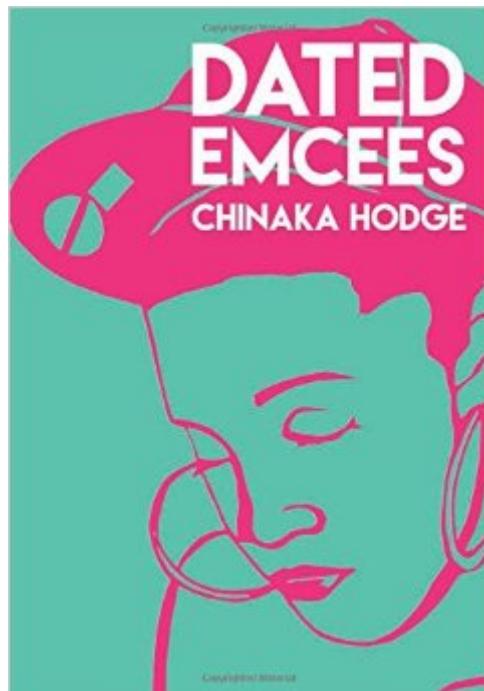


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# Dated Emcees (City Lights/Sister Spit)



## Synopsis

Chinaka Hodge came of age along with hip-hop; and its influence on her suitors became inextricable from their personal interactions. Form blends with content in *Dated Emcees* as she examines her love life through the lens of hip-hop's best known orators, characters, archetypes and songs, creating a new and inventive narrative about the music that shaped the craggy heart of a young woman poet, just as it also changed the global landscape of pop. Praise for *Dated Emcees*: "In the old tellings hip-hop was a woman, a certain kind; one needing, even begging to be saved. In *Dated Emcees*, Chinaka Hodge gives her a voice and she tells of her loves and desires, her traumas and pains in words as hard, as lit, as loving, cunning, cutting, ecstatic, as tender and devastating as her big world requires. This is poetry that, in its infinite power and intimate grace, will still turn in your mind long after the music is over." Jeff Chang, author of *Who We Be: A Cultural History of Race in Post-Civil Rights America* "Hodge writes with an unpredictable, rare honesty. This collection quietly and simply illustrates love in a complicated world." Donald Glover AKA Childish Gambino: "This is an absolute powerhouse of a book, and a new pinnacle for Chinaka Hodge. There's enough beauty and heartbreak and melancholy and humor and sorrow in here for three collections, or two lifetimes. Hodge's writing is so incredibly specific but somehow universal, so honest and raw but somehow polished to unimproveability. She deserves a wide audience, an attentive audience, an audience that wants to be astounded." Dave Eggers, author of *The Circle* "Chinaka Hodge is hands down, unequivocally, my favorite writer of words. All day. Every day. She writes with the grace of a dancer, the bars of a rapper, the heart of your best friend, and all of the swag and soul of Oakland. *Dated Emcees* made me cry. And I don't really do that. It doesn't use Hip Hop as a lens. It is Hip Hop. In the way that we, who have grown up with rap as our brilliant, estranged, mythological, abusive lover/father/son, are all Hip Hop. Aware of his flaws, and his potential. And loving him unconditionally. These are poems to read every day. To make mantras from. They are the best poems you've ever read." Daveed Diggs, Actor/Rapper, star of *Hamilton* on Broadway "Every time I hear new work from Chinaka Hodge I wonder if she was always this good. She was, I'm pretty sure. And yet somehow, she's leveled up again. *Dated Emcees* is a dropped microphone, and a direct challenge to anyone listening. Step your game up." George Watsky, author of *How to Ruin Everything: Essays*: Ms. Hodge's collection complicates dogmatic notions of feminist principles and hip hop pathologies. She is the steward of a candid and sonorous new form, a lyrical journalism expressed in a meter that climbs from West Oakland's Bottoms to the peak of a Wonder-laced rocket love. *Dated Emcees* is outlined in the matter of black life, streamlined through the filter of

black womb ; a smoke-filled lung in a sweat-filled club of safety and danger, and the bass of black moon.â •> Marc Bamuthi Joseph, arts activist, spoken word artist, US Artists Rockefeller Fellow

## Book Information

Series: City Lights/Sister Spit

Paperback: 64 pages

Publisher: City Lights Publishers (May 24, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0872867021

ISBN-13: 978-0872867024

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.2 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (1 customer review)

Best Sellers Rank: #82,039 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #45 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > African American > Poetry #67 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Women Authors #308 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Regional & Cultural > United States

## Customer Reviews

Do you ever read something and have to stop, put it down, and freak out about how genius it is? That is this entire collection. The best writing is writing that gives form to what you thought could only live amorphously in your brain, or even what you never even consciously thought until you read the words. Chinaka Hodge is an actual genius, and I don't use that word lightly. There is a section of 24 haiku, one for each year of Biggie's life. I didn't think it could get more amazing than that. Then the next section was 2pac couplets, one for each year he lived. There are poems deeply personal, and still deeply resonant. Gut punches that remind us of the cost of living in a world that values the illusion of whiteness and tries to destroy what it deems is not. This is for hip hop fans. This is for poetry fans. This is for black women. This is for me, a woman of color. This is for you, whoever you are.

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