporter head over to the show's [Patreon page](#) to check it all out.

Here is the [Bookshop](#) for today's episode.

## MENU

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